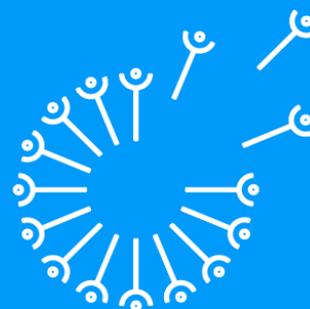


Executive Summary
Local Evidence
Submission: Professor
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Prevention, treatment
& recovery independent
review of drugs

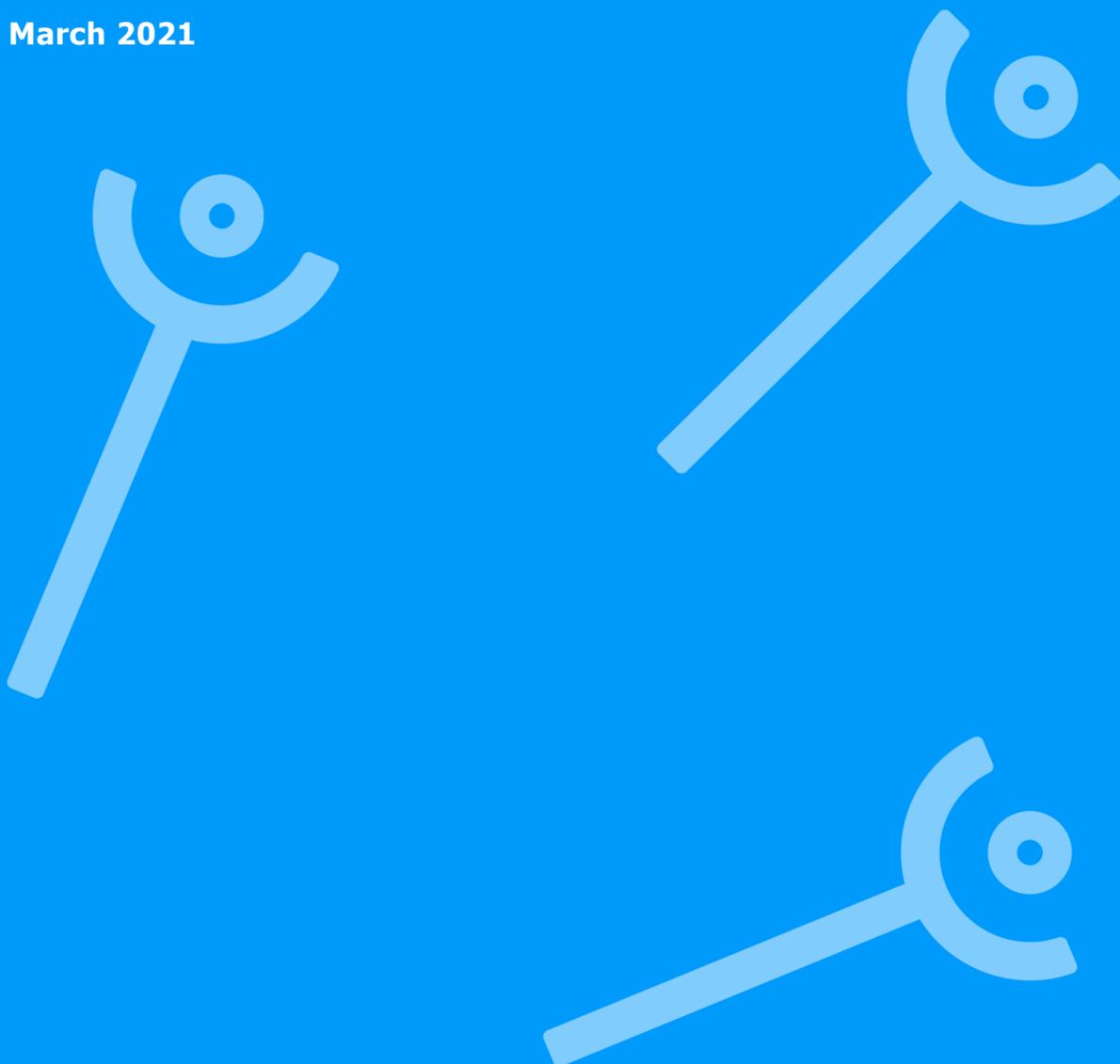


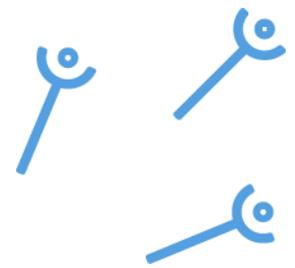
**FULLFILLING
LIVES**
LAMBETH
SOUTHWARK
LEWISHAM



Fulfilling Lives Lambeth Southwark Lewisham

March 2021





Fulfilling Lives Lambeth, Southwark, and Lewisham Local Evidence Submission: Professor Dame Carol Black's Independent review of drugs

The Fulfilling Lives Lambeth, Southwark & Lewisham (FLLSL) programme is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and is part of the National Fulfilling Lives Programme. Certitude is the lead agency, delivering the programme in partnership with Thames Reach and strategic partners; South London and Maudsley NHS Trust and the three boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark, and Lewisham.

Fulfilling Lives LSL works across three main areas:

- **Co-production:** Give equal value to the voices of both the decision makers and the people we support, so that all opinions are heard and respected equally.
- **Service delivery:** it works alongside people and services learning and testing different interventions to change the lives of people experiencing multiple disadvantages for the better – now and in the future
- **System change:** Make an impact on the way people are supported - by influencing policy and practice, locally and nationally

Thank you to all participants who have contributed to the FLLSL local evidence submission and who shared their experiences with us.

Thank you to all those who supported the publication of this report; notably our FLLSL Ambassador who contributed to the research and presented findings at the NECG to an audience with Professor Dame Carol Black. Thank you to all other NECG members who drove forwards a national Fulfilling Lives response to the Independent review of drugs.

Thank you to the Fulfilling Lives Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham team members who facilitated the working groups and produced the final report.

And finally, thank you to The National Lottery Community Fund in funding National Fulfilling Lives Programme.

Executive Summary

This report provides insight into people's experiences using drug and alcohol support services in Lambeth, Southwark, and Lewisham. We present seven key findings and describe how this evidence is shaping our priorities moving forward.

Through the Fulfilling Lives National Expert Citizens Group, FLLSL findings have been presented to the government's independent review of substance use treatment services¹ currently being undertaken by Dame Carol Black.

Co-produced evidence

All evidence was gathered by working alongside people who need services, as well as those who deliver them. Fulfilling Lives Lambeth, Southwark & Lewisham Community and Peer team and Ambassadors spoke with people with lived experience of drug and alcohol services in their local boroughs. Our conversations covered the many barriers that prevent people from recovering.

Key findings

Our seven key findings are:

1. Service delivery is too siloed

Many participants spoke about the challenges they face when experiencing both substance use and mental health support needs. Services are not currently set up to effectively respond to dual diagnosis, which leaves people without access to support.

2. Information should be available in more ways

People told us they needed information relating to support services and treatment options to be provided in multiple ways. Without access to information, people did not know where or how to go to get support.

3. People do not feel safe accessing services

Our research highlighted the need for services to feel physically and psychologically safe, particularly for women.

4. Good housing is essential to recovery

Participants talked about the importance of having the right kind of affordable and appropriate housing as essential to support recovery.

5. Stigma is still an issue

Our conversations identified that shame and stigma are still a barrier to recovery, and that both are felt from many sources including family, employers, and services.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-review-of-drugs-by-professor-dame-carol-black>

6. Services should offer more choice

People highlighted the need for choice and autonomy; both in relation to treatment options and in relation to the planning of their care. They felt that flexibility from services is key to helping people connect and this includes flexible appointment times and varied methods of engagement.

7. Peer support is welcomed

People we spoke told us that they value support from someone who has experienced something similar to them. In particular they value peer support as the first point of contact with a service.

How these findings are shaping FLLSL priorities

The key findings from the evidence gathered for the Dame Carol Black Review, has helped shape and inform FLLSL priorities and our commitment to systems change² going forwards. Here we highlight three areas which directly respond to our findings.

Challenging siloed approaches

Looking forwards, we will continue to challenge siloed working by finding new ways to connect services through coproduction, systemic thinking and partnership working activities. We will evaluate our approaches including testing new approaches with risk management forums, as well as establishing specialist steering groups.

Improving women's access to drug and alcohol treatment

We are committed to improving access to drug and alcohol treatment for women, including those who have had children removed.

Looking forwards we are determined to create a level playing field so that all opinions and experiences are respected so that we can better meet the needs of women facing more than one need and experiencing multiple disadvantages.

Developing our workforce

FLLSL team is made up of people with both lived and learned experience at all levels of the programme, and the people we support can work with Community and Peer Link workers. Looking forwards, we will continue to highlight the importance and value of peer support and will continue share our learning on workforce development.

About Fulfilling Lives Lambeth Southwark and Lewisham

FLLSL is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and is part of the National Fulfilling lives programme. We acknowledge that systems don't work for everyone – particularly people who experience greater levels of disadvantage – and our ambition is to make services easier to access. We do this by working alongside people who need, deliver and commission these services and by thinking in a pioneering and creative way

² To find out more about our systems change priorities see: <https://fulfillingliveslsl.london/system-change/>