

Ana Liffey Drug Project

MEDIA RELEASE

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Lord Mayor launches ‘What’s in the Powder?’ campaign aimed at student population

The Lord Mayor, Criona Ni Dhalaigh, today launched a campaign urging students to think about drug use, and in particular about drugs sold in powder form. The ‘What’s in the Powder?’ campaign is the result of a collaboration between three Dublin universities – DIT, TCD, and UCD and the Ana Liffey Drug Project. Resources created include posters and a factsheet, which will be distributed on campus as well as promoted on social media and via the drugs.ie website. Speaking at today’s launch in the Mansion House, The Lord Mayor of Dublin, Criona Ní Dhálaigh, highlighted Ireland’s drugs problem:

“After more than three decades of drugs devastating our communities, Ireland’s drugs problem has gone way beyond the point of a crisis. For many people drugs are a reality and an established part of their lives. I personally know families that have seen three successive generations blighted by drugs - lives devastated by chaos, disease and death. We need action; and I take this opportunity to call on the next Government to prioritise Ireland’s drugs problem.”

The Lord Mayor also praised the efforts of all the groups involved in developing the ‘What’s in the Powder?’ campaign:

“I was very impressed to learn that the original campaign has expanded across the country. I believe that this harm reduction campaign, and its predecessor ‘What’s in the Pill?’ provides much needed information on drugs and drug use. While it’s always safest not to use illicit drugs at all, the reality is that people do use drugs. Given that this is the case, they need to be properly informed about the risks and how to reduce the potential for harm. I want to commend the work of the Student Welfare Officers and the staff of the Ana Liffey Drug Project for continuing to work together to bring this campaign into third level institutions.”

These sentiments were echoed by Lysette Golden, Welfare Officer for DIT; Clare O’Connor Welfare Officer for UCD; and Conor Clancy, Welfare Officer for Trinity College Dublin Students’ Union, who made the following statement:

“The ‘What’s in the Powder?’ instalment of this already widespread campaign represents our ongoing commitment to raising awareness about drugs in a way that is realistic and in-touch. There is evidence to show that students do indeed take illegal drugs. We do not condone the use of illegal drugs, but if a student chooses to do so, they need to be educated about what they are putting into their bodies, and as welfare officers that is exactly what we have to do, educate.”

The campaign focuses on harm reduction information related to powder taking. Already in 2016, there have been a number of hospitalisations and a fatality in Ireland which was reported in the national press.

Tony Duffin, Director of the Ana Liffey Drug Project, said of the 'What's in the Powder?' campaign:

"The 'What's in the Powder?' campaign provides third level students, and others, with knowledge that could save them from serious harm or death. Each year students arrive through the doors of their third level institutions full of life and looking forward to the future. Part of this experience is to fully embrace this new found freedom. For some people, this will involve taking illicit drugs. Those people need clear, accurate and evidence based communication on this subject. That is what this campaign provides."

To download the posters and factsheet visit drugs.ie/whatsinthepowder

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Information for Editors:

Ana Liffey Drug Project is a national addiction service working to reduce the harm caused by drug use in Ireland. Ana Liffey provided direct services to over 2,914 clients in 2014, many of whom are among the most marginalised from mainstream service provision. To find out more about the Ana Liffey's services visit www.aldp.ie.

Drugs.ie is an independent website funded by the HSE and managed by the Ana Liffey Drug Project. The drugs.ie site has in excess of 150,000 unique Irish visitors each year and over 750,000 international visitors annually.

Twitter:

We would be grateful if you could use the following Tweet and the attached PNG image to link to the campaign website page:

Today [@LordMayorDublin](https://twitter.com/LordMayorDublin) launched 'What's in the powder?' campaign aimed at student population <http://drugs.ie/whatsinthepowder> [#WhatsInThePowder](https://twitter.com/WhatsInThePowder)