

# The Safe Zone

## Dundee City Health and Social Care Partnership

How Dundee City Health and Social Care Partnership created a Community Outreach response for vulnerable groups, using available resources.

*It's been amazing how quickly multiple agencies got together to develop this service to support the most vulnerable in our communities.*

Neill Sneddon, Integrated Manager, Dundee HSCP



### Challenge

Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) recognised that some of their most vulnerable citizens had little resilience in their day to day lives. Prior to the COVID-19 crisis the HSCP coordinated a range of statutory, 3rd sector and voluntary organisation services which aimed to support vulnerable people through the provision of health and social care, welfare, food, companionship and spiritual support.

Due to COVID -19 restrictions, these important services were forced to retract and this therefore removed a layer of resilience which once supported these vulnerable people's basic needs. Dundee's challenge was to consider how best to support this once visible but vulnerable population who were now all but invisible.



### What was done differently?

Dundee HSCP was aware that they were no longer able to provide a layer of support for this vulnerable group which boosted their resilience and were therefore at an increased risk, not only to COVID-19, but to other pre-existing health and social inequalities which continued to be present.

The HSCP first thought of a 'pop up shop' type coordinated outreach service that would support the needs of this group in relation to their health and wellbeing. The HSCP were aware that this service was required in a number of geographical areas of the city and their challenge was to operate a multi-site agile and responsive service.

Using a partnership approach, the HSCP repurposed an existing 3rd sector service "[The Safe Zone](#)" and used this bus to deliver much need support whilst practicing safe social distancing. Partners included Tayside Council on Alcohol, Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership, Hillcrest Futures, Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre, Transform, The Brooksbank Centre, Dundee Volunteer and Voluntary Action, Health and Homeless Outreach Nursing and Parish Nurses.

An example of how Health and Social Care Partnerships are responding to planning and commissioning challenges in the context of COVID-19

## Key insights: Neill Sneddon Integration Manager Dundee HSCP

“Initially operating on a Saturday night, staff from the participating agencies have been on hand to support people who are most at risk of being adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although lockdown restrictions have been in place, it was identified that there continued to be a number of people on the streets for a variety of reasons, including substance misuse and homelessness.

There have been 44 visitors to the Safe Zone Bus between 25 April and 30 May, accessing a range of support that includes nursing care, substance misuse, debt and benefits advice, housing or homelessness issues along with providing hot food and drinks and a friendly ear to anyone who has required support.”



## Experience of change

*“It’s great being able to bring a host of Service and Supports to communities where they are most needed. I enjoy working and learning alongside different professions. It develops my practice.”*

Social Worker participating in The Safe Zone Community Outreach Project

*“Working on the safe zone bus allows me the opportunity to engage with some great people and support them during these tough times.”*

Dundee City HSCP staff

## Good Practice Framework for Strategic Planning

The Strategic Planning support team at the ihub have developed a [Good Practice Framework for Strategic Planning](#) to enable practical and constructive local conversations on strategic planning.



In this example Dundee HSCP was led by those who maintain commitment to, and accept accountability for transforming services in partnership. It shows good strategic planning by

- maintaining a clear focus on prevention.
- focussing on defined populations and their needs, not conditions, services or pathways.
- shifting resources , including the workforce, towards a more preventative and community based approach.

## Reflections

This Safe Zone service is one way of organising and delivering care and support via a specialised team which is providing intensive, highly coordinated, agile and flexible support.

One of the opportunities that has emerged from the COVID-19 period is that it is enabling public services to look beyond organisational or system boundaries and embrace complexity more than ever before

If you are interested in exploring something similar in your area or to find out more, please get in touch.

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