

PRESS BRIEFING



For immediate release

UK Drug Policy Commission's run extended to 2012

The UK Drug Policy Commission (UKDPC) has been awarded a second three-year grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. The £1.1m grant allows the Commission to continue its work for a final three years, until December 2012.

Dawn Austwick, Chief Executive of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, said:

"The UKDPC has made substantial progress since it launched in 2007, quickly establishing itself as an authoritative independent body. Our Trustees felt that the Commission should continue its work for a further three years as it is now in a good position to make its impact felt more widely."

Dame Ruth Runciman, Chair of the UKDPC, said:

"We are all so pleased and enthused by the opportunity this grant gives us to enhance the policy debate through our work. Drug policy suffers from a remarkably under-developed and under-utilised evidence base. We simply do not know enough about what works and why, and more independent scrutiny of drug policies is needed."

The UKDPC will develop its future programme in consultation with key individuals and organisations. Reviews to be published over the next 12 months will include:

- The role of enforcement agencies in reducing the harm caused by drugs.
- Supporting families of problem drug users.
- Addressing stigma and discrimination towards recovering drug users.
- Black and minority ethnic groups and drugs – what the evidence tell us.
- What it means to be recovery-oriented – implications for policy makers and practitioners.

For more information and to sign up for updates, visit www.ukdpc.org.uk.

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Notes to Editors

For more information please contact Ben Lynam: 020 7812 3792, 07988 054241, blynam@ukdpc.org.uk

ABOUT THE UK DRUG POLICY COMMISSION (UKDPC)

We are an independent registered charity that:

- provides authoritative and objective analysis of UK drug policies.
- furthers understanding of the evidence base and its implications for drug policies.
- encourages UK policy makers to adopt evidence-based drug policies.

Launched in April 2007, we are independent of governments and vested interests and we are not a campaigning body.

SOME OF OUR REVIEWS TO DATE

An Analysis of UK Drug Policy	Although drug policy appears to have a limited effect on overall levels of drug use, it has a more significant role in reducing the impact of drug use on individuals and communities.
Reducing Drug Use, Reducing Reoffending	We risk causing more harm than good by sending significant and growing numbers of problem drug users to prison, especially for relatively short sentences, rather than using community sentences to address their drug-related offending.
Tackling Drug Markets and Distribution Networks in the UK	Even the most significant drug seizures and dealer/trafficker convictions usually fail to have a sustainable impact on street-level supply and demand due to the scale of the markets and their ability to adapt quickly. However, enforcement agencies can contribute towards reducing the impact of drug markets on communities.
Working Towards Recovery: Getting problem drug users into jobs	Employment is an important component of rehabilitation and reintegration, yet two-thirds of employers would not employ a former heroin or crack cocaine user even if they were otherwise suitable for the job. More support for employers is needed to encourage them to engage with this group.
Developing a vision of Recovery	"The process of recovery from problematic substance use is characterised by voluntarily-sustained control over substance use which maximises health and well-being, and the participation in the rights, roles and responsibilities of society." This UKDPC Consensus Group statement challenges services and wider society to consider what it means to be recovery-oriented.

OUR COMMISSIONERS

The UKDPC brings together senior figures from policing, public policy and the media along with leading experts from the drug treatment and medical research fields.

- **John Varley** (President): Group Chief Executive of Barclays Bank Plc.
- **Dame Ruth Runciman** (Chair): Chair of the Central & NW London NHS Foundation Trust & previously Chair of the Independent Inquiry into the Misuse of Drugs Act and member of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs.
- **Professor Baroness Haleh Afshar** OBE: Professor of Politics & Women's Studies, University of York
- **Professor Colin Blakemore** FRS: Professor of Neuroscience at the Universities of Oxford and Warwick and Chair of the Food Standard Agency's General Advisory Committee on Science.
- **David Blakey** CBE QPM: formerly HM Inspector of Constabulary, President of ACPO and Chief Constable of West Mercia Police.
- **Annette Dale-Perera**: currently Director of Quality at the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse and soon to be Strategic Director of Addiction and Offender Care for the Central & NW London Mental Health Foundation Trust
- **Baroness Finlay of Llandaff**: Professor of Palliative Care, University of Wales Cardiff & Former President of the Royal Society of Medicine.
- **Daniel Finkelstein** OBE: Comment Editor at "The Times".
- **Jeremy Hardie** CBE: Former Chair and trustee of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.
- **Professor Alan Maynard** OBE: Professor of Health Economics and Director of the York Health Policy Group, University of York and Adjunct Professor, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.
- **Adam Sampson**: former Chief Executive of Shelter and soon to be the first chief ombudsman of the Office for Legal Complaints.
- **Professor John Strang**: Director of the National Addiction Centre, Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College London.

- **UKDPC Chief Executive**: Roger Howard, formerly Chief Executive of Crime Concern & DrugScope.

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