



 **FASS**

Supporting you one step at a time

Annual Report
2019/2020

Organisation of the Year July 2019 – June 2020



Contents

- 04 Chairman's Foreword**
- 05 Management Team Report**
- 06 Alcohol Counselling Service**
- 10 ADAPT Substance Recovery**
- 14 Community Drug Service**
- 16 Curnie Clubs**
- 19 Donations and Funders**

Chairman's Foreword

When I wrote the Chairman's Forward for the last annual report, we had never heard of Covid 19 and pandemics were from the distant past. This year FASS was at the heart of many exciting developments in support of those suffering with drug and alcohol problems and new projects were under development. Seek, Treat and Keep was underway. Curnie Clubs were going from strength to strength. All our counselling services were performing well. We embarked on a reorganisation of the top management structure to better reflect the diverse activities of our organisation and improve communication between sections.

All this was underway when lockdown struck. This threw up many problems, but we had a plan for such disruption although something quite so severe hadn't been anticipated. However, people rallied round, and the pandemic has illustrated just how resourceful, capable and committed are the FASS staff and volunteers.

We have managed to fulfil our commitments and provide such help as was needed in these extraordinary times. For this I must thank all staff and volunteers for how they have risen to the challenge and once again shown what an excellent organisation they have created.

John C Hamilton
Chairman

Management Team Report

Looking back to the year from April 2019 until March 2020 seems like looking at another world. It's a memory of another age, but also a different country. The Pandemic has changed so much, and as this report is written, we are living and working very differently.

But in 2019 it was business as usual for FASS, although with a very special celebration. In June 2019, FASS was recognised as Organisation of the Year by Fife Voluntary Action. The award was presented at their annual celebration of volunteering in Fife. It's a recognition of the work that FASS has done quietly for 40 years, working in areas of stigma. A huge part of our receiving the award from FVA was, of course, the contribution that Volunteers make. Due to our dedicated Volunteers we've been able to change the lives of many, many people in FASS's four decades.

The long-established Alcohol Support Service continued to develop in line with COSCA standards for counsellors and counselling organisations. Investment in Volunteer Counsellors has been a historic strength of the service. This continued in 2019, through recruitment of new Counsellors and training and development opportunities to enhance professional practice. As partners of the Scottish Alcohol Counselling Consortium, we contributed to the development of a new qualification for Counsellors. There is now, therefore, a COSCA validated Certificate of Advanced Alcohol Counselling Skills.

It was also a year of dynamic innovation, with the development of a pilot Near Fatal Overdose Service. ADAPT worked closely with the Scottish Ambulance Service and Fife Alcohol & Drug Partnership in its development. The result was a highly successful response to providing support to the alarming numbers of people who almost die from drug overdoses.

The NFO team act as a very timely, second response following the intervention of the Ambulance Service. The team supports patients and their families towards appropriate help from addictions and other health and social services. Following the pilot, the NFO team is still with us. It has been so successful that other areas of Scotland are seeking advice in setting up similar services.

ADAPT also joined with partners in the NHS, Social Work and the Third Sector to develop the REACH service. This project finds new ways of supporting patients who make repeat hospital visits due to alcohol and drug problems. REACH is multi-disciplinary in its approach. It's a major project in Fife that continues to evolve today.

Our Curnie Clubs network continued to work in Fife communities and increased both its Membership and geographic reach. In Cowdenbeath, a Club was piloted from 2018 for six months as part of the 'Delivering Differently' initiative. The project was looking at how best employability services can engage with those in poor mental health. Following the pilot and with match funding, we retained our Project Worker and Club in Cowdenbeath.

We trained a lot of staff and Volunteers over the year. Developed knowledge and skills were used within the Clubs, but also in others' local community work. Through Rank Foundation funding, we recruited a Volunteer Development Coordinator. We were very happy to appoint an ex-Member, someone with lived experience, to this role.

Often our Members are presenting with the same issues of trauma as those of our alcohol and drugs clients. We were able to report in February that of 81 new Members, 64 had achieved sustained community activity.

More so than ever, this Annual Report is a reflection on the past, an account of the wonderful enthusiasm, knowledge and skill that the charity's staff and volunteers bring to their vocation. It shows that our Alcohol Support, ADAPT and Curnie Cub services enjoyed a very productive and successful year.

Jim Bett, Mhairi Owens, Dave Dempster, Donald Grieve - Management Team

Alcohol Counselling Service



The Alcohol Support Service provides psycho-social counselling for individuals aged 16 and over concerned about their own or someone else's drinking.

Our counselling is tailored to meet individual need, with a choice of abstinence or controlled drinking regimes. A collaborative, goal focused and recovery based approach assists our clients to address their concerns about alcohol use and does so within a context of inter-related psychological, social and relationship issues. Support is also available for family members and friends.

During 2019, counselling was available in Health Centres and Hospitals throughout Fife and in Outreach Centres in Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, St Andrews and Glenrothes. A home visiting service was also available.

From April 2019 until March 2020, we received **673 referrals** for our alcohol counselling therapies. **44 people** were referred for our EMDR.

There were **306 closures** of counselling programmes. **242 (79%) clients** indicated either complete success or significant progress with their chosen goals. A further **37 people** completed their EMDR.

Another **107 people** required a single appointment for crisis counselling or relapse prevention.

The Alcohol Support Service invests a great deal of effort and resource to enable a high quality and standard of service. Our counselling is delivered in line with COSCA Standards & Ethics and the quality of our organisation is recognised by COSCA's Recognition Scheme for Organisations. Investment in volunteer counsellors has been a historic strength of the service, and this continued during 2019, through recruitment of new counsellors and training and development opportunities to enhance professional practice.

The Alcohol Support Service is recognised as a learning provider that can offer counselling placements to students/volunteers from universities, colleges etc and is committed in providing all the necessary supervision, training and personal development that is an essential requirement of these placements.

The organisation is a member of the Scottish Alcohol Counselling Consortium (SACC) and we participated in the development of a new qualification designed for counsellors, a COSCA validated Certificate of Advanced Alcohol Counselling Skills.

Another strength of the service is our training expertise. Our trainers deliver on behalf of NHS Fife Health Promotions both the Assisted Suicide Intervention Training (ASIST) and the Scottish Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA) and are part of the NHS Trainers Network registered with Public Health Scotland. These courses are provided within the community and for other services.



673

Referrals for our alcohol counselling therapies from April 2019 to March 2020.



79%

Of our clients indicated either complete success or significant progress with their chosen goals.

The Alcohol Support Service invests a great deal of effort and resource to enable a high quality and standard of service.

A Client Journey

John was referred by our ADAPT Triage service. He was drinking alcohol and also using cocaine. John was a male in his late thirties and was married with young children. He was in full time employment and his place of employment was outside his local area which involved a daily drive to and from work of around 70 miles.

For John, substances had been a major part in his life for the last 5 years. What brought him to counselling was the impact these were having on his physical health and also more recently for him it had become apparent that he was suffering from poor mental health. There were currently no other Services involved. During his counselling assessment, John completed a mandate with his counsellor giving permission for our service to liaise with his GP. His chosen goal was abstinence from all substances.

John's attendance and commitment were excellent. Working collaboratively with him, it was identified that John would benefit from the support of his GP. He requested that his counsellor contact the GP on his behalf to discuss the possibility of the GP being willing to support him in his goal of abstinence.

John's GP offered to support him and with his help John was able to initiate a planned reduction programme supported with medication. The counsellor actively supported the agreed reduction programme and over a period of time John successfully managed to achieve abstinence from both alcohol and cocaine.

John felt that the support he experienced had played a key part in his achievement.

As a result of this positive experience, John made a decision to take a further step and involve his employer who had an alcohol and drug policy in place. John's mandate in counselling was amended at his request to include his counsellor liaising with his employer and provide them with on-going reports on his progress.

Through the further work in counselling where relapse prevention was the focus, John recognised the impact his lifestyle had on various aspects of his life including his family, friends, work, social life etc. In order to support his full recovery John then progressed to engaging with other support pathways e.g. AA & CA for himself. His partner also accessed our counselling service as a significant other. John continues to remain abstinent and is now currently engaging with hospital services to improve his physical health.

The most significant thing to date for this client has been the importance of one nominated person being able to identify, encourage and liaise on his behalf with all other appropriate services, to grow and develop a support network to promote his full recovery.

He said

“It always felt a bit like trying to build a picture jigsaw but not having all the pieces and not knowing what the picture looked like or where to look for the missing pieces. I realise now I just needed to have one piece and someone else would know what the picture looked like and would help build it”.



Honest, no nonsense but compassionate approach. Holding me to account for the reality of the life I choose to live. Not drinking, longest while of abstinence in a very long time and the most resolved I've felt in choosing not to drink.

I've abstained from alcohol. I've more understanding of how my wife and family felt whilst I was on the drink. My counsellor was understanding and non-judgemental.



ADAPT Substance Recovery



ADAPT offers advice, access to services and counselling for individuals and family members worried about alcohol, drugs and prescribed medicines.

ADAPT Triage and Counselling

The year until March 2020 started as business as usual but ended up as a quite tumultuous year.

ADAPT offers drop-in clinics, telephone triage and support, out of hours working and support for those experiencing substance misuse issues and includes hospital discharge within the community to help prevent those who may relapse on their journey and may find themselves returning to the hospital environment.

Anyone concerned about substance misuse could either drop-in to one of the Clinics or telephone our Outreach Support Workers who would listen carefully, provide a triage assessment of needs and choices and assist with referral and access to the right services.

ADAPT workers triaged and supported **598 clients** into a combination of both 3rd sector and statutory services for ongoing treatment for their substance misuse issues and all that this involves.



589

Triaged and supported clients.



213

Referrals for ADAPT counselling.

Brief psycho-social counselling provides help for clients in crisis and for those not requiring opiate treatment services. A solid foundation for recovery is established through a solution focused approach with identification of the client's personal strengths and resources. Relapse prevention strategies help maintain recovery.

213 people were referred into counselling during the year. By March, **130 clients** had completed their programmes with **70%** reporting full success or significant improvement. A further **40 clients** required a single appointment for crisis counselling or relapse management.

Near Fatal Overdose Pilot

National drug-related deaths have increased over the last few years and sadly Fife's drug related death rate has mirrored this trend.

In April 2019, our ADAPT Service, Fife Alcohol & Drug Partnership (ADP) and the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) began working together to provide a Near Fatal Overdose (NFO) response for patients issued Naloxone to counter an Opiate overdose following intervention by Paramedics.

Harm reduction is at the heart of the Scottish Government's Substance Misuse Strategy and reducing the number of drug-related deaths is a key aim. A large proportion of drug-related deaths are the result of accidental opiate overdose and reducing the number of fatal (and non-fatal) poisonings is understandably a key target of the Scottish Government.

The NFO team are first point of contact for those who experience near fatal overdose and continue to support those clients within the community to address their own personal needs such as substance misuse issues, debt, housing and relationship difficulties.

This project is fast becoming the leading example in Scotland for dealing with near fatal overdoses.

As a new service we continue to build professional relationships with both the Statutory and 3rd sector services. This has been a difficult journey for this service and clients this year, due to the project being operated by staff and volunteers doing more than their normal roles to assist those most in need.

Praise should be given to all Fife wide services as they have worked hard at building and maintaining support to this new project and helped to ensure that clients are seen in a quick and responsive manner. In doing this we have assisted **125 individual people 144 times during this period.**

All clients are offered on-going support regarding their needs and we continue to advocate and support them with all relevant issues that they may be encountering within the community.

REACH

REACH is an innovative Multi-Disciplinary Team approach for Improving Pathways from Hospital. Its aim is to improve access to specialist alcohol & drug services for patients who have accessed inpatient hospital services in Fife.

ADAPT, the NHS Addiction Service, NHS Pharmacy, We Are With You (WAWY), and the Social Work Service each brought the strengths of their individual disciplines to the REACH team. REACH started operating in Victoria Hospital in the early months of 2020.

ADAPT provided a liaison service in the community. Its designated role was to provide on-going support and assistance for patients leaving Hospital. ADAPT's service included psycho-social support, helping people to access the right mainstream and recovery orientated services to meet their needs and wishes and where appropriate carry out single share assessment and recovery planning.

ADAPT provided Patients with assisted referral from hospital to specialist alcohol and drug services and other Health and Social Care services. Emphasis was given to on-going support for patients who are most likely to avoid or disengage from services following discharge from hospital.

In late March 2020, the REACH team's operations in Victoria Hospital were suspending because of the Covid-19 lockdown, however, ADAPT's workers continued to take referrals from medical staff and supported patients leaving hospital throughout the months of lockdown. Our workers also contributed to a Prescription Delivery service set up by ADAPT to support the NHS Addiction Service.

Client Journeys

I attended the Adapt drop-in clinic on the advice of my GP. During the assessment it was identified that I was alcohol dependant and all previous attempts at trying to reduce or stop on my own had been unsuccessful.

The agreed outcome of the assessment was that a referral be made to Addiction Services requesting a detox and to counselling to address my alcohol dependency. I was also the main carer of my disabled husband.

From the start of me attending the drop-in clinic to where I am today feels surreal. I was in my late 50's and had almost accepted it would be impossible now to make any lifestyle changes. My main driver in attending a drop-in clinic had been the fact that I was responsible for my husband's care and well-being and was increasingly becoming more involved with medical staff, GP's, social work elderly care team etc.

I was offered my first counselling session while I waited on my appointment with Addiction services and was also offered additional support short term if needed from the point of first attending the drop-in clinic. My counselling sessions were on a regular basis and once I had been seen by my Addiction Services nurse the counsellor began communicating directly with the nurse.

My detox was planned and went smoothly and during the whole process the communication was excellent. I felt that my journey had been well planned and supported and what really helped was that even going between appointments with my nurse and then with my counsellor and being supported had all just seemed to flow. It was obvious that they were in regular contact and this seemed to alleviate or minimise any pressure on me.

I had a terrible time a year ago when a few major changes occurred in my life and relapsed and found myself spiralling downwards through alcohol dependency which resulted in several hospital admissions.

I had become so low that I thought there was no way back, but my ADAPT Counsellor supported me constantly throughout, liaising with my GP and bringing Addiction Services on board to get me the help and support I needed.

After almost losing my life, I left hospital for the final time, glad to be alive and given a second chance. I was put on Antabuse via Addiction Services and started attending AA regularly, as well as Curnie Clubs to which I was introduced by my ADAPT support worker and Counsellor.

All these supports have been fantastic for getting and keeping me on track, but it has been the constant support of my ADAPT Support worker and Counsellor which has allowed me to reflect on everything fully, with someone I feel who knows and understand my whole story, which I feel has been central to my recovery.

The co-ordinated help through ADAPT has enabled me to move on with a positive outlook now. I am so grateful to all the Agencies who have supported my recovery, with my ADAPT Counsellor as someone I can speak to a constant throughout my recovery journey.

I feel I can enjoy life again and am in such a good place now with my family too. ADAPT counselling gave me the support I desperately needed at a time of crisis in my life and the Support worker guided me through the whole process and was always there for me - many thanks.

FASS Community Drug Service



FASS Community Drug Service (FCDS) is for people experiencing every severity of drug misuse. From people who are first time experimenters, to regular users, to people experiencing great problems because of their long-term chaotic drug misuse.

We help vulnerable adults aged 16 years plus, and their families, who are affected by substance misuse and who consequently experience a range of personal, social and lifestyle problems. Our outreach services are available in Dunfermline, West Fife, and Kirkcaldy.

Our Intensive Outreach Support offers a thorough, on demand, response for people who need help to gain control over their drug misuse. This service is provided for clients and families who find themselves in chaotic and potentially dangerous circumstances.

Our Brief Recovery Support is an outreach service that offers advice and immediate care for people when they are most likely to be using drugs, offering crisis support, relapse prevention and lifestyle advice.

The Fife community drug service continues to support people attending specialist prescribing and harm reduction clinics in Benarty and Inverkeithing surgeries. The service supports clients, families, and significant others both within a clinical setting and within the communities that they live within and assisted approximately **480 people and their families** primarily within the West Fife area.



480

People and their families supported primarily within West Fife.

“

My Support Worker is very caring and supportive.

I felt comfortable enough to open up to my support worker, they are very good.

Excellent service, as per usual!

I would be lost without the FCDS and the service they provide.

”



Curnie Clubs



Tackling isolation and loneliness at the heart of communities.



Curnie Clubs continued to work in the heart of our Fife communities and extended our activities over the year. We worked with **158 lonely/socially isolated adults** during this time.

Providing group and 1-1 interaction, we tailored our approach according to each Member's needs. Club interaction was all important, however some Members required up to six hours of individual support in a week. Our figures from February show that of **81 new Members**, 64 had achieved sustained community activity or were taking part in community activity outwith Clubs.

We expanded our work, both in numbers and geography. We learned by working locally and were able to adapt our approach to suit local needs. In Cowdenbeath, a Club was piloted from 2018 for six-months as part of the 'Delivering Differently' (mental health and employability) initiative. It is an area with a particular lack of community activity. Following the pilot and with match funding, we retained our Project Worker and our community activities in Cowdenbeath.

We developed our own in-house and external training. This included training six Curnie Volunteers and two other FASS staff in COSCA skills one through four. Personal skills within the Clubs were developed, enabling better and more professional peer support. In all over the year, we trained 20 people. Developed knowledge and skills were used within the Clubs, but also taken into communities, helping isolated people to engage.

We were successful in an application process with the Rank Foundation. Application was through invitation only, and through our success we are now part of the Rank 'family'. This allowed us to appoint a Volunteer Development Coordinator and access some further support for training and personal development. Our new Coordinator is responsible for all aspects of volunteering with Curnie Clubs, for both Members and non-Members. This includes development of the Community Bridge project, which will reach more people who are unable, for various reasons, to attend Clubs in person. We were very happy to appoint an ex-Member, someone with lived experience, to this role.

We saw directly the effect that loneliness/ isolation had on our Members' mental health. For example, from information collated towards the end of 2019, around **a fifth of our Members** had current suicidal ideation, **10 were self-harming** and **8 had recently attempted suicide**. Furthermore, our work continued to indicate that almost all Members coming to us are dealing with some, or even all, of the following issues: diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health issues, financial isolation, trauma (both childhood and adult), domestic abuse; alcohol and/ drug and/ substance misuse. Loneliness/isolation are both caused by and feed these further issues. We addressed these by continuing to build up excellent partnerships. Within FASS we referred to specialist support in substance misuse and near fatal overdose. We used our strong links with external agencies in areas such as trauma and health. These included Link Living, GP's, Psychological Services, Fife Forum, Community Psychiatric Nurses and Fife Carers Centre.



158

Lonely and socially isolated adults received group and peer to peer support over the last year.

20%

Of our Members has current suicidal ideation.

The Curnie Clubs programme is now in its fourth year and has evolved and expanded since its inception. Therefore, we took time since January to look at what it is and how we promote it. This work has involved all of the staff, as well as Members, in a branding exercise for the Clubs. We have already seen increased 'ownership' of the 'brand' and new initiative springing up from this work in itself.

In response to COVID-19 our work became increasingly important. We widened the age-range of Clubs from 26 - 49, opening them up to all adults across Fife. We marketed the Clubs' availability widely through radio and mailings. Having retained a presence through our private Face book pages, Members are able to chat across Fife and give peer support. Additionally, we are helping them to facilitate digital social gatherings and activities, as well as those delivered by staff. All activities are planned by individual groups but are accessible to all Members. This ensures a diverse menu of activity such as quizzes, arts and crafts, cooking, weekly Reiki sessions, or just synchronized movie watching and chatting about the film. Staff have been dealing with very stressful situations, with increased levels of anxiety and suicidal ideation. They have been doing so admirably, with professionalism and dedication beyond expectations. We have implemented steps, including supervision and looking at recruitment of additional staff to help with this.

Member journey

I have been coming to Curnie since late July 2019. I was completely stuck in my own home.

My 15 year old daughter lives with me and has been my carer since she was eight. I feel a heavy weight of responsibility for having her in that role. Curnie has been the main thing to help me gain confidence in mixing with people and making new friends. I have gained so much from the discussions and activities at the Club meetings and outings. I am now able, to my surprise, to take the bus on my own around the local area. I have also asserted myself with the OT Department, who were regularly messing up my appointments. I felt very uncomfortable doing this but I got an apology and all has gone well since! I have also successfully pushed the authorities to provide her with the necessary support as a Young Carer. I realise that my mental and physical health are still fragile and I am careful not to push myself too hard. "A step at a time".

And a thought for today (6 December 2019)

"When I'm worrying about what might happen when I go out, I say to myself - If it happens, I'll deal with it!"



The Curnie club has helped me a lot because I used to stay in the house and didn't have much friends and felt lonely. I felt like I was an outsider until I started the Curnie Club. There were people there just like me and they are nice and understanding. I have made a lot of great friends."

I had a lot of personal problems when I joined Curnie, I didn't want to go out of the house, and my anxiety was sky high. Since coming to Curnie, my confidence has improved so much and I am now a Club Volunteer which I would never have been able to do before. I no longer feel isolated."



A huge thank you!

Thanks to our funders



Fife Alcohol and Drug Partnership
Promoting Recovery. Reducing Harm.



Grants & Donations received with thanks

STV Appeal

Rank Foundation

The Robertson Trust

Garfield Weston

Carnegie Trust

Richardson and Starling

Anonymous donators who used BT My Donate

Anonymous clients who made donations

Awards

Fife Voluntary Action 'Organisation of the Year' 2019

Design by Jim Bett & Forbes Creative



Fife Alcohol Support Service
17 Tolbooth Street
Kirkcaldy, Fife
KY1 1RW

T: 01592 206200
enquiries@fassaction.org.uk
www.fassaction.org.uk



Fife Alcohol Support Service is a Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee.
Registered in Scotland. Company Registration No. 97502. Charity No. SCO10422