

# Pilot CRAFFT Screening & Brief Interventions in Glasgow Youth Work Settings

Summary Report

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for  
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# Summary

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## Introduction

The CRAFFT tool provides an opportunity for youth workers to have a structured conversation with young people about alcohol and drug use, and can identify young people who may benefit from brief interventions to address needs around alcohol and/or drugs, or who may benefit from referral to other agencies for support.

A working group was established to oversee the development and delivery of new guidelines for screening, delivering brief interventions and making onward referrals for young people in youth work settings in Glasgow City. The working group commissioned work to develop guidelines and evaluate a pilot implementation.

## Programme of Work

The original aims of the programme of work were to:

- Develop and produce guidelines around CRAFFT related processes and procedures for youth workers, working with young people aged 11-17 (subsequently revised to 12-17)
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the CRAFFT guidelines across three youth work settings in Glasgow City (subsequently revised to two youth work settings)

The work was broken down into the following six objectives:

1. Review of local, national and international policies and procedures that relate to young people's alcohol and drug use.
2. Identify local youth organisations' policies and procedures relating to young people's alcohol and drug use.
3. Map appropriate agencies that youth services can refer young people to and their capacity to manage, if applicable, an increase in referrals.
4. Based upon the findings from objectives 1,2 and 3 and local evidence, produce age appropriate guidelines for CRAFFT screenings, brief interventions and referrals by youth work staff.
5. Refine the content and usability of the guidelines after consultation with youth work staff.
6. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the CRAFFT guidelines across three youth work settings in Glasgow City and recommend any further changes.

## Findings from Review of Policies and Procedures

The key findings from the review of policies and procedures were:

## **Feasibility/Acceptability of Alcohol and Drugs Screening and Brief Interventions for Young People in a Youth Work Setting**

- CRAFFT is a validated tool for screening young people's alcohol and drug use, developed for 12-18 year olds.
- Youth work settings are well placed to identify and address drug and alcohol related issues, and screenings and brief interventions have been successfully carried out in youth work settings in Scotland and elsewhere.
- CRAFFT screenings provide a basis for appropriate follow-up conversations.

## **Child Protection and Drug & Alcohol Policies and Consent**

- Scottish Government National Guidance for Child Protection recognises the risk of harm from children's own drug or alcohol use. Some local Safeguarding Children Boards have specific policies/procedures for alcohol/drug use and advocate the use of screening (some of which advocate CRAFFT as a screening tool).
- Youth organisations' safeguarding or child protection policies do not usually mention children's own behaviour. However, safeguarding concerns relating to children's own behaviour may arise during CRAFFT screening.
- Few national or local youth organisations have specific drugs and alcohol policies relating to young people's use of alcohol and drugs.
- Young people's ability to consent should be considered according to the Gillick ruling and the Age of Legal Capacity (Scotland) Act. In Glasgow, in other contexts, 12 is used as the 'rule of thumb' age to provide informed consent.

## **Survey of Youth Work Organisations**

A total of 23 Glasgow City youth work organisations responded to an online survey. Seventeen (74%) said they currently provided information, advice, support or interventions on drugs and/or alcohol issues. All knew of at least one organisation they could refer young people to if they were concerned about their drug or alcohol use.

## **Mapping of Local Referral Agencies**

Investigations were carried out to identify suitable referral agencies for young people who identified as requiring additional support as a result of CRAFFT screenings. It became apparent that the new Multiple Risk service (which was in development at the time) would be the most appropriate referral

agency. The roll-out of CRAFFT was delayed in order to ensure the new service was in operation and able to accept referrals. The service, called *Know Your Way* provides a person-centred 12 week programme of one-to-one support for young people.

Although *Know Your Way* was the default referral agency, the Alcohol Drug Recovery Service (ADRS) was identified as the most appropriate referral service where young people were identified as having an urgent need of support, with signs of dangerous use/dependency.

### **Development of the Guideline**

The development of the guideline was informed by the evidence from the review of policies and procedures. The guideline sets out the protocols for conducting CRAFFT screenings, brief interventions and referrals.

### **Development of the CRAFFT App**

The development of the CRAFFT App was overseen by the CRAFFT working group, and was commissioned to an application development organisation. The App collects all the required information to monitor CRAFFT scores and outcomes, as well as giving appropriate feedback. The app was signed off as compliant with NHSGGC governance concerning GDPR.

### **Validation Workshop**

Staff from nine organisations attended a validation workshop. Youth workers were given the draft CRAFFT guideline document prior to the event, and at the event there was a section-by-section presentation, and comment/feedback was sought. Overall the guideline was felt to be clear and appropriate and no required changes were identified.

### **Policy Development**

A key requirement for youth organisations enlisted to deliver CRAFFT screenings was that they would have to have an appropriate alcohol and drugs policy. In order to progress with the pilot, the working group developed a 'CRAFFT Practice Implications Document' which was intended to be a 'holding position', in the absence of a formal policy.

### **Identification of Pilot Sites**

Youth work sites were recruited in each of the three localities (South, North West and North East) for the CRAFFT pilot.

### **CRAFFT Training and Support**

Bespoke training was developed for those who would be delivering CRAFFT screening. The training was divided into four sessions. Two training courses were run:

- One in August-September 2019, with five youth workers from the two pilot sites in the South and North West (run as four half day sessions over a four-week period).
- One in October 2019 with two youth workers from the pilot site in the North East (run as two full day sessions on consecutive days).

Following the training, there was an open invitation for youth workers to get in touch with the trainers with any queries or support needs. Following the first training course, the two trainers met with the youth workers from the two organisations to obtain feedback on the initial CRAFFT screenings and respond to any concern or queries.

## **Pilot Findings**

### **Training**

Overall, the two trainers felt that the training had gone well, and they felt that the course worked better as four half days over four weeks than two full consecutive days. All the youth workers interviewed enthused about the training, praising the trainers, the content and the format. Trainers and participants all felt that the training was very helpful in providing the skills and knowledge needed to conduct the CRAFFT screenings and appropriate brief interventions and referrals where required.

All training participants completed pre-and post-training evaluation forms and also evaluations of each of the four sessions. The evaluation data show very positive findings, with all elements of the training being very well received. The data showed that training was successful in increasing knowledge on all the points it was developed to address and in providing the required skills.

### **Policy and Governance Barriers to Implementation**

Although the staff at the pilot site in the North East (further education establishment) were positive about the training and keen to deliver CRAFFT screenings, they were unable to proceed with this due to a potential conflict with the institution's safeguarding policy which prohibited staff from 'investigating' any safeguarding issues. There were also concerns about how screenings may be conducted within their safeguarding requirements which prohibit staff from being alone with a young person. It is understood the staff are currently liaising with their safeguarding team to resolve these points, but at the time of the evaluation this pilot site had not been able to begin CRAFFT screening.

### **Practical Opportunities and Limitations**

The youth workers were able to find a variety of spaces to conduct the CRAFFT screenings with privacy, which they felt were suitable.

Both pilot sites who had conducted CRAFFT screenings had periods where it was difficult to find time for screenings and brief interventions. The

organisation in the North West is activity-centred and staff could struggle to take time away from activities to do screenings. The organisation in the South was more varied and youth-led, but there were periods where planned events took precedence or otherwise impacted screening activity. In the South, there was a two-week period where the key youth worker forgot her password and was therefore unable to use the app or carry out screenings.

### **Youth worker resources**

In the North West organisation, two members of staff had been trained and both were undertaking CRAFFT screenings and brief interventions with young people. In the South, only one member of staff was undertaking CRAFFT screenings, but another (who had attended the training) was involved in delivering brief interventions and informal conversations following screening. The pilot identified a potential barrier of some youth work staff not being comfortable using the app-based technology to conduct screenings.

### **Brief interventions**

All young people who had positive CRAFFT scores (and some with negative scores) received a brief intervention. Ideally, BIs were conducted straight after the screening, but that this was not always possible.

### **Numbers of Screenings, CRAFFT Scores and Outcomes**

During the pilot period, 21 young people aged between 12 and 17 participated in CRAFFT screenings across two youth work settings. Eight of the 21 young people had a CRAFFT score of 2 or more, indicating risk.

Youth workers indicated that no referrals to services had been offered. They felt that the most appropriate actions for the young people they encountered with positive scores was a brief intervention. They had not encountered anyone who raised any 'red flags', child protection issues or in need of urgent attention for addiction. They had not referred any of the young people to the *Know Your Way* service. One youth worker felt that the length of support (12 weeks) offered at *Know Your Way* would not appeal to the young people they saw.

Staff in the pilot site in the South described a very obvious difference in the CRAFFT scores by ethnicity. Cannabis use was widespread for the Scottish white young people they worked with, but other ethnic groups and nationalities tended not to use drugs or alcohol at all.

### **Willingness to participate**

Youth workers in both pilot sites who conducted screenings reported that young people had all been willing and happy to engage in the screening and provide consent for anonymised data to be held. The youth workers felt that young people engaged well and were candid in their responses.

Young people interviewed all indicated that they had been given the choice of participating and that they were happy to do so. Although most young people could not recall what they were told about the screening and its purpose

before hand, one young person was under the impression that the purpose was to check that young people who were going on a trip with the organisation were not drinking or using drugs. A youth worker in the South said that she explained to young people that they were doing the screenings to see what services were needed in the area, and that taking part could bring services to the area.

### **Youth Work Setting**

Youth workers felt that the delivery of CRAFFT screenings and brief interventions in a youth work setting was very appropriate and allowed them to build on the relationship and rapport they had with the young people. The young people who had participated in CRAFFT screenings, regardless of the outcome of the screening, saw the youth work setting as a very appropriate and relevant place to have conversations about drug and alcohol use.

### **The CRAFFT Tool**

The youth workers felt that the CRAFFT tool was easy to use, appropriate and was effective as a quick screening tool. The CRAFFT app was viewed positively by youth workers and the young people. All felt that it was very user-friendly, being clear and easy to use.

### **The CRAFFT Guideline Document**

Although youth workers were issued the CRAFFT guideline document prior to attending training, and trainers stressing the importance of reading the document, youth workers did not use or refer to the document prior to training or after training/during the delivery of CRAFFT. However, during training, participants were exposed to the entire content of the guideline document as the training was based on the content of the guideline, broken down into sections and discussed in full.

### **Impacts**

All the youth workers interviewed felt the CRAFFT tool was very useful as a means of starting conversations and opening a dialogue about alcohol and drugs. Young people often saw value in initiating the discussion with youth workers and opening a door to future conversations.

Youth workers reported that CRAFFT screenings which had resulted in 'amber' or 'red' feedback on positive scores had often elicited an emotive response from young people, who could be shocked that their behaviour was indicative of risk. Three of the young people who were interviewed had CRAFFT screenings which had resulted in a positive score. Two talked about how their score and the subsequent conversations with the youth worker had initiated a real change in both their attitude and behaviour regarding cannabis use, either completely stopping or significantly cutting down their use. In one case, elimination of cannabis was associated with an increase in tobacco use.

## **Messages from the evaluation**

### **Key Successes**

- The CRAFFT training was very successful.
- The protocols set out in the guideline, the CRAFFT app and the age range targeted are regarded as appropriate and work well.
- The youth work setting appears particularly successful for the delivery of CRAFFT screening and brief interventions.
- Young people have generally been willing to participate in CRAFFT screenings and have been open and candid in their responses.
- The CRAFFT screenings provide a useful opportunity to begin a dialogue between the youth worker and young person regarding alcohol and drug use, affording future opportunities to discuss any relevant issues if they arise.
- There is evidence of CRAFFT screenings and brief interventions with young people effecting an immediate and real change in attitudes and behaviours with regards to substance use.

### **Other messages and emerging issues**

The evaluation has also highlighted the following messages:

- The third pilot site (a large further education establishment) was unable to initiate the CRAFFT programme due to a potential conflict between the CRAFFT protocols and the organisation's policies.
- The CRAFFT guideline document has largely not been read by youth workers as a standalone document prior to beginning screenings nor referred to in the course of conducting screenings or brief interventions. However, during training, participants were exposed to the entire content of the document as the training was based on the content of the guideline, broken down into sections and discussed in full.
- The pilot site in the South has highlighted the importance of cultural and environmental factors influencing behaviour around substance use – this includes very disparate patterns of behaviour by ethnicity and local community pockets with specific cultural norms.
- No referrals have been made to the *Know Your Way* service identified as the key referral route.
- There may be some variation in how the purpose of the CRAFFT screening is explained by youth workers to young people, or how this is understood by young people.
- At least one example of positive behaviour change also included some displacement of substance use to increased use of tobacco.

## Gaps in Evidence

Gaps in evidence include:

- Only a fairly small number of young people have been screened.
- No young people were referred to *Know Your Way*. There were no instances of red flags, child protection issues or young people requiring a referral to the Alcohol and Drugs Recovery Service.
- There is ongoing dialogue at the third pilot site to attempt to resolve the issues relating to the possible conflict between CRAFFT protocols and internal policies – learning from this process and any resulting resolution is not yet available.
- Because the guideline has not been read or referred to as a stand-alone document, it was not possible to gauge youth workers' views on the document itself.
- It is not possible to determine longer term impacts of screenings and BIs.

## Recommendations

Based on the evaluation findings and the evidence gaps, the following nine recommendations are made:

1. Implement a Second Phase Pilot.
2. Consider expanding the data gathered by the CRAFFT app (e.g. include ethnicity)
3. Develop a template alcohol and drugs policy
4. Refine the CRAFFT training programme
5. Improve clarity on the purpose of CRAFFT screenings
6. Review advice regarding referring to *Know Your Way*
7. Further emphasise the importance of using the guideline document
8. Provide youth workers with information on smoking cessation
9. Enable paper versions of CRAFFT screenings