

The Mayo Drug and Alcohol Family Support Group will meet on the 30th January in the TF Royal Hotel, Castlebar from 7.30 to 9pm.

A drug and alcohol family support group is a confidential, safe, accepting place where adults come together to find ways to cope with the drug or alcohol use of someone close to them.

Coming to a family support group for help is not an admission of failure but a way of finding strength. Many families experience disappointment, fear, worry, blame, manipulation as well as practical problems such as financial difficulties, paying off debts, offering excuses for their loved one, relationship problems etc.

The benefits for attending this group are:

- It provides a confidential and supportive environment for members
- It provides access to information
- It helps family members look after their own needs
- It can help family members support the substance user to make constructive choices
- It provides a safe space for members to share experiences and to offer support to one another.
- There is no charge/fee
- Non-judgemental, not obliged to share until you feel comfortable to do so.

Both the national and regional drug strategy have identified the importance of the provision of supports to families and in response to this the Western Region Drugs Task Force (WRDTF) established the Drug & Alcohol Family Support Network (DAFSN) in late 2010. The network is made up of members of existing peer led support groups in the region and relevant agencies working in the field.

The network aims to:

- Support local drug and alcohol family support groups in the region and
- Raise awareness of the need for support for individuals and family members affected by another's drug and alcohol use.

In addition, the WRDTF has appointed Debbie McDonagh, Family Support Training & Development worker for the western region. Debbie can be contacted @ 087 6955557; debbie.mcdonagh@wrdtf.ie for any questions/queries in relation to drug & alcohol family support.

“Family support helps you to put your family first and not the substance abuse”