

Motion Name: Harm Reduction Approach to Alcohol and Other Drugs

Proposer: Saranya Thambirajah

Seconded: Isobel Russell

Background:

1. Bristol and students have a strong association with alcohol and other drugs:
 - a. Bristol was named the cocaine capital of Europe.
 - b. A documentary series about the use and policing of drugs was produced in Bristol, 'Drugsland'. [2]
 - c. Around 20% of students at the University stated that they take drugs. * [3]
 - d. Students services and the Student Living Officer co-produced a new alcohol and other drugs harm reduction policy. [4]
 - e. Students services have also been running 'Be in the Know' drug awareness courses at the University. [5]
2. Why the SU?
 - a. In the NUS drug research paper, Taking the Hit, students have stated that they would want their university or union to provide information on drugs. [6]
 - b. We cannot stand by knowing the problem without taking action to solve it. Unhealthy habits and relationships with alcohol and other drugs lead to long term issues in later life. *
With this being a minimum, as many chose not to answer this question.

Purpose:

1. Providing harm reduction information about alcohol and other drugs.
2. Partnering with experts in this subject to provide up to date and competent advice.
3. Ensuring drug testing kits, and other harm reduction resources, are available to students and their provision is facilitated by the SU and through partnerships.

Actions:

1. Continue mandating and promoting education around alcohol and other drugs to be taught in first year introduction sessions.
2. Continue our strong relationship with Bristol Drugs Project to aid our harm reduction approaches and to implement planned provision of regular physical information points on campus.
3. Continue regularly supplying drug testing kits to students on campus. Continue to lobby the university to provide regular funding for this.
4. Build on existing work with the council, venues and festivals to protect the welfare of students on campus and in the wider city.
5. Continue exploring and expanding our harm reduction offer/approach in line with student need to ensure its success.

6. Take a harm reduction approach to students self-medicating with normally prescribed medication/treatments eg. HRT
7. Ensure the risks to students associated with this motion are effectively managed.

[1] - https://www.vice.com/en_uk/article/3kx7xb/cocaine-capital-europe-2019

[2] - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p05lvqmd>

[3] – (Mental Health and Wellbeing Survey Findings 2018/19)
<https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/policies/survey-findings/>

[4] - <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/policies/harm-reduction/>

[5] - <https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/groups/bristol-su-wellbeing-network/resources/be-in-the-know>

[6] - <https://www.release.org.uk/sites/default/files/pdf/publications/Taking%20the%20Hit%20-%20Student%20drug%20use%20and%20how%20institutions%20respond%20-.pdf>