

RAPID Strategic Protocol

Lead Departments – DHSSPS and DOJ **Lead Agencies** – PHA and PSNI **Lead Partnerships** – NIDACTS and NIPCSPS

RAPID (Remove All Prescription and Illegal Drugs) is a joint health and community safety focussed initiative which facilitates the disposal and removal of all types of prescribed, illegal and illicit drugs at community level. This is achieved via the installation and maintenance of drug disposal bins in key community locations throughout Northern Ireland alongside a package of community education and support in relation to raising awareness of the dangers and risks associated with of drug use/misuse and drug dealing, both at individual and at societal level, and the benefits of having and promoting the use of the drug disposal bin within that locality as a means of reducing such dangers and risks ultimately creating safer communities and saving lives.

Aim

The overall aim of the RAPID initiative is to reduce risk – at individual, family and community level – in relation to drug use and availability by providing a means for local people to dispose of, any drugs that they may have obtained, directly or indirectly, and which they would now like to ensure are put out of harm's way.

Reduced availability = reduced opportunities in relation to both supply and demand = safer communities

Increased awareness = individuals more informed about risks and consequences and therefore making better choices = safer communities

Roles

A Regional Steering Group (PHA rep, PSNI rep, DACT Connections Service Rep, PCSP Rep and DHSSPS and DOJ reps when required) will oversee the development and roll out of the RAPID Initiative during 16/17 and will then review progress – at local and regional level – early in 17/18.

Local DACTS and PSCPS will jointly implement and oversee the application and award process for communities wishing to participate in, and/or being targeted to participate in, the RAPID initiative with the local PCSP then leading on the siting and installation aspect and the local DACT Connections Service leading on the community education element.

PSNI will routinely empty the drug disposal bins, record information on the drugs deposited on the RAPID Database, test substances as and when appropriate, and share information on a quarterly basis with members of the aforementioned steering group who will then disseminate further via local health (drugs and alcohol) and community safety structures/reporting mechanisms.

**Whilst the drug disposal bin associated with the RAPID initiative should be sited in a location which allows for maximum protection for an individual to be able to make their deposit anonymously and inconspicuously there may be occasions, whereby the PSNI may need to conduct follow up enquiries in relation to a specific drug that has been disposed of – particularly where said substance has tested for high levels of toxicity and therefore presents a high and immediate risk to the public. Community partners will be made aware of this possibility via the community education package and follow up reporting process.*