
St Dominic's Community Response Project

Annual Report 2021

***St Dominic's Contact Centre
St Dominic's Road
Tallaght
Dublin 24***

Registered Irish Charity No: 20043292

CHY 13693

Company Registration No: 302199



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MISSION STATEMENT

St Dominic's Community Response Project is a community based project set up to respond to problematic substance use in the area. Our work is based on the belief that each person is of unique value and has the potential to wholeness of life.

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Working as a team we aim to raise awareness of the impacts of substance use in our area. We encourage substance users to look at the possibility of alternative healthier lifestyles.

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We aim to create a safe, challenging, non-judgemental, supportive environment where those affected by substance use can reach their full potential.

About Us

St Dominic's Community Response Project (CRP) is based in Central Tallaght, Dublin 24. We have an open-door policy with no catchment area to support problematic substance users over the age of 18 yrs. Our treatment approach is focused on the relationship people form with their substance/substances of choice. We believe in increasing awareness and educating service users with the tools to make informed choices around their substance use will result in positive change. As a service we believe everyone is of unique value and has the potential to change, therefore treatment plans are tailored to meet the individual's needs.

St Dominic's CRP provides Tier 3 community drug intervention and Tier 4 residential preparation support, along with community detox support. Our service supports all substances and poly drug use. We offer Family Support through a peer led group to support those impacted by problematic substance users and the associated behaviours. The project also offers a Powder Cocaine specific service from 2pm - 9pm every Wednesday. Our evening appointments cater for the needs of problem Cocaine users in full time employment. In the last quarter of 2021 we also developed group work for Dual Diagnosis service users. This was a response to an influx of referrals for service users with Dual Diagnosis. Information on all services will be provided in this report.

This report will demonstrate all service user activity in St Dominic's Community Response Project in 2021 and show outcomes for each of our services. The report will also demonstrate the rationale and approach used in our Tier 4 initiative and the reader will gain a good insight into what service users are offered in preparation for residential treatment by St Dominic's CRP.

St Dominic's CRP has a Board of Management in place, who are responsible for the supervision of our governance standards, reviewing and updating policies and ensuring the organisation is operating to a high standard. St Dominic's CRP is compliant with the Charity Regulators Governance Code and the Health Service Executive's, Better Safer Healthcare.

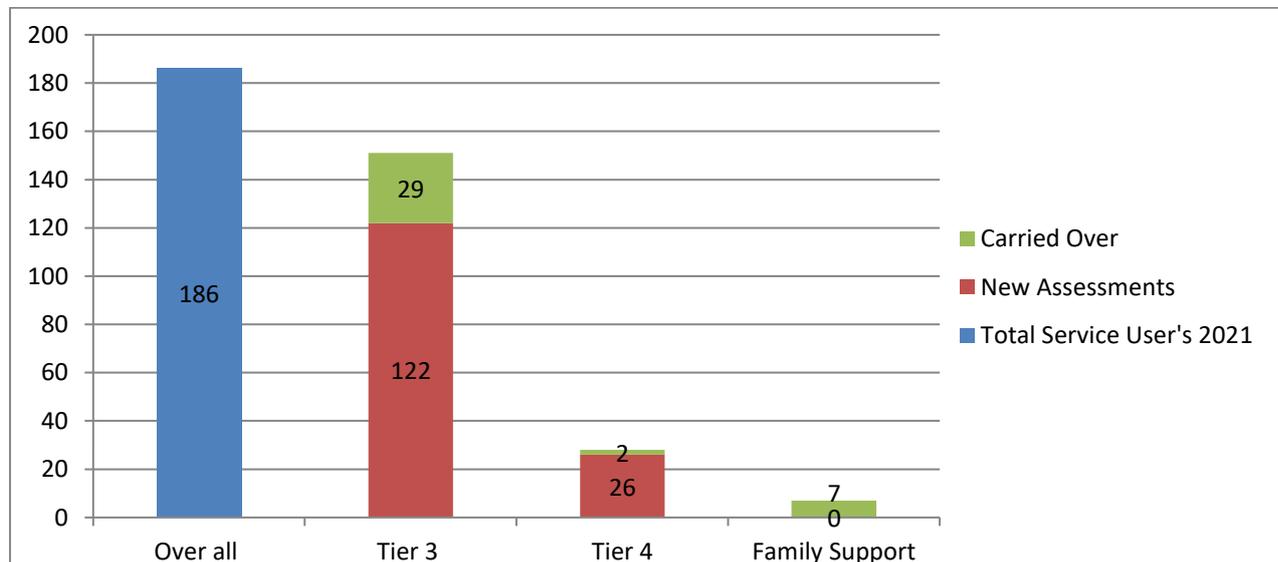
Covid-19

St Dominic's CRP remained open and fully operational throughout the Covid 19 pandemic in 2021. The service adhered to all safety guidelines which increased the workload on the staff team, whose roles now involve sanitation and health assessments. This has been hugely successful and there has been a number of disclosures of feeling unwell, awaiting results, or close contacts of Covid before they were due to present to the service. The staff team was reduced at times due to positive Covid 19 results or close contacts, however we kept the service open and service users continued to receive support throughout 2021.

Service User Engagement 2021

The following statistics are based on all service user referral and engagement with St Dominic's Community Response Project in 2021. Highlighted in Green are service users that were carried over in each service from 2020 into 2021.

St Dominic's CRP Service User Total of 2021 (Graph 1)



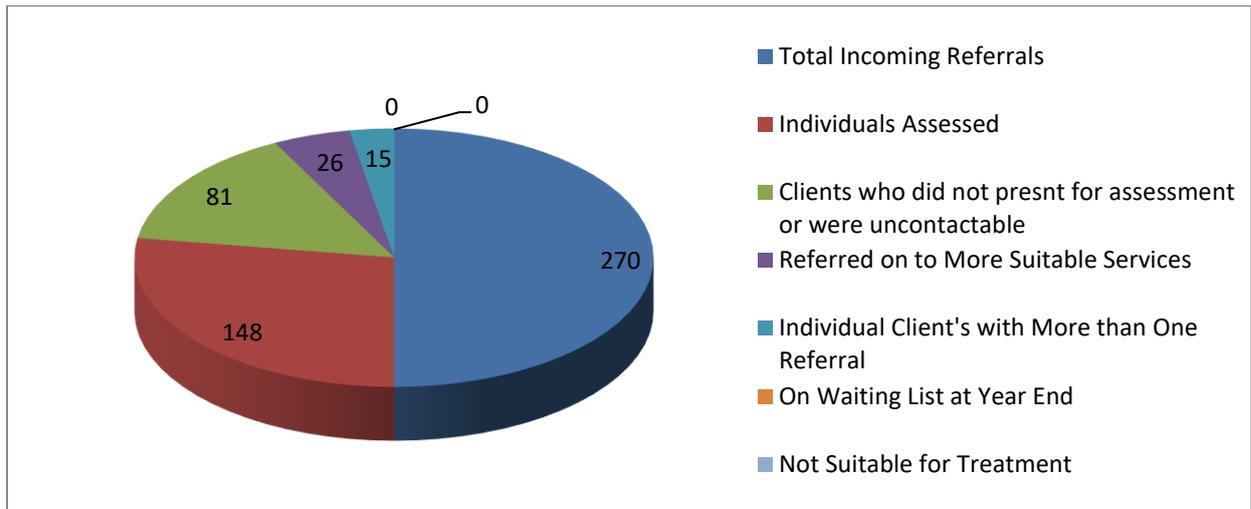
Male: 125

Female: 61

Out of the 186 individuals supported in St Dominic's CRP in 2021, there were 125 Males and 61 females. There were no transgender service users in 2021 and the Male to Female ratio remained 2/3's Male to 1/3 Female.

The number of service users engaged for support in 2021 increased by 14% compared to 2020. This impacted the waiting list and how soon we could respond to incoming referrals.

Incoming Referrals 2021 (Graph 2)



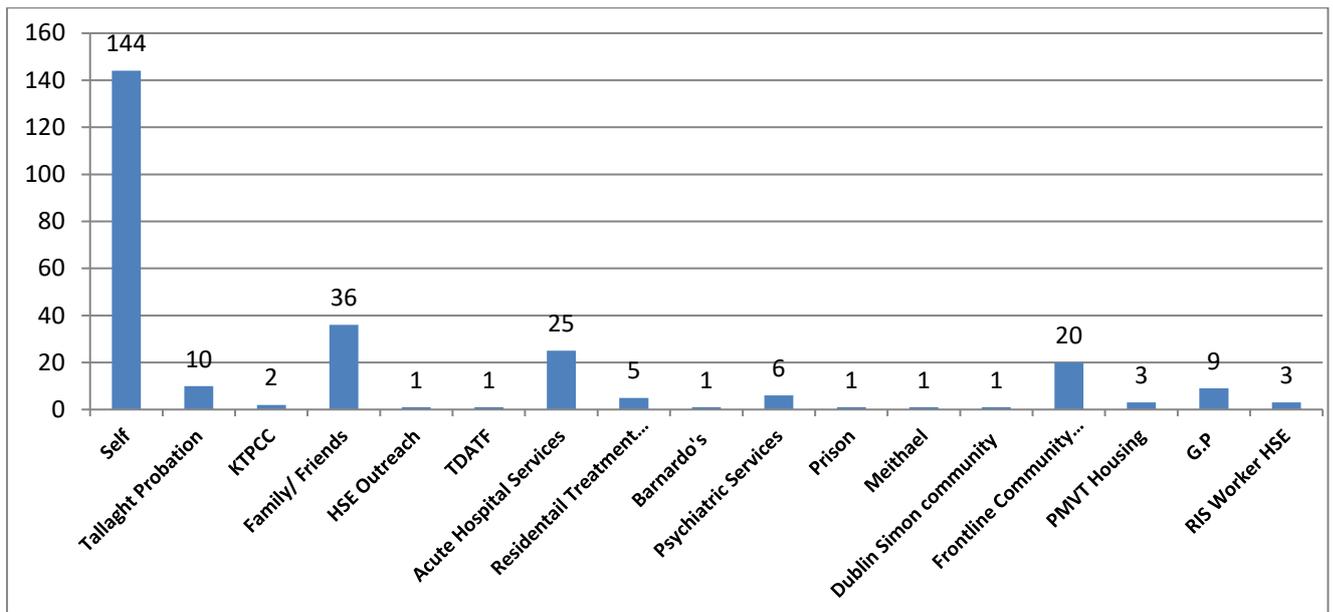
Covid 19 directly impacted our usual management of incoming and outgoing referrals, which increased the waiting list and the time frame of assessing incoming referrals.

When service users contact the service for support they are usually in the determination or action stage of change. Our normal response time to assess individuals after contact is 1 – 2 weeks. In 2021 our waiting list averaged between 15 – 30 and our wait times increased to 4 – 8 weeks for assessment. Although this is an improvement on response times from 2020, we would like to be able to respond sooner.

As shown above in graph 2, a total of 81 incoming referrals did not respond to contact or present for assessment when contacted for support. In our opinion the increased waiting times played a role in this. All of the 270 individual people referred were contacted weekly to update them on their position on the waiting list.

Our policy is to contact new referrals who do not show for assessment three times to re-arrange appointments before closing the referral. All referring agents were liaised with regarding the outcomes of these referrals.

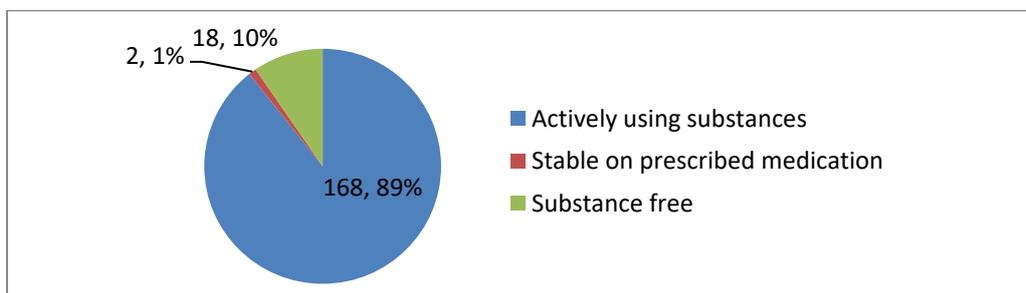
Source of Incoming Referrals 2021 (Graph 3)



Self-referrals continue to be our highest number of incoming referrals, with family and friends our second highest. Inter-agency relationships continue to develop with frontline community drug projects and we have Memorandums of Understanding with projects in our area to ensure smooth referral pathways for our service users.

Residential services are also referring people on their waiting lists to us for Tier 4 preparation support. This is something we aim to further develop in 2022 as more Covid 19 restrictions ease.

Service User Substance Use Status on Engagement (Graph 4)



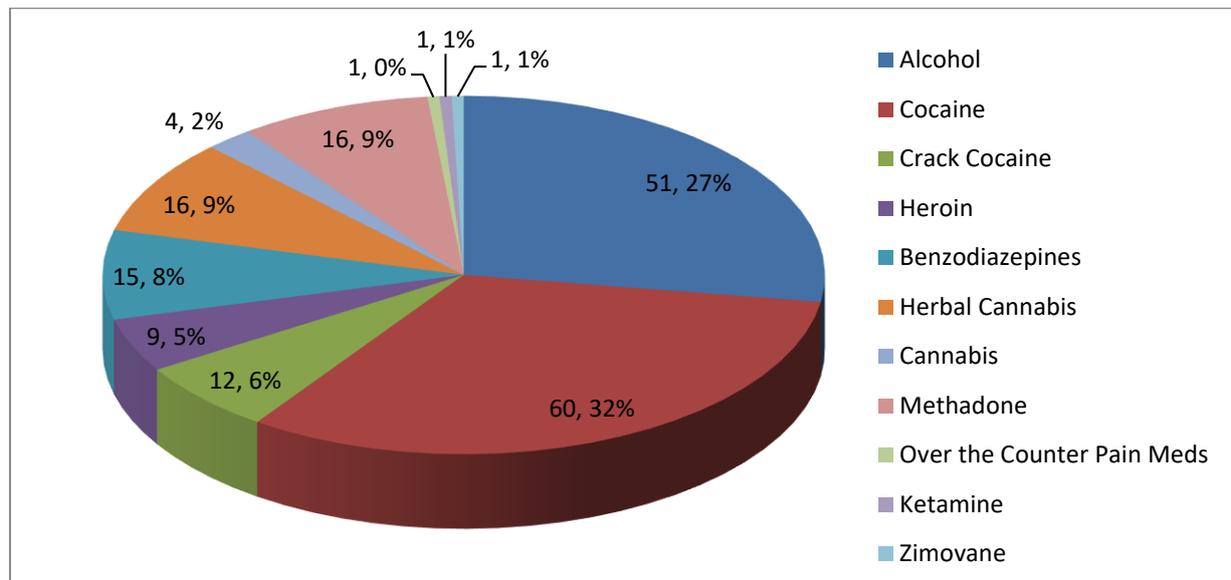
As displayed, St Dominic's CRP primarily supports active substance users. Our target group are those problematically using substances who are expressing motivation to change.

Active substance users can mean a number of things:

- *Service Users using illicit street substances on engagement.*
- *Service users not stable on their prescribed medication and using other licit medications on top of the prescribed doses.*
- *Service Users on prescribed medication also using illicit street substances.*
- *Service Users not prescribed but using prescription medication.*
- *Service Users abusing over-the-counter pain-killing medication.*
- *Service Users with poly drug use using a range of different substances*

St Dominic’s CRP only supports substance-free clients if they recently became substance free and they are at risk of relapse. A long term substance-free referral is referred on to a more suitable service.

Primary Problematic Substance on Engagement in 2021 (Graph 5)

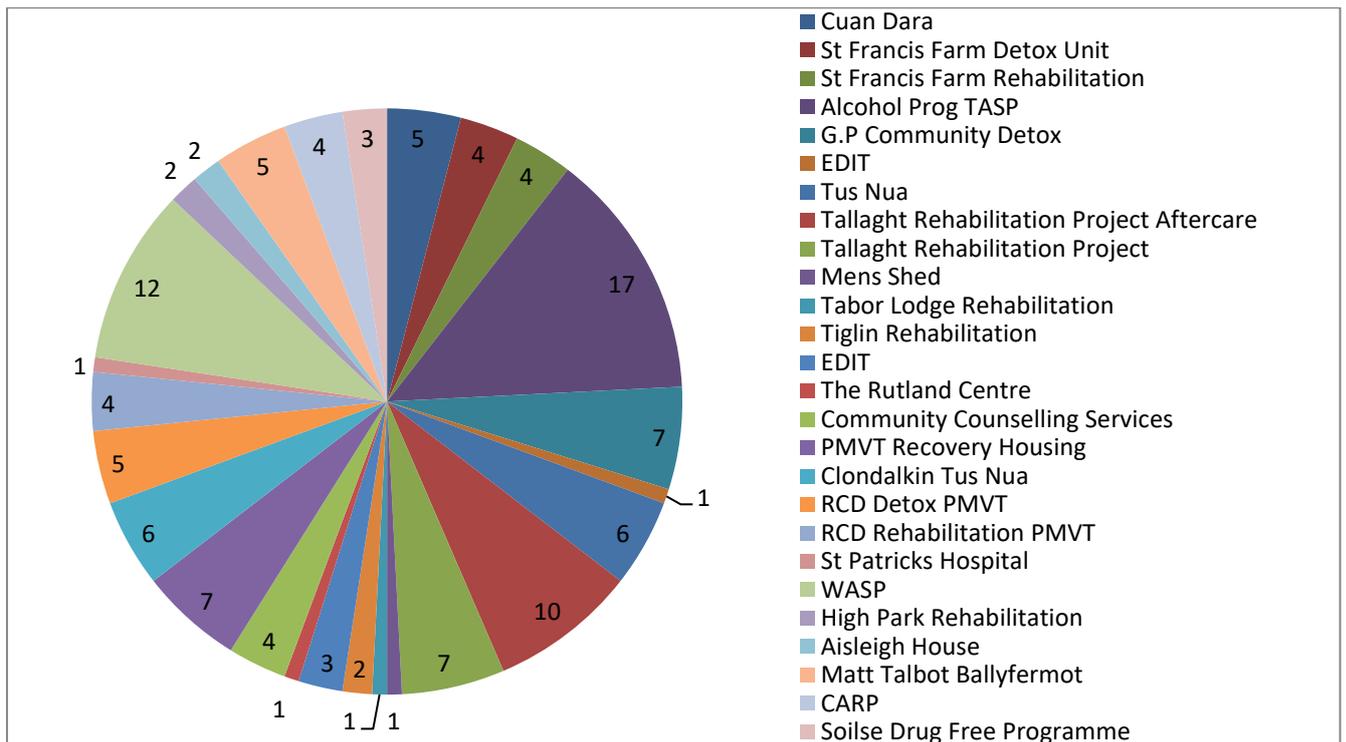


This graph shows the statistics of the primary problematic substance for each service user supported in the service upon engagement and assessment in 2021.

Nasal Cocaine users continue to be our highest cohort of service users, with Alcohol use a close second. Methadone increased from 2020 due to incoming referrals seeking referral and preparation support for Tier 4 detox units.

There was poly drug use in 62% of the cases accessing St Dominic’s CRP for treatment.

Source of Outgoing Referrals 2021 (Graph 6)



There were 127 outgoing referrals made on behalf of 88 individual service users of St Dominic’s CRP in 2021.

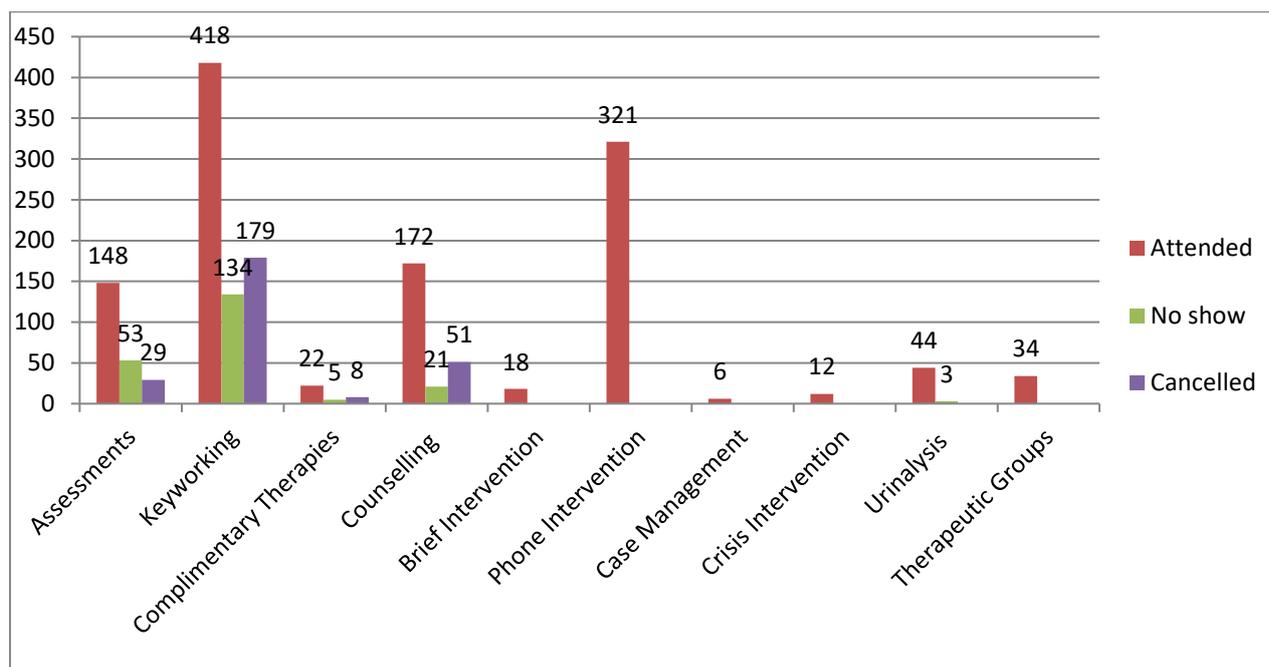
Some service users, especially Tier 4 clients had more than 1 referral made on their behalf to support their treatment plans. For example, Tier 4 service users been referred to detox units would also have rehabilitation and day programme referrals made on their behalf to support their post detox/ rehabilitation plans and their continuum of care.

Tallaght Rehabilitation Project (TRP) continues to be our main support link for clients of the service ready to progress on to structured Day Programmes and Aftercare Supports when they reach a substance free status in St Dominic’s CRP. We have an MOU formed with TRP which ensures smooth referral pathways for our service users.

As demonstrated in Graph 5, St Dominic’s receives a high number of referrals for problematic Alcohol users. When therapeutic group work is identified as positive to support their treatment plans we refer these service users to the Alcohol specific programme in TASP.

A lot of Tier 3 service users did not require an outgoing referral and became substance free through community drug intervention support provided in St Dominic’s CRP.

Client Intervention Activity for 2021 (Graph 7)



As demonstrated in this chart, St Dominic’s CRP continued to offer phone intervention support for service users who did not feel safe attending the service due to Covid 19.

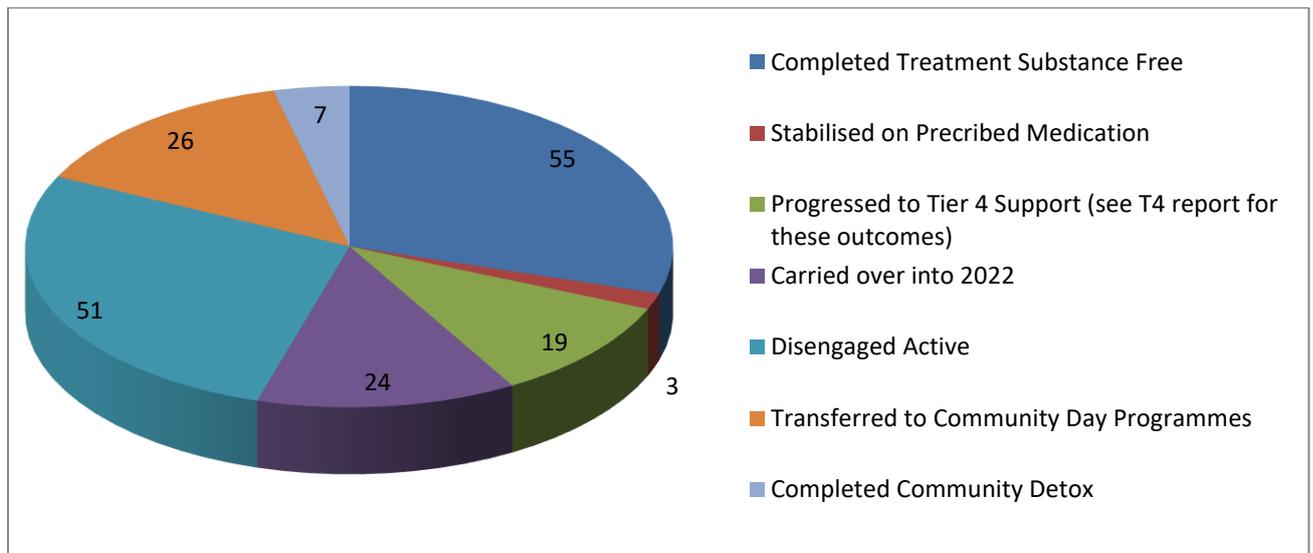
Key Working and Counselling interventions are our highest service user activity with one-to-one support being our main element of support.

As shown in Graph 7, St Dominic’s introduced group work back into the service through a couple of programmes developed to respond to service users’ needs in 2021. We developed a cross agency 16-week Nasal Cocaine programme in conjunction with Tallaght Rehabilitation Project, for Males involved in problematic Cocaine use, from March – June 2021. Twelve service users engaged in this programme and 8 completed the 16-week programme substance free.

St Dominic’s CRP also ran a Dual Diagnosis programme for 6 weeks initially, then extended this until the end of the year after receiving funding from the TDATA. Ten service users engaged and benefited from this programme.

Holistic treatments ceased in March 2020 due to the pandemic, however in the third quarter of 2021 we reintroduced Acupuncture back into the service.

Outcome Statistics for Tier 3 Service Users in 2021 (Graph 8)



There was a lot of positive progression for service users of St Dominic’s CRP in 2021, with 65% of our service users having positive progression. Upcoming Tier 4 statistics will demonstrate the outcomes for the 19 individuals referred to Tier 4 services.

A total of 55 individuals completed their treatment with St Dominic’s CRP substance free after receiving Tier 3 community drug intervention support.

Another 7 completed Community Detox with support from their G.P and St Dominic’s CRP. Ongoing communication with the G.P around the service user’s treatment plan is an integral part of our Community Detox support. A further 3 individuals stabilised on their prescribed medication and where happy enough to disengage from support at this point.

We had a high number of service users disengage from support active in their substance use in 2021. Unfortunately, due to our target group, individuals active in problematic substance use can often find it difficult to engage for support.

Cocaine Service

As shown in Graph 5, in 2021 Cocaine referrals continue to be our highest cohort of service users accessing St Dominic's CRP for treatment. To meet these referrals needs we further developed our service to have Wednesdays as a Powder Cocaine specific day.

Overview:

Time: Wednesdays from 2pm – 9pm

Target Group: Problematic Powder Cocaine Users

Criteria: Males and Females over 18yrs of Age active in their substance use

Referrals: Agency Referrals, Self-Referrals and Family Referrals

Contact Details: 01 4620624/ 0833377129/
info@dominics.ie

Support on Offer:

- **Walk in Assessments (2 – 4pm)**
- **Acupuncture Groups (3 – 4pm/ 6.30 – 7.30pm)**
- **Key Working (2 – 8pm)**
- **Counselling (2 – 8pm)**
- **Therapeutic Group (5 – 6.30pm)**
- **Cocaine Anonymous Meetings (8 – 9pm)**
- **Referrals to Rehabilitation/ Aftercare programmes**
- **Referrals to Residential Detox & Rehabilitation**

Tier 4 Support

This element of the report will provide an overview of St Dominic's CRP Tier 4 preparation support. It will demonstrate our aims and objectives of our Tier 4 initiative and will provide statistics of referrals and outcomes for service users referred for residential detox, stabilisation, and rehabilitation.

Throughout this report, we will show that these referrals are made with a view to comprehensively supporting service user's often complex treatment needs. Furthermore, we will demonstrate areas we feel have been gaps and blocks in relation to Tier 4 service users accessing treatment.

Aims and Objectives of St Dominic's Tier 4

Here in St Dominic's Community Response Project (CRP) we see the Tier 4 piece as a vital component of an inclusive, individually tailored treatment plan for those of our clients who have been identified as suitable for an episode of residential treatment.

We aim to:

- Complete our Tier 4 specific Holistic Needs Assessment with Potential Tier 4 Clients.
- Assist service users with developing their own Treatment Plans
- Ensure service user commitment.
- Identify the appropriate Tier 4 service(s).
- Formulate and agree a continuum of care focused care plan.
- Increase awareness around thoughts, feelings, emotions and behaviour.
- Teach healthy coping skills and educate service users.
- Promote pro-social outlets.
- Ensure service users have a clear understanding of choice and personal responsibility.

Service users are deemed suitable for Tier 4 referral and preparation support when Tier 3 community drug intervention supports have been exhausted.

Continuum of care

In St Dominic's Community Response Project, we see ourselves as being the first stage of referral preparation through Tier 3 drug interventions aimed at supporting active substance users in the community. When one of our service users identifies that they want to initiate community detox or residential treatment referral, and it is agreed by the therapeutic team that this is in their best interest, they then move into the Tier 4 element of support.

Throughout this process a continuum of care is promoted and adhered to by:

- Assessing and making the most suitable residential referrals.
- Identifying and removing gaps and blocks to a successful outcome.
- Full psychological and emotional preparation for the treatment process.
- Continued support where required throughout the treatment episode.
- Post treatment referrals to secondary treatment, day programmes, aftercare and transitional housing options.
- 12 Step Fellowship or SMART Recovery supports in place (if suitable).
- Three-way handover to residential, day, or aftercare programmes.

Aftercare:

Here at St Dominic's, we do not promote clients returning to our service for aftercare purposes. As a part of their continuum of care plan, we have already made post treatment referrals to either a day programme or other such aftercare services.

Over the years we have fostered and developed a very successful working relationship with the Tallaght Rehabilitation Programme and we regularly refer to both their Rehabilitation Day Programme and Aftercare services.

While we as a service do not provide a structured aftercare programme, when required we will provide four to six weeks' aftercare one to one appointments. This is provided in order to support clients referred by St Dominic's into residential treatment who have to wait to access day programmes, or other such structured aftercare programmes post treatment.

These sessions will cover the following:

- Re-integration into a community setting, (family and social dynamics).
- Referral to Suitable Aftercare Programmes.
- Relapse prevention (Substance and Behavioural).
- The role of pro-social supports in a successful recovery.
- Twelve Step programme education and awareness.
- SMART Recovery education and awareness.
- Early recovery pitfalls.
- Managing expectations.

TIER 4 Statistics

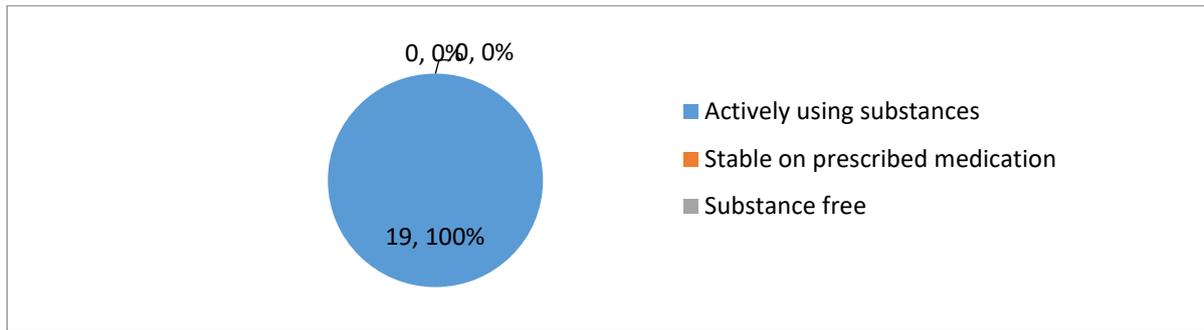
At the pre-referral stage, each prospective referral is comprehensively discussed at a client meeting, thus ensuring that all of our Tier 4 specific procedures are followed and accountability is assured.

This provides the team with time to slow down the process and assess the following:

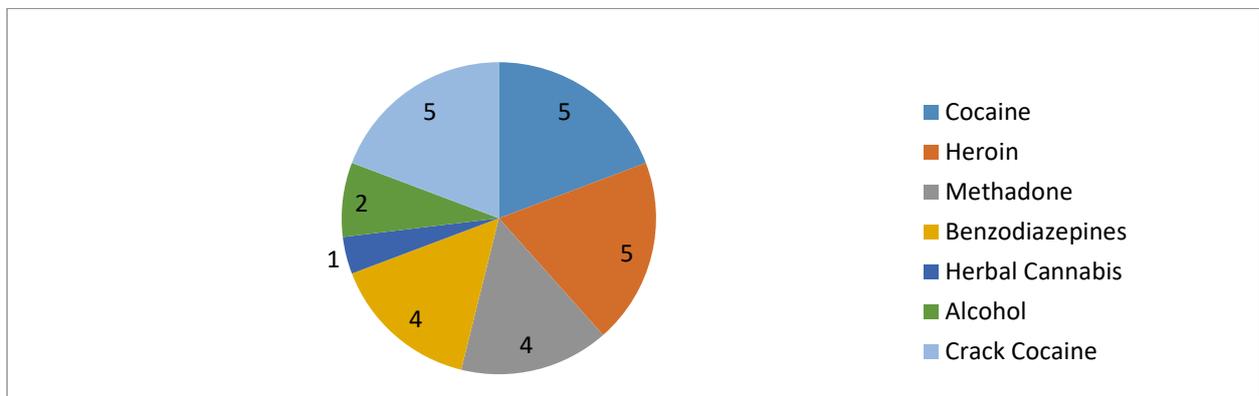
- Stability
- Engagement/ Attendance
- Criteria compliance
- Efficacy of Care plans
- Substance Use/Lapse management
- Commitment
- Readiness for change
- Motivation
- Suitability for referral
- Most appropriate site for referral

As presented in the Tier 3 element of this report, **186** substance using clients were supported in St Dominic's CRP in 2021. A total of **19** of these clients were deemed suitable for Tier 4 referral and preparation support.

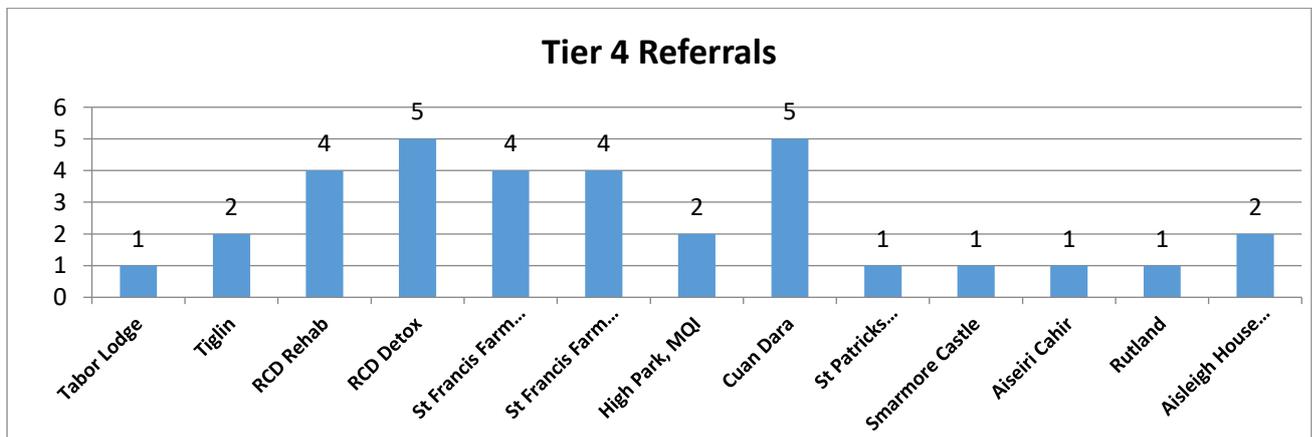
Tier 4 Clients 2021 Substance Use on Engagement (Graph 9)



Primary Problem Substance upon on Engagement (Graph 10)

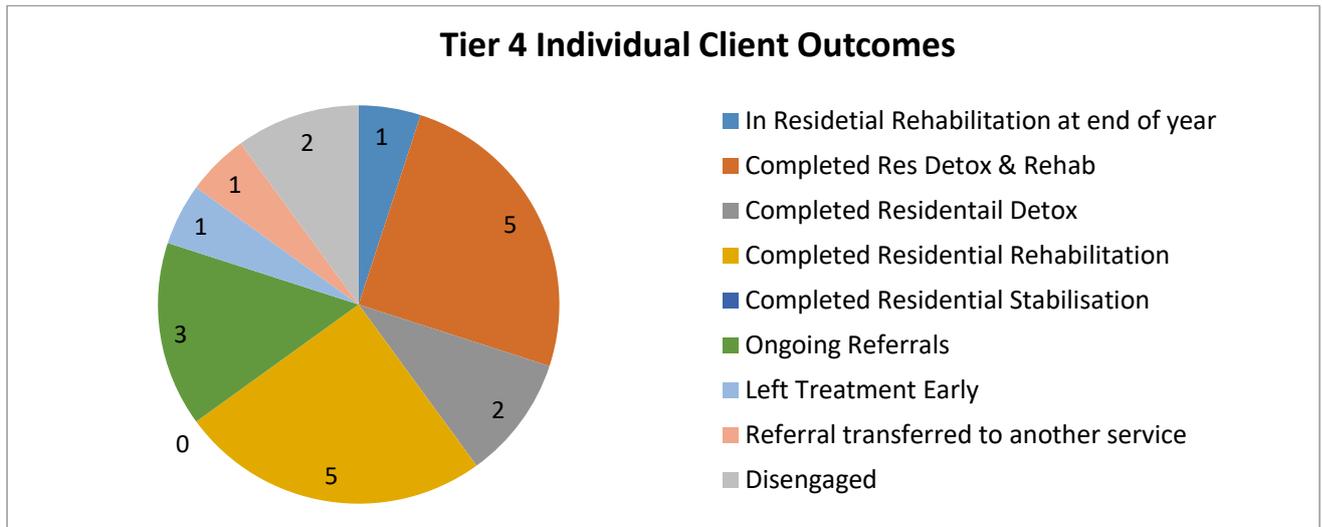


Outgoing Referrals on behalf of Tier 4 Clients (Graph 11)



There have been 33 Tier 4 referrals made by St Dominic’s CRP on behalf of 19 Tier 4 clients in 2021. All Tier 4 service users were supported to meet the criteria of chosen treatment centre prior to referral.

Tier 4 Outcomes in 2021 (Graph 12)



As shown in Graph 12, there has been a lot of positive progression for Tier 4 referrals in 2021. Over 70% of Tier 4 clients entered and completed residential treatment in 2021, with a further 15% still waiting on their beds at the end of the year. Support for these referrals will be ongoing into 2022.

Gaps & Blocks

Covid 19 presented many obstacles for people's treatment plans in 2021. One residential unit in particular, who we have a long standing referral relationship with, changed their criteria to only admitting Covid 19 vaccinated people. This blocked the unvaccinated from accessing treatment there and led to St Dominic's having to alter a number of our service user's treatment plans. Waiting lists for accessing residential centres around the country have also increased due to Covid 19.

The closing of Keltoi for drug rehabilitation has had a direct impact on post treatment preparation plans for our Tier 4 clients accessing Cuan Dara. We have had to work harder to access a further rehabilitation bed for referrals to Cuan Dara prior to admission. Thankfully High Park have been extremely supportive with this, however it does limit rehabilitation referral pathways for detox referrals.

Family Support Service

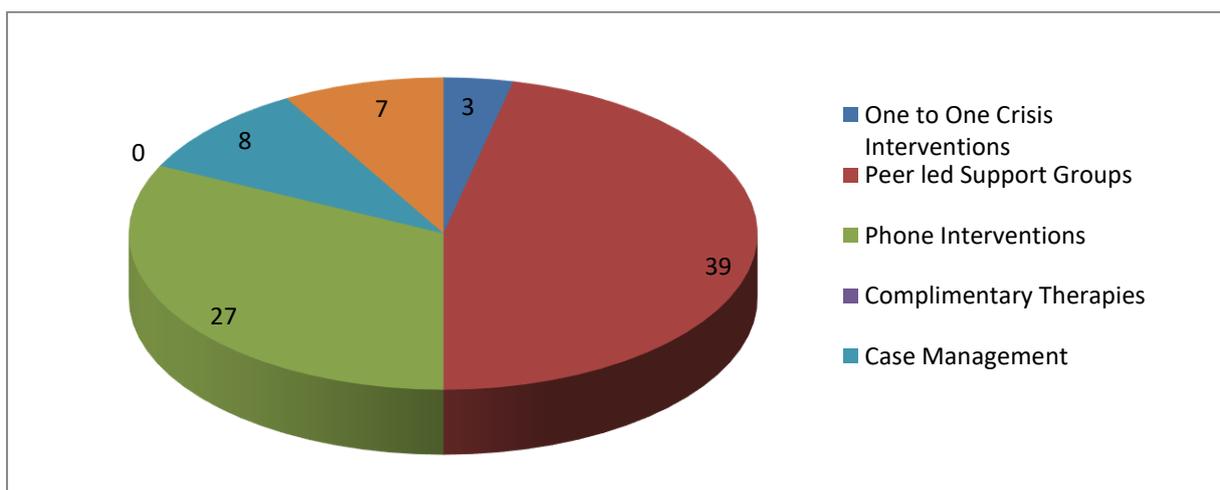
St Dominic's CRP continued to provide a Family Support Service to family members and partners of problematic substance users in 2021. This support entailed crisis intervention and group work. St Dominic's CRP no longer provides long term one-to-one support to family support service users.

St Dominic's CRP has developed an inter-agency working relationship and MOU with WASP and now refer family support clients seeking one-to-one support to the outreach Family Support worker based in WASP. We have referred 14 Family Support clients to WASP in 2021.

The Family Support group here in St Dominic's CRP was the service most impacted by Covid 19. It was a difficult time with bereavement for the Family Support group in 2020 with one two of the member's children passing away in 2020.

In 2021 St Dominic's organised 6 weeks of group bereavement counselling for the Family Support group. Two members of the group were also referred to low cost Bereavement Counselling by the therapeutic team.

Family Support Activity Statistics for 2021 (Graph 13)



Community Addiction Studies Training (CAST) for 2021 – 2022

Community Addiction Studies is a vocational, further education module designed by the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC). The module 5N1834 has a credit value of 1, and it is designed for learners to develop an understanding of addiction; to examine their own attitudes; to become more effective in their personal response, and to develop the skills and knowledge to become more effective in responding to drug misuse in their communities.

The course commenced on 21st October 2021 and finished on 17th February 2022 and ran for 14 Thursdays (6.30pm to 9.30pm), plus 2 Saturdays (10am to 4pm) with a 3 week break over the Christmas and New Year. The venue for the course was Tallaght Rehabilitation Project (TRP) Kiltalown, Tallaght. This year the course was ran in another location, in order to provide safe social distancing for students.

Course Content:

The opening night was for introductions, discussion on student current attitude to drug use and drug users and their expectations from the course.

The main core of the training covered:

- Drugs and Alcohol in a local context
- Different Types of drugs and drug categories
- The process of addiction
- The Pharmacology of Drugs – Presented by Des Corrigan
- The history of Drug use in Ireland, local responses and community development
- Reporting by the media of drug related topics
- The Wheel of Change
- The National Drug Strategy
- Drug related intimidation
- Models of interventions
- Family dynamics and impact on the family
- Harm Reduction – Presented by Karen
- Crisis intervention

The closing night was for reflection, changes of attitude, feedback, if expectations were met

Assignments:

The student had 5 assignments to complete

- Drugs and their effects
- Media studies
- A Visit to a drug recovery support / rehabilitation service
- A Case Study
- Reflective journal

Covid19 Pandemic

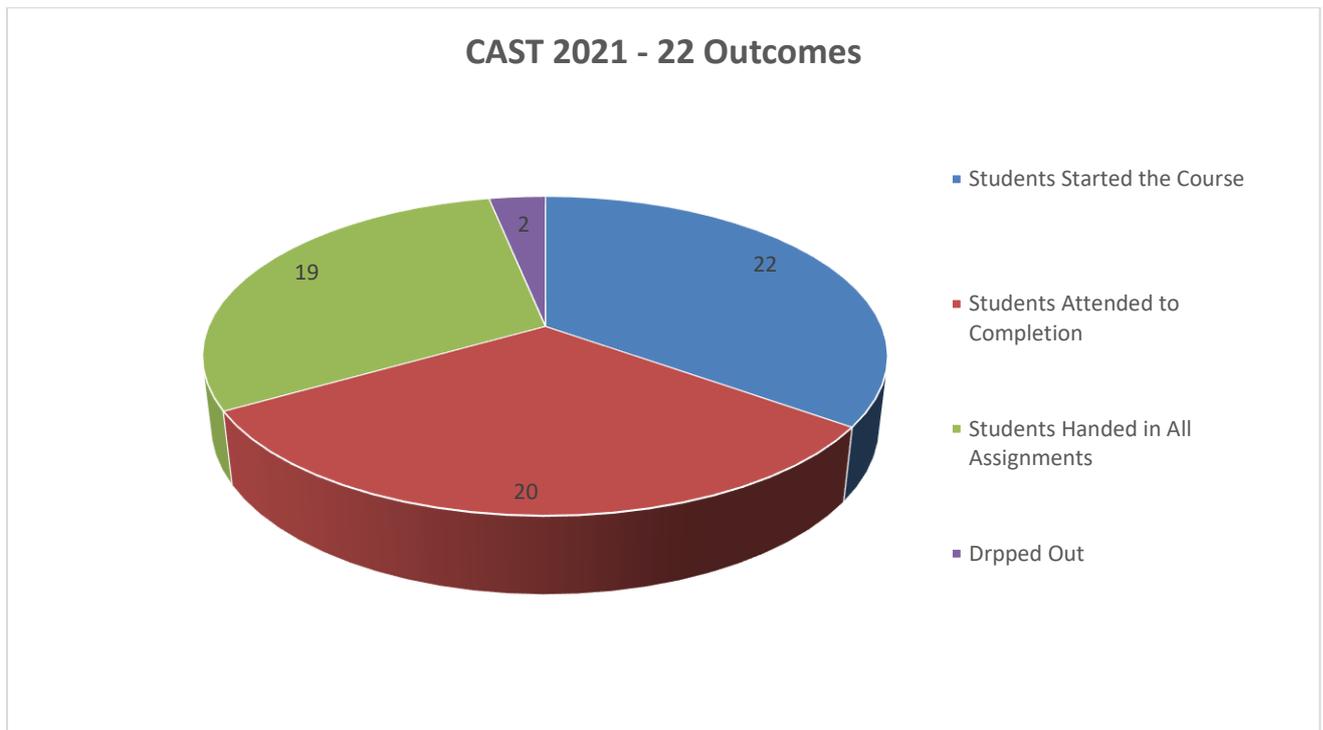
As the Covid19 pandemic was ongoing, students were asked on the application form for their preference to attend the course over Zoom or in the classroom setting and the vast majority opted for the classroom

The pandemic and the restrictions and guidelines impacted on the 2021-2022 course as follows:

- The venue for the course was moved from St Dominic's CRP to Tallaght rehabilitation Project to facilitate social distancing guidelines.
- Absenteeism from the course was attributed in most cases to some students having Covid or being a close contact to a person with Covid.
- Mask wearing caused discomfort for the students, muffled voices by speakers and not been able to read people's expressions.
- For their own safety, we had to cancel the ladies from St Dominic's Family Support Group facilitating a presentation and discussion on the impact of Drugs / Alcohol misuse on the family.
- Due to a surge in Covid cases in the community, the class of 16th December 2021 was cancelled and deferred to a later date. This decision was taken to avoid students and facilitators contracting Covid resulting in an illness and isolation for themselves or their families over the Christmas period.

Taking into consideration the impact of Covid19 it is a credit to the facilitators, the staff of TRP, CAST coordinator and students for getting the course to its completion.

Outcomes



All applicants for the course underwent an interview process for a place on the course and 22 Students began the course

20 students attended to completion. (One student notified us that for personal reasons he had to drop out of the course and one student did not return after the Christmas break)

19 Students completed all assignments

The average attendance per night was 17 students over the duration of the course.

It is hoped to have preliminary results for students in the next 2 or 3 weeks with final results and certificates sometime in August.

Financial Summary

St. Dominic's Community Response Project Limited have completed our financial audits for 2021 and the following extract was taken from the Director's report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31st December 2021 and approved by the board on the 16th May 2022.

Income	2021	2020
Mainstream grants	365,701	406,700
Other grants and funds	1,800	
Other income	24,731	9,680
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	392,232	416,380
 Administration expenses		
Wages & Salaries	303,886	329,473
Employer's PRSI	32,840	35,902
Staff welfare	1,227	3,043
Staff training	4,973	5,016
Project materials	499	1,933
Rent & rates	2,028	210
Security costs	873	693
Cleaning	2,147	1,737
Power, light & heat	3,241	2,445
Repairs & maintenance	820	2,050
Computer running costs	2,410	2,937
Motor & travel expenses	906	620
Legal & professional fees	7,416	1,925
Audit fees	3,542	3,376
Bank charges	25	-
Insurances	5,016	4,734
Printing & stationery	1,929	798
Advertising	897	180
Telephone & fax	2,654	3,576
Canteen expenses	1,010	100
Sundry expenses	198	247
Depreciation	598	598
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	(379,135)	(401,593)
 Operating surplus		
	13,097	14,787
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Conclusion

St Dominic's CRP has managed well throughout the Covid 19 pandemic in 2021, remaining fully operational, however there was an increase in waiting times for support. This could not be helped and unfortunately led to some referrals not engaging for assessment. There were a number of developments in the service in 2021 and although the number of incoming referrals were high, we managed increase service delivery by developing group work to meet the needs of our service users.

One development in 2021 was changing our Cocaine Service on a Wednesday Evening, to a Cocaine specific day while maintaining the Evening service for Cocaine users in full time employment. We also introduced therapeutic group work and Acupuncture groups into the Cocaine Service this year. Another development was our Dual Diagnosis programme to respond to the high number of incoming referrals for service users with mental health issues. Initially we fund raised to get this programme up and running, however the Task Force recognised the work we were doing and supported us financially to extend this programme further.

The Tier 4 preparation support element of the service was really successful in 2021, although there were a number of blocks for Tier 4 clients accessing treatment as discussed in the report. Although the number of service users referred to Tier 4 services wasn't as high as previous years, 85 -90% of those referred successfully entered residential services and completed their treatment.

Tier 3 community drug intervention support seen a lot of positive progression and the inter-agency relationships that were developed, especially with the FMC projects, provided a continuum of care and progression routes for our service users. As demonstrated in the report, in 2021 St Dominic's CRP made its highest number of outgoing referrals in 2021. This is due to the collaboration between the Frontline Drugs projects in the area.