

To Assess The Nature And Extent Of Drug Misuse Among The Traveller Community

Background

The National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD) was established in July 2000 to advise the Government in relation to the prevalence, prevention, treatment/ rehabilitation and consequences of problem drug use in Ireland, based on the analysis of research findings and information. The Committee is overseeing the delivery of a three-year work programme on the extent, nature, causes and effects of drug use in Ireland. The Committee comprises representatives nominated from relevant agencies and sectors, both statutory and non- statutory. The Committee reports to the Minister of State responsible for the National Drugs Strategy.

Commission

The NACD wishes to commission an assessment of the nature and extent of drug misuse among the Traveller community.

Background Information

The National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008 requested the NACD to carry out studies on drug misuse amongst at-risk groups such as Travellers, stating that

"it is essential that the individuals and groups most affected by drug misuse and those involved in working to reduce, treat and prevent drug misuse have immediate access to relevant statistical information." (Action 98)

In addition, informed anecdotal evidence points to increasing levels of drug misuse among young Travellers and concerns have been expressed that young Travellers are at a high risk of developing drug and associated health problems particularly due to the following factors:

- the nature of large extended families living in confined spaces which suggests a potentially rapid spread of drug misuse within this community;
- drug prevention and harm reduction programmes are seen to have by-passed young Travellers because of early school leaving and consequent literacy problems, and because of cultural inappropriateness; and
- the difficulties experienced by Travellers in accessing mainstream treatment services.

In order to facilitate an empirical study of drug misuse among Travellers, the NACD has developed a methodological framework based on the Rapid Assessment Response (RAR) model to assess the nature of drug misuse within the Traveller community. This method has been used elsewhere successfully (for example, Eastern Europe) to investigate a rapidly expanding drug problem within 'hard to reach' communities and is particularly appropriate for examining drug misuse among Travellers as it involves members of the community in both the assessment process and in the development of interventions.

The aim of this RAR study is to:

1. provide an overview of the nature and extent of illicit drug use among the Traveller community;
2. identify patterns of problematic drug use and drug related risk behaviours; and
3. describe what interventions are needed to prevent and deal with the harmful health consequences of illicit drug use.

The Brief

The NACD wishes to commission a study of drug misuse among the Traveller community in Ireland based on the Rapid Assessment Response (RAR) methodological framework.

The researcher(s) will be supported and assisted in conducting the study by a RAR team comprising of the Research Officer of the NACD, and the Co-ordinator of the Drugs Specific Initiative at Pavee Point, peer researchers, and others as required.

In addition, the researcher(s) will work closely with a Research Advisory Group whose membership is drawn from community and statutory groups representing and working with the Traveller community.

The role of the researcher(s), in liaison with the RAR team and the Research Advisory Group, will be to:

1. develop the research design based on the RAR framework;
2. co-ordinate the implementation of the agreed research design;
3. assist in the training and development of peer researchers and co-ordinate the researchers to conduct surveys, focus groups, interviews etc;
4. collect and analyse relevant secondary data;
5. conduct individual interviews and focus groups and surveys as required
6. analyse the RAR data, write the research report and develop the RAR Action Plan.

Duration of project

The project is expected to commence in December 2002 and the final report to be completed by September 2003. A liaison schedule will be agreed as part of the contract.

Requirements

Researchers wishing to tender for this contract must submit a written proposal outlining the following:

1. track record in leading /co-ordinating research studies;
2. previous experience of conducting research within the Traveller community
3. experience of using both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, and any previous experience of drugs research;
4. previous experience of working with peer researchers and/or community based research;
5. awareness of the ethical issues involved in researching the Traveller community and in conducting drugs research;
6. description of costs based on a daily rate for 60 days over the ten month period, any additional costs envisaged (such as travel etc.) should be detailed separately and VAT included.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the submissions be will based on the following criteria:

Research methodology

- Understanding of the project
- Understanding of the work involved
- Understanding of the research ethics involved

Project management

- Ability to deliver key outputs on time
- Credibility of personnel and consultants involved
- Track record

Value for money

- Description of cost
- Justification for proposed costs

The standard contract terms and conditions are available from the office. However, specifics with regard to the tender brief, schedule of liaison, reports and payments, intellectual property rights will be prepared separately on awarding the contract.

Closing date: 12.00 p.m. Friday 22nd November 2002.

Tenders may be short-listed and an oral presentation requested. Tenderers are required to sign a Declaration under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 and submit this with their application.

 [link to Disclosure of Information under the Freedom of Information Act 1997 form](#)

An up to date Tax Clearance Certificate will be requested if the tender is successful.

Seven copies of the tender should be submitted, addressed to:

Secretary
NACD
3rd Floor, Shelbourne House
Shelbourne Road
Ballsbridge
Dublin 4
Tel: (01) 667 0760 / 667 0765;
Fax: (01) 667 0828.
Email: info@nacd.ie;
Web: www.nacd.ie

NOTE: TENDER RETURNS SHOULD BE MARKED:

Ref: Ten/TravellerResearch