

## Example of joint working between mental health and substance use services.

*Highlighting the role of community mental health teams in cases where immediate high level mental health support is not possible due to the extent of substance use.*

**The purpose of this is to enable reflection within Community Mental Health Team on their role in supporting people with co-occurring mental health and substance use, and to learn from examples of good practice from elsewhere.**

Joint working and collaboration also includes planning for transitions or staged care. When there is a need for substance use reduction/stabilisation, it is important to co-ordinate across services to allow for:

- Mental health specialist input to plan for when support can be provided.
- Smooth and timely transitions when high level mental health support is appropriate.
- Access to support for managing mental health challenges related to reducing substance use.

There were multi-agency concerns raised about ongoing psychotic symptoms experienced by an individual being supported by the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) and the substance use service. The person was taking cocaine, opiates, alcohol and benzodiazepines. There were shared concerns that the person was not taking their anti-psychotic medication.



### Referral

CMHT used their specialist knowledge, along with awareness of co-morbid substance use to understand the person's current presentation, symptoms and how they might be able to help.



### Joint discussion

CMHT liaised with the substance use service and other services supporting the person. **The CMHT brought their skills to understand how to best respond to the person's needs, and how that contributes to person centred support across a range of services.**



### Mental health support

Access to mental health nurses was provided to the person for support with symptom management, crisis assessment and ongoing formulation.

**Community Mental Health Team continued to monitor the person's mental health whilst working alongside the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service in managing their substance use.**



### Transitions

With input from the substance use service, the person was able to reduce their substance use. This reduced their psychotic symptoms, allowing a safer introduction of mental health medication treatment.

**Community Mental Health Team were able to advise substance use services when they could escalate mental health support thus enabling a transition of care.**