



STRATEGY 2024-2029

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INTRODUCTION

The **ASCERT** charity is committed to reducing the harm from substance use and other connected health and social issues. Our corporate strategy for 2024-2029 sets out our approach to ensuring we are effective in delivering real change that improves people's lives,

Each person has different circumstances and needs and these change over time. We will have a focus on development of our services so that people have access to supports at all stages of their journey from prevention to recovery. Through service innovations we will be more effective in reaching people with the right support at the right time.

We will confirm our position as Northern Ireland leading drug and alcohol charity, strengthening our profile to reach more people with support. We will ensure our voice is heard, and that of lived experience, influencing policy and practice to better meet needs.

The linkage between drug and alcohol related harm and issues such as mental health, trauma, and social conditions is well established. We will broaden our work in addressing those inter-connected issues, offering a more holistic range of services.

ASCERT relies on public funds in a challenging environment. Improving the sustainability of the charity is a priority, to ensure we are a resilient organisation with strong foundations from which to deliver our work.

We will continue to strive for excellence, developing our people, our practice and processes to deliver high quality services and demonstrable outcomes in everything we do.

Jillian Patchett - Boyce
Chairperson



ABOUT ASCERT

ASCERT is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and a company limited by guarantee. The organisation was established in 1998 and has become a leading charity addressing alcohol and substance use issues as well as other related social issues across Northern Ireland.

The main services we currently provide include;

- Information and signposting
- Community based initiatives
- Prevention and early-intervention programmes
- Intervention and counselling for individuals and families
- Training and development programmes

We support individuals, and communities to address their particular needs with services that are **dealing with alcohol and substance use** and other related **issues such as mental health and suicide prevention.**

ASCERT delivers its services across all of Northern Ireland and operates from a head office in Lisburn and regional offices in Belfast, and Omagh. .

OUR MISSION

ASCERT addresses alcohol and drug related issues; reducing harm and supporting positive change.

We aim to make a real difference in relation to how drugs and alcohol and other related issues impact on people and society. Through our actions we will reduce the potential or actual impact on people's lives, and support the achievement of positive and sustainable change for individuals, families, communities and society.

OUR VALUES



INTEGRITY

ASCERT will demonstrate integrity in everything we do, acting honestly and reflecting moral and ethical principles.



ACCOUNTABILITY

ASCERT will be open and transparent in its conduct and be answerable to its members and stakeholders.



HOPE

ASCERT believes there is hope in every situation, and with the right help at the right time, every person can achieve change for the better.



PROGRESSIVE

ASCERT will be sensitive to changing needs, consider opportunities to innovate and adapt in order to be effective in the delivery of outcomes for our service users.

OUR PRINCIPLES



Being evidence informed and outcomes focused

- We are guided by evidence of what works.
- We evaluate our work and use this to improve what we do and inform others.
- We define success by the difference we have made



Putting service users at the centre of what we do

- We work collaboratively with service users in the design, delivery and evaluation of our work.
- We are focused on delivering the best experience and outcome for the service user.
- Our services are person centred and adaptive to each service user's needs



Taking a holistic approach to addressing alcohol and drugs

- We address substance use in the context of the whole person, the family and community.
- We work collaboratively and utilise community resources to meet service user needs.
- We address other social factors that impact alcohol and drug use.

OUR STRATEGY

We have identified four strategic priorities over the five year period between 2024-29. These priorities will guide our development and strengthen the ASCERT charity to fulfil its charitable objectives and deliver the best possible outcomes for the people and communities it supports.

Priority 1: Effective Support

ASCERT will deliver an integrated model of services that support prevention, intervention, recovery and training

Priority 2: Influence and Reach

ASCERT will be the leading alcohol and drugs charity

Priority 3: Sustainable Growth

ASCERT will be a resilient and sustainable organisation that makes a meaningful difference.

Priority 4: Demonstrate Quality

ASCERT will deliver the highest quality of service to our stakeholders.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Priority 1: Effective Support

ASCERT will deliver an integrated model of services that support prevention, intervention, recovery and training

Outcomes	Objectives
1.1 We will ensure that everyone in the community can access our support.	1.1.1 We will have core services that are available across all of Northern Ireland.
	1.1.2 Address inequalities and barriers to access to support through targeted programmes and collaborations.
1.2 People will be able to get our help easily and when they need it.	1.2.1 Develop an integrated referral, assessment and care planning model across our services that will improve access and timely person-centred care.
	1.2.2 Review our service model, increasing our capability to respond more holistically to the needs of individuals and families.
1.3 We will support people wherever they are in their journey and for as long as we can.	1.3.1 Our services will provide a pathway of support from prevention through to recovery.
	1.3.2 Develop a programme of recovery support that includes self-help, digital tools and support groups.
	1.3.3 Develop a peer support model whereby people with lived experience enhance our services.
1.4 We will strengthen the capacity of individuals, families, communities and the workforce through training and development services.	1.4.1 Expand our training services through an extensive menu of training for individual learning and workforce development.
	1.4.2 Provide educational and capacity building programmes within communities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priority 2: Influence and Reach

ASCERT will be the leading alcohol and drugs charity

Outcomes	Objectives
<p>2.1 We will strengthen ASCERTs profile as the main drug and alcohol charity in Northern Ireland.</p>	<p>2.1.1 Increase awareness of the ASCERT brand through a marketing and communications strategy.</p>
	<p>2.1.2 Increase our reach to the public and communities with information, campaigns and services.</p>
<p>2.2 We will have effective engagement with stakeholders to improve how community needs are met.</p>	<p>2.2.1 Engagement processes with communities, stakeholder groups and service users.</p>
	<p>2.2.2 Influence policy through lobbying, campaigns and advocacy on key issues.</p>
	<p>2.2.3 Be an active partner in the delivery of government strategies through implementation structures and service delivery.</p>
	<p>2.2.4 Inform evidence based practice through evaluation, research and training.</p>

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priority 3: Sustainable Growth

ASCERT will be a resilient and sustainable organisation that makes a meaningful difference.

Outcomes	Objectives
<p>3.1 We will ensure ASCERTs infrastructure is suitable to support a strategic approach to sustainability and growth.</p>	<p>3.1.1 Organisational restructuring with the creation of a Business Development Directorate to support the implementation of ASCERT’s financial sustainability strategy.</p>
<p>3.2 We will grow and diversify our services to increase the impact of the charity in addressing drugs and alcohol and other relevant and inter-connected issues.</p>	<p>3.2.1 Further develop ASCERTs drugs and alcohol services and expand service provision to incorporate mental health, wellbeing and recovery.</p>
	<p>3.2.2 Development of ASCERTs Training Services as a social enterprise and establish it as the main training provider across drugs, alcohol, suicide prevention and other relevant areas of health and wellbeing.</p>
	<p>3.2.3 Expand ASCERT’s operations to become an Ireland wide provider of training and services.</p>

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priority 4: Demonstrate Quality

ASCERT will deliver the highest quality of service to our stakeholders.

Outcomes	Objectives
<p>4.1 We will ensure that our service users experience the highest quality of service.</p>	<p>4.1.1 Develop digital solutions that improve services and support innovation.</p>
	<p>4.1.2 Ensure ASCERTs policies, systems and practice demonstrate a trauma informed organisation.</p>
	<p>4.1.3 Have an effective workforce structure and the skills needed to deliver objectives.</p>
<p>4.2 We will improve how we identify need, demonstrate outcomes and support improvement.</p>	<p>4.2.1 Build on our Service User Involvement Strategy, increasing quality of service user involvement in planning, implementation and improvement.</p>
	<p>4.2.2 Demonstrate outcomes and impact through an outcomes framework, reports and information sharing, evaluation and research.</p>
	<p>4.2.3 Improve quality of data capture and analysis to identify need and support service development and improvement.</p>



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