

HIGNA Request for help and support from UKPI February 2022

We are asking for help and or support on the planning and delivery of a “For professionals” PI presentation to the Orkney ADP (Alcohol & Drugs Partnership) <https://www.orkneyadp.org.uk/> on a date to be determined in the next few months.

The initial contact from the Action for Children Team on Orkney was made via an email forwarded to us from the admin team at www.virtual-na.org enquiring about support services for the family members of substance abusers.

After an exchange of emails, a conversation was had with the Action for Children team and what information we were able to provide was given. During that conversation we learnt that Action for Children in Orkney were part of the local ADP and a commitment was made by them to pass on the NA information we provided to the other agencies involved. It was also briefly discussed about the possibility of an NA presentation being made to the ADP and that too was to be passed on.

Our second contact from Orkney, a couple of weeks later, was direct from the Lead Substance Abuse worker who expressed a keen interest in gathering information about NA in the UK, particularly online resources, and in working with us to facilitate such a presentation. Various information about HIGNA www.higna.org.uk, UKNA, NA World Service and Virtual-na.org has been provided. We also informed them that we would be talking to you guys at UKPI and possibly the East Coast Scotland (Aberdeen) Area in the hope of being able to develop a collaborative plan to deliver the presentation, it was acknowledged that it may take a month or two make that happen but that we would keep him informed of our progress.

As part of the long-term planning and PI goals of the HIGNA Area we are keen to develop relationships with the ADPs across the Western Highlands & Islands of Scotland and this, we hope, may be the 1st of many opportunities to do that providing we can make a good impression in this instance.

Orkney, in terms of NA, is virgin territory and we, NA, have never had a presence there although it is understood that AA has been on the island for some considerable time and is well established.

With a widely scattered population of around 22k Orkney has one of the highest rates, per head, of substance abuse in the UK and we, NA, face many of the same challenges of bringing our message to remote, rural and isolated communities as do the statutory and non-statutory agencies working in the addiction field. Not least of those challenges would be a strong cultural bias against addiction, as is commonly seen on the Scottish isles, as opposed to alcoholism that seems to be widely accepted and the almost complete lack of anonymity experienced in such small communities.

Given all of the above, we, HIGNA, are open to any and all suggestions as to how to move forward with the planning of such a presentation in terms of what is thought might work best in this scenario and what materials and support UKPI may be able to furnish us with, although we, HIGNA, do have a reasonable amount of tradition 7 funds available that has been ringfenced for such use.

By the very nature of Orkney’s location, it is assumed that any presentation would have to be via a digital platform and could easily be done using our own Bluejeans Enterprise account, on which we have unlimited rooms at no extra cost or, if felt more appropriate, via the UKNA’s Zoom account.

We look forward to your input and being able to work together with UKPI on this project.

As ever ILF&S

Steve A (HIGNA Chair)