



FINGLAS  
ADDICTION  
SUPPORT  
TEAM

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[www.fastltd.ie](http://www.fastltd.ie)

The Chairperson  
Finglas/Cabra Local Drug Task Force  
Tolka Clinic  
121 Broombridge Close  
Ballyboggan Road  
Dublin 11

11<sup>th</sup> February 2010

Dear Chairperson,

The Management Board of FAST wish to outline how the severe funding cuts in FAST's budget has affected the service for drug/alcohol users, their families and the wider community.

In 2009 FAST saw over 400 clients who accessed our service approximately 3,600 times between them. We delivered a high quality service throughout 2009 with excellent measureable outcomes.

Due to the 13% cut in funding the Board took the difficult but pragmatic decision to cut our costs in the following way;

- Reduced Counselling appointments
- Reduced Cocaine Support
- Reduced Drop-In
- Reduced opening hours
- Reduced overheads e.g. training budget, cleaner etc.
- Reduced employee salaries
- One employee reduced to a four day week

These reductions have had a direct impact on clients, staff and the wider community. The reductions have increased the pressure and capacity to respond to an ever growing drug problem. Staff are stretched to capacity and for the first time in FAST's history we have had to operate a waiting list for our cocaine service.



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As the only community based drug/alcohol service in Finglas, the demands on the service are numerous and in times of recession are increasing not decreasing.

Finglas as a community cannot afford any further erosion of local drug services. The ramifications of further cuts would have a serious effect on drug users, their families and the wider community and only serve to exacerbate the problem, not help to solve it.

Research in the UK and Australia indicate that investment in Addiction Services saves money in the long term and is much more cost effective than diluting services.

The Finglas/Cabra Local Drug Task Force receives the second lowest funding budget amongst all of the Task Forces despite having one of the worst drug problems.

It is essential that no further cuts are imposed on FAST or indeed any service in Finglas addressing Prevention, Treatment, Rehabilitation and Supply Reduction.

Yours sincerely,

*Barbara Condon*

On behalf of the Management Board

Barbara Condon

FAST Manager