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Dear Mr Haden

Thank you for your letter 12 May 2004. I am sorry for the delay but I have been on holiday until this week. Essentially Drug & Alcohol services provide excellent services with the resources they have, a bit like most departments, more could be done with more funds available. I have outlined below some areas in which I think more could be done within the Island of Jersey, provided there is the manpower available.

Benzodiazepine prescribing is far too high on Jersey in general and this is leading to a lot of diversion of prescribed medications being sold on the street. Although small initiatives are occurring with letters from Mike Gafoor to General Practitioners, a concerted effort needs to be given to this.

Although there is a good needle exchange scheme and an outreach worker, I think more could be done with education within the school setting, although this is probably dealt within other areas, I think there could be a higher profile with publications in the local press.

With regard to opiate prescribing, something called Bupramorphine (Subutex) has recently become available. This provides a relatively easy way of detoxing addicts. At the present time there is a short waiting list for this, and although this is no bad thing in its own way and a lot shorter than in the UK, a lot of the people who require more urgent detoxes are having to wait. This is a relatively expensive drug in comparison to Methadone and I think more could be spent to widen the number of people available for this scheme.

Although Hepatitis B, vaccinations and screening for Hepatitis and HIV are available through the Drug & Alcohol services, I feel that the treatment of Hepatitis amongst drug users is limited to its cost. This may be an area which can be addressed as in some parts

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of the UK, people who have been stable on a treatment programme are offered treatment and this is not currently the case here in Jersey. Although I have no personal problems with the treatment that Dr Muscat has provided (this is excellent). Again this may be an area which would need to be reviewed.

Drug users are a very needy group of individuals and there is no specific social worker to address their needs and those of the families of drug users. Again, I think this could be an area which a social worker could be funded.

Drug users have very little contact with the medical services on Jersey and obviously general practice being private practice, does mean that drug users are particularly reluctant to seek help. There are a lot of issues that general practitioners can help with, both in general help, contraceptive measures, routine health screening and providing a stable link with general medical services as well as their links with Drug & Alcohol, the legal services and links to other services such as social security. General practitioners who are interested in helping drug users can offer an awful lot. We do however, have constraints upon us and we are obliged obviously to earn a living and offering free medical care to drug users, limits the number of people we can see. I therefore believe it would be helpful to fund general practitioners seeing drug users in the form of a voucher scheme for a registered addict or to provide sessional employment of the Drug & Alcohol Services. If the latter was available, I would have a much stronger case in providing free time during my working week in order to help them. I know this is a contentious issue and it would be seen along the lines of 'feathering my own pocket', but I do not believe this is the case. I have been consistently offering free medical care for a number of years now and the number of addicts that I treat is making it very difficult to justify to partners. It is a well quoted fact that for every pound spent on a drug addict, you will save three through the criminal justice system and to society as a whole and therefore, it is seen as a 'Cinderella service', spending money on addicts does pay dividends to society.

When funding to drug addicts is reduced or withdrawn, you will quickly find more chaotic patterns of behaviour causing more and more problems to the society as a whole.

I look forward to an opportunity to meet in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Dr D J Bailey