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► **[Commissioning for recovery. Drug treatment, reintegration and recovery in the community and prisons: a guide for drug partnerships.](#)**

**National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse.
National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse, 2010.**

Guidance to funding authorities on how to construct a local pattern of services from England's special health authority tasked to improve the availability, capacity and effectiveness of drug misuse treatment.

This guidance is intended for local multi-agency partnerships responsible for planning services in their areas and for the spending of funds earmarked nationally for tackling drug problems, and also for authorities responsible for addiction services in prisons. It aims to give practical advice on how local commissioners may seek to continually develop effective, evidence-based treatment options with a focus on enabling service users to reintegrate into society and recover as soon as is practicable in the context of a recovery-based drug treatment system. The following text is based on the foreword to the guidance.

The 2008 [English national drug strategy](#) stipulated that "The goal of all treatment is for drug users to achieve abstinence from their drug – or drugs – of dependency". In order to deliver against all the treatment system actions in the drug strategy, partnerships will recognise the need to have recovery as the bedrock of all commissioning decisions.

In practice this will mean that partnerships articulate a vision for drug treatment in their areas that meets the needs of the drug-using population – for those currently in treatment, and for those as yet not engaged with treatment and reintegration services.

Partnerships and services will want to articulate the ambition of service users and their families and ensure that all systems provide options that meet these ambitions. This will mean that services stay abreast of service-user aspiration – regularly checked at individual care plan review stages – and seek to maximise opportunities as they present in a client's journey, building on the benefits of being in treatment, with a view to recovery steps being foremost at all times.

Reintegration options – in both employment and housing terms – as outlined by the drug

strategy, will be an integral part of care planning, with partnership efforts focused on harnessing local job and housing options as key building blocks to maximise recovery.

The drug strategy highlights that partnerships will want to build in opportunities in local drug treatment systems for families and carers to positively impact on the service-user experience of treatment and to assist with getting their lives back on track.

In order to deliver this challenging agenda, partnerships will be aware of the need to pay significant attention to how service users exit treatment either through community-based structured day services, tailored community-based abstinence services or via residential rehabilitation services. Building on annual needs assessments and service-user views, planned exits and recovery opportunities are likely to be key building blocks in an effective treatment system.

As part of their vision, partnerships may wish to consider building links to mutual aid groups into all local systems, ensuring that all individual services have pathways to mutual aid groups.

Commissioners and joint commissioning groups may well wish to consider whether the identification of recovery champions at both a system and service level would assist in retaining the focus of all parties on the recovery agenda. Recovery champions could play an important role in articulating ambition, championing routes to recovery and challenging partnerships and services to retain a recovery focus at all stages of a service user's journey.

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