

## What supports can drug services offer me?

### A support worker can:

- Listen to your experience of intimidation.
- Support you to think through your decision in relation to payment, non-payment and/or seeking help from the guards.
- Provide you with information on the Drug Related Intimidation Reporting Programme.
- Help you to arrange a meeting with the nominated Inspector for your area.

### Support workers cannot:

- Advise you on what to do. You are the person best placed to make any decisions relating to this issue.

## The experiences of service users

*"We felt persecuted and to have a number of a guard who understood was invaluable. This support enabled us to focus on making the right decisions and not those based upon hear-say and fear." (Family member)*

*"I found it a very positive experience. The Inspector responded very promptly, was very easy to talk to, very helpful and engaged well in the discussions with myself and the family. The Inspector was also very respectful of the confidential nature of our meeting and offered future help, if the family desired." (Family Support Worker)*

*"Intimidation is the most frightening and stressful experience....whether you or someone close to you is the target. The fear and pain it generates is insurmountable and speaking for myself I ended up like a headless chicken running round in circles trying to solve a problem I didn't have a clue about. Thanks to the support I got from the National Family Support Network and the facilitator of my family support group, I stopped, took a breath and went to the guards, whom I found very helpful....It eventually ended and I will always be grateful to family support for helping me through a very frightening period." (Family Member)*

*"As a facilitator in a family support group I come across several issues that people struggle with. One of the most difficult of these is intimidation regarding drug debts. It is a huge support for me in my work to be able to pick up the phone and speak to the National Family Support Network who can put me in contact with the relevant people who can offer help." (Family Support Worker)*



## Drug Related Intimidation Reporting Programme

This programme has been established by the Garda National Drugs Unit and the National Family Support Network. The purpose of this programme is to respond to the needs of drug users and family members who are experiencing drug related intimidation.



This leaflet was funded by the HSE Social Inclusion Unit

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## What is the Drug Related Intimidation Reporting Programme?

Drug users and family members can be intimidated by drug dealers to repay drug debts. Forms of intimidation can include threats, physical violence, damage to the family home / property and sexual violence. Some people try to repay these debts through cash payment or cash payment and involvement in illegal activity. The experience of intimidation can be very frightening and can pose a serious risk to the individuals involved and their loved ones.

Inspectors have been selected by the Garda Commissioner to respond to the issue of drug related intimidation. The nominated Inspector will always be at management level in the force, and will liaise directly with the Superintendent in relation to the case. Individuals experiencing intimidation can make contact with the Inspector for their area for an informal / formal meeting.

## How can I make contact with the nominated Inspector for my area?

- You can contact a station directly and request to speak with the nominated Inspector in charge of drug related intimidation for your area or
- You can ask a local family support worker or drugs worker to contact the Inspector for your area or
- You can ask the National Family Support Network to contact the Inspector for your area.
- If you or your support worker is having difficulty contacting the Inspector for your area you can contact the National Family Support Network or the Project Office at the Garda National Drugs Unit and they will make contact for you.
- A full list of the nominated Inspectors and their contact details can be found on [www.fsn.ie](http://www.fsn.ie).

## What help can the Gardaí offer me if I am experiencing intimidation?

### At an initial meeting Gardaí will:

- Provide practical safety information.
- Provide advice in relation to particular threats or instances of intimidation.
- Provide information on appropriate drug support services for the individual in the family who is accruing drug debts.
- Outline how to make a formal complaint, what is involved, what happens after and possible outcomes.

It is the decision of the person being intimidated if they want to make a formal complaint.

If you wish to meet with the Inspector, although are apprehensive to meet in the Garda station, or to meet with an Inspector in uniform, you may request to meet the Inspector in a neutral venue with the Inspector in plain clothes.

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