

mainliners

"Street to Strategy"

Mainliners Strategic Plan

2009-2014

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Forward

I am proud to present Mainliners' strategic plan outlining our key objectives for the next 5 years. Coinciding with our 20th anniversary, the launch of this plan marks an exciting milestone in our history so far. In establishing this strategy, we have been able to engage in a consultation exercise with our key stakeholders, in order to develop the aims that Mainliners' service users, staff and purchasing agencies require, and based on genuine collaboration. Adhering to the ethos of our founder members is our primary focus, and we will continue to persevere to maintain our strong bias of being a user involved organisation.

Our plan demonstrates our ambition. It outlines significant organisational development, with one single minded message – to offer more services in order to help improve more lives. Preventing the spread of blood borne viruses via harm reduction methods, and offering testing, referral into treatment, and care and support for current and former drug users infected with hepatitis C is a primary emphasis of the work Mainliners will seek to achieve over the next 5 years, and forms a key priority of this plan.

To achieve our objectives in the very best way, we have developed four key strategic cross cutting themes that reflect best practice and value in organisation development; User Involvement, Learning & Development, Equality & Diversity and Quality Assurance. Our cross cutting themes are more than just a series of values. They are the founding principles that govern the way we will promote, deliver and ultimately succeed in our objectives. We have made a clear commitment to achieving specified outcomes in each of the themes, and have organised our governance structure around them, ensuring that they remain truly imbedded within our organisation.

We are aware that achieving the plan will not be an easy task. However our confidence stems from the abundant passion and commitment of our staff, and we believe that the experience that we have attained in delivering services in the areas of substance misuse and blood borne viruses over a period of twenty years means that we are well placed to offer expert care and support, and to disseminate best practice across the UK.

Finally, as always we will simply remain innately focused on reflecting and supporting the needs of our service users, true to our non-judgemental approach.

David Badcock, Chief Executive Officer

Our Organisation

Our history

In 1988, two sero-positive ex-drug users, Ian Palliser and Stuart Menzies, realised there were no facilities specifically for people affected by HIV and drugs. They decided to develop a self-help group for the growing numbers of people affected. With support from staff and residents at Phoenix House, Southwark Drugs Misuse Unit and the CADA drug project in Southwark who generously provided office space, Mainliners was born.

Mainliners rapidly gained recognition in the HIV and drugs fields and moved into their own premises in Brixton in autumn 1988, thanks to financial support from various sources including the National AIDS trust, Thames regional health authorities and the London boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea, and Southwark. An advisory panel was formed, Ian Palliser became Co-ordinator and a group of volunteers was recruited and trained. A wide range of services was launched, including a small grants scheme, a national newsletter, an outreach needle exchange service, individual support, information and advice and training and consultancy services for primary care workers.

Unfortunately this original group was unable to develop the organisational structures necessary to secure further funding and was forced to close down in September 1989. At the same time members of the original advisory panel were joined by representatives of other major drug and HIV organisations to form the Board of Directors of a newly incorporated company; Mainliners Limited. Grazyna Kowszun who had joined Mainliners in March 1989 became Acting Co-ordinator, and interim funding was obtained from the London Boroughs of Kensington & Chelsea and Southwark, and the Department of Health.

In February 1990 new employees were appointed and since then Mainliners has developed to its current structure, providing a range of services to help people overcome the problems associated with addiction and blood borne viruses.

Our mission

In line with a process of continuous renewal Mainliners will consistently review its mission. The most recent review was undertaken in 2008 as a part of the process of developing this strategy.

Mainliner's mission is:

To minimise the damage caused by drug use and to improve the quality of life for people who are vulnerable through the spread of blood borne viruses by changing and preventing risk taking behaviour with dignity, empathy and insight.

The aims for which the charity is registered are by charitable means:

- i) To protect and preserve health by the relief or alleviation of sickness and suffering and physical, mental and financial deprivation caused by blood borne viruses and conditions which may be transmitted sexually or through the use of injectible drugs
- ii) To establish services and places of refuge for the provision of help and support and medical attention and nursing to those suffering from or affected by such diseases and conditions
- iii) To advance the education of the public and to institute or support research into such diseases and conditions and means of alleviating them and their consequences and to exchange information and disseminate the useful products of such research.

Our stakeholders

Our key stakeholders fall into three distinct groups:

1. People living with or affected by substance misuse and blood borne viruses

This includes adults throughout the UK who are coping with addiction, and who are living with or at risk of blood borne viruses as a result of their lifestyle choice. Key stakeholders also include those affected by the above, for instance families, carers and support workers.

Mainliners' relationship with service users is paramount and we are an organisation which listens to, and actively encourages service user participation in every aspect of our philosophy. We will consistently strive to retain our inherent values as an independent organisation set up by and for people living with, or at risk of blood borne viruses. From a strategic perspective we will always listen to service user opinion, using this to mould our direction and retain our independency.

2. Purchasing agencies

Where possible, Mainliners aims to provide services, which further government social and economic policies and are in accord with our vision and mission. Public Sector organisations that purchase our services on behalf of users include local Primary Care Trusts, the Department of Health and the Scottish Government.

As commissioned agents of government strategy, Mainliners is susceptible to the rapidly changing environment inherent within the substance misuse sector. Despite this, we feel that Mainliners ethos allows the ability to be responsive to this changing environment, and can evolve to tackle changing social problems whilst remaining true to our founding principles. We recognise that we must work with government in order to deliver our missions and without this funding we would not have the capacity or resources to access the hard to reach clients that we fundamentally set out to help.

3. Our employees and volunteers

Mainliners firmly believes that its people are central to guaranteeing the very best chance of achieving the objectives of the organisation, and is committed to striving to provide the very best working conditions for its staff and volunteers. Staff welfare is considered as vital as that of any other stakeholder, and this strategy outlines key activities in the following areas:

- Equality and Diversity
- Organisational Development
- Performance Management & Development
- Employee Reward and Recognition
- Learning and Development

Learning and Development remains a cornerstone to Mainliners ability to meet its mission, and will aim to achieve and retain the Investors in People accredited standard.

Our structure

The board of trustees is responsible for the corporate governance of the organisation.

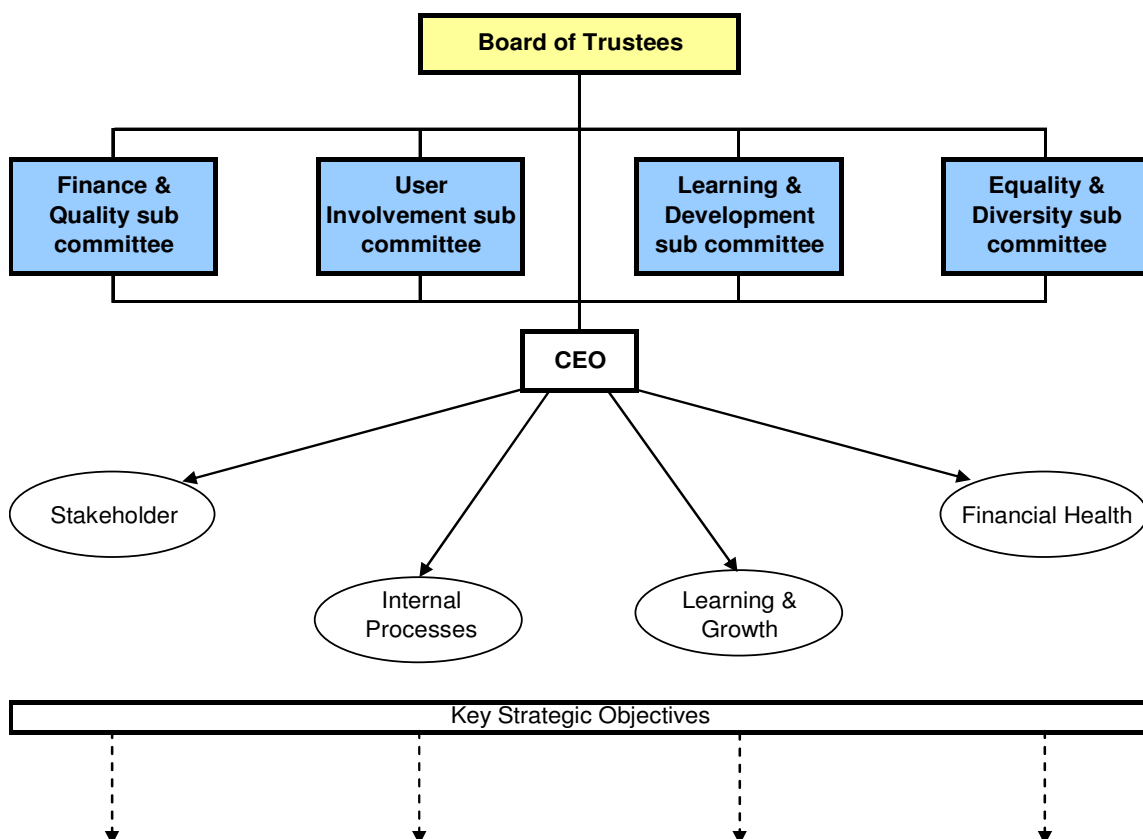
The board appoints the following sub committee’s to undertake management and executive review on a bi-monthly basis:

- Finance & Quality
- User Involvement
- Learning & Development
- Equality & Diversity

The full board of trustee’s meet on a quarterly basis and reviews reports from the Chief Executive Officer, the respective committee’s, and ongoing strategy. The Chief Executive Officer attends all board meetings. The organisation’s performance is reported to the Annual General Meeting, and published in the annual report which is released to all stakeholders.

The trustee’s of Mainliners’ expertise covers a variety of backgrounds important to the governance of the organisation. This includes: Current service users, Finance, Sexual health commissioning, private sector marketing and Hepatitis C advocacy.

Trustee’s offer specific expertise to the Chief Executive Officer and management team. The day to day management is fully devolved to the Chief Executive Officer.



Our Environment

The need is compelling. Almost half of all injecting drug users (IDUs) have been infected by Hepatitis C, around one in four have been exposed to hepatitis B, and about one in 75 are now infected with HIV

Estimated 332,000 problem drug users in England¹

Estimated 52,000 problem drug users in Scotland²

Estimated 200,000 people chronically infected with Hep C in England³

Estimated 38,000 people chronically infected with Hep C in Scotland⁴

Estimated 12,000 people chronically infected with Hepatitis C in Wales⁶

Estimated 4,000 people chronically infected with Hepatitis C in Northern Ireland⁵

Estimated 73,000 people living with HIV in the UK⁷

Harm Reduction

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)⁸ reported:

"harm reduction is often made an unnecessarily controversial issue, as if there was a contradiction between treatment and prevention on the one hand, and reducing adverse health and social consequences of drug use on another. This is a false dichotomy. They are complementary".

Mainliners fundamentally believe in this and the ethos of harm reduction, and we aim to minimise the damage caused by illicit drugs to both the individual and society as a whole. Whilst abstinence from the dependency of drug use will always be the ultimate outcome, reducing the harm caused to both the user and the general public will continue to be at the forefront of Mainliners service provision.

We understand that the hurt caused by drugs is not simply related to crime, but in the marginalisation of people and communities, and the health risks associated with injecting practices and the spread of blood borne viruses. Harm reduction employs a range of innovative interventions and treatment methods that work best for the client, working holistically to achieve the goals set. Mainliners will continue to work with public health bodies, as well as the voluntary and private sector to ensure that harm reduction and BBV prevention remain central pillars in our health and criminal justice strategies.

Key strategic outcomes of HM Government¹ indicate a developed package of support to help drug users, and particularly those causing most harm, to access and complete treatment and to reintegrate into society. The Scottish Government² states it is essential that equity of service provision across Scotland is assured in harm reduction services which provide needle exchange, sterile paraphernalia and advice to reduce blood-borne virus.

Hepatitis C

The prevalence of hepatitis C has increased dramatically since it was first described in 1989, and has resulted in the recognition of this infection as a major infectious disease priority in the UK. Injecting drugs is currently the main way by which hepatitis C is spread and IDUs remain the key risk group. As data from throughout the UK consistently show, more than 90% of all newly diagnosed infections occur in this population. With 80% of those acquiring hepatitis C developing chronic infection, and subsequently being at risk of developing

cirrhosis and liver cancer, it is clear that hepatitis C can be considered to be a significant infectious disease affecting those who inject drugs.

Countries within the UK have developed strategies^{3,4,5,6} to respond to hepatitis C, and much of the focus of these is on current and former IDUs:

The Hepatitis C Action Plan for Scotland Phase II⁴ acknowledges that efforts to prevent hepatitis C in Scotland must focus on preventing transmission among IDUs, through improving the accessibility and effectiveness of drug treatment, rehabilitation, needle exchange and other harm reduction services. The Action Plan will offer significant funding directed towards care and support with explicit links into social care services such as addictions, and will therefore improve access to local health and social care services for injecting drug users.

The Hepatitis C Action Plan for England³ recommends that the National Treatment Agency (NTA), Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (DAATs) and the Prison Service should review and strengthen, where necessary and appropriate, harm reduction services for the prevention of hepatitis C transmission associated with injecting drug use.

The National Public Health Service Blood Borne Viral Hepatitis Action for Wales⁶ suggests an estimated 5000 people aged between 15-64 living in Wales are injecting drugs, with up to 9% potentially becoming infected with hepatitis C. Of further concern is the lack of awareness of hepatitis C and hepatitis B transmission routes and the implications for health among this population despite contact with substance misuse services.

The Department of Health Action Plan for the Prevention, Management and Control of Hepatitis C in Northern Ireland 2007⁵ states in the absence of a vaccine, the focus must be on the prevention of infection and successful treatment of those already infected so that the potential for spread is minimised. Through this plan the department aims to achieve a reduction in the prevalence of hepatitis C in Northern Ireland while ensuring that people with the infection are identified and receive high quality, evidence-based treatment.

Hepatitis B

The transmission of Hepatitis B is increasing despite there being an effective vaccine, and injecting drug use is the main risk associated with infection, as well as through unprotected sex. One in five IDUs have had hepatitis B infection, and one-third of IDUs have still not received Hepatitis B vaccination.

HIV

HIV infection in England & Wales in injecting drug users has increased to 1 in 75 since the start of the decade, and in Scotland this remains consistently at around 1 in 100, and only two-thirds of IDUs with HIV are aware of their infection. Whilst the annual number of HIV diagnosis among IDUs in recent years has been low and relatively stable (HIV infection among IDUs has remained relatively uncommon in the UK compared to other countries), reports suggest the prevalence of HIV transmission among recent initiates (an injecting drug habit of less than 3 years at time of survey) has increased since the start of the decade.

Our Strategy

Our strategy is defined in two ways

1. The key strategic objectives that we set ourselves to realise our aims
2. The key strategic cross cutting themes that will ensure the very best practice and value in everything we do

Our key strategic objectives

Mainliners has agreed nine high level strategic objectives that will contribute to our ultimate goal of helping to prevent harm, associated harm and the spread of blood borne viruses, caused by drug use.

To align our business activities to the mission set out earlier in this strategy, we have used the planning and measurement system known as the Balanced Scorecard, categorising our objectives into four perspectives

- Stakeholder
- Learning & Growth
- Internal Processes
- Financial Health

We believe this provides an ideal framework that not only provides performance measurements, but allows us to identify what should be done and how its effectiveness will be measured, thereby helping us to accurately deliver on our strategic objectives.

Stakeholder

Objective A Increase the geographic scope of our services

Mainliners will continue to work to decrease the likelihood of damage to people at risk from drug use and blood borne viruses, and reducing the harm caused to both the user and the general public will continue to be at the forefront of Mainliners service provision. A key strategic objective of Mainliners will be to identify new opportunities to expand our services in order to reach more people. We believe that our considerable experience in delivering services in the areas of substance misuse and particularly hepatitis C, means that we are well placed to offer expert care and support, and to disseminate best practice across the UK.

Objective B Provide an environment of continuous development

We believe that the people who work for the organisation, both staff and volunteers, are the most important resource. We will therefore strive to provide an environment where continuous development can take place and where staff are supported and enabled to meet the changing demands and priorities of Mainliners and its service users. We are committed to giving opportunities to individuals where others perhaps wouldn't. By investing significant time and resource into training volunteers, many people have been able to come out of long periods of unemployment and develop to become respected, skilled professionals within the sector.

Professional development does not stop there, and in fact does not stop at all. All employees are encouraged to continuously improve their own skill set, so to ensure that individual jobs can be performed effectively, and in doing so, ensure that the organisation achieves its objectives. This is supported through our key strategic cross cutting theme '*CCT2 – Learning & Development*'. We will measure our effectiveness through our performance management system, and by assessing our successes against agreed key work objectives as detailed in the Individual Performance and Development Plans.

Objective C Achieve and maintain high quality services

Mainliners' commitment to becoming an excellent organisation is absolute. We are aware that performance measurement is now vital to funders' requirements and to the voluntary sector as a whole. It is imperative that we are able to guarantee the highest quality possible within all our services in order to sustain the work we do, and the growth described within this plan. Our performance management process is about realising our objectives, work plans and standards of achievement, and delivering high standards of practice by developing highly trained and motivated staff.

Our goal is to improve our effectiveness and enhance our reputation, which will ultimately increase our number of service users and increase the level of user satisfaction. We believe that this can be best achieved by delivering on our key strategic cross cutting theme '*CCT4 – Quality Assurance*'.

Learning & Growth**Objective D Develop our services and increase our presence and profile**

We will seek to develop our existing care and support services to offer a greater choice of treatment support with our non-judgemental approach. We will also explore other opportunities that present themselves during the course of this strategy, that firmly compliment the vision, mission and values of Mainliners. On every occasion, we will ensure that service users will play a central role in the planning, delivery and evaluation of all our services. This objective is supported through our key strategic cross cutting theme '*CCT1 User Involvement*'.

In addition, we will actively seek to enhance our presence in the substance misuse and BBV field. Mainliners branding and all publicity materials will be revised during the implementation of this strategy, in line with our communication strategy. Our web-sites will be re-developed and new publicity resources and materials will also be distributed using electronic and traditional media.

Objective E Improve the awareness and understanding of blood borne viruses and drug use

We will continue to provide a national information resource for Hepatitis C information and treatment provision. Our 'Be Blood Aware' campaign will inform, advise and support at risk individuals, future risk groups, and people with a positive diagnosis who are not linked into a care pathway, about blood borne viruses. We will also aim to enhance the skills and knowledge of both the general public and the workforce, through expansion of our conference and training programmes.

Internal Processes**Objective F Manage business improvement through continual self-assessment**

Our goal is to improve our effectiveness and enhance our reputation, which will ultimately increase our number of service users and increase the level of user satisfaction. To translate our strategic objectives into real working practices, and to continuously manage business improvement we will adopt a system of performance management, providing an on-going systematic process designed to develop the performance of our organisation, teams and individual members of staff and volunteers.

We will measure our effectiveness through our performance management system, and by assessing our successes against agreed key work objectives as detailed in the Individual

Performance and Development Plans. These plans will be linked back to the annual business plan, and ultimately this strategy, to ensure that the key strategic objectives outlined here are met. This will be complimented by achieving and attaining Investors in People accreditation.

Objective G Enhance value through developing strategic partnerships

We will seek to establish local partnerships, and our new Peer Involvement Project (PIP) will adopt a local community development approach to facilitate increased involvement of the wider voluntary sector, supporting people through their local Hepatitis C care pathway. We will also seek to establish national partnerships, working alongside organisations that compliment our aims and objectives to add value to the work we set out to achieve.

Financial Health

Objective H Secure continued public funding and increase the annual value of unrestricted funds

Mainliners will continue to secure funding to ensure the continuance and future development of sustainable services in line with Mainliners' strategy. HM Treasury first endorsed the principle of Full Cost Recovery in its 2002 cross cutting review, 'The role of the voluntary sector in service delivery'. The review stated that "Funders should recognise that it is legitimate for providers to include the relevant element of overheads in their cost estimates for providing a given service under service agreement or contract".

Mainliners firmly believes that, in order to be fully financially sound, it must own the principle of full cost recovery, moving towards the language of a price for delivery when bidding for contracts, and away from the language of core and project cost.

We will therefore ensure that we cost all contract bids appropriately, using the Full Cost Recovery model, with the aim of giving our funders the confidence that we are seeking appropriate resources, and that we are able to demonstrate that we are an organisation that has adequate operational finances to deliver all our projects. Additionally we will explore opportunities to expand our current conference programme as well as our training programme, with a view to achieving the dual purpose of a) increasing the annual value of unrestricted funds and b) to raise the profile of BBVs

Objective I Safeguard the financial viability of the charity

As our policy states a range of investment methods will be pursued in order to safeguard the short and longer term financial viability of the charity. This approach will include diversification of our earned income initiatives to include an expansion of our training & conference activities along with other initiatives in keeping with the charities aims and objectives.

We recognise the importance of maintaining the value of our assets, and we will aim to increase the value of our assets in line with any growth in the organisation. Furthermore, we recognise the importance of transparency in all our activities and will comply with SORP recommendations for financial reporting.

Our key strategic cross cutting themes

To achieve our objectives in the very best way, we have developed four key strategic cross cutting themes that reflect best practice and value in organisation development. Our cross cutting themes are more than just a series of values. They are the founding principles that govern the way we will promote, deliver and ultimately succeed in our objectives. By making a clear commitment to achieving specified outcomes in each of the themes, and by organising our governance structure around them, we will ensure that they remain truly imbedded within our organisation.

CCT1 - User Involvement

Mainliners is committed to ensuring that service user involvement is more than consultation or seeking views, and means users have equal involvement as a stakeholder, and are central to the design, delivery and review of services and activities.

We believe that by making sure that the voices of our service users are heard, we will ensure that they are able to have a genuine influence on the support they receive, which leads to greater effectiveness within Mainliners itself.

We have highlighted two areas as central to making user involvement work. These are: people being able to get together to work collectively for change and mutual support, and the importance of making known their own experience, views and ideas.

This will be achieved by:

- Having a transparent and accountable process for service users to influence policy and practice within Mainliners, e.g. via representation on the board of trustees, members of service steering groups, and representation at key external meetings, including funders monitoring meetings.
- Ensuring service users are central to our operations by guaranteeing their involvement in all key operational activities, including the annual business plan review and the subsequent years planning process
- Promoting service user groups to ensure service users play a central role in the planning, delivery and evaluation of all our services, and encouraging a culture of facilitative leadership within these groups.
- Enabling services users to be fully active in the groups and at meetings by offering empowerment and other development training
- Supporting service users to have influence in policy in the wider environment by ensuring they are represented at relevant forums and conferences

CCT2 - Learning & Development

Mainliners believes that staff development and learning should be an integral part of the organisation's strategic planning so that staff can perform their individual jobs effectively and in doing so, ensure that the organisation achieves its objectives.

The central aim is therefore to provide an environment where continuous development can take place and where staff are supported and enabled to meet the changing demands and priorities of Mainliners and its service users.

This will be achieved by:

- Providing all members of staff with an Individual Performance & Development Plan linked to strategy via the annual business plan, detailing training development activity to meet departmental and organisational objectives
- Service managers being responsible for planning and implementing service specific training and development plans informed by the annual business plan with input from the staff.
- Evaluating the impact on the performance of the organisation by reviewing the Individual Performance & Development Plans against the annual business plan and strategy.
- Evaluating improved performance of staff teams based on feedback from funders/service users/other stakeholders and creating recommendations to inform future training and development

CCT3 - Equality & Diversity

Mainliners believes that the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion must sit at the heart of our organisation. Inclusion means understanding, respecting, valuing, and accommodating human and cultural differences so that we can offer both a truly public service, and a work place where everyone has the opportunity to fully participate in contributing to success.

Mainliners aims to create a culture that respects and values each others' differences. We see these differences as an asset to our work as we improve our ability to meet the needs of the organisation and people we serve. We are committed to developing and maintaining an organisation in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds, and needs are fostered, and where those with diverse backgrounds and experience are able to participate and contribute.

This will be achieved by:

- Conducting and continually reviewing Equality Impact Assessments across all services within the organisation, and to increase the diversity of our board, staff and stakeholders.
- Ensuring that all relevant new and existing functions/services comply with our responsibilities under the Equality Bill.
- Ensuring all Mainliners services are covered by the equality & diversity policy, and that the policy's goals are translated via the equality & diversity action plan, into real changes and improvements in the working practice
- Ensuring that fairness underpins all aspects of recruitment and employment, and that we aim that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society, and each employee feels respected and able to give their best.
- Ensuring all trainers, facilitators and consultants contracted to work for Mainliners support our equality & diversity policy.

CCT4 - Quality Assurance

Mainliners believes that by firmly outlining our commitment to quality assurance we will ensure we are an effective charity for the benefit of our beneficiaries. This will improve effectiveness and enhance our reputation, and ultimately increase our number of users and increase the level of user satisfaction.

We also aim that, in the future not only will our service users be more efficiently and effectively supported, but funders will see changes in the way we report to them. This will help to prove that we are reaching our own targets for effectiveness and support.

We will ensure that all services benefit from driving a continuous improvement approach in all of the quality standard targets, learning what we do well and doing it better.

This will be achieved by:

- Continually assessing service provision specific to drug and alcohol users against the QuADS Organisational Standards, demonstrating quality within best value.
- Attaining level 2 of the Charity Evaluation Service's PQASSO quality mark, focusing strongly on organisational outcomes, and shaping the planning and implementation of service wide improvements leading to more effective and efficient systems and procedures.
- Attaining Investors in People accreditation which will improve our performance and enable us to realise our objectives through the management and development of our workforce.
- Attaining the governments Customer Service Excellence standard, with particular focus on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. Through this model, emphasis will be placed on developing service user insight, understanding the user's experience and ensuring a robust measurement of service satisfaction.

Conclusion

The preceding plan sets out an ambitious 5 years ahead for Mainliners. However it will not only determine the way forward for the duration of this strategy, but for many years to come.

Our objectives and cross cutting themes have been developed around a simple, sound principle – creating an excellent, robust charity that will provide better services to more people.

We are motivated by a single factor – our passion to help our clients, and our confidence to do this is built upon the commitment of all Mainliners' staff.

We have no doubt that when we review this strategy as we approach our 25th anniversary, we will look back on a period of continued organisational development, and this will be regarded as a milestone in Mainliners history, having helped many more lives along the way.

Board of Trustee's

Reference

1. HM Government '*Drugs: protecting families and communities – The 2008 drug strategy*'
2. The Scottish Government '*The Road to Recovery - A new approach to tackling Scotland's Drug Problem*'
3. Department of Health '*Hepatitis C Action Plan for England – July 2004*'
4. NHS Scotland '*Hepatitis C Action Plan for Scotland Phase II – May 2008 March 2011*'
5. Department of Health '*The Action Plan for the Prevention, Management and Control of Hepatitis C in Northern Ireland 2007*'
6. National Public Health Service for Wales '*Blood Borne Viral Hepatitis Action for Wales*'
7. Health Protection Agency
8. UNODC '*Reducing the adverse health and social consequences of drug abuse: A comprehensive approach 2008*'

Appendix 1

Mainliners - Strategic Map

