Statement of Patient Needs from Prescribed Medication Support Services (for medicines associated with withdrawal and dependence)

1. Community provision

- 1.1 To have been educated about normal emotions, pain and life problems

2. When a life event happens

- 2.1 To be heard / have someone to talk to on either a planned or emergency basis
- 2.2 To know how to find out about options for support including information about their possible benefits and harms, their local availability and how to access them
- 2.3 To have access to someone who can help navigate available options in order to make an informed decision
- 2.4 To be supported to continue in employment

3. If primary care route

- 3.1 To be informed about available options and how they compare in terms of potential timescales, benefits (intended effects, effectiveness NNT), harms and other risks
- 3.2 Appropriate interventions to be available in a reasonable time frame
- 3.3 A clear statement of, and agreement to the range of interventions that are to be made available, summarised in a treatment plan

4. If medications are advised

- 4.1 To be given relevant information
- 4.2 To be given a clear view on relevant timescales
- 4.3 A formal discussion of possible benefits versus harms
- 4.4 A plan for coming off medication
- 4.5 Treatment plan and informed consent form including non-pharmacological interventions
- 4.6 To be prompted to consider the idea of asking for feedback from family and friends

5. Treatment plan reviews

- 5. 1 For agreed reviews to be proactively scheduled based on the agreed plan laid out in the treatment plan and informed consent form
- 5.2 To be invited to give feedback on experience of taking the drug and other therapies and to share decisions on any changes
- 5.3 A second tier review of any proposal to introduce more than one dependence forming drug or drugs to manage side effects
- 5.4 To be provided with info about risks presented by a change of drug or dosage or stopping or change of make/brand
- 5.5 To be provided with info about risks of longer term prescribing at the end of any planned treatment period
- 5.6 To be aware of, and consent to, any changes to an agreed plan for coming off prescription/s

6. Considering withdrawal

- 6.1 To be helped to assess their readiness to withdraw and to prepare for it
- 6.2 To be helped to understand information about what to expect during withdrawal
- 6.3 Supported by a specifically trained, person to create an individual tapering plan
- 6.4 Supported to be in control of the pace of the plan, to pause, stop or re-instate to any prior dose at any point
- 6.5 Understand services to support withdrawal and any original issue

7. During withdrawal

- 7.1 Access to advice about how to taper (when both single drug and more complex polypharmacy)
- 7.2 To have access to tools to support tapering
- 7.3 24/7 access to prescribed medication withdrawal support
- 7.4 Regular tapering reviews planned & ad hoc
- 7.5 Access to peer support
- 7.6 Withdrawal symptoms and plan to be visible and understood by all professionals they interact with
- 7.7 To have other possible medical conditions investigated appropriately
- 7.8 Not stigmatised for taking drugs as prescribed or withdrawal seen as victim behaviour

8. After tapering

- 8.1 24/7 access to prescribed medication withdrawal support
- 8.2 Access to peer support
- 8.3 Post taper support for withdrawal symptoms
- 8.4 Potential for protracted harms to be recognised
- 8.5 Recognition for some of an ongoing physiological sensitivity to some drugs
- 8.6 Support in securing appropriate access to financial and other practical services

9. Throughout prescribed drug dependence

- 9.1 Their voice to be heard both individually and collectively
- 9.1 Their medical records to be consistent with their experience e.g., to agree with how that is captured

5.7 To be able to access support or advice from an alternative source other than the original prescriber both on a planned or emergency / unscheduled basis

5.8 Additional (or first) reviews of drug interventions to be triggered in defined circumstances