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National Assembly for Wales
Health and Social Care Committee

Inquiry into new psychoactive substances (“legal highs”)

Evidence from Public Health Wales – LH AI 06

4th December 2014

**Submission to the National Assembly for Wales’ Health
and Social Care Committee : Inquiry into New
Psychoactive Substances**

**Additional information on ‘How Public Health Wales engages and
communicates with communities in Wales about New Psychoactive
Substances (NPSs)’**

In addition to the WEDINOS project, Public Health Wales engages and communicates with communities in Wales in relation to NPS both directly and indirectly via a number of interventions and resources. These include:

- Active engagement via presentations and updates with NPS forums and service users groups including the All Wales Service User Movement (AWSUM) as well as concerned and interested members of the wider community, e.g. at adult learning centres as part an educational programme
- Regular training sessions on NPS to a range of specialists, clinicians and service providers including criminal justice, housing, education, youth services, prison healthcare, primary care, ambulance and emergency services and substance misuse services
- On-going development of an e-module on NPS accessible for all interested parties via the NHS e-learning portal
- Inclusion of a range of specific NPS on the Harm Reduction Database Wales – to effectively capture the scale and nature of NPS use in Wales and to ensure that those using, or considering use of NPS, are provided with accurate and appropriate harm reduction



advice in a range of services including community pharmacy services

- Contribution of information and advice to the DAN24/7 website on NPS and potential harms associated with use. This service is free and bilingual and provides a single point of contact for anyone in Wales wanting further information or help relating to drugs or alcohol
- Publication of a quarterly bulletin 'PHILTRE' on NPS which is available to all interested parties via the WEDINOS website
- Use of social media tools including Twitter and email contact details for engagement and effective communication with the general population as well as NPS specialists.

Over the next year, Public Health is planning work to better understand important issues around:

- The availability and sources of NPS in Wales
- Initiation to use
- Awareness of harms associated with NPS and other drugs and alcohol on physical and mental health;
- Impact of use on individuals, their families and carers and the wider community.

This work will inform interventions designed to prevent initiation of use of NPS.