



Sheffield Alcohol Advisory Service (SAAS)

Background

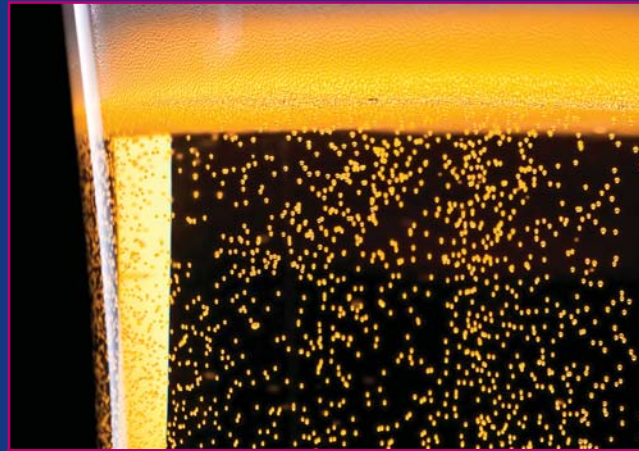
Established in 1977, Sheffield Alcohol Advisory Service was founded by a psychiatrist, a specialist in public health, a probation officer and a number of volunteers who recognised the devastating effects of problem drinking.

The organisation provides a range of services, including counselling, residential rehabilitation, training, and crisis support for families. Today, Sheffield Alcohol Advisory Service remains at the forefront providing help, support and advice, which helps to equip front line personnel with the vital skills needed to help them make a difference. It employs 35 members of staff and has 15 volunteers.

Responding to a need

Three years ago, SAAS worked in partnership with the Children and Young People's Directorate to pioneer a groundbreaking crisis service providing support for families experiencing problems with substance misuse and/or parenting. It was recognised that in many cases children could remain safely at home and avoid being taken into care if the family received skilled help and support. Since its launch Families Together has helped a number of families within Sheffield and early results indicate that it is providing many long term benefits for the families taking part. It is one of a small number of similar cutting-edge family support services in the UK.

The SAAS training team provides a varied range of courses and National Open College accredited programmes. They are accessed by many of the city's drug and alcohol workers and other frontline services, including Sheffield Primary Care Trust, Turning Point, Phoenix Futures and part of the Sheffield Safer Community Partnership.



PROFILE IN BRIEF

Sheffield Alcohol Advisory Service (SAAS)

Services offered:

- Information, advice and counselling for people with alcohol related problems
- Support for those concerned about the drinking of someone close to them
- Relapse prevention
- Telephone information and advice service
- Day or evening appointments
- Counselling for couples
- Information leaflets
- A residential 'dry' house
- Counselling for drug users who are under the care of their GP
- Training around substance misuse for community members, front line workers and people employed in the drugs and alcohol field
- Families Together - a crisis and one to one service for families where there are issues around parenting and/or substance misuse

Who do you work with?

Any member of the public who sees their drinking behaviour as a problem or anyone close to a person with a drinking problem

Contact details:

646 Abbeydale Road, Sheffield, S7 2BB
T: 0114 258 7553 F: 0114 258 8466
Email: info@sheffielddaas.org.uk

www.sheffielddaas.org.uk

Amazing achievements

Nicola Smith, SAAS Director, believes that the frontline experiences of staff in SAAS has been a key element of the services success.

"Some organisations offer training based upon what they've read in a handbook but our sessions are grounded in first hand experiences, it helps to bring a very different perspective"

She believes that the success enjoyed by SAAS is a direct result of the organisation's ability to innovate and evolve:

"It can be all too easy for the public and private sectors to dismiss the achievements of voluntary organisations, but many inspirational business models and concepts that today we take for granted, started life with a volunteer and a passion for overcoming a particular hurdle."

Looking ahead

SAAS is working in partnership with Barnsley Alcohol and Drug Advisory Service to establish a social enterprise. The new business will provide a range of training courses, aimed at helping employees and businesses and is actively looking to forge closer links with the private and public sectors. The creation of the new service forms part of a 3-5 year development strategy to increase the impact of their service. Once established, the social enterprise will help to create a viable business model, enabling the groundbreaking work undertaken in Sheffield to be rolled out more widely.

