

To Assess the Nature and Extent of Drug Misuse among the Homeless Population

Background Information

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

While the correlation between drug misuse and homelessness has been noted in a number of research studies there is little specific evidence as to the extent of drug misuse among the homeless population in Ireland. The empirical studies on homelessness, which have been conducted to date, focus on the physical and mental health needs of this population and vary in the extent to which questions on drug misuse are included. In addition, all of the studies relate to homelessness in the Dublin area and our knowledge of the link between homelessness and drug misuse in other areas is very limited.

Consequently, the NACD has outlined the need for:

- A qualitative study outlining the experience and issues faced by homeless and drug treatment service providers in dealing with homeless drug users; and
- A quantitative study of the homeless population which examines:
 1. the relationship between homelessness and drug use i.e. the extent to which drug use contributes to homelessness and the extent to which homelessness contributes to and exacerbates drug use;
 2. the nature and extent of drug misuse among the homeless population in different areas of Ireland, in particular the type of drugs used by age, gender and accommodation situation of the user (e.g. rough sleeper, hostel dweller etc.);
 3. the extent and context of drug related risk behaviour among the homeless population; and
 4. the needs of homeless drug users and the barriers they encounter in accessing homeless and drug treatment services.

The Brief

The NACD is seeking to commission a research study on the nature, extent and context of drug misuse within the homeless population in Ireland as outlined in the attached "Background Paper".

The study will consist of approximately 340 survey interviews with homeless people (280 in Dublin and 60 in three other urban centres) and 25 qualitative interviews with service providers in the homeless and addiction services. Each interview lasting approximately 1 hour. The research organisation will be provided with the sampling frame to be used in the study and a draft questionnaire and interview schedule.

The NACD will appoint a Research Advisory Group, comprising of experts and gatekeepers in the homeless and addiction services, to support the research

consultant(s) throughout the process and in particular to finalise the design and pilot testing of the research questionnaire, to access the research population, and to advise on the training of fieldworkers.

Duration of project

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

Requirements

Researchers interested in tendering for this contract should submit an application outlining their proposed research methodology in researching this marginalised and hard to reach population. In particular, details should be provided as to how they will address issues of validity, ethics, access, location of interviews, training of fieldworkers, and payment of respondents. Applications should also include details on their track record in co-ordinating research fieldwork; previous experience of conducting research with hidden and vulnerable populations such as homeless people or drug users; and their experience of using both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.

A detailed budget should also be included outlining the costs incurred in:

1. finalising research instruments and sampling strategy (approx. 3 days);
2. accessing the research population, co-ordinating and conducting interviews (additional travel, accommodation, and interview expenses for fieldworkers should be detailed);
3. data transcription, data inputting, and data analysis;
4. report writing.

In addition, the researcher organisation will be responsible for administering the payment of €15 to each homeless participant surveyed. Consequently, the amount of €5,100 should be incorporated into the proposed budget to cover these payments.

A total budget in the region of €65,000 excluding VAT will be made available for this study.

Evaluation

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

Research methodology

- Understanding of the project
- Understanding of the work involved
- Feasibility of the approach suggested

Project management

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


Value for money

Description of cost
Justification for proposed costs
Best use of resources

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/Homeless Research