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**MP praises aid for addicts
Older people can find help for addictions**

A man of 93 is the oldest person to have been helped by a service which weans people of drug and alcohol abuse in Neath Port Talbot.

West Glamorgan Council for Drug and Alcohol Abuse in Victoria Gardens, Neath operates a unique programme to help those aged 55 and over.

This week Deputy Health Minister John Griffiths visited the scheme. Older person's workers Anne Craven and Carolyn Foley visit the elderly in their homes and provide advice and support for a generation that is often forgotten. Mrs. Craven said "I think the young get stigmatised with substance misuse, but elderly people also need help. This is a problem across society."

Chief Executive of WGCADA Norman Preddy said older people often had different needs to young people. He said drug and alcohol addictions had a devastating effect on the families of those affected. But he said there was always a light at the end of the tunnel.

"We have clients who have come through the treatment and have enjoyed their years in life being clean and sober" he said. He added WGCADA had been treating older people since the first day the centre began but said the role of the specialised workers meant they could be treated more effectively. There never used to be funding for this kind of role – it was up to whatever staff that was available to get them help, which was difficult" he said. Both positions were paid for by the Welsh Assembly through its older person's strategy. Deputy Health Minister Mr Griffiths said "I think the scheme is very impressive. There is obviously a serious need and it is just what we want to see this strategy money being used for."