

Our story so far: The History and Development

Three factors influenced the establishment of an SU orientated, abstinence based social enterprise in Leicester that would deliver Mutual Aid facilitation, promote abstinence and deliver a more co-produced, peer led treatment system.

Firstly, the national government's 2010 drug strategy: 'Reducing Demand, Restricting Supply, Building Recovery', aimed at establishing a recovery focused treatment framework more capable of 'supporting people to live a drug free life'. Of particular relevance was the stated desire to build 'recovery in communities'. A resulting NTA consultation (2011) identified the need to '...actively promote mutual aid (MA) groups'; finding: 'Within an integrated, recovery-oriented system, MA is important to ensure coherence to an ambitious approach which continues throughout an individual's progression...MA/peer support is vital to a client's recovery journey'.

Secondly, at the same time locally the 'system change project', a pilot study managed by Leicester DAAT and regional NTA in conjunction with the cities CJDT (LRPT) published conclusions highlighting advantages of 'robust links to MA groups' (Talbout, 2010) as part of a recommended refurbishment

of treatment delivery. AA, NA and SMART were now seen as under-utilised resources, already existing within the community, but operating separately from treatment, and not being offered as a potential solution. Other research (i.e. DTORS 2000, DORIS 2004) had already confirmed the 'low rates of sustained abstinence from stabilisation-focused community treatment' (Best, 2010).

Thirdly, SU's returning to Leicester from successful treatment journeys in (12step) Rehabilitation Centres, (Minnesota/Hazelden Model) were vocal in putting forward the need for links between MA and treatment providers. Some entering the CJDT's Peer Mentoring Project came equipped with 12step knowledge, using 12step recovery language, slogans, etc and with an interest in moving a recovery (sustained sobriety) agenda forward. This support for MA collaboration fitted well with a recognition of voluntary engagement as an aftercare pathway.

Since then Dear Albert has steadily increased influence, working with the University of Leicester via Enterprise inc to develop a Brand attractive to all concerned, a business plan, and a strategy to help properly establish a more recovery orientated drug and alcohol service in Leicester. Dear Albert has presented to students on the foundation degree in drug and alcohol counselling at Leicester University and has contributed to the 3rd recovery conference held at Chester University; presenting at Manchester University Sept 13th.

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Abbreviations. SU: Service Users. MA: mutual Aid. PHE: Public Health England. LRP: Leicester Recovery Partnership. CJDT: Criminal Justice Drugs Team. LRPT: Leicester and Rutland Probation Trust. NTA: National Treatment Agency. NA: narcotics anonymous. SMART: self-management and recovery training. DTORS: Drug Treatment Outcomes Research Study. DORIS: Outcomes Results in Scotland. NBV: Nottingham business venture. CASE: co-ops and social enterprise. VAL: voluntary action Leicester. WISE: working in social enterprise. References. Talbout, C. (2010). [nta.nhs.uk/scp-leicester](http://www.nta.nhs.uk/scp-leicester). Retrieved march 1, 2013, from NTA: <http://www.nta.nhs.uk/scp-leicester.aspx> Best, D. R. (2010). Research for Recovery: A Review of the Drugs Evidence Base. Scottish Government.

DearAlbert

You do the MAFs™

Working out what's best for you

'You do the MAFs' reflects Dear Albert's philosophy of promoting abstinence based interventions/way of life, viewing recovery as primarily a social process that can be supported utilising existing community assets.

Dear Albert has been successful in grant support via NBV & LRP to refine and upgrade the 'You do the MAFs' product, a researched peer led facilitation programme, very well received by both service users and professionals, proving successful in supporting engagement with local, regional and national positive social networks. Dear Albert has also delivered CPD sessions with PHE to LRP & CJDT.

This allows existing Providers to better focus resources on professional medical/ therapeutic 1-2-1 interventions where most needed.

Dear Albert can deliver impressive outcomes at a lot lower cost compared with existing templates and support Providers secure PbR

increments. Dear Albert facilitates existing Providers to become more recovery savvy. Dear Albert is focused on recovery and adheres to the latest PHE/NICE clinical guidance. Sharing a 'clean time' of approximately 45 years in active recovery, with over 30 years combined recent study and professional/voluntary experience in the drug and alcohol treatment field, Dear Albert is guided by a voluntary Board made up primarily of (ex)-service users. Work is continuing with CASE, VAL and WISE, honing legal structures best suited to continue working collaboratively with other stakeholders to deliver on-going interventions, and pursue the aim of delivering an abstinence based peer led recovery home in Leicester.

History of Mutual Aid

Using peer led facilitation, interesting, witty slides, films*, etc, we provide an informative history of MA to date, including myth busting, exploring different facts and literature about how the different ideas, concepts and philosophies work. *Including the highly acclaimed Film 'Dear Albert'

Mutual Aid, Mutual Respect, Mutual Benefits

'There are many paths up the mountain, all leading in the right direction. The only person wasting time is the one at the bottom, telling everyone that their path is wrong but not starting their own...'

What is Mutual Aid?

Simply put, Mutual Aid is about people with similar experiences coming together to help each other in a structured way. Dear Albert supports finding out much more about these groups and helping to discover which ones are going to work out best in an empathic, informed way.

Everyone who successfully completes our 'You do the MAFs™' course receives our exclusive 'You do the MAFs™' DA completion hamper.