



‘The whole is greater than the sum of its parts:
Using a collaborative,
interagency and intersectoral approach to
address substance use in higher
education – the Midwest model.’


Dr. Eva Devaney

Healthy UL/Substance Use & Gambling Officer

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Session outline

- My role @ UL
 - History of the TLDAN
 - Partners
 - How we work
 - Case study: drug driving awareness
 - Call to action!
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My role @ UL

- Underpinned by the Healthy UL framework, HEA Healthy Campus Framework & the *Strategic Framework for Addressing Illicit Substance use in Higher Education* (DoE 2020)
- 1st in Ireland
- Healthy UL subgroup
- Drop-in & F2F service (BI, MI, SAOR), signposting, family support, recovery support, sober curious, IPEDs
- Awareness
- Policy development
- Supervision of students & volunteers
- External engagement



SUBSTANCE USE & GAMBLING SUPPORT SERVICE

A FREE, CONFIDENTIAL & NON-JUDGEMENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICE FOR STAFF & STUDENTS

DROP-IN


TUESDAYS 10.30-11.30
THURSDAYS 3.30-4.30

Student Engagement & Support Hub
(Courtyard)


Other times - contact sugs@ul.ie 9-5


Dr. Eva Devaney
Substance Use & Gambling Support Officer





MW 3rd level regional D&A network - history



- Successful POBAL grant application (MIC/ULSU/ETB/MWRDAF) (2015?)
 - Project worker; steering group; working group
 - Project worker position - sustained for 2 years
 - Year 2 funded by 3 institutions
 - Steering group dissolved; network group continued
 - Drive initiatives
 - Policy template
 - Coordination by MWRDAF key since the start
 - Different levels of involvement by partners
 - Huge goodwill has kept the network going for 10 yrs
- 



MW 3rd level network in 2025
Current partners (plus a VS member)

Purpose of the network

- 30K+ students in Limerick during AY
- Regional & collaborative approach (MIC & TUS campuses in Clare & Tipp)
- To provide a forum for discussion of current & emerging issues/ trends regarding alcohol & other drug use relevant to the third level institutions in the Mid-West.
- To identify possible responses to these issues/trends in a cooperative way
- To provide a forum for sharing experiences, knowledge, ideas & resources and disseminating good practice
- Meets 4X/year with smaller task-based working groups meeting more frequently (e.g. race day, drug driving awareness project)
- Funding applications (small grants)

Personal reflections & next steps

- Learning from others (HSE, MWRDAF, AGS, HEIs, SUs, VAs) and sharing knowledge is vital. We cannot work in silos – healthy campus/city/settings approach. We are not in competition. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.
- Feeding into the Prev/Ed subgroup of the MWRDAF – feeds into the regional forum – 3rd level has a voice
- Sharing resources/real time on the ground info
- Next steps:
 - Finish & sustain #drugdrivingaware project
 - Gambling/gaming
 - Cannabis/HHC/Vaping
- Challenges: Time; SUs competing areas of interest



Case study:

#drugdrivingaware

Developed by students for students

- Context: student commuting, new test administered by the AGS – higher level of detections 2023-24. In 2023, over one-third of DUI detections were attributed to drug driving. Raised as an issue in the network Sept 2023.
- The #DrugDrivingAwareness project is an educational and harm reduction initiative that aims to raise awareness about the issue of Drug Driving and its potential consequences.
- We asked students about their information needs. 6 practical questions.
- Road Traffic Garda interviewed by SU officers – 6 videos Insta
 - 42K + views in 2 weeks April 2024
- Bespoke posters based on information needs
- Still active



23 Apr 2024

UL students participate

Just how long do
night out last?



FAVOURITE JEANS - ANOTHER NIGHT
FAVOURITE SILK TOP - WRECKED
NAGGIN OF VODKA - 8-10 HRS
MDMA - 3-4 DAYS IN URINE
WORK PLACEMENT - IMPACTED

Drugs react differently within all of us.
Some drugs last hours, days, even weeks.

Driving under the influence can have many impacts

#drugdrivingaware

NEVER USE DRUGS AND DRIVE



www.mwrdf.ie
Videos & Posters

HEA Healthy
Campus Case
study 2024

Which line will
you take?



Want to see the Great Outback?

Driving under the influence can limit
your career and travel choices...

#drugdrivingaware



RSA Roadshow – shuttlebus October 2024



Call to action!

- Proposal to form a national **community of practice** for people (students, SU staff/officers and staff) in the Heathy Campus landscape who have an interest in substance use (and maybe gambling too!) from a personal, professional, research POV.
- EOI: eva.devaney@ul.ie or sugs@ul.ie
- May align well with UCC's proposed work (let's not reproduce work!) - TBC
- Propose a brainstorming meeting in September 2025, agree on a couple of small wins and propose TORs.