



# One minute guide

## Forward Leeds - integrated alcohol and drugs service

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### What is Forward Leeds?

Forward Leeds is the integrated alcohol and drug service for the city, with a single point of contact (tel: 0113 887 2477) and delivery hubs across Leeds. It is a consortium arrangement, which means that a number of different service providers, some of whom have been working in Leeds for a number of years, have come together to form an integrated service.

Current figures indicate that there are around 16,000 adults in Leeds who are experiencing significant issues with substance misuse, and around 500 young people.

### How the service works?

The consortium approach of Forward Leeds means that people who want to access help with their substance misuse can do this easily. There is a single point of contact for all, which means that service users who may misuse a number of different substances do not have to go to different providers for help. This makes the service simple to understand and navigate.

The service has a presence across the whole of the city. There are three main hubs, one in each wedge, which deliver the full service, as well as secondary, smaller hubs in each wedge. Anybody who attends one of the hubs is offered an assessment of need, with the principle that there is no 'wrong door' for people to access help. There are a range of services that are replicated in every hub, but for more complex needs, e.g. a dual diagnosis of substance misuse and mental health problems, service users may need to be seen by a specialist team.

The service provides a holistic approach with services to support clients, through the housing support team and support for families. The service has an outreach role, working with communities who may be more difficult to engage, and has a presence at major festivals and events in the city to offer advice, guidance and support about the misuse of substances.

### How does the service support young people who misuse substances?

Each of the hubs across the city has practitioners who are skilled and experienced in working with young people.

The area-based model of the new arrangements enables services to be delivered closer to young people's communities, rather than service users having to travel further.

With Forward Leeds offering adult and young person's services, this allows for an easier transition for young people once they turn eighteen. Young people's substance misuse workers are able to continue work with them up to the age of 25, rather than transferring them to adult services.

The broad age range also allows Forward Leeds to work with the large community of university and college students in Leeds.

## How the service supports parents who misuse substances?

Forward Leeds has a Think Family approach, which means that practitioners are aware of and respect the fact that the substance use of their service users will have an impact on other adults, children and young people in their families and their households.

Forward Leeds incorporates a specific Family Plus team who offer both support around substance misuse and work on parenting skills. Whilst the primary focus of the service will be on service users' drug and alcohol use, there is an intensive parenting resource available for families where there are serious concerns about parenting capacity, and a focus on helping parents to understand the impact of their substance misuse on their children. The Family Plus team work closely with existing children's services in the city. The Family Plus team prioritises parents with children living with them, parents under the age of 21 who are not engaged with other services, families with children subject to a child protection, child in need or early help plan, and service users whose children also need support from the young people's service. The integrated arrangements allow for a holistic approach to inter-generational substance misuse within families. The Families Plus service prioritises families where children and young people are experiencing poor outcomes, for example poor attendance and/ or attainment in education, or demonstrating challenging behaviour.

In addition, Forward Leeds also has a Drug and Alcohol Coordinator based in each of the city's three Early Help Hubs where there may be emerging or escalating difficulties around substance misuse. These workers are able to undertake short term, direct interventions and help in signposting families to the right service. They can also provide guidance and advice regarding pathways / service provision and joint working / coaching and consultation with practitioners to develop knowledge/ skills in working with specific areas of concern.

## What should practitioners do if substance misuse is present or suspected?

If you have concerns about the potential substance misuse of a young person, parent or carer you are working with, you should call the one-stop support line on tel: 0113 887 2477. Lines are open between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday, and staffed by skilled, qualified workers. They can offer information and advice on next steps to support the family, and can help you to make a referral if appropriate. This would involve the knowledge and consent of the person needing support.

For face to face support, practitioners can accompany service users to one of the primary or secondary recovery hubs across the city, where their needs will be assessed. These hubs generally have the same opening hours as the telephone line, but appointments and services may be available outside of these times; call the one-stop support line for further information.

## For further information

The Forward Leeds [website](#) has further details of the support offered by the service, and details of the three main recovery hubs, based in Seacroft (Irford House, Seacroft Crescent LS14 6PA), Armley (Armley Park Court, 9 Stanningley Road LS12 2AE) and Leeds city centre (74 Kirkgate LS2 7DJ).

If you would like to discuss accessing workforce development and training for your agency in relation to working with adults or young people who misuse substances, please call the one-stop support line on tel: 0113 887 2477.

You can follow Forward Leeds on Twitter [@forwardleeds](#) or Facebook [/ForwardLeeds](#).