

Recovery Matters

Summer 2024 - Issue 12



Aberdeen
in Recovery



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Editorial

Hello Readers

Welcome to the Spring/ Summer 2024 edition of Recovery Matters, a magazine to inspire and inform, brought to you by Aberdeen in Recovery (AiR).

Spring always feels like a fresh start to me—a time to look ahead. The warmer weather and longer days also make it a great time to enjoy the outdoors! There's the National Recovery Walk in September to look forward to, but even before that, at AiR, we're delighted to have a new walking group! It's a great opportunity to enjoy the outdoors while connecting with other folk.

Early on in my recovery I had the opportunity to join a gardening group at Hazelhead. I was sceptical at first (I had no interest in gardening before) but it turned out to be a wonderful experience—working outdoors and meeting new people. On my first visit, I saw an inspirational sign that has really stuck with me, 'to plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow'.

It is the essence of recovery—we look ahead and believe in tomorrow, because we know RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE!

Thank you

The Media Team

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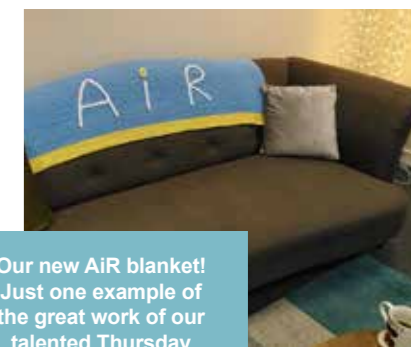


News Roundup

Here's what we've been up to since our last issue!



Community Crafts, a casual drop-in session every Thursday afternoon (1-3:30pm) in our community space at 41 Union St. Come along and enjoy board games, crafts and banter while we listen to our very own radio show, Recovery on AiR!



Our new AiR blanket! Just one example of the great work of our talented Thursday afternoon regulars, adding a lovely cosy touch to our community space!



Scotland's new Minister for Alcohol and Drugs Policy paid Aberdeen a visit along with some big news—you can read the full story on pages 8 & 9.



This past April AiR was delighted to host our second quiz night—and the first in our new place. The BPD group were the winners on the night! We're looking forward to hosting more quiz nights, so watch our social media for info, but in the meantime, you can practice with our quizmaster's latest offering on page 14!



Our first Christmas in our new place! We were free to decorate as much as we wanted, making a wonderfully festive atmosphere for a great party and to show off our Christmas jumpers!



Even before the Christmas party, AiR members found their festive creativity in a wreath-making session - many thanks to Sarah for a wonderful afternoon!



THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

My Recovery Journey Part 4

By AC

So, my journey continues, back to college, this is a big year with placements, assessments and hopefully my graduation.

During our first two years at college, we learned a lot about theories and why people behave in the way they do. A person may have several underlying issues in their life which many people do not understand or do not acknowledge. The person may have suffered a traumatic upbringing or tragic events in life, the list is ongoing. It is during these first years that I began to understand more about values, empathy, trust, confidentiality, being non-judgemental, and many more. This gave me a greater understanding of people whilst conducting my volunteering with vulnerable people. This all certainly helped me when I began my first placement.

My first placement was supporting offenders and ex-offenders. The placement had made a schedule which I had to work to. One of my projects was to organise a visit to Alcohol & Drugs Action (ADA) for members of staff. Some of the staff had never heard of ADA, therefore this was a fantastic opportunity for them to learn about

ADA. I organised with an ADA staff member who would show us around and inform us about what ADA does. As part of this project, I had to log everything which was done for

“I am just trying to be a better person for myself and those around me”

part of my college portfolio. All the staff really enjoyed their visit and appreciated the time and effort that was put into this project.

Another project I had to conduct was giving a presentation to some of the people who used the service. As part of my volunteering with ADA, I participated in the making of a short recovery film, therefore this was a wonderful opportunity to highlight the film. Once again, I had to organise everything which needed to be done to fulfil this task.

On the day of the showing, I was extremely nervous as I had to give a presentation along with the film. At the end of my presentation the audience were appreciative and congratulated me on a job well done. Everything had to be logged into my college portfolio for my assessment. I really enjoyed my first placement; it gave me a lot of confidence and knowledge in supporting vulnerable people. I was really pleased to have passed my assessment for my first placement.

My second placement involved supporting people who were Substance use Dependent (SUD) or Alcohol use Dependent (AUD), which was remarkably interesting. I remember one of the gentlemen in particular who was more elderly. This gentleman liked doing jigsaw puzzles. However, instead of breaking them up he would get them framed so that he could keep them. These puzzles looked exactly like pictures.

My project for my placement required me to get everyone involved, and I did struggle to produce an idea. One of the gentlemen suggested (as there was a pool table) having a pool competition. I thought this would be



an innovative idea, so my project began.

I discussed my project with the manager who agreed that this was a promising idea as it would get everyone involved in one way or another. As normal I had to log everything for my college work (planning, implementing, and reflecting). Some of the participants and I discussed when would be the best day and time to have the competition. A poster was made with all the details of the competition which was distributed to everyone. There was a trophy purchased which would be presented to the eventual winner. Food and light refreshments were organised for

the day. On the day of the pool competition chairs were set out whereby everyone could watch the games, the participants made up the rules before play began. Some of the watching crowd made the draw for the order of play. The smile on the eventual winner's face made it all worthwhile and they said it was the first thing that they had ever won. Everyone enjoyed the competition and had a good feed.

I passed my placement along with my assessments which meant that I would graduate with a HNC in Health and Social Care.

I agree with many people who say that you learn more from lived

experience. However, I feel that I have also learnt a lot while attending college. I never knew the true meaning of confidentiality, non-judgemental, self-esteem, self-worth, trust, trustworthy and many more. Even today I am still learning as they say, "every day is a school day". There are still many people (even some in recovery) who are judgemental.

I am not trying to be better than others, I am just trying to be a better person for myself and those around me. I do not want to go back to being the old me, that is for sure. SMALL STEPS.....



Home At Last - One Year On

By LW

What a difference a day (whoops, I mean a year) makes!

As most of you know, we moved into our very own new home a year ago (May 2023) and what a year it's been! After all the moonlit flitting we were finally able to put down some roots and focus on growing the Recovery Community in Aberdeen. Starting off with an empty shell was both exciting and arduous with furniture getting bought and moved around, and more furniture getting bought and moved around, and moved around again—it was like a gargantuan game of Jenga which resulted in several bruises! Probably one of the most exciting things about this was our windows. We were able to put our own branding on the

windows which, with our trademark blue, really stands out on Union Street against the grey of the granite and truly makes recovery visible—you can't miss us!

Once we were happy with what we had (although we're still ordering more furniture!) it was on to the next task—timetabling. This was brand new territory for us too as we had always been tied to what space we had and when it was available. We were able to really think big and do what we want when we wanted. This in itself proved challenging as we wanted to do everything all the time, but manpower limited us, and we had to show some restraint. After a few team meetings we created a timetable and off we went, let loose

in the world to advertise and promote it. Like arranging the furniture though, our first draft never stuck, and we also learned that nothing was set in tablets of stone, so as we welcomed in our community, both old friends and new, we were able to get some valuable feedback from them, as well as our own learning over the course of the year.

On that note, as we are (hopefully) heading into some better weather, we have launched our new spring/summer timetable! This is an exciting timetable offering many groups and meetings Monday to Friday. We see the continuation of some popular existing groups such as the Men's Group, Cuppa with A Purpose, Yoga, the Recovery Café and Community

Crafts (which has been renamed a few times too!) Some old favourites have been reintroduced like the walking group (crossing fingers for good weather!) and ORT & Me.

We have also created a new group on Tuesday called Next Steps and this is where we will deliver training courses like Live Life To The Full and Peer 2 Peer training in the morning coupled with some life skills and wellbeing conversations in the afternoon. We also continue our pop-ups both at the Vaccination Centre on Wednesday mornings and at the Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust Community Hub on Thursday afternoons at Pittodrie, where we offer information, peer support and Naloxone training. You can also pop in to see us anytime for training and/or supply of Naloxone.

We also continue to produce this amazing magazine as well as being back broadcasting our radio show, Recovery on AiR, live on shmu 99.8FM every Thursday at 2pm.



As if all that wasn't enough—we are now into our busy events schedule! We've already had a birthday party to celebrate our first year in our new place, and we had a full busload go to Recovery Connects in Glasgow. Coming up, we have International

Overdose Awareness Day, the Celebrate Aberdeen Parade, and Recovery Walk Scotland, so keep your eyes on our social media for more information on all of these as plans are made and be assured, a great time is always had by all who take part!

If you want to find out more about anything and everything we do, please get in touch either by emailing info@aberdeeninrecovery.org or calling 01224 638342 or, and we far prefer this way, pop in and see us. We are open Monday to Thursday 10:30am to 3:30pm and Friday 10:30am to 12:30pm—you'll be welcomed with a fine coffee and there's always fine pieces on the go! Take care and hopefully see you soon!

Happy Birthday to Us! By JSK

The 22nd of May marked one year since we got the keys to our new place, and what a journey it's been! Starting with a blank canvass we've created a brilliant community space, and we've grown busier and busier as word has spread and the momentum has built. So, we decided to celebrate the year's accomplishments with two open days and an anniversary party! Our community space was bustling with folk over the three days—thanks to everyone who came along and made it such a wonderful time—and a special thanks to our members and volunteers for making AiR the amazing community it is!





New Hope for Reducing Harm

By LW

In March 2024, we had the pleasure of meeting the new Minister for Drugs and Alcohol Policy, Ms Christina McKelvie. Initially, prior to meeting her, I felt a bit uncertain. However, once the round table conversation started it was very clear that she felt as passionate about change as we did. We had a great chat about what is happening across Aberdeen City and what, if anything, we felt would make the biggest difference. The usual topics of conversation were spoken about including funding, services being truly holistic and person-centred, and trauma informed practices. The fear, for me, of using these terms

so regularly, is that they will turn into 'bumper stickers' or tick box exercises and I was confident that my voice was heard.

Ms McKelvie was genuinely interested in what we do at AiR and assured us she would return to Aberdeen and would schedule a visit to our home on Union Street, so watch this space for more photos!

Another reason the Minister was visiting Aberdeen was to highlight some amazing news! Alcohol & Drugs Action (ADA), part of Aberdeen City Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (ADP), have submitted an application to the Home Office to

open Scotland's first drug checking facility. If successful, this would be integrated into ADA's Needle Exchange service and would be available to anyone accessing this service.

Simon Pringle, ADA's Direct Access Services Manager, said in a BBC Scotland article covering the event: "Our main aim is to reduce harm associated with drug use for people at the highest risk of harm, overdose and death. Being able to test substances on site will give us an opportunity to have a conversation [with people] about what they're using and what's actually in these

substances, so they can make more informed choices."

Ms McKelvie said, "We are committed to delivering drug-checking facilities which will allow people to get substances tested for content whilst receiving tailored harm reduction advice alongside the results and will enable services to respond faster to emerging trends".

You can read the full article on the BBC's website: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-north-east-orkney-shetland-68678078>

Personally, as much as I think this is a great opportunity for Aberdeen as a whole, the stark fact is that people are still dying from drug use, and to be able to offer another service aimed at keeping people safe, can only be a good thing. I know that when you are in the chaos of it all, stopping and thinking 'oooh I better get this tested before I take any' is likely not going to be at the forefront of people's minds, but where people are accessing ADA's needle exchange service anyway it adds

another level of protection for people should they want it. As Simon Pringle observed, it's that opportunity to have the conversation with folk.

This news, as you can imagine, saw a bit of a media frenzy where BBC Scotland, Press & Journal, Daily Record, and Northsound all wanted in on the act! We had the pleasure (tongue in cheek!) of being recorded by BBC Scotland to be aired on Reporting Scotland that night and I must say, as my first experience of national media I was terrified! I waited with bated breath that night to watch the news and I have to say, after the length of time it took and all the fuff, I was rather disappointed with the shortness of the video. Still, when all is said and done, drawing attention to some positive news to help reduce drug deaths is a win (even though the mainstream media are persistent in the use of images depicting negativity around the topic which I can only describe here as frustrating, but that is a whole other topic for another day – one battle at a time and all!!!)

Attention was brought to more great news in the form of yellow boxes, or Naboxone! Aberdeen City ADP have purchased 10 yellow boxes which will be situated across the city and they will contain the life saving Naloxone. Not unlike defibrillators, they will be secure boxes with a keypad to open and where someone is suspected of suffering from an overdose, emergency services would be called and the 'What Three Words' on the box given to get the code to open. Emergency services would then talk the person through what to do whilst an ambulance was dispatched. As Peer Naloxone trainers and suppliers, AiR would love for every single person to carry Naloxone, but we know this is not realistic. To have public access to Naloxone is a game changer and goes a long way to getting the right help to the most vulnerable people at the time they need it most – I love it!





Making Connections and Special Memories

My First Recovery Walk

By AR & LW



Last year, the annual Recovery Walk, facilitated by the Scottish Recovery Consortium (SRC) took place in Greenock in September 2023. We were fortunate to have beautiful weather, and everyone had a fabulous day! Once again AiR provided a coach to allow members of Aberdeen's Recovery Community to travel to, and take part in, this flagship event. This time there were a few members of AiR who had never been before, and one of them was kind enough to share their experience with us here!

AR tells it like this:

"It was a beautiful day, and it was the first time I'd been on it. There was a few of us who all went down on the bus so that was good. We left early in the morning, and we

got there quick. I really enjoyed it; it was more than what I thought. I didn't realise what it was all about because I hadn't done it before, I'd only heard people speaking about it. The good thing for me was when I was in my rehab last year I was at Jericho in Greenock. Getting to see down the river on the Recovery walk, I was nearly crying when they put the flowers in the water and listening to all the shares people who has had death in their family [through addiction] and it's emotional going down and putting the roses into the river. I loved the dancing. Walking right round the whole of Greenock as well that was pretty good getting connected with other people. I knew a lot of people from Elgin and people from other services all connecting, so it's all worthwhile, it's all a good day.

The journey was good, and I hope some time we can get it running in Aberdeen. But also, to get it in Aberdeen would be a benefit, but to me also the travelling was good as well, that travelling experience down there, but yeah it was a good day really enjoyed it and roll on find out where this year will be. Thank you take care."

I think AR summed up their experience well! And I echo what they said about having the Recovery Walk in Aberdeen as it's never been held here before. I can take this opportunity to say that we (AiR), supported by Alcohol & Drugs Action (ADA) and Aberdeen City Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (ADP), in partnership with Aberdeenshire have submitted a bid to host the 2025 Recovery

Walk, so everyone crosses all their fingers and toes and watch this space for news as it develops!

In the meantime, we are looking forward to this year's Recovery Walk, which will be held at Glasgow Green on the 7th of September! AiR will again provide transport to the event to give the opportunity to as many of our Recovery Community as possible. We hope you'll join us! Keep an eye on our social media for more info as we get closer to the date. Now let's just hope for another blue-sky day, but even if it's not, an amazing time is guaranteed.



SPRING WORD SEARCH



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 MARCH
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 FLOWERS

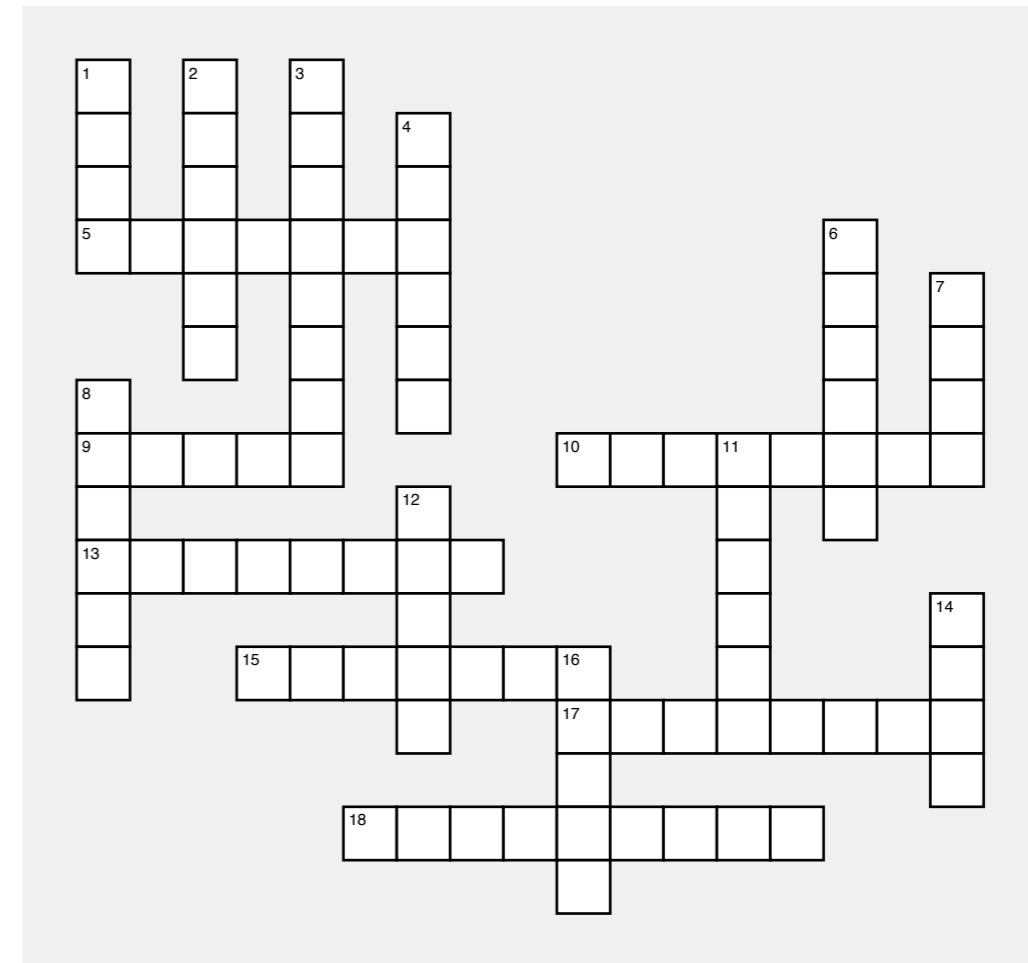
SEASON
 SUNSHINE
 GREEN
 PICNIC
 WARM
 TULIP

BUNNY
 BLOSSOM
 RAINBOW
 SEEDS
 GARDEN
 APRIL

KITES
 BUTTERFLY
 EGGS
 EASTER
 BIRDS
 SPRING



SPRING CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 5) They're usually found in beds
- 9) Time for showers
- 10) Gloom's opposite
- 13) Yellow spring flower
- 15) Day for diamonds and dreams
- 17) Shower apparel?
- 18) Monarch, e.g.

DOWN

- 1) Sport with tees
- 2) Fledgling plant
- 3) America's pastime
- 4) ___ egg
- 6) Eating outing
- 7) When spring ends
- 8) Vegetable plot
- 11) One of four in a year
- 12) Breezy
- 14) Flying toy with a tail
- 16) Verdant

QUIZ TIME



1. How many bones are there in the ear?
2. What country has won the most football World Cups?
3. What sports car company manufactures the 911?
4. What is a group of pandas known as?
5. How many dots appear on a pair of dice?
6. In what country was Elon Musk born?
7. Who is the world's highest paid athlete in 2021?
8. What was the first name of Argentinian soccer star Maradona?
9. What is the capital of Canada?
10. What is the deadliest mammal?
11. What colour are Mickey Mouse's shoes?
12. Mickey Mouse was originally named what?
13. What company was originally called "Cadabra"?
14. What artist has the most streams on Spotify?
15. What planet has the most moons?
16. How many colours will you find in a regular bag of M&Ms?
17. What is the national animal of Scotland?
18. How many keys are on a modern, standard-sized piano?
19. In what fictional town is Jaws set?
20. How many times has Andy Murray won Wimbledon playing singles?
21. What is the largest country in the world?
22. In Harry Potter, what is the name of The Weasley's house?
23. What month was Prince George born?
24. What is the smallest country in the world?
25. What is the name of the lead singer of MADNESS?



I hope you enjoyed our little brain teaser, watch out for our next edition. All the answers are correct at the time of publishing. Therefore, no arguing. I had to get in a question about MADNESS.

Regards,
The Quizmaster
(Answers on page 15)

Creative Corner

Sober (song lyrics by KAM)

Involuntary detoxing
Torture you cannot imagine
It feels like claws under my skin dragging and clawing me in.
I'm being dragged slowly and painfully
Shoved back into reality
There is no future, no light,
All there is, is struggle and fight.

And I can see what's happening to me,
And I can't see a future for me
I keep watching everything spiral out of control.

And now I have to get sober
Am I going under,
This chain of abuse,
Will end in the noose,
I have to get sober
Am I going under
Thought I would die high,
But I'm more terrified of staying alive
I have to get sober
Before I go under

Now I can see a way out,
I'm thirsty from this drought,
The insomnia is making me crazy
The starvation is making things hazy
Every part of the day feels malicious
Waking up is so damn vicious
Life around me has lost all its colour
Every breath I take I just suffer

I can't breathe I can't sleep; I can't eat I can't think
Sweating, shaking, questioning reality
I think that it might have cost me, you.
Will I get better there's no way to tell
Or will I stay fixed in this self-made hell
I don't know what's on the other side
All I know is what I'm feeling inside

Now I'm picking up the pieces of my life
Now I can plan for my future years
I can see now I've dried up my tears
I found a way to let go of the fear.

Alcohol and Drugs Poem (by Amy, age 13)

Alcohol makes you feel warm,
and it numbs your mind when
thoughts begin to swarm. BUT it
can poison your heart, I've seen
it create hate, tearing friends
and family apart. I've seen it
take lives, I've seen it take love,
I've seen it imprison spirits that
were once free as a dove. Don't
get me wrong, it's ok to have a
drink once in a while, but when
it's every night it's a concerning
lifestyle. It's ok to have a beer
or a shot of whisky. But don't let
it replace the warmth of a hug,
let hope and love be your drug.
It's ok to lean on someone's
shoulder and shed a tear or two.
It's ok to have someone help
you. So, I'm begging you please
take my hand, let me pull you
from the quicksand. Because as
your faithful friend I won't let the
bottom of a bottle be your end.

For anyone who needs to hear it.

1 - 3	14 - Drake
2 - Brazil	15 - Saturn
3 - Porche	16 - 6
4 - An Embarrasment	17 - The Unicorn
5 - 42	18 - 88
6 - South Africa	19 - Amity Island
7 - Conor McGregor	20 - Twice
8 - Diego	21 - Russia
9 - Ottawa	22 - The Burrow
10 - The Hippo	23 - July
11 - Yellow	24 - Vatican City
12 - Mortimer Mouse	25 - THE ONE AND ONLY "SUGGS"
13 - Amazon	

RECOVERY ON AIR

Join us every week for Recovery on AiR, a lively mix of music and chat, Thursdays at 2pm on shmu 99.8FM or listen online at: www.shmu.org.uk/fm.

Song request? Feedback? Topic ideas? We'd love to hear from you! Please get in touch at chatterbox@aberdeeninrecovery.org



ADA Helpline

0333 344 8355

Timmermarket

01224 651130

AA

0800 9177 650

NA

0300 999 1212

AI-Anon

0800 0086 811

Anonimowi Alkoholicy Informacja

07598853255

SFAD

08080 101011

Gamblers Anonymous Scotland

0370 050 8881

Samaritans

116 123

Breathing Space 24hr Helpline

0800 83 85 87

Aberdeen Foyer

01224 212924

Overeaters Anonymous

07801185872

Citizen's Advice Scotland

800 028 1456

LGBT Health and Wellbeing

0300 123 2523

Rape Crisis Grampian

01224 590932

Grampian Women's Aid

01224 593381

St Machar Credit Union

01224 276994

Grampian Credit Union

01224 561506

Community Food Initiatives

North East (CFINE)

01224 596156

Families Outside

0800 254 0088

Aberdeen Multicultural Centre

01224 977424

Social Work Duty Team and Out of Hours Service

0800 7315520

Instant Neighbour

01224 489955

Grampian Sexual Health Services

0345 337 9900

NHS 24 111

GDENS 111

Cummings Park Community Flat

01224 681357

Inchgarth Community Centre

01224 325191

Check out our website for all the latest info: www.aberdeeninrecovery.org