



## Making Every Adult Matter

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### What is MEAM?

MEAM is a coalition of four national charities - Clinks, DrugScope, Homeless Link and Mind - formed to influence policy and services for adults with multiple needs and exclusions. Together the charities represent over 1600 frontline organisations working in the criminal justice, drug treatment, homelessness and mental health sectors. The coalition is supported by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

#### What is the MEAM vision?

The MEAM vision is of a society where every adult matters, regardless of the complexity of their needs:

- Where people with multiple needs and exclusions are explicitly recognised in government policy as a group requiring specific help to achieve positive outcomes; and where
- Every adult who needs it is appropriately supported by a range of services (statutory and voluntary) to achieve their part in the rights, roles and responsibilities of society.

The MEAM ambition is for a national programme of investment and reform to improve the well-being and life chances of adults with multiple needs and exclusions.

#### What is multiple needs and exclusions?

People facing multiple needs and exclusions are part of all our communities. They experience a combination of issues that impact adversely on their lives (such as homelessness, substance misuse, mental ill health and offending) and because of this also face ineffective responses or exclusion from statutory and voluntary services designed and incentivised to deal with one problem at a time.

As a result they often live chaotic lives at the margins of our society, reliant on inappropriate and expensive emergency or criminal justice responses and without access to the coordinated interventions that help change lives.

(For a full definition of multiple needs and exclusions please see the MEAM four-point manifesto, p.9)

## Why focus on this group?

Failing to tackle multiple needs and exclusions therefore has both social and economic costs to individuals and communities. Getting it right for this group could improve outcomes for the individuals involved but also, at the same time, help government towards achieving some of its core commitments - support for the most vulnerable; better value from public services so that all may benefit; and tackling the budgetary deficit.

## What is MEAM calling for?

Progress on multiple needs and exclusions requires simultaneous action from frontline services and national government that builds on what works across both policy and practice. MEAM is therefore:

- **Calling on government and political leaders:** to commit to a green paper on multiple needs and exclusions that makes this a key cross-government policy issue and lays out a shared vision and approach
- **Calling on local areas and services:** to deliver coordinated responses, increase the impact of public investment and create positive outcomes for people with multiple needs and exclusions

## How will MEAM achieve its goals?

In the next 12 months MEAM will:

- Support three local pilot areas to develop coordinated service responses for people with multiple needs and exclusions, evaluate the social and economic impact of these interventions and share this information with MEAM members and government through a report and series of events
- Continue to promote key messages to politicians and government as outlined in the MEAM *four-point manifesto* (2009) and *Hardest to Reach? The politics of multiple needs and exclusions* (2010)
- Engage in further policy development activities
- Liaise with a wide range of agencies working with people facing multiple needs and exclusions through the MEAM reference group and continue to seek the views of service users to inform the coalition's work

## How do I get involved or get more information?

For further information on MEAM please see <http://www.meam.org.uk>

For information on:

- The service pilots - <http://www.meam.org.uk/service-pilots>
- Publications - <http://www.meam.org.uk/publications>
- Events - <http://www.meam.org.uk/events>

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