

Glasgow WithYou STARS Service: Working in partnership to overcome health inequalities and meet the medically assisted treatment (MAT) standards

Every year, WithYou helps more than 14,000 people in Scotland with challenges relating to drugs and alcohol.

STARS impact:

500

onward referrals made to other support services and activities in the first six months

70%

of clients said that they had been informed about local recovery support in their area

786

clients currently being supported across Glasgow

withyou
in Scotland



"This is the longest time I've had the same worker and she is very supportive"

"In comparison to other services I have felt listened to and that things have moved at a pace that met my needs"

What is the STARS service?

The WithYou Glasgow STARS Service is delivered in partnership with Glasgow Alcohol & Drug Recovery Services, offering a distinctive approach to supporting individuals in recovery who present as low risk in terms of their substance use but still benefit from structured, ongoing engagement.

The service model has been developed in alignment with the Scottish Government's Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards, which emphasise:

- Supporting retention in treatment
- Providing choice and flexibility in treatment pathways
- Addressing wider health and social needs alongside substance use

“Before I was introduced to the STARS team I felt that I was basically going nowhere, stuck in a rut but since I have been with them my life and my mental health has improved so much. I'm now getting therapy for my PTSD and started going to gym (over a year now) so mentally and physically feel much stronger.”

Challenges to Effective Collaboration

Data Sharing & IT System – Navigating different platforms and protocols

Embedding a shared vision across different workplace cultures

Aligning organisational practices wasn't always easy, complex discussions, conflicting priorities – and a lot of diagrams!

Person-Centred, Recovery-Oriented Model

STARS is intentionally designed as an **alternative to mainstream addiction care pathways**. It provides a **low-threshold, high-engagement model** that supports individuals in a way that feels **safe, accessible, and appropriate** for their current stage of recovery.

A **multidisciplinary team approach** involving Recovery Workers, Senior Addiction Workers, Prescribers, Healthcare Support Teams, and Clinicians

A focus on **sustaining recovery** through meaningful connection, community support, and continuity of care

Flexible, **person-led support** that recognises and respects individual readiness, goals, and autonomy

STARS reflects the principle that **'one size does not fit all'** in recovery. By offering a supportive alternative model, we aim to increase engagement, reduce barriers to care, and promote long-term recovery outcomes.

Working Together Means Learning Together: When different services team up, they can share ideas and learn from each other to find better ways of helping people.

Better Use of Resources: By working together, services can avoid doing the same thing twice – manage capacity while still giving people the help they need.

The importance of collaboration

Less Judgement, More Support: When services join forces, it helps break down stigma and creates a more understanding and supportive environment for people in recovery.