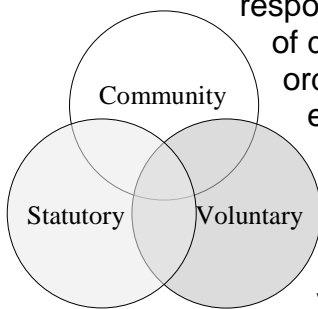


Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign - Information sheet: Regional Drug Task Force Community Reps

About Regional Drug Task Forces

The Regional Drugs Task Forces (RDTF's) were set up to facilitate a more effective response to the drug problem in the areas experiencing the highest levels of drug misuse. This was to be achieved through improved co-ordination in services and through utilizing the knowledge and experience of local communities in designing and delivering those services.



The Task Forces are a partnership between the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. They prepare and oversee the implementation of action plans which co-ordinate all relevant drug programs in their areas and address gaps in service provision

Drug Task Forces are made up of the following members and representatives:

Community Representatives	Voluntary Representatives	Elected Representatives
Local Authorities	Education and Science	Garda Síochána
Youth Service (VEC)	FÁS	Probation & Welfare Service
Task Force Chairperson	Health Services Executive (HSE)	Task Force Co-ordinator

Statutory Sector: Government Departments and Agencies. (*Representatives from these agencies should be at a sufficiently senior level, or have access to people in their organisation who are in a position to influence policy.*)

Voluntary Sector: Drugs Service Providers (delivered by voluntary and community based organisations)

Community Sector: Community based groups and networks working locally

Where are the Regional Drugs Task Forces?

East Coast

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, Wicklow

Midland

Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath

Mid Western

Clare, Limerick, Tipperary NR

North Dublin City & County (Northern Area)

North Dublin City, Fingal

North Eastern

East Cavan, Louth, Meath, Monaghan

North West

Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo, West Cavan

Southern

Cork, Kerry

South East

Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary SR,
Waterford, Wexford

South Western Area

South Dublin City, South Dublin, Kildare,
West Wicklow

Western

Galway, Mayo, Roscommon

Are there Drug Task Forces in the rest of the country?

Yes, Local Drug Task Forces (LDTF's) were set up in 1997 in the areas experiencing the worst levels of opiate misuse. There are 12 LDTF's in areas of Dublin, one in Bray and one in Cork city.

How do drug problems in a local community get action?

Community reps through their networks and groups identify issues from their local community. The RDTF community reps meet before each Task Force meeting to establish common objectives for the meeting. These issues are then brought to the full Task Force meeting for discussion and appropriate action is decided.

How do problems and issues in local areas get communicated to those that decide on Drugs Policy?

The National Drugs strategy has structures for linking the work of the Local and Regional Drugs Task Forces to the work of policy committees and to the Minister directly. In this pack we have included a diagram of the way Drugs Task Forces are linked to the decision and policy making committees.

How does the community voice get heard at decision and policy making level?

Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign is the representative organisation for the community sector on all national policy making committees. We bring together the Task Force community reps on a regular basis to identify issues on the ground and we raise those issues at appropriate level. We also facilitate regular meetings between the Network of Community Reps and the Minister with responsibility for drugs. ***There is an information leaflet about Citywide's work in this pack.***

About RDTF Community Reps

How do I become a Drug Task Force Community Rep?

There are six community representatives on each RDTF. Community Reps are nominated in a number of ways but the following criteria should be considered:

- That there is an appropriate geographical spread of representation for the area;
- Groups with a strong track record in community development should nominate
- Community Reps should have or develop the relevant knowledge and experience of the drugs issue necessary to play a full and productive role on the Taskforce;
- People should have the active support of the communities they represent.

What do Community Reps do?

The overall role of a Drug Task Force Community Representative is:

- To bring the benefit of your own local knowledge and experience of the drugs issue to the Task Force
- To act as a representative on behalf of the community at the Task Force.

Your role in the community

- To provide information to the community
- To organize and facilitate discussion and debate in the community
- Provide feedback to the Task Force.

The Supports you need for this role

- ✓ Structures in the community to allow you to feedback information and to identify issues
- ✓ Shared responsibility with other community people – you are not alone in representing your community's interest. You need to have a local network to support your work
- ✓ Shared responsibility with other Task Force members – All Task Force members are in place to facilitate a more effective response to the drug problem in your area

Your role in the Task Force

- Actively participate in full Task Force meetings and sub-group or Working Groups
- Meet in advance of all Task Force meetings with the other community representatives on your Task Force to develop common objectives and approaches on behalf of the community

The Supports you need for this role.

- ✓ Administration and office facilities
- ✓ Technical assistance and training
- ✓ Expenses

Community representatives are not members of the Task Force as individuals.

They are not there to represent the interests of any particular organisation.

They are nominated as people who can represent the interests of the wider community. Their role, therefore, is to bring the view of the wider community to the Task Force and to keep their community informed on the Task Force's work

Community Reps Network

Citywide facilitates a network of community reps from all Local and Regional Drugs Task Forces

The purpose of the Task Force Community Representatives Network is

- a) to enable community representatives from different areas to share information and experience and offer each other support in their work
- b) to clarify the role and responsibilities of the Task Force community representative, as well as identifying support needs
- c) to support community representatives to participate fully in the overall Task Force process
- d) To identify key policy issues and to meet as a group with key policy makers

Contact Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign Tel: 01 8365090 Email: info@citywide.ie

Glossary of Terms commonly used

Often new members of a group or committee can be confused by the language and abbreviations (or acronyms) that other members use. We have listed below a glossary of some of the terms you may come across at Drug Task Force meetings:

CDB'S	City/County Development Boards
CE	Community Employment
CPF	Community Policing Forum
DAG	Drugs Advisory Group (of the Office of the Minister for Drugs)
D/CEGA	Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs
D/E&S	Department of Education & Skills
D/H&C	Department of Health and Children
D/JLR	Department of Justice, Equality And Law Reform
DCC	Dublin City Council

DMRD	Drug Misuse Research Division <i>(Of the Health Research Board)</i>
HRB	Health Research Board
HSE	Health Services Executive
LDTF	Local Drugs Task Force
OMD	Office of the Minister for Drugs
NACD	National Advisory Committee on Drugs
LDTF	Local Drugs Task Force
SCP	School Completion Programme
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
YPFSF	Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund

Add your own:

Structures of the National Drugs Strategy

