



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Swanswell launch life-saving treatment service in Barnsley

12 April 2010, Barnsley - Swanswell, a national charity that helps people overcome drug, alcohol and other problem behaviour, will be supporting carers in Barnsley from April 2010.

It is estimated 18.9% of adults are drinking at hazardous levels in Barnsley and there are 1,726 problematic drug users (Barnsley MBC and NHS Barnsley online, 2009)<sup>1</sup>. For every person with a drug and/or alcohol problem there is usually at least one carer.

Caring for someone with an addiction can be very isolating and have a profound effect on families and loved ones. All too often individual needs and contribution go unrecognised.

Swanswell has a strong track record of working with carers, friends and significant others of those experiencing difficulties with their drug and/or alcohol use. The new carers support service in Barnsley, operated by Swanswell, is at the cutting edge of substance user treatment and will provide essential emotional and practical support to carers. Each client will receive a tailored programme to meet their needs and support services range from group sessions providing advice and information to counselling and training which will build confidence and develop skills.

Swanswell will also work in partnership with carers and their friends and family who are in treatment. Research, identified by the National Treatment Agency (NTA), shows the

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active involvement of carers, given the right support, can speed up service user recovery, reduce drug and/or alcohol related crime and the harm of substance abuse on communities. Carers support and involvement can potentially save the NHS and other state services nearly £4,000 a year for each drug user (UKDPC online, 2009)<sup>2</sup> so it's in the interests of everyone to care for the carers.

Maggie Philbin, BBC TV presenter and trustee of Swanswell, who has personal experience of supporting a loved one through alcohol misuse said: *'When someone has a problem with alcohol or drugs, the lives of those around them are deeply affected. Finding good knowledgeable help isn't always as straightforward as you might think. Even amongst health professionals there can be huge ignorance of how friends, relatives and workmates can act to improve their lives and that of the person using alcohol or drugs. Getting the right advice and support is quite literally life-saving.'*

Carers can access Swanswell's new support service through a telephone helpline 01226 705932, self referral or referral from their GP.

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## References

1. Barnsley MBC and Barnsley NHS. 2009. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Technical Document. [Online]. Available at : <http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/bguk/docs/CentralResearchTeam/Draft%201%20Barnsley%20JSNA%20Report%2020080328.pdf> [Accessed 8 April 2010].
2. UKDPC. 2009. Supporting the Supporters: families of drug misusers. [Online]. Available at : [http://www.ukdpc.org.uk/publications.shtml#Families\\_report#Families\\_report](http://www.ukdpc.org.uk/publications.shtml#Families_report#Families_report) [Accessed 8 April 2010].

## Notes for editors

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## About Swanswell

Swanswell is a national charity that helps people overcome drug, alcohol and other problem behaviour. We believe that everyone deserves the chance to change and to be happy. We help them to remove the things that stand in their way, whether physical, emotional or practical. So, as their lives improve, they can feel well, do well, and stay well. Swanswell has a reputation for innovation and is a leading developer of new services which help people to change their lives for the better.

[www.swanswell.org](http://www.swanswell.org)

## About Maggie Philbin

Maggie Philbin has worked in radio and television for 30 years on a wide range of science, medical and technology programmes. Currently providing analysis and comment on technology and a regular reporter on BBC 1's "Inside Out", she has a unique resonance with audiences, having grown up with them on much loved shows like "Swap Shop", "Hospital Watch" and "Tomorrow's World". Maggie has personal experience of the effect alcohol misuse can have on an individual and their family.