



How can campuses benefit from developing on campus drug and alcohol support?

Prof Ed Day, University of Birmingham

Dot Smith, Collegiate Recovery UK

Eloise McDay, UCL

Session Overview



- Recovery on the University Campus: Scaffolding Peer Support
- Supporting the growth of Collegiate Recovery Programmes across the UK
- Harm Reduction at UCL and the Collaboration with the Changing Unwanted BEhaviour Clinic (CUBE)
- Discussion and Q&A

Speakers





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for Mental
Health

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BETTER THAN WELL

Recovery on the University Campus: Scaffolding Peer Support

Prof Ed Day

Program Director, Better Than Well CRP

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Questions...

- In a nationally representative survey of the UK population, what proportion (percentage) of people said that they had once had a problem with alcohol or drugs but no longer do?
- In a nationally representative survey of the UK population, what proportion (percentage) of people had overcome a problem behaviour (shopping, food, exercise, internet use, gambling, gaming, sex/love/pornography)?

Question...

- How many students on a UK campus of 20,000 students might be in need of recovery support?

The UK National Recovery Survey: nationally representative survey of people overcoming a drug or alcohol problem

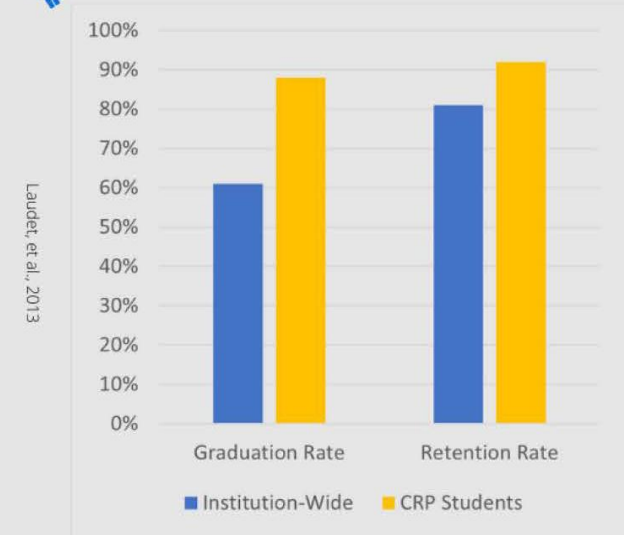
Ed Day, Ifigeneia Manitsa, Amanda Farley and John F. Kelly

- Nationally representative survey of the UK population
- **5%** had overcome a problem with **alcohol or drugs**
- **9%** had overcome a **problem behaviour** (shopping, food, exercise, internet use, gambling, gaming, sex/love/pornography)
- Translates to **1900** students may benefit from recovery support for AOD problems and **3420** for behavioural addictions

Growth of Collegiate Recovery ARHE Institutional Members



Student Success



- Students involved in CRPs collectively have a higher average GPA than the general student body. (Laudet, et al., 2013; Ashford, et al, 2018)

The Collegiate Recovery Program

Running for 40 years+ on US campuses



The UK's first university-led Collegiate Recovery Program

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

BETTER THAN WELL

ARE YOU IN RECOVERY FROM ADDICTION?

Did you once have a problem with alcohol, drugs or a behavioural addiction (food, sex, gambling, gaming, compulsive shopping, exercise or internet use) but no longer do? Are you in recovery from addiction? Are you moving towards or interested in recovery from addiction?

SCAN QR CODE
TO VIEW OUR
WEBSITE &
MATERIAL!

We are a community programme of recovering students on campus at UoB who support each other in shaping and maintaining an abstinence based life through peer support, mutual aid, social activities and recovery focused groups. **Join us at BTW.**



www.birmingham.ac.uk/betterthanwell

Collegiate Recovery Community

- Celebration of recovery
- 12-step/other support meetings
- Student drop-in
- Individual recovery plans
- Sober social activities
- Community service projects
- Peer mentoring

Branding + Physical events
 Email / Twitter / Instagram
 Posters / Digital totems /
 Website

Addiction Recovery @ Institute for Mental Health

Learning Support

- Access existing UoB resources
- Peer-based tutoring
- Staff support

Recovery housing

Recovering Student
 Scholarship Program

Educational Curriculum

- Campus Educational Seminars & Events
- 'Minor' curriculum e.g. *Addictive Disorders & Recovery Studies* [general curriculum for the university]
- Link to IMH MSc and other courses

Research & Project Development

- Student outcome study
- Study of stigma of addiction
- Study of pathways into and out of addiction

**UK Network of Collegiate
 Recovery Programs**

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UK Network of Collegiate
Recovery Programs

EVENTS



MERCH



RESET



SOBER
SOCIALS



ARHE CONFERENCE
VISIT (USA)



ANNUAL CELEBRATION
LUNCH



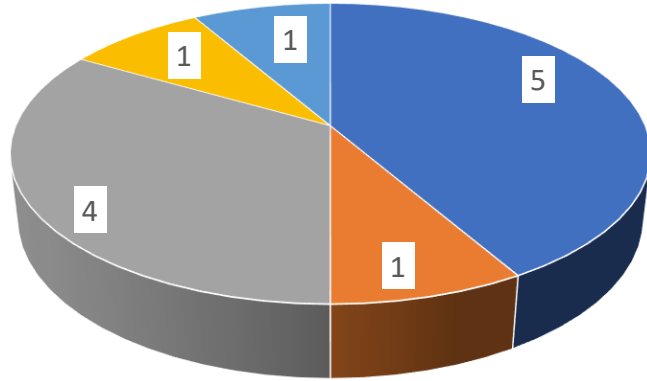


- 5-bedded recovery flat opened in January 2023
- Fully occupied in 2023/34

Question...

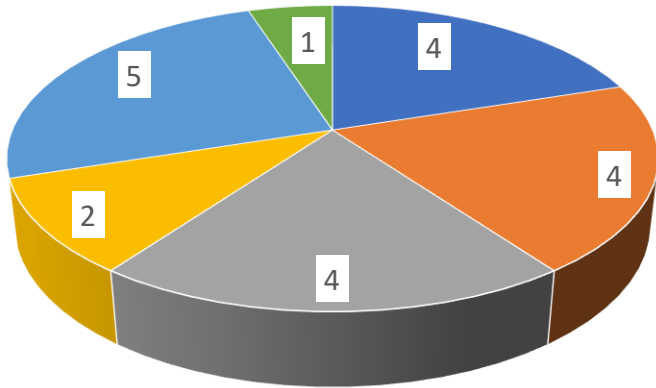
- In what proportion of BTW members is the primary problem
 - Drugs?
 - Alcohol?
 - A behaviour (sex/pornography, gaming, gambling, exercise, food)?

Primary behaviour



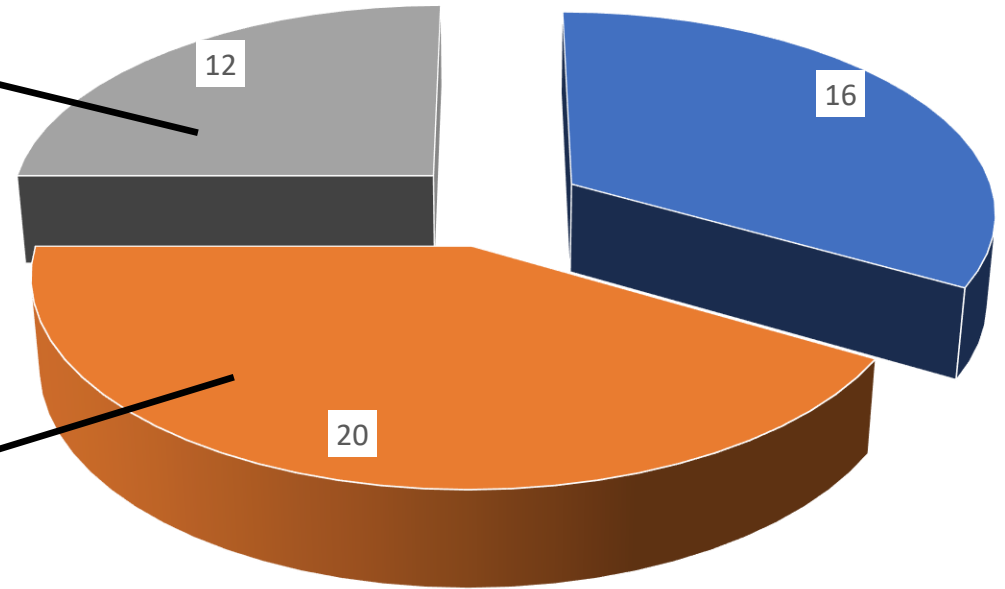
■ Sex/porn ■ Exercise ■ Food ■ Gaming ■ Self-harm

Primary drug



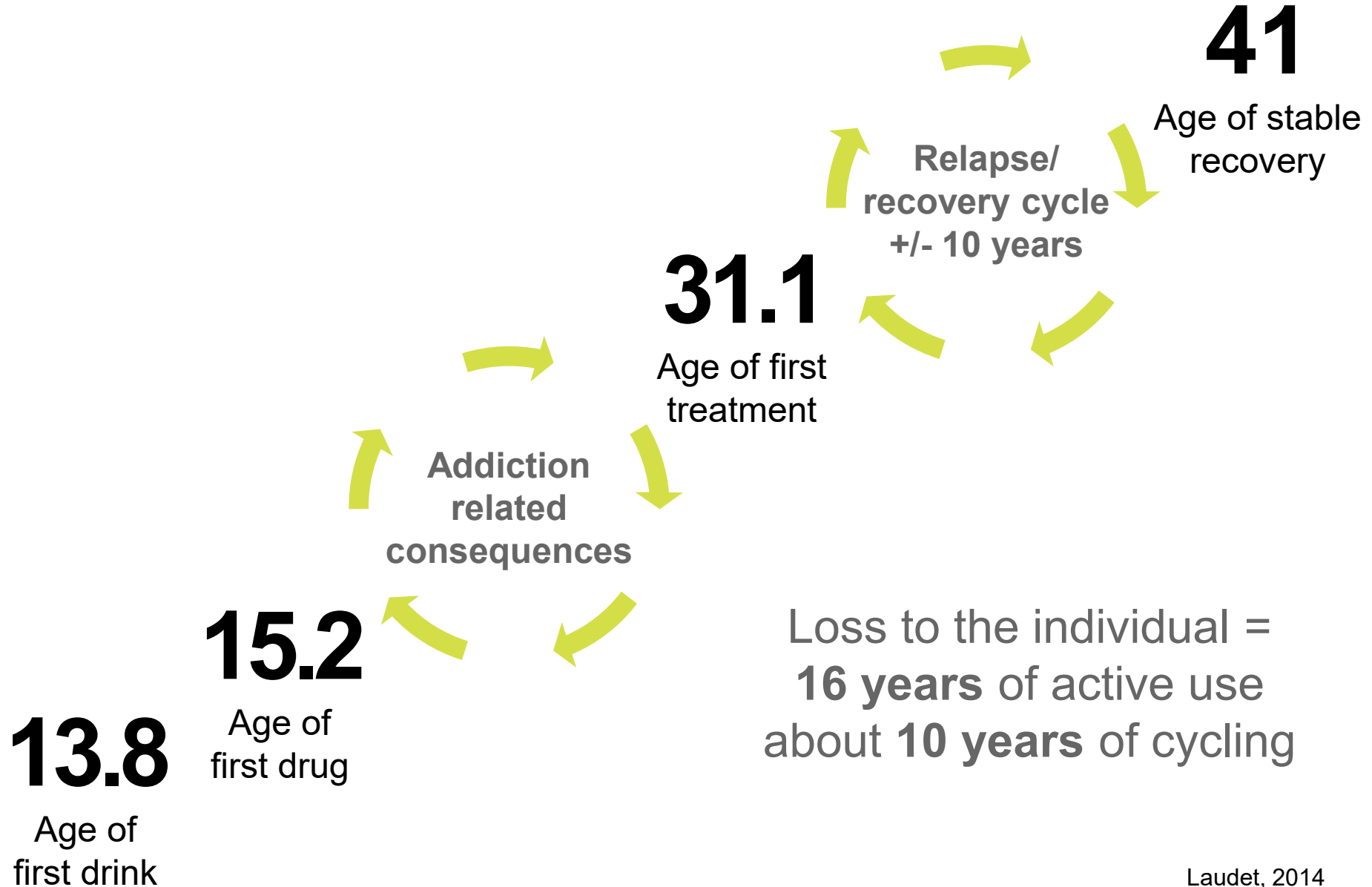
■ Opiates ■ Cocaine ■ Cannabis ■ Benzodiazepines ■ Ketamine ■ Psychedelics

Primary Addiction

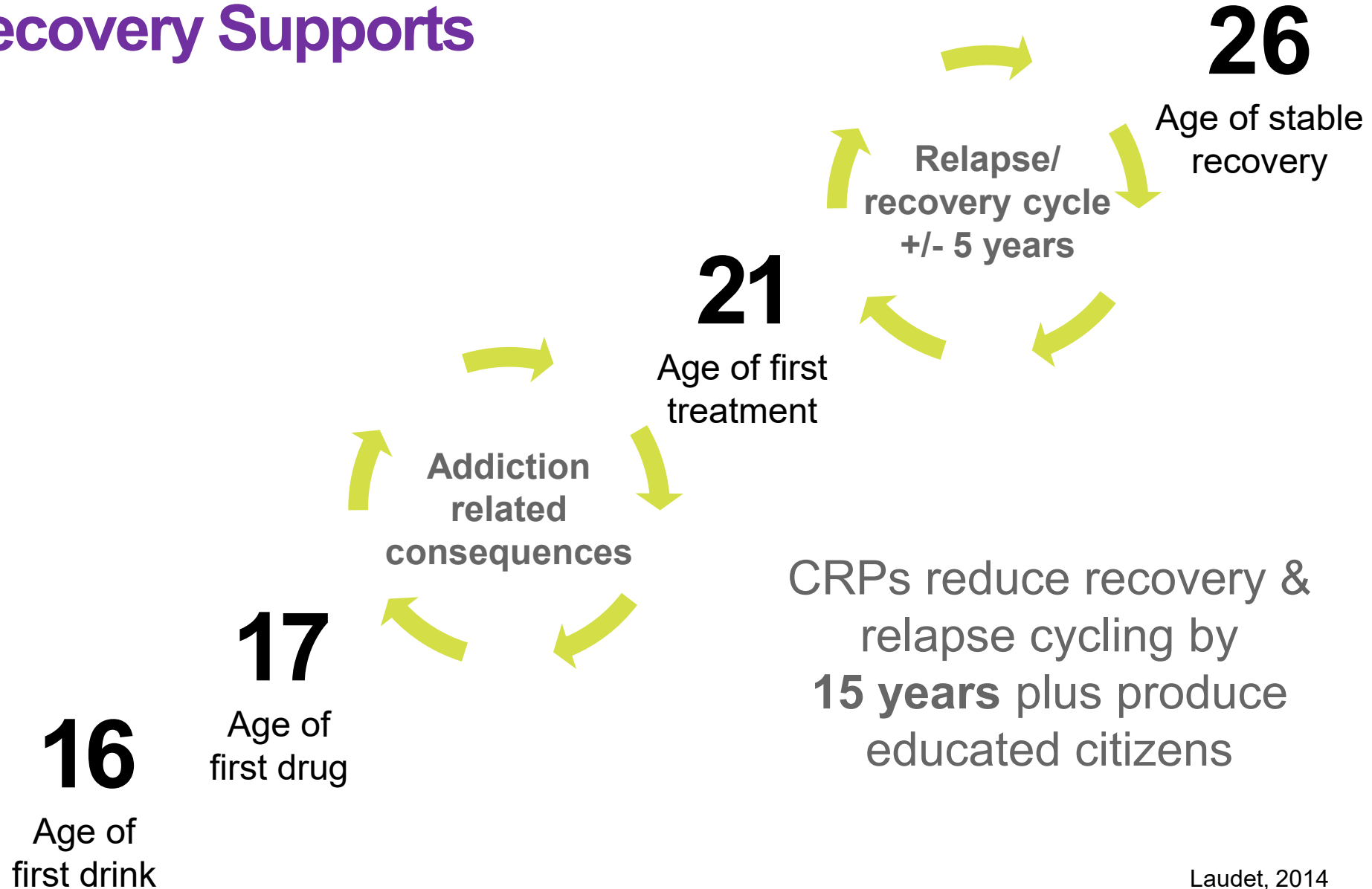


■ Alcohol ■ Drugs ■ Behaviours

Typical Addiction Trajectory



Addiction Trajectory of Student with Recovery Supports



<https://collegiaterecovery.uk/>



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Supporting the growth of Collegiate Recovery Programmes across the UK.

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STUDY OF
ADDICTION



OPEN ACCESS



Recovery from Addiction on a University Campus – a UK Perspective

Ed Day DM and Luke Trainor MSc

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Participant Experiences of a Collegiate Recovery Program on a UK University Campus

Ed Day, Ifigeneia Manitsa, Luke Trainor & Amanda Farley

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To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/07347324.2025.2589143>

SITUATION

PERSONAL BARRIER

- Overcoming stress of initial contact for help
- Disclosing addiction and recovery to authority
- Preconceptions about addiction/recovery (too young, not severe enough)

SOCIAL BARRIER

- Recovery will mean no more fun/social events
- No friends/opportunities to make friends
- Poor at making friends
- No student-related issues discussed in support group

COMMUNITY BARRIER

- Pervasive nature of alcohol and drugs on campus
- No community of support on campus – feel different to others
- Unaware of support available in community or unable to attend

INPUTS: CRP ACTIVITIES

- Easy access to support
- One-to-one sessions
- Safe space on campus
- Peer group meetings
- Sober social events
- Recovery housing

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

HUMAN CAPITAL

- Confidence in rehearsing ideas with others
- Ability to talk openly
- ↑ understanding of emotional needs
- ↑ knowledge about recovery and practical relapse prevention skills

SOCIAL CAPITAL

- Joy/contentment in others company
- More empathy for others
- Deeper connection with others
- Sense of belonging or feeling less different

COMMUNITY CAPITAL

- Feel part of a supportive peer group
- Able to join other peer recovery groups outside campus

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

HUMAN CAPITAL

- Engage in coursework
- ↑ self-confidence and motivation

SOCIAL CAPITAL

- ↑ trust and honesty in relationships
- Strong friendships
- Practical help from others

COMMUNITY CAPITAL

- Feel a valued part of university community
- More efforts to help others in community

**Fear of being judged
or labelled**

Anticipation of rejection
leads many to conceal
their condition, resulting
in **feelings of isolation,
secrecy and
disempowerment**

**35-50% of university
students would avoid
seeking assistance for
problematic substance use
solely because of the fear of
social stigma**

**Fear of acquiring a
shameful social
identity**

Worry about **damage to
academic standing and
future career prospects**

Gambling: What's the Harm?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DlRnDPg5feU>





COLLEGIATE
RECOVERY UK

Supporting the growth of Collegiate Recovery
Programmes across the UK

Project overview

- Funded by the Society for the Study of Addiction



- Developed from summer '23 - June '24
- Two steering groups involved
 - one student group
 - one professional / academic group



Steering Groups

Professional / Academic Group

- Provided experience of CRP research and development (from Canada, UK, US)
- Best practices and common challenges
- Monthly meetings over 9 months
- How to develop Texas Tech University's Center for Students in Recovery Replication Curriculum



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

College of Human Sciences

- Language style and choice
- Develop mission and values

Website, Toolkit, Knowledge Hub



Website

To store the information

To make it sharable,
discoverable, and accessible

To adapt and grow as more
CRPs in the UK take shape

To connect with anyone
interested in CRPs



Toolkit

Key features of CRPs and how
to get started

Useful facts & research

Information to provide to
decision makers at universities

Guidance and considerations as
you begin



Knowledge Hub

Established, step-by-step
guidance for reference

Broken down into chapters
relevant to different stages of
development

All the knowledge of the Texas
Tech University's Center for
Students in Recovery Replication
Curriculum

Toolkit



Supporting the growth of Collegiate Recovery
Programmes across the UK

Getting started with your CRP Toolkit

www.collegiaterecovery.uk



Toolkit



Existing Models of CRPS in the UK The University of Teesside

First established in 2017, the University of Teesside has a Students in Recovery Lead on site.

An employee of local Lived Experience Recovery Organisation Recovery Connections has coordinated Recovery groups on campus, worked with students 1-2-1, delivered presentations to relevant faculties, and taken part in the university's regular programme of health and wellbeing events.

Using the framework of Texas Tech's Center for Students in Recovery Replication Curriculum (now available in in the UK, with your registration to this website), the CRP has become more visible on campus year-on-year.

In 2023 Teesside signed the Recovery Friendly University Pledge.

Features: Coordinated via external charity. University space available each week. Visible presence on campus.

Toolkit

The Recovery Friendly Pledge

- 1 Raise awareness and educate students and staff about recovery
- 2 Ensure that there are recovery friendly events at the university
- 3 Promote and support opportunities for people in recovery to support others in recovery
- 4 Ensure that there are opportunities to increase the visibility of recovery within our university and to ensure that recovery is valued and celebrated
- 5 Ensure that there are recovery friendly events at our university
- 6 Actively address and challenge the stigma of people in recovery
- 7 Ensure that accommodation options meet the needs of people in recovery
- 8 Ensure that we increase our awareness of the needs of families and loved ones of people in recovery
- 9 Ensure that Wellbeing and Student Support teams are aware of the needs of people in recovery and have the appropriate knowledge and referral information for onward signposting and support to meet their needs
- 10 Provide a physical environment within the university that acts as a safe space and focal point for people in recovery to build community

Toolkit





**COLLEGIATE
RECOVERY UK**

Find CRUK: <https://www.collegiaterecovery.uk/>

Email CRUK: hello@collegiaterecovery.uk

Connect with CRUK - LinkedIn: Collegiate Recovery UK

Connect with CRUK - Instagram: @collegiaterecoveryuk

Connect with CRUK - TikTok: @collegiaterecoveryuk

Recovery Connections are on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn,
TikTok & YouTube

Connect with me on LinkedIn: Simon George Trelfa

How can campuses benefit from developing on campus drug and alcohol support



Student Support and Wellbeing Services

Our journey to Harm Reduction approval

Start



September '22

There was an article in The Tab student newspaper which was critical of UCL's stance on drugs.

October '22

The Students' Union Welfare and Community Zone was asked to discuss the motion 'The Union should promote harm reduction in regards to students who take illegal (and legal) drugs'.

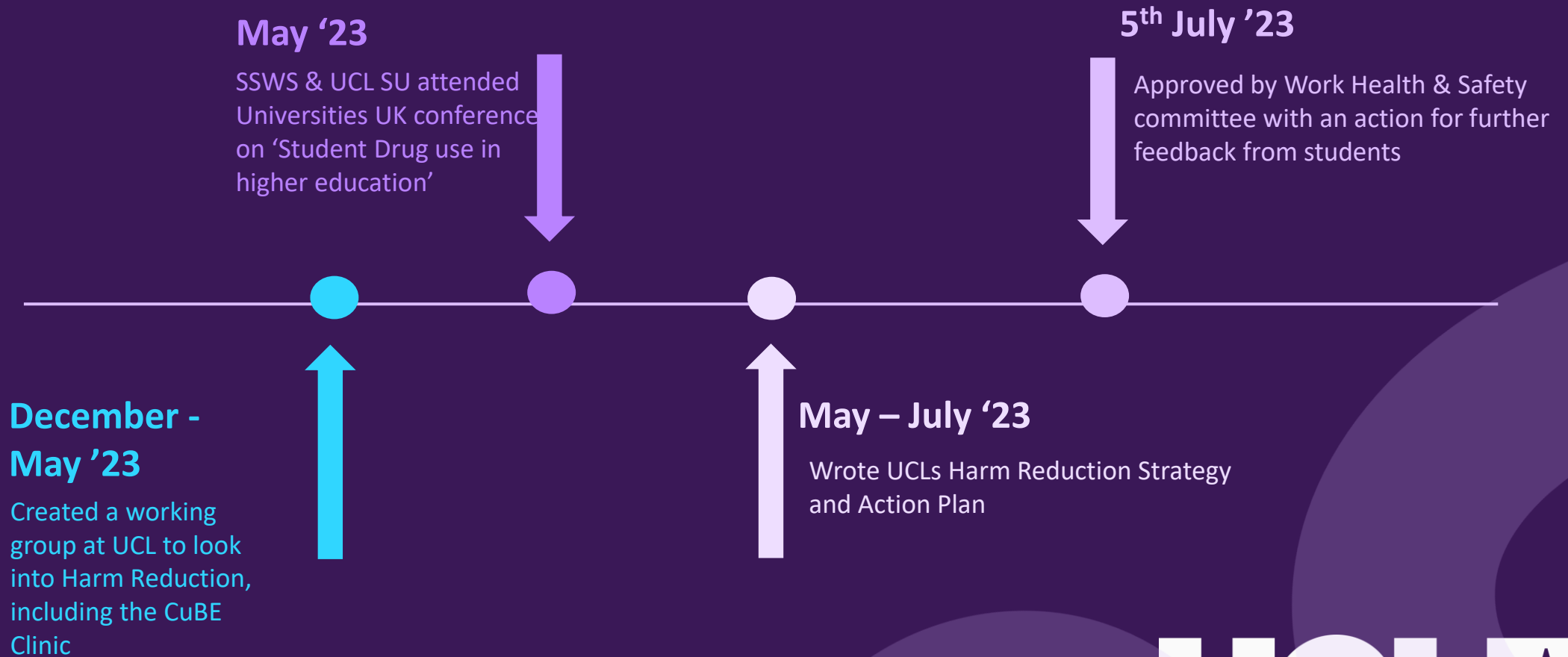
November '22

Taken to Student Support and Wellbeing Services' (SSWS) leadership and approved for a campaign we were going to champion.



Student Support and Wellbeing Services

Our journey to Harm Reduction approval cont.



Our journey to Harm Reduction approval cont.



Our journey to Harm Reduction approval cont.



Harm Reduction Policy

UCL Student Support and Wellbeing Services offer support for students who are experiencing problems with alcohol, substances, unwanted or addictive behaviours.



Harm Reduction Implementation



- Joined **SOS-UK 'Alcohol, Drugs and Student Wellbeing'** programme in November 2024.
- Created a UCL wide **Harm Reduction steering group**.
- Conducted our first **Student Drug and Alcohol Survey** and Survey Impact Report , with 581 responses.
- Created a **new sections of our website**, highlighting how students can receive help for various unwanted behaviours.
- Published:
 - **UCL's Harm Reduction Statement.**
 - **Harm Reduction Policy.**

Harm Reduction Implementation cont.

- Staff training in July/August 2025.
- Implemented a Support First Approach.
- Student of concern 'Drugs and Alcohol and addictive behaviours' categorisation.
- Campaign plan for alcohol-free, fun events, and new, engaging visual resources and content for 2025-26 academic year.



Harm Reduction Implementation cont..

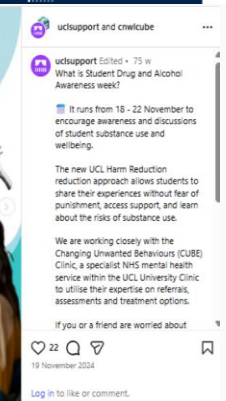
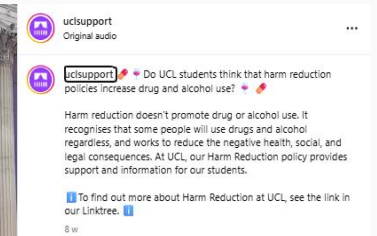
- Communicating the change of approach across the university:

- Institutional updates
- Internal news platforms
- Dedicated webpages
- UCL200 article
- Social media
- SSWSxSU video
- Staff presentations

Spotlight on... Eloise McDay

12 March 2026

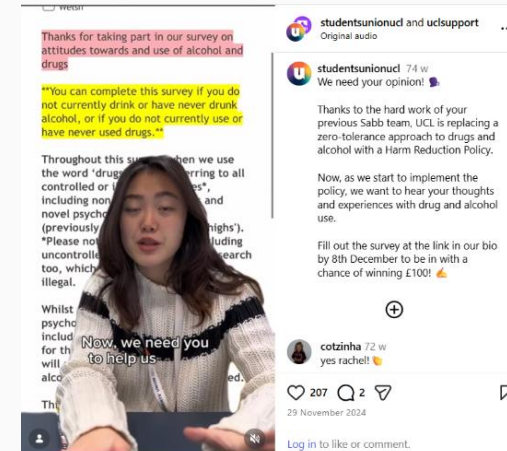
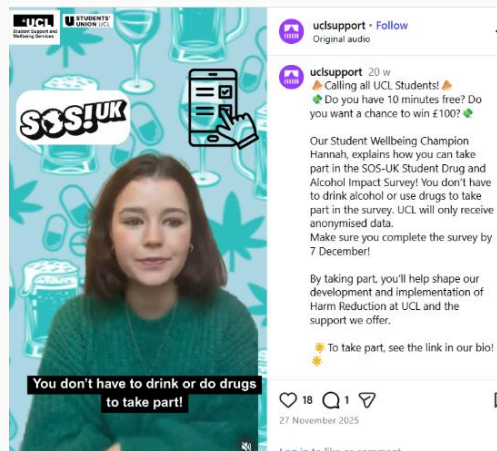
This week we speak to Eloise McDay, Head of Student Support and Wellbeing Services (Events and Campaigns), the team dedicated to helping UCL students with personal, emotional and psychological concerns.



Harm Reduction Implementation cont.



- Working more closely with **external organisations** including (Change Grow Live, local police services).
- Dr Vassilis Sideropoulos joins the core project team to use survey findings within academic research.
- Involvement of students to champion Harm Reduction work.



Events, initiatives and campaigns 2025-26

- Student-led social media content around Harm Reduction (SSWS, Accommodation and the SU).
- Harm Reduction resources at Welcome fairs.
- Harm Reduction coasters developed by SSWS to be given out in Accommodation tote bags, at Welcome Fairs and at the SU bars and venues.
- SU bars and SSWS to continue putting on alcohol-free events.
- Pop-ups and events across campus and accommodation.



Rise and Shine Morning Rave

BEAT THE JANUARY BLUES

Join us for a professional, live DJ on decks playing electronic music for this one-of-a-kind experience to start your day right.

Come along to this sober event to get active and energised in Term 2! No alcohol, just good vibes. To refuel after the event you'll also receive a **FREE hot drink voucher** to use at any UCL cafe.

Date: Tuesday 3 February 2026
Time: 7:00 - 8:30am (join anytime!)
Location: UCL IOE, Bedford Way, Ground Floor

QR code to sign up





TIME TO CHANGE? WE CAN HELP

We help UCL students who are experiencing problems related to their use of alcohol, drugs and other behaviours such as gaming, gambling and pornography.

The Clinic runs every Thursday between 9am and 5pm.

To book a free and confidential appointment, you can email us on cnwl.cube@nhs.net

For more information visit our website www.clubdrugclinic.cnwl.nhs.uk/cube-clinic



04 104 1440027

Collaboration with the Changing Unwanted BEhaviour Clinic (CUBE)

- Specialist NHS mental health service for UCL students.
- Satellite clinic of the 'Club Drug Clinic', provided by the Central and North-West London NHS Trust (CNWL), launched in January 2022.
- Offer assessments and goal-based, short-term, evidence based psychological therapy.
- Team consists of a Consultant Psychiatrist, Clinical Psychologist and psychiatrists/psychologists in training.



Impact of CUBE Clinic on UCL's Harm Reduction work



- Strategic influence and governance.
- Clinical expertise.
- Clinically robust Harm Reduction approach.
- Ongoing partnership engagement.
- Staff training and capacity building.
- Student engagement and visibility.
- Joint awareness and prevention activity.
- Data-informed collaboration.
- Clear support pathways for students.
- Expert insights into our survey data.
- Data reviews on the impact of their service.



Upcoming Audit

Our audit is fast approaching (June – 22nd and 23rd - 6 weeks!)

...because nothing brings people together quite like evidence requests.

Wish us luck!





Thank you!



Any questions?
~~~~~



Thank you

Prof Ed Day, University of Birmingham

e.j.day@bham.ac.uk

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e.mcday@ucl.ac.uk

Dot Smith, Collegiate Recovery UK

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