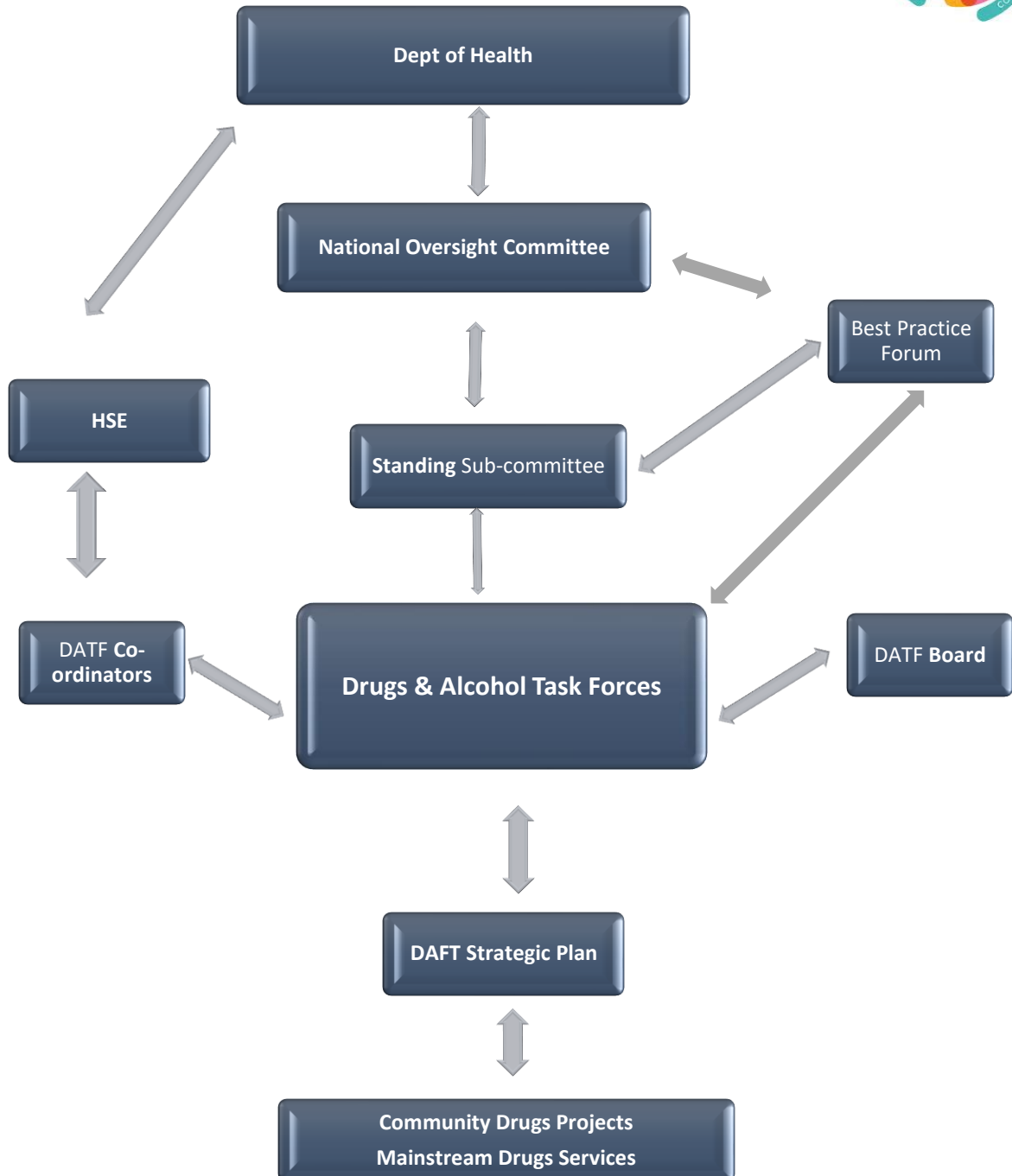


Citywide Submission to the DATF Handbook on Governance

National Drugs Strategy 2017- 2025: Reducing Harm Supporting Recovery



National Drugs Strategy

The National Drugs Strategy *Reducing Harm Supporting Recovery (RHSR)* sets out the government's policy to address the harm caused by substance misuse in Ireland through a health-led and evidence-based approach. The strategy is underpinned by an interagency partnership approach and implementation of this approach is facilitated through interagency structures at national, regional and local level.

Dept. of Health

The Dept of Health has responsibility for overseeing and supporting delivery of RHSR by ensuring the active participation of all partners in delivery of the Strategy and its Action Plan and by facilitating and supporting the work of the interagency structures at national, regional and local level. The Dept is responsible for facilitating the operation of two key structures at national level:

- National Oversight Committee (NOC), which gives leadership, direction, prioritisation and mobilisation of resources to support the implementation of the strategy;
- Standing Sub-Committee of NOC (SSc) which drives implementation of *Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery* at national, local and regional level and supports and monitors the role of DATFs in coordinating local and regional implementation of the National Drugs Strategy with a view to strengthening the Task Force interagency model.

Drug and Alcohol Task Forces

The role of the DATFs is to co-ordinate, through an interagency approach, the implementation of the National Drugs Strategy in the context of the needs of the local or regional area. The DATFs give the statutory, community and voluntary sectors, as well as public representatives, a unique opportunity to work together in preparing and implementing an integrated strategy to address the issues relating to drug use & misuse in the local /regional area. This requires the development of shared values, which promote co-operation and collaboration.

The part played by individual DATF members in representing their particular agencies or sectors is pivotal to the success of the initiative and demands active participation by all members in all of the Task Force's work, including decision-making.

DATF Board

The Board is established by the DATF to manage the SLA between the Task Force and the HSE in relation to the HSE role as the channel of funding for the DATF operational budget. The Board is also responsible for managing other funds that may be allocated directly to the DATF and for ensuring adequate arrangements are in place for management of Task Force staff. The Board will be constituted as a CLG in line with the governance code and its membership will be decided by the DATF, reflecting the overall Task Force membership insofar as is possible and including non-Task Force members where the Task Force deems it appropriate. The DATF Chairperson should also be Chair of the Board.

DATF Chairperson

The Chairperson's role is to lead the Task Force, to facilitate its meetings and to oversee the implementation of the DATFs work programme in conjunction with the Co-ordinator. The

Chairperson is a key figure and the Chairperson's independence must clearly be established and evident in the manner in which the business of the DATF is conducted. It is important that the Chairperson appointed by the DATF is not directly connected with any of the projects being funded by the Task Force. It is also important that there is complete transparency in the arrangements put in place by DATFs for the selection process and appointment of Chairs.

DATF Co-ordinator

The Co-ordinator, in conjunction with the DATF and its Chairperson, plays a pivotal role in assisting the DATF in developing and implementing its strategic plan. This necessitates him/her taking a proactive role in driving the work of the Task Force and managing its day-to-day operation, including the provision of project and financial information. A Co-ordinator is appointed full-time to each DATF. The Co-ordinators are employed by the HSE who have responsibility for their conditions of employment and salaries and they are recruited in collaboration with the DATF. The Co-ordinator facilitates multi-agency collaboration and works with all members of the Task Force to ensure that the aims and objectives of the DATF Strategic Plan are met through ongoing review, updating, prioritisation and amendment.

DATF Strategic Plan

The Plan provides for the implementation of a local/regional strategy in the context of the National Drugs Strategy 2017 – 2025, through identifying emerging strategic issues and developing proposals to address them, identifying barriers to the efficient delivery of services in the DATF area and how to overcome them and influencing the work of all relevant Statutory, Community and Voluntary service providers to improve services.

The Plan will also provide for the development of cross Task Force initiatives and networking arrangements with other DATFs and for co-ordination of Task Force activities with other relevant initiatives/programmes in the region, particularly those involved in responding to social disadvantage.

Community Drug Projects

Community Drug Projects are funded through the Task Forces to deliver key elements of the DATF plan through a flexible, responsive and integrated approach to the needs of service users in the context of the local community. The annual allocation to the projects is subject to the decision-making process of the DATF and Task Forces are responsible for oversight of project activities in line with the DATF plan. Each project has an SLA with the HSE who is responsible for ensuring that funding is appropriately managed.

Best Practice Forum.

The Forum will facilitate a "community of learning" by providing supports for DATFs to work together to promote networking arrangements, exchange information and experience and facilitate the dissemination of good practice in tackling issues and developing services with each other and other relevant bodies. It will also help to maximise opportunities for DATFs to tackle issues or develop services on a cross Task Force basis. The Forum will provide supports in relation to governance in line with the Governance Code and will draw on the experience of Task Forces in developing good practice in this area.