

Regional and International Collaboration

The Heads of Demand Reduction Councils in the Region met in the form of a Research Conference in Montego Bay, St. James in November of 2005 to promote/advocate for Drug Abuse prevention in the Region. The Conference which was funded by the Spanish Government was initiated by CARICOM and hosted by Jamaica's National Council on Drug Abuse. CARICOM have a role to play in the Caribbean, hence all CARICOM countries along with Aruba and the Cayman Islands were present. Some of the key functions were:-

- ⇒ To form a Tech group on Demand Reduction in the Region.
- ⇒ Finalize Terms of Reference for groups
- ⇒ Review strategic framework
- ⇒ A document prepared by Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC) / Caribbean Community (CARICOM) / World Health Organization (WHO) which is currently being revised to deal with the demand reduction of substance abuse in the region.

Some thematic plans that came out of the conference that will be implemented include:

- ⇒ Surveillance research and development evaluation plan.
- ⇒ Policy development and advocacy.
- ⇒ Prevention and education.
- ⇒ Treatment and rehabilitation.
- ⇒ Programme management and coordination.
- ⇒ A link between HIV/AIDS/Drug Abuse and Violence was also identified.

The terms of reference for the technical advisory body on regional drug demand reduction strategy was drafted. The advisory body will, among other things:

- ⇒ Assist national drug councils or agencies in the development or updating of their work plans or programmes in keeping with the Regional Strategic Framework for Drug Demand Reduction and Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) recommendations.
- ⇒ Provide technical assistance for the implementation of the regional programme of work for drug demand reduction at national levels.
- ⇒ Support annual review or evaluation of the status of implementation of the drug demand reduction programme in Member States.
- ⇒ Provide technical advice for the development of project proposals and funding to support drug demand reduction programmes.
- ⇒ Review regional plan every two years and revise as appropriate.

- ⇒ Advocate for, and provide technical assistance for the establishment of National Drug Councils in Member States where these do not exist.
- ⇒ Make representation to the Council of Human and Social Development (COHSOD) and other regional and international for a in matters relating to drug demand reduction.
- ⇒ Build linkages and strengthen cooperation with other regional and international programmes and;
- ⇒ Mobilize resources for the implementation of the Regional Strategy for Drug Demand.

There was also a technical advisory body identified for:

- ⇒ Specific member recommendation on specific tasks
- ⇒ Notification of the terms of reference through CARICOM

A follow-up meeting will be held in Guyana this November where the terms of reference will be presented by a member of Technical Advisory Boards (TABS) to finalize project proposals for the region.

From these meetings local agencies are awarded funding for projects they design around priority areas.

Integrated Drug Abuse Prevention Programme funded by the European Union

The National Council on Drug Abuse has been implementing the E.U. funded project on Drug Abuse Prevention since April 2000. The E.U. support has enabled the Agency to augment its activities and we look forward to this being continued under the new European Development Fund portfolio.

With E.U. assistance, the NCDA between 2000 and 2003:

- Completed a National School Survey
- Established six new community groups
- Trained 180 Drug Abuse Prevention advocates
- Produced educational and support materials for training
- Evaluated the Prevention Education Programme (PEP) in schools trained 450 teachers, 40 teacher trainers, 75 guidance counselors, 28 early childhood officers, 60 education officers and 150 students as peer counsellors.
- Developed a Drug Policy for Schools in partnership with the Ministry of Education.