

Rehabilitation Programmes for Youth¹ Drug Abusers

Singapore maintains a zero-tolerance stance against drugs. We tackle drug demand and supply through a comprehensive approach of tough laws and effective enforcement, preventive drug education and structured rehabilitation and supervision for drug abusers. Preventive Drug Education will continue to be our first line of defence in the fight against drugs.

2 Youth drug abusers will be placed on suitable rehabilitation programmes depending on their risk profiles. Risk assessments are conducted by trained psychologists to assess the abuser's likelihood of drug re-offending, taking into account factors such as criminal and drug abuse history, family support and anti-social peer associations. The abuser's risk profile will determine the type and intensity of rehabilitation programme that will be administered.

3 A youth drug abuser who is tested positive in the urine test may be emplaced on one of three rehabilitation programmes: the Youth Enhanced Supervision (YES) Scheme for low risk abusers, the Community Rehabilitation Centre (CRC) for moderate-risk abusers or the Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) for high-risk abusers.

4 The key elements of each programme are:

(a) YES scheme

The YES scheme comprises weekly or bi-weekly urine reporting requirement for up to 2 years. In addition, the supervisees go through counselling and casework administered by social workers over a period of 6 months. In addition to individual counselling and group work, families of the supervisees are engaged, as strong family support is an important part of the scheme.

(b) CRC

Youth abusers assessed to be suitable for the 12-month CRC regime will first complete a short detention at the Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC). They are then placed on a structured 6-month residential phase at the CRC. The structured CRC environment facilitates rehabilitation while minimising disruption to the abusers' daily lives. Abusers continue to study or work in the day during their stay at the CRC and then return to the CRC in the evenings. The abusers will undergo drug intervention and life-skills programmes which inculcate pro-social values. These programmes, together with casework and counselling, help abusers resist the temptation of taking drugs again and reject negative peer influence. The families of the abusers are encouraged to visit them regularly at the CRC, involve themselves in these programmes and familiarise themselves with the post-release routine.

Upon their successful completion of the residential phase at the CRC, abusers will be electronically tagged and placed on supervised home leave for 6 months. In

¹ Youth refers to persons below the age of 21.

addition to support from their families during this phase of the programme, the abusers continue to receive counselling and guidance from SPS's counsellors to ensure that they stay away from drugs.

(c) DRC

The DRC regime lasts up to 36 months, depending on whether the youth abusers are first-time or second-time abusers, their risk levels, progress in rehabilitation as well as their conduct and behaviour. The DRC regime comprises a residential in-care phase and a structured aftercare phase.

Abusers receive differentiated in-care rehabilitation and counselling programmes to address their criminogenic needs and addiction issues in the DRC. The programmes are administered in accordance with the abuser's risk of general re-offending and severity of drug use. During the aftercare phase, they are closely supervised and undergo a regime to facilitate their reintegration into society.

New programme

5 The Task Force has identified the need for more differentiated and targeted rehabilitation programmes to meet the needs of a more diverse profile of youth drug abusers. In this regard, the Task Force recommends a new rehabilitation programme to be introduced for youth drug abusers. This programme could include youths who have taken drugs but tested negative in their urine tests, perhaps because they took the drugs some time before the urine test was administered. CNB will refer these youth abusers to this programme, which will be run by the National Addictions Management Service (NAMS). We expect the new programme to be ready before the end of this year.

6 This new programme will be conducted by counsellors over a 3-month period. It will comprise four half-day group counselling sessions and three individual counselling sessions for the youths. It will equip youths with skills to lead a drug-free lifestyle through experiential learning, support and guidance. There will also be a half-day workshop for their parents to equip them with knowledge and skills to support their children. Parental and school support will be critical for the success of this programme.