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LAST SCOTLAND'S FUTURES FORUM SEMINAR ON ALCOHOL AND DRUGS TO TAKE PLACE AT HOLYROOD

2 April 2008

The last Scotland's Futures Forum seminar ahead of the publication of a report on 'Fresh Perspectives on Alcohol and Drugs' will take place in Holyrood on Thursday (3 April).

Discussions will explore the links between inequalities and substance misuse in the morning and debates around abstinence and treatment in the afternoon.

Speaking at the daylong event will be:

- Dr Brian Kidd and Mike McCarron from the Scottish Association of Alcohol and Drug Action Teams;
- Mike Ashton, author of "the new abstentionists" report and editor of Drug and Alcohol Findings, Drugscope;
- Dr Ailsa McKay, Reader in Gender and Economics at Glasgow Caledonian University ;
- Professor Neil McKeganey from the Centre for Drug Misuse Research at Glasgow University ;
- Dr Tom Gilhooly, GP, Glasgow NHS
- Jackie Johnston, Manager of FV Tox, a treatment centre based in Alloa in the Forth Valley
- Jason Wallace, Janet McGowan and Catriona Doran, researchers from the Scottish Drugs Forum.

Scotland's Futures Forum Director Robert Rae said:

"This is the last session in our programme focussing on alcohol and drugs, but a very important one. Our aim during this study has been to stimulate open and honest debate on the causes and impacts of drug and alcohol misuse across Scottish society. We have considered the views of local communities, a wide range of harm reduction measures, the role of poverty, and review international best practice.

"I am confident the project has helped inform public policy debate and challenged policy makers to consider new long-term approaches to problematic alcohol and drug use. We look forward now to the publication of our report on this subject in June."

Background information on the 'Fresh Perspectives on Alcohol and Drugs' project

Holyrood's think-tank, Scotland 's Futures Forum, is carrying out an innovative study into alcohol and drugs use in Scotland . The aim of the project is to look at the following question: "How can Scotland reduce the damage to its population through alcohol and drugs by half by the year 2025?"

The latest study by Scotland's Futures Forum is being undertaken in the context of recent research which suggests that there are currently in excess of 100,000 children in Scotland affected by parental alcohol use and nearly 60,000 by parental drug use (source: Scottish Executive, May 2006).

Background information on Scotland 's Futures Forum

Scotland 's Futures Forum was created by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body in August 2005. The forum aims to identify key challenges facing the nation and stimulate debate between MSPs, academics, civic society, wealth creators and international organisations on the ways of meeting them.

For more information about Scotland 's Futures Forum see:

www.scotlandfutureforum.org

www.scottish.parliament.uk/nmCentre/news/futuresforum_news.htm

Media access

Members of the media are welcome to attend this event, which is taking place in Committee Room 1 of the Scottish Parliament and should contact Sally Coyne on 0131 348 6265 or sally.coyne@scottish.parliament.uk

Photography

Photographs will be available afterwards by contacting the Scottish Parliament's Media Relations Office on 0131 348 6269 or photography@scottish.parliament.uk.

For further information, the Scottish Parliament media contact is:

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