Simpson House provides counselling and therapeutic support to adults affected by drug use and young people aged 5-18 affected by parental drug and/or alcohol use.

As part of CrossReach (the operating name of the Church of Scotland Social Care Council), Simpson House is guided and motivated by a Christian ethos of love, compassion and care for all. At Simpson House you will find a welcoming, professional, non-judgemental place where anyone can explore the impact of drug and/or alcohol use; whether directly or indirectly affected.

We have two main teams within Simpson House which offer clients a variety of services; our Counselling & Recovery team provides support to those 16+ who are affected by their own or someone else’s past or present drug use and our Sunflower Garden team, working with children and young people, aged 5 – 18 affected by parental drug and/or alcohol use.

Counselling & Recovery clients are offered Recovery Appointments which are structured and focused 30 minute sessions using CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy) and REBT (rational emotive behaviour therapy) tools to explore issues which may be affecting their day to day life. Many clients have 6 sessions before moving on to counselling, which can be more in depth and open ended. We also run a group called ‘A Life Worth Living’ for people who have struggled with depression.

Sunflower Garden offers 1:1 therapeutic support within schools as well as counselling and art therapy at Simpson House. Groups for children and young people affected by parental alcohol use are also offered.

To find out more about the services we offer at Simpson House please phone us on 0131 225 6028
I’m delighted to introduce the 2017/2018 Annual Review for Simpson House. Inside you will find information on our service, our people and most importantly our clients; whom are at the heart of everything we do. This document covers the period from April 2017-March 2018. Hopefully, it will be interesting for you and, as ever, we always welcome your feedback.

Since starting my role here in December 2017, three things particularly stand out:

**The depth of vulnerability experienced by some of the clients we are here to serve and the increasingly complex, multifaceted nature of what our clients are bringing.** Correspondingly the skill, professionalism and expertise with which our teams respond; coming alongside clients as they work towards achieving some truly remarkable outcomes.

**The critical importance of team-working both within all areas of Simpson House and in partnership with others in Edinburgh.** Of particular note are Circle, ELCA, Crew and all those we work in close collaboration with through the Edinburgh Alcohol and Drug Partnership. More generally though, day-in and day-out, we work closely with a multitude of other professionals whether in the field of psychological therapies or medicine or in social services, the prison service or elsewhere in the Edinburgh localities. The list is vast and we are thankful to all we regularly liaise with.

**The generosity of those contributing to make our work possible.** Of particular note are the many volunteers freely offering their time to provide administrative support and counselling time. I would like to thank them all for everything they freely bring.

For the year up until March 2018, 340 adults, children and young people have been supported through various interventions; including recovery appointments, 1:1 counselling sessions (in the community and in HMP Edinburgh), ‘A Life Worth Living’ group, art therapy and therapeutic support in schools. 80% of Children and Young People reported feeling better about themselves and 84% of adults experienced an improvement in their psychological health.

Thanks to those involved in making all of this possible and I look forward to seeing what the upcoming year will bring.
Our People

Jackie Walker
CrossReach Head of Service (Counselling and Community) Children and Family Services

Sheila Gordon
CrossReach Director, Children and Family Services

Craig Miller
Managing Co-ordinator, Simpson House

Claire Murray
Monitoring & Evaluation Administrator

Barbara Wesolowska
Finance & IT Administrator

Teresa Reilly  Margaret Barr  Miranda Whitmarsh  Kirsten Pryde  Paul Arnott
Volunteer Administration and Reception Team

Counselling & Recovery Adults
Ruth Galloway-Kirkland - Service Leader
Alison Balfour – Senior Project Worker
Lydia Eunson – Counsellor
Anna Mastorakou – Counsellor
Paul Nicholson – Recovery Worker
Liz Forrester - Recovery Worker

Louise Wilson – Volunteer Counsellor
Chera Sudworth – Volunteer Counsellor
Cathy Bain – Volunteer Counsellor
Karen Stilman – Volunteer Counsellor
David Scott – Volunteer Counsellor
Ian Reid – Volunteer Counsellor
Joey Blomqvist Almbring – Volunteer Counsellor
Saskia Burnett – Volunteer Counsellor
Rhoda Morrison – Volunteer Counsellor
Sarah Quinley – Volunteer Counsellor
Joanna Kaczowka – Volunteer Counsellor

Sunflower Garden
Children & Young People
Anna Rahimian - Service Leader
Gillian Rouse – Senior Project Worker
Sarah MacLean – Children’s Worker
Ciara McBrien – Children’s Worker
Becky Whittaker – Children’s Worker

Sarah Quinley – Volunteer Counsellor
Aishani Sood – Volunteer Counsellor
Miriam Courtney – Volunteer Counsellor
Bryn Morin – Volunteer Counsellor
Rou Zhang – Volunteer Counsellor
Karen Moss – Volunteer Counsellor
Heidi Soholt – Volunteer Counsellor
Ruth Galloway-Kirkland
Counselling & Recovery Service Leader

It has been a full year for us! We were again awarded Organisational Accreditation Status from BACP, one of only three agencies in Scotland to have this recognition. Assessors noted our commitment to evaluation and service development, and commented that we are a professional service, highly valued by the community it serves.

Since April 2017, our waiting list has reduced from over 100 to 20 clients; Clients are moving into recovery appointments within two weeks of referring, and segueing into their counselling space thereafter. Reducing and managing the waiting list has been a huge piece of work, embraced by the whole team. Safeguarding issues continue to take up a lot of management time, as we are working with a very vulnerable client group, and we manage to hold the client at the centre of all we do to ensure appropriate support is available to them at the time they need it most.

The extent of the work we do has been made possible by a large influx of both qualified and student volunteer counsellors, and there were three lengthy recruitment and training cycles within this period to prepare volunteers and equip them to work with people who use substances, and who have experienced complex trauma. At present we are supported by 11 volunteer counsellors (down from a peak of 18 in September 2017). We are excited about our next recruitment drive for volunteers.

Anna Rahimian
Sunflower Garden Service Leader

Our Children’s workers have been working hard in schools across the city working with children who need extra support due to their family situations. The Children’s Workers offer 1:1 sessions, using art and play to help children to express themselves and find new ways of coping.

Here at Simpson House we have the wonderful resource of four children’s play/art rooms which allows us to offer in-house counselling and art therapy to children who need time and space to process their experiences and explore their feelings. This service has been particularly useful for children and young people who are accommodated or in kinship care, as a place to make sense of their situations. We can offer open-ended counselling, which is vital for children who have experienced trauma. This part of the service could not run without the commitment of our counselling volunteers and students.

This year we were pleased to run group-work again due to funding received from the Scotch Whiskey Action Fund. This enabled us to run 3 groups throughout the year for children affected by alcohol use in their families. We have found group-work to be a powerful tool in helping to reduce felt isolation in children and giving them a chance to be heard and understood by children who have similar experiences to themselves.
Our Year in Numbers

Gender of Service Users

- 45% female
- 55% male

Referral Pathway Adults (211 referrals)

- 85% self-referral
- 6% signposted by DTTO
- 1% signposted by other service
- 8% signposted by Recovery Hub

Referral Pathway Children & Young People (188 referrals)

- 30% Education
- 26% Voluntary Agency
- 11% Family
- 1% NHS
- 2% Recovery Hub

Most Common Therapeutic Issues at Assessment (Adults)

- Addictions: 100%
- Anxiety/Stress: 80%
- Depression: 60%
- Trauma/Abuse: 50%
- Self Esteem: 40%
- Relational: 30%
- Bereavement: 20%

296 hours of Clinical Supervision costing £13,320

- 229 Adults
- 111 Children & Young People Supported
### Appointments Offered to Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Offered</th>
<th>Attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recovery Appointments</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling in Simpson House</td>
<td>1710</td>
<td>1217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling in Prison</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appointments Offered to Children & Young People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Offered</th>
<th>Attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Outreach Service</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling &amp; Art Therapy</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol Group</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other Advocacy and Support for Young People

- **126** Home Visits
- **21** Child Planning Meetings
- **12** Children’s Hearings
- **10** LAC Reviews
- **6** Child Protection
- **24** Other Meetings
Outcomes

Outcomes for Children Receiving 1:1 Therapeutic Support in School (n. 34)

Outcomes for Adult Planned Closures (n. 77)

Reduced chaos in daily living
Increased social network with people in recovery
Improved relationships
Improved sense of wellbeing
Improved quality of life
Improved psychological health
Improved physical health
Ceased use of drugs and/or alcohol
Reduction in drug and/or alcohol use
Feedback from Service Users

**Adults**

- ‘The group gives me a space where I can be honest about my feelings and feel understood by other members who have had similar experiences.’

- ‘I felt that my recovery appointments have given me the opportunity to develop my awareness of myself and situations.’

- ‘I feel it is a safe place to explore my issues.’

- ‘I don’t know where my head, anxieties and fear would have taken me to, if I hadn’t found this place.’

- ‘I feel lucky to have access to this invaluable service.’

- ‘Counselling has helped me to understand and to accept myself. It has transformed my view of how my life in recovery is supported by all of my life experiences, rather than my recovery being somewhat independent of my ‘previous’ life.’

- ‘It’s helped me relate to and accept another individual.’

**Recovery Appointments are a non-judgemental space 100% agree**

**My counsellor accepts me 96% agree**

**Coming to the group has improved my wellbeing and mental health 78% agree**

**Children & Young People**

- ‘[helped me] when I was scared.’

- ‘[helped me] feel safer.’

- ‘Keep me calm, helped me realise who I really am.’

- ‘He helped me overcome fears.’

- ‘[helped me] feel safer.’

- ‘Helped me with my anger.’

- ‘It’s taught me that I can talk about my feelings, not just keep them inside.’

- ‘It has helped me deal with my feelings better. It’s easier to talk about my feelings.’

- ‘Making me more confident in speaking.’

- ‘Getting a break from class.’

- ‘I feel better about myself 80% agree’

- ‘I feel listened to 83% agree’

- ‘I feel safer 89% agree’

- ‘Helped me let go since my Grandad died.’

- ‘Helped me with my anger.’
Feedback from Parents / Carers

‘I have always found staff professional, committed and compassionate.’

‘Very caring and professional counselling service often providing a much needed lifeline for people. I have not had contact with other departments of Simpson House, however, their reputation is very good also.’

‘The child in my class has thoroughly enjoyed her sessions with Sunflower Garden. She enjoys her time and returns to class afterwards much calmer and able to show more focus on the tasks in class.’

‘[The worker] is very insightful about her sessions and is useful when it comes to Child Planning Meetings and having another voice for the young people.’

‘Very caring and professional counselling service often providing a much needed lifeline for people. I have not had contact with other departments of Simpson House, however, their reputation is very good also.’

‘The children on my caseload can access a high quality emotional support service plus additional services when necessary such as counselling, art & play therapy without waiting for a significant period of time.’

‘...young people are more willing to attend school due to the support being offered by Sunflower. Young people feel they have a voice and are being listened to.’

92% agree

Our workers values and professional relationships are highly satisfactory

87% agree

92% agree

I have noticed positive changes in the young person that I would relate to their Sunflower Garden support

87% agree

Our workers values and professional relationships are highly satisfactory
Sarah accessed 1-1 therapeutic support at school for 9 months as part of the Family Outreach Service. Sarah was 13 and lived in an overcrowded flat with her 3 siblings. Sarah’s mum’s mental health was poor and she had a history of illicit drug use and offending behaviour. At the start of the work, Sarah’s mum was experiencing post-natal depression and struggling to meet the physical and emotional needs of the children. This resulted in Sarah taking on a significant caring role for her younger siblings. Sarah was experiencing high levels of anxiety and struggling to separate from her family. She regularly had panic attacks which increased her anxiety about leaving the house. Sarah and her mum’s relationship was volatile and they argued constantly. Sarah said she felt that she had no voice and there no one left to care for her. She wanted to stop having panic attacks, be able to hang out with friends and be able to trust her mum again.

Sarah used the sessions to explore her relationships in her family, her experiences of being accommodated and her struggle to trust her mum to meet her needs. Sarah developed in confidence to articulate what she needed from her mum. Her mum was also accessing support from Circle during this period. Sunflower Garden and Circle were able to work together with the family to provide mum with support to manage her own emotions and give Sarah what she needed. Sarah stopped having panic attacks and was able to go on a trip to a theme park with her friends ‘without worrying about her family once’. Both Sarah and her mum report their relationship dramatically improved and they now spend Friday afternoons together doing an activity they both enjoy. Sarah says the sessions helped her know she could trust people and develop confidence that she was important. Sarah says the support from Sunflower ‘changed everything.’
“I have been affected by depression throughout my life. My current episode began last year, culminating in anxiety, OCD, self-harm and ultimately a suicide attempt. A health practitioner suggested I consider attending this group to compliment one to one talking therapy.

I was very apprehensive about attending a group, due to my social anxiety and due to fears it may be rigidly structured and harrowing. I was, however, immediately welcomed by all and even at my first meeting felt enabled to share a few words, even though not required to do so.

Liz and Paul are both excellent facilitators. Their expertise is matched equally by their genuine, caring and kind natures. Getting the balance right in such roles is very difficult and theirs is a unique recipe that should rightfully be applauded and replicated. They never patronise or seek to offer generic platitudes, but instead offer keen insights. They know when to offer advice and equally simply to listen and assure.

Astonishingly all group members, with diverse experiences of mental health, addictions and backgrounds, are incredible listeners and fantastically supportive. Just hearing other people’s challenges and life journeys give enormous hope in recognising we are not alone. It is so refreshing and healing to be with other people who can instantly empathise as they’ve been there and experienced similar challenges.

The sessions have the right mix of structure and free expression. Themes covered explore both difficult yet essential clinical issues counter balanced with opportunities to share the joys and pleasures of life. There is always plenty laughter and fun at every meeting, and this comes organically from the foundations of mutual trust and love that forms the heart of the group.

‘A Life Worth Living’ is so valued and unique that I only wish it could be replicated elsewhere to benefit many others across the UK. I feel so privileged and blessed to be part of it and benefit and grow hugely from it.

Despite the obviously upsetting life stories shared, I always leave each session energised, uplifted and empowered with hope and faith in my recovery and that of others. I can’t express enough my gratitude and hope that funding and recognition for the group and potentially others like it can be secured. It is a vital, valuable service with major and enduring impacts.

Such is the trust and commitment to equality and diversity in the group, I was able to share my emerging gender identity here. Unsurprisingly everyone was incredibly warm and supportive on this which has not been my experience uniformly, even with family and friends.

In conclusion, I can only express my overwhelming feelings of the light and positivity that this collective engenders, thanks to all involved. Many thanks.”
“Since volunteering with Sunflower Garden I have decided to specialise in children/young people once qualified as a therapist. I have been provided ongoing support, including in-house training, and my skills have developed as a result. I am very grateful for the opportunity I have been given to enhance my learning and ability to support this vulnerable client group.”

Heidi Soholt, Volunteer Counsellor

“Working with Simpson House as a Volunteer Counsellor has been an uplifting and rewarding experience, from the initial interview to supporting clients. Expert modelling and experienced mentoring from the leadership team have both encouraged and developed me in working professionally with the client-base. Working with any trauma requires a delicate and holding touch. The extensive preparation and service training designed and delivered expertly, by the team recognises this need by giving a living voice to thoughtful safeguarding and professional process.

With the whole Simpson House team working together to encourage the humanity, respect, and warmth which are often lacking in the world we live in today, it creates an atmosphere that offers something uniquely different - for clients and team-members alike.”

Ian Reid, Volunteer Counsellor

1. Princess Anne visited us in May 2017 and met with those who have benefited from our service.
2. Each year a number of churches generously donate Christmas gifts for our families.
We hire counselling rooms, meeting rooms and office space within Simpson House at a competitive rate. Please give us a call if you are interested.
Thank You to Our Supporters

- Scotch Whisky Action Fund
- Nobel Gospel Resolve Fund
- Edinburgh Alcohol & Drug Partnership
- Avenel Trust
- The Hope Trust
- Hinshelwood Gibson Trust
- The Castansa Trust
- The Ryvoan Trust
- Cruden Foundation
- Ponton House Trust
- Edinburgh Trades Maiden Fund
- Martin Currie Charitable Foundation
- Cash for Kids
- The Church of Scotland
- Nobel Gospel Resolve Fund
- Dr Guthrie’s Association