Abstract
A qualitative study was carried out among a number of community drug projects in west Dublin.

These projects in the course of their work support individuals that are accessing methadone maintenance treatment (MMT).

The study aims to gain an insight into the experience of service users 'from a key workers perspective'.

Introduction
This research, will focus on the knowledge and experience of frontline staff (the key worker).

The study will offer a unique opportunity to assess the impact the wider debates, policies and practices directly and indirectly influence the service user’s negotiation of services and ultimately their addiction.

Method
A qualitative research method was used in this study. The research focused on person centred practice within a number of frontline community drug programmes in west Dublin.

Nine frontline keyworkers were interviewed, all of whom in the course of their work engage professionally with MMT clients.

Research was conducted using semi-structured interviews which were informal and open-ended and set out to discover some of the embedded elements within drug service delivery which have direct impact on service user progression.

A thematic approach was applied to analyse the data collected.

Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous.

Results
The general findings from this research were that MMT service users primarily are seeking to introduce a level of stability into their lives when they first present for treatment. The decision to access treatment is largely motivated by matters relating to their immediate family. In the majority of cases service users state that their long term goal is to be drug free. The clinic environment and difficulties encountered establishing a shared and equal relationship with clinic staff, GPs and pharmacies was identified as major barriers to service users progression.

Discussion
It was accepted that many elements of MMT provision worked successfully and that both clinic staff and GPs were in many cases willing to engage meaningfully with service users and key workers. However many elements were highlighted within service provision which serve to obstruct the purposeful engagement of service users. The study suggests that in order for MMT to develop into a more effective service, formal measures which promote the service user as a partner to other stakeholders, need to be integrated into provision.

References
The key references used in this study are:

