

How can you help us?

Donate

There are several ways to donate to BAT:

You can donate by PayPal to kate@bataid.org

We are also delighted to receive cheque payments – please make payable to ‘Battle Against Tranquillisers’ and send to our office address.

Our sponsors

We would like to thank the John James foundation for their funding this year



Volunteer

Please contact us if you feel you would like to volunteer

Join BATs committee

The most effective Boards are ones which benefit from individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences and skill sets. The role of a BAT Trustee is to ensure that Battle Against Tranquillisers fulfils its duties to its service users and delivers on our vision, mission and values. You will be required to attend 12 meetings per year plus AGM and perform associated admin. If you are interested please email us at support@bataid.org

Obituary



We are sad to report the death of BAT’s first Vice Chair of the management committee, Edith Milne, who contributed so much to BAT through her passion and commitment and who later became an honorary trustee.

About BAT

Our mission:

BAT is committed to reducing the harms caused by prescribed drugs of addiction and withdrawal.

Our commitment is to:

Anyone who has problems associated with these drugs, no matter how they became addicted to them. The professionals who look after these people.

Which drugs are we talking about?

- Benzodiazepines e.g.: diazepam, clonazepam, lorazepam, Xanax
- ‘Z’ drugs e.g.: Zopiclone, Zolpidem.
- Gabapentinoids, Pregabalin, Gabapentin.
- Opioid painkillers eg: Co-codamol, Tramadol, etc:

We want to develop good relationships with statutory, voluntary and not-for profit organisations

We want to work in partnership with all referrers, developing strong and trusting relationships with them.

BAT will continue to deliver a service for clients, which puts them at the centre of their treatment and in which they are able to make informed choices, in line with the 2017 Consent Law, so that everyone accessing BAT services experiences the same quality of support and information

BAT runs a support group at Gloucester House, Southmead Hospital on Thursdays from 14:30 – 16:00



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Patchway, Bristol
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BATTLE AGAINST TRANQUILLISERS

bat

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18



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Chairs report

Despite being in a challenging climate BAT has been able to continue to deliver its services to those who need them, we have continued to support clients at our groups, provide 1-1 interventions and work with clients and GP's to make sure their support is correct.

BAT has finished the sub-contract with DHI and will not be recommissioned to deliver services for a second time, this means that BAT will need to continue into the next year relying mainly on its reserves to continue to deliver its services.

BAT has struggled to adjust to the changing face of commissioning, and we fully understand that there needs to be fast paced change within the charity in order to be sustainable. BAT will strive in the following year to make changes and these have already begun. This year the trustees made a decision to invest some of its legacy for a 3 year fixed term. This will bring in an income for BAT which will support its ongoing functions.

We have reviewed all of our finances and made savings streamlining the charities work. BAT also took the decision to centralise its support line for clients, this has the benefits of enabling us to grow a volunteer base on supporters who can give advice over the phone, and this in the future will help build capacity within the charity

We are fully aware of the rising problem in prescribed and over-the-counter medication and believe that we are on the



Robert Farrow, Chair

cusp of change and this is becoming more recognised by commissioning groups. Dependence on these types of substances is only increasing as recognised in Public Health England's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

News in a nutshell

On October 15th 2018 the Home Office published news that Prescription drugs **pregabalin and gabapentin** are to be reclassified as class C controlled substances from April 2019. The move came after experts highlighted rising numbers of fatalities linked to the drugs.

There have been some signs of progress in the knowledge about the **2017 Consent Law** as well as putting it into practice, particularly in GP surgeries where there has a big increase in the number of health professions who have contacted BAT in the past, asking what BAT could offer them.

BAT believes that the recently-launched **NHS 10 year plan**, provides new opportunities for working with GPs in their surgeries. We are planning one GP surgery and we are hopeful that this will lead to many more such opportunities.

Earlier in 2018 BAT was asked by **Public Health England** to respond to a call for evidence on 'dependence, short term discontinuation and longer-term withdrawal symptoms associated with prescribed medicines' which gave us the opportunity to look more closely at our service user statistics

Service user journey

At first taking diazepam made me feel extra happy and strong, but gradually I began to notice I wasn't happy any more, I wasn't the person I'd always been before. Fears began to creep in. Then paranoia. My confidence disappeared. Friends began to lose interest in this strange sad person I was becoming. My partner left. 'You just won't pull yourself together. I'm off'

I tried everything. I asked myself 'why is this happening to me?'

And then One day my GP rang me. 'I've been doing a bit of research. I think it might be the diazepam making you ill. I'm going to give you a telephone number to ring'



My GP AND Battle Against Tranquillisers worked together with me. Sometimes a worker from BAT came with me to see the GP. I knew they both wanted me to succeed. I felt safe and a bit hopeful.

That was 6 years ago and it was hard, very hard, but I really am me again. And I'm loving every minute of it!

Service statistics

In Service

In 2017-18 BAT saw a reduction in service users in treatment to 152, from 194 the previous year (-21%)

Exit from service

83 service users exited BATs services in 2017-18. Our total successful exits – 90%. This contrasts to PHE overall successful exits of 49% in 2016-17.

Return to service

PHE reports that of those in treatment on the 31 March 2017, a third (29%) were in treatment continuously since their initial commencement. 34% had more than three attempts at treatment. By contrast BAT has had only 3 returns to service in 3 years. We believe this is because our specialist advice ensures the service users do not leave the service without the knowledge and support they need.

Phone support

(Figures for the last quarter)

Our support line receives approximately 600 incoming calls a month - however, many of these would be repeat callers who make multiple calls. BAT currently has 51 clients who use BATs phone service as their method of support (as opposed to using a group)