

Kerslake Commission evidence submission

Expert Citizens CIC

1. Thinking about the response to rough sleeping during the pandemic, which measures, policies, practices or joint working do you think worked well and why?

-enabling to enter housing rapidly:
- housing provision that was flexible enough to manage drug use on site without exclusion. Some areas did this, others didn't.
- provision of key interventions – purchased alcohol, rapid prescribing, needle exchange to retain people in service; joint working with drug services was essential
- moving people from daily to weekly (or longer) prescribing
- where it happened staff in housing being trained around drugs BUT some of this training was too short and in some areas it was non-existent

2. In contrast, which measures, policies, practices or joint working do you think have not worked well and why?

Hotels and areas which evicted for avoidable breaches of rules such as drugs on site.

Should have had far more training.

3. Please describe the specific challenges, and opportunities, in the next phase of the Everyone In programme and helping people to move on from hotel accommodation.

Planned move on essential: seamless transfer of prescriptions and healthcare as people move is essential. Very last chance to get people scripted, engaged on treatment, get vaccines, healthcare, woundcare done NOW.

Every person leaving should be having a health screen, chance for BBV tests and vaccines as appropriate.

All people with recent history of opiate use should leave with Naloxone.

Getting people tied in to drugs, mental health or wound treatment now is imperative.

Need to make sure there is good handholding as people will shift accommodation, support and treatment provider all at same time.

Need to maximise meaningful engagement so people don't drift back towards street scene and street identity as this will be a catalyst for lapse. But housing provision is winding down at the same time drug provision is not yet opening up enough and that leaves a void.

4. And finally, what do you think needs to be put in place to embed the good work that developed during the pandemic, or improve upon it?

Massive spending on suitably supported housing, integrated drug and mental health services and faster access to high quality treatment.

There needs to be a huge spend on drugs treatment to better facilitate psychosocial interventions.