

# Clouds House Guide for referrers



Action on Addiction



Our experts have been providing life-saving treatment to individuals in active addiction for 35 years. We know that for every person we help, another five people are also helped indirectly.

Clouds has been a life-saving sanctuary for sufferers of addiction since 1983. We provide high-quality care through our 12 step programme and our team is connected to the world's leading experts and institutions in the research and teaching of addiction treatment.

Our tried and tested interpersonal group therapy model provides a rich and safe environment in which clients gain valuable insights into their relationships with themselves, other people and the substances or behaviours of their addiction.

Some 90% of clients are drug and alcohol free on discharge and 95% of our clients tell us their treatment at Clouds was either 'very good' or 'excellent'.

More than 12,000 people have found the chance of recovery from addiction at Clouds, and today our Care Quality Commission reports are among the best in the country. Clouds is also the destination of choice for NHS professionals dealing with their own addiction issues.

Please feel free to contact a member of our admissions team who will arrange for one of our senior clinicians to discuss the specifics of the case with you.

[admissions@actiononaddiction.org.uk](mailto:admissions@actiononaddiction.org.uk)  
01747 832 070

## Supervised withdrawal and detoxification

We have highly skilled, fully trained staff available 24 hours a day, and peer-to-peer support forms the bedrock of our treatment programme with all our clients supported by peers who have gone through or are going through, the transition to abstinence.

Our approach to withdrawal from addictive substances is summarised in the following pages.

## Alcohol

Our aim is to facilitate the safe transition from dependence to abstinence by transferring the client on to a pharmaceutical sedative and then to wean them off this medication over a four to seven day period.

We prescribe the following medication for alcohol detoxification:

- Diazepam in frequent divided doses reducing to zero over four to seven days, administered according to clients' individual symptomatic need
- Pabrinex administered intramuscularly for up to four days or longer where there is a clinical need

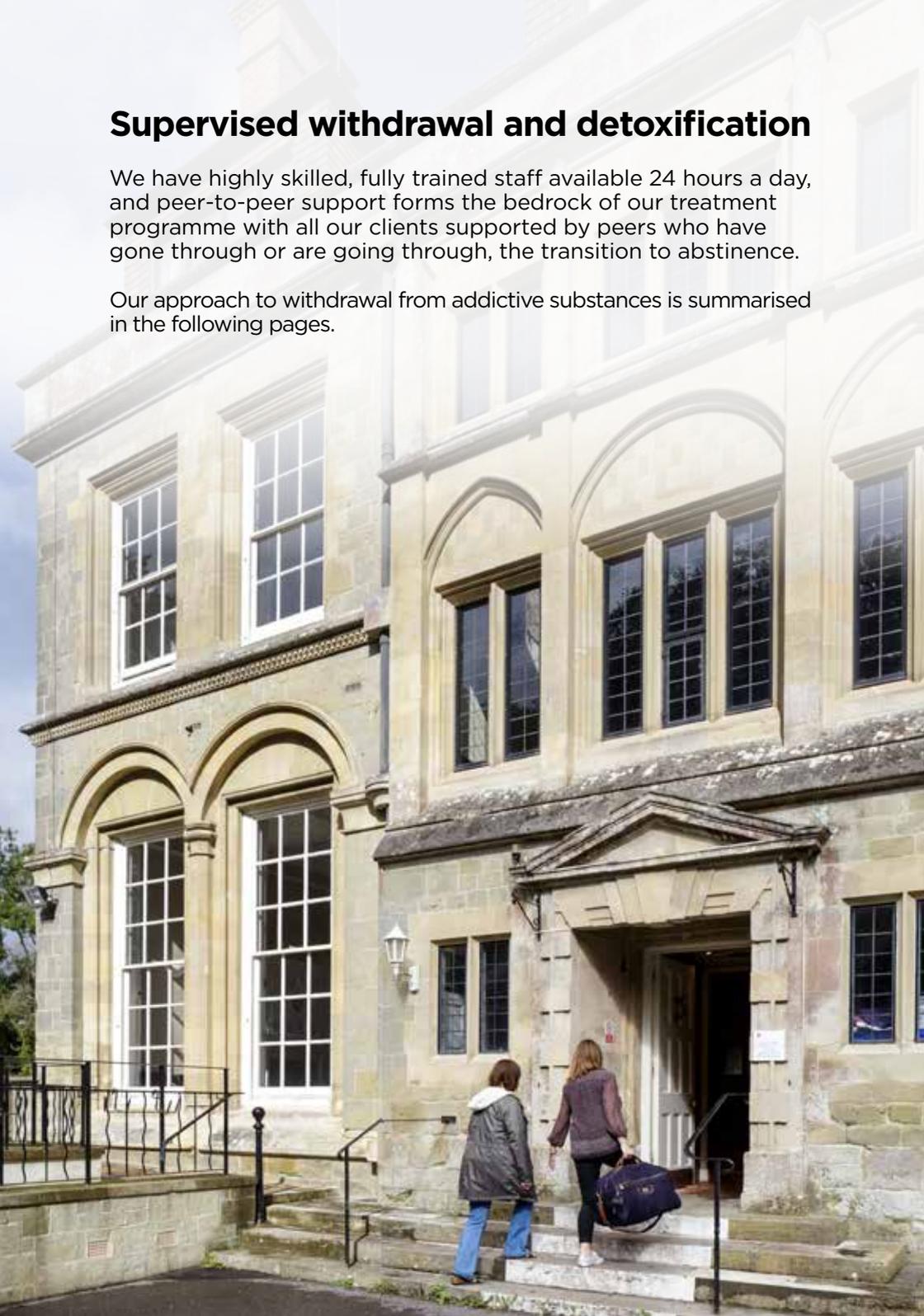
We also offer anticonvulsant medication if the client has a previous history of convulsions.

## Opiates

Our abiding principle is that clients will achieve abstinence within two to three weeks of their admission to Clouds House depending on their level and type of use. In accordance with NICE guidance, the main medications we use for detoxification are methadone and buprenorphine. We assess each client on an individual basis and provide tailored reductions with adjunct supportive medication to minimise withdrawal symptoms.

Insomnia can be a considerable problem for those withdrawing from opiates. Therefore, we prescribe zopiclone for up to three weeks from the date of admission, according to the need of the client. Alongside zopiclone we also prescribe regular supportive medication including cyclizine, buscopan and quinine sulphate.

For clients who are addicted to prescribed and/or illicitly obtained opioid analgesics such as tramadol, we offer a conversion to subutex and a subsequent reduction. We will consider - on a case-by-case basis - admitting clients who are maintained on relatively high doses of methadone if they are committed to achieving abstinence. In these cases we may use a titrating dose of subutex (buprenorphine) to achieve stabilisation and then detoxification.



## **Benzodiazepines**

We convert all benzodiazepine drugs used to an equivalent dose of diazepam, and steadily withdraw this over as realistic a time period as possible. If there is a history of convulsions, we may find it necessary to prescribe anticonvulsants at the same time as administering diazepam.

## **Stimulants and cannabis**

While they do not cause significant physical withdrawal symptoms, cocaine and crack cocaine are intensely addictive from a psychological perspective.

In these cases, and in accordance with clinical need, we offer short courses of anxiolytic medication to address rebound symptoms of agitation, anxiety and insomnia. Most of these clients become very tired and irritable, and the early stage of sleepiness gives way to a depressive phase that is usually brief in duration. Irritability and agitation may require a short course of benzodiazepine to facilitate the settling-in process, and the short-term use of quetiapine is sometimes used to deal with emerging anxiety.

## **Prescribed medication**

We also offer individually tailored treatment for those who find themselves abusing prescribed medication including the gabapentinoids; pregabalin and gabapentin. Treatment includes a tailored reduction with psychological support and adjunct medication.



# Clinical team



**Dr Simone Yule**  
**BSc 1988 MB Bch 1991 DRCOG**  
**1994 FP Cert 1996**

Dr Simone Yule studied at The University of Wales College of Medicine and graduated in 1991 having achieved a BSc in Biochemistry and an MB BCh in Medicine. She developed an interest in treating addiction early on in her GP training, and was one of the first cohort to be awarded the RCGP Diploma in Substance Misuse working alongside Dr Gordon Morse. She also worked as a deputy clinical lead for Turning Point.

Dr Yule has been a GP partner for 22 years and continues to combine general practice with her clinical lead role at Action on Addiction and is the North Dorset Locality lead GP for Dorset CCG.

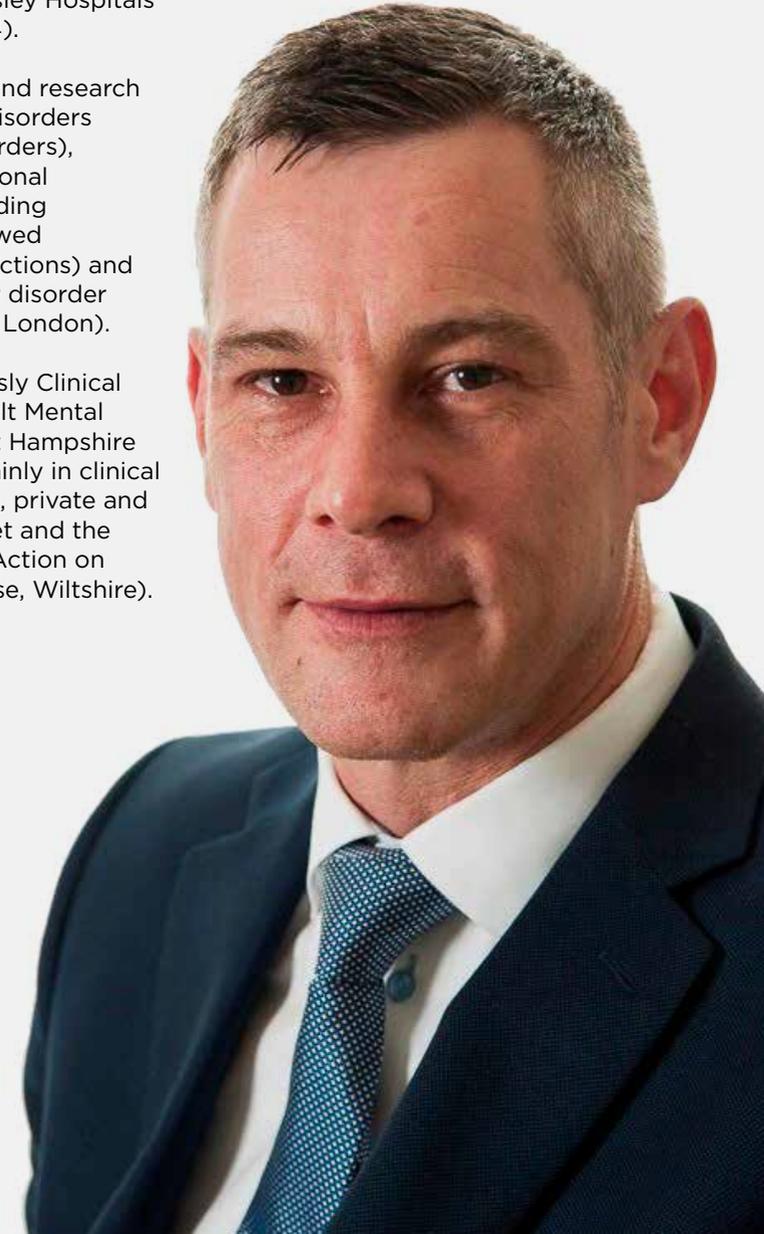
Dr Yule enjoys the variety of her work and the challenges that are presented when people are in active addiction. With her experience she is able to tailor detoxification programmes and make the difference that starts people on the road to recovery.

**Dr Cory de Wet**  
**MBBCh 1995 MRCPsych 2000**  
**MSc 2004**

Dr de Wet has 15 years' experience as an NHS Consultant Psychiatrist, including training and experience at the Bethlem and Maudsley Hospitals in London (1998 - 2004).

He has special clinical and research experience in anxiety disorders (Clinic for Anxiety Disorders), substance misuse (National Addiction Centre, including a number of peer reviewed research papers in addictions) and schizophrenia & bipolar disorder (Institute of Psychiatry, London).

Dr De Wet was previously Clinical Service Director of Adult Mental Health Services in West Hampshire and currently works mainly in clinical roles spanning the NHS, private and charity sectors in Dorset and the South West, including Action on Addiction (Clouds House, Wiltshire).



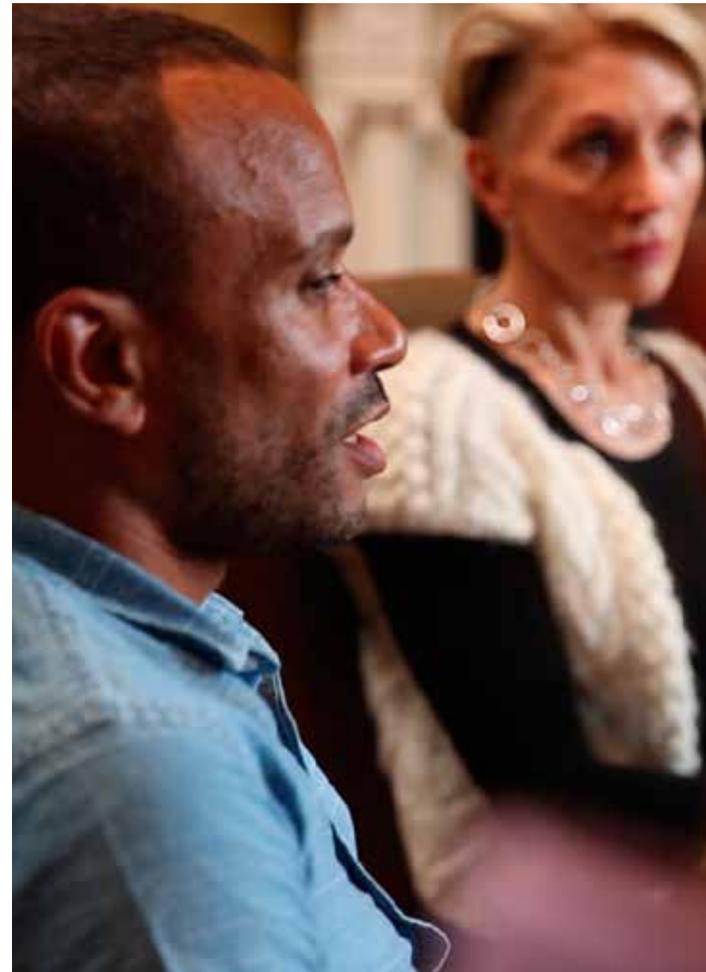
## Addiction does not discriminate and neither do we.

One of Clouds' unique features is that we offer top quality treatment to people from all walks of life, irrespective of their ability to pay.

We are, however, unable to assist people with certain medical conditions, including those with the following serious complications:

- Acute and/or chronic conditions which if they became unstable during detoxification would require hospitalisation
- Active infections that may be contagious to others
- Low BMI. We do not accept clients with a BMI below 16 and clients with a BMI of between 16 and 20 will need to be medically assessed for suitability
- Conditions which require biochemical monitoring or IV fluid therapy
- Conditions which prevent the client from managing their own self-care
- Conditions which affect mobility - clients must be fully mobile throughout their treatment
- Serious psychiatric conditions - on assessment clients must be considered able to benefit from intensive integrated group therapy
- Serious personality problems characterised by poor impulse control, violent behaviour and/or repeated self-harm

Clients using high-dose benzodiazepines and pregnant women requiring detoxification will be considered on a case-by-case basis by our medical team prior to admission. Pregnant women will only ever be admitted - in the second trimester only - following full consultation with the client's obstetrician.





Action on Addiction

[www.actiononaddiction.org.uk](http://www.actiononaddiction.org.uk)



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