

**International Institute for Psychiatric Drug Withdrawal (IIPDW)  
Registered Charity 1195569**

**Trustees Report for the year ending  
31st March 2025**

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

**Purposes of the Charity**

The aims stated in our governing document are:

- Support research and practice-based knowledge that will facilitate safe reduction of and withdrawal from psychiatric drugs.
- Contribute to evidence-based practices for reduction of and withdrawal from psychiatric drugs, and facilitate their inclusion in general practice guidelines.
- Support the human right to informed choice with regard to psychiatric drugs.
- Promote practices that help families, friends, and practitioners support safe reduction of and withdrawal from psychiatric drugs, and take into account relational and social aspects essential to this process.

**Main activities**

IIPDW continued to deliver on its main activities: online events, microgrants and facilitating an international network of experts. We also continued to grow and engage with its networks, adding 111 people to our mailing list and 9 people to our Associates list, and hosting 210 at our online events.

In dialogue with our communities, IIPDW identified key questions or areas of discussion to which we can contribute through our activities, these include:

- the availability and advantages of smaller-dose formulations
- the continued prescribing of benzodiazepines and new research into benzodiazepine harms
- connecting together founders and directors of medication-free residential centres internationally who necessarily support psychiatric drug withdrawal
- the need to ensure the relational aspects of withdrawal support are incorporated into services

**Statutory Declaration**

Our Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's Guidance on Public Benefit (PB1-3) and all activities have undertaken by IIPDW have been for the public benefit in furthering the stated aims of IIPDW.

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

**Network Meetings**

This year, IIPDW continued to support and facilitate an international network of experts and change-makers, who we call Associates, providing opportunities for them to connect, support each other and collaborate.

We added 9 new Associates to our network from Norway, USA, UK, Italy and Greece. Among these are founders and directors of two medication-free residential treatment centres which support withdrawal as part of their work, psychiatrists and mental health nurses, an activist and a researcher.

We continued to facilitate our quarterly network meeting where each Associate can share an update on their work and the situation in their country, and discuss chosen topics – the availability of smaller-dose formulations of in each country and how to make changes in this area, and how to ensure a place for supportive relationships in services for people in withdrawal.

## **Microgrants**

This year, IIPDW gave two microgrants to online peer support groups for those in withdrawal: – the Prescribed Drugs Withdrawal Support Group and the North Wales Withdrawal Group – to cover the cost of an annual Zoom subscription for each group.

## **Webinar on Liquids and Tapering Strips, June 2024**

On 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024, we hosted a webinar on Liquids and Tapering Strips: formulations in psychiatric drug withdrawal with speakers Sarah Jones and Dr Peter Groot. Each speaker delivered a 20-minute presentation on liquids and tapering strips respectfully, then Dr Mark Horowitz facilitated an audience Q&A.

We arranged this webinar because we receive lots of enquiries from the global public about how to access smaller-dose formulations, and there was confusion about the legality of these formulations in each country and what rights patients have to request them. There was also ongoing discussion on the pros and cons of each formulation. The speakers went some way to answering these questions.

## **Online Screening of *As Prescribed*, January 2025**

On 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025, we hosted an online screening of feature length documentary *As Prescribed* which follows the lives of a handful of people harmed by benzodiazepines and spotlights the efforts of Boston-based activist Geraldine Burns as she supports those harmed and advocates for greater awareness.

After the screening, director Holly Hardman joined Geraldine Burns, Dr Alison Fixsen, a senior lecturer in Psychology at the University of Westminster who has published on benzodiazepine withdrawal, and Dr Valsa Madhava, a medical doctor and specialist in functional medicine who runs a clinic for those wanting to taper benzodiazepines, to discuss issues raised in the film and to answer audience questions.

We hosted this screening to address a common misconception among the public and professionals that benzodiazepines are rarely prescribed anymore. While research and debate has recently centred around antidepressants, benzodiazepine dependence is still an issue that affects many.

## **Volunteers**

This year IIPDW is grateful to 7 volunteers who collaborated with us to plan and deliver our online events.

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

### **Review of Financial Position**

At the end of the year IIPDW was in a good financial position with £3672.44 in its current account and £8000 in reserves. Our income during the year was £7,823.62 and our outgoings were £13,138.57. In November the Trustees voted to move £4000 from our reserves into our current account.

### **Principle Sources of Funds**

Our principle source of funds is donations from the public, made via our online donation page on our website. The majority of the donations are monthly subscriptions from supporters, this year we also sent a call-out for donations via our newsletter in January – this generated 28 one-off donations including a single large donation from an IIPDW Associate of £2500. In total, online donations came to £5551.23

The other principle source of funds is our online events, in particular our webinar on formulations which sold 133 tickets (and 10 ticket holders donated tickets to others who may be unable to afford one). Tickets are tiered. All together, our online events brought £2149.35 via Eventbrite.

## **Reserves Policy**

IIPDW will maintain free reserves in unrestricted funds at a level which equates to approximately twelve months of unrestricted charitable expenditure ('operational costs') to allow IIPDW time to develop its financial strategy if circumstances change. At present levels of operations this amounts to £12,000.

## **Grantmaking Policy**

IIPDW is able to grant a maximum of £250 to organisations anywhere in the world that do work that falls within the remit of IIPDW's charitable aims. For each grant the Board will require a majority vote, and proof of spending from the recipient if appropriate.

## **Principle Risks Facing the Charity**

Trustees have considered the major risks to which the charity is exposed and satisfied themselves that procedures are established to manage those risks. This process of monitoring risk is carried out annually in preparation for the making a statement to the Charity Commission, and whenever risks arise or evolve.

## **Review of Internal Financial Controls**

Our existing Trustee Stevie Lewis took over as Treasurer, each month she performs a bank reconciliation and ensures that all invoices and receipts are correctly filed. No issues arose during the year.

As our income this year was under the threshold and we have used some of our reserves, IIPDW Trustees decided an external examiner would be an unnecessary use of funds.

## **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

IIPDW is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), using a Foundation Model Constitution as the basis for its Governing Document.

### **Trustee Appointment**

This year our Trustee and Treasurer Dr Ruth Cooper stepped down, as from July 2024 her professional role would be changing, to move towards other areas of research, away from psychiatric drugs. Ruth gave so much to IIPDW for over 4 years and was very valued by all the Trustees.

Adele Framer stepped down as Trustee in September 2024, as she has now founded a US-based non profit called Psychotropic Deprescribing Council (PDC). PDC's aims are allied with IIPDW's but with a focus on US-based prescribers, we continue to work closely with Adele on US-based objectives.

In June 2024 we welcomed Dr Rani Bora as a Trustee, Rani is a UK-based coach, author and holistic psychiatrist with an interest in spiritual healing and deprescribing. Rani has up-to-date knowledge of how to produce content and engage followers on a range of social media platforms.

At the same time, we also welcomed Joanna McCabe, a Canada-based registered nurse with lived experience of psychiatric drug withdrawal. Joanna strengthens our understanding of the needs of Canadians as well as the position of nurses on the issue of withdrawal.

## **REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

International Institute for Psychiatric Drug Withdrawal (commonly abbreviated to IIPDW)

**Charity number:** Registered Charity 1195569

**Website:** <https://iipdw.org>

**Address:** 5 Brayford Square, London E1 0SG

**Trustees:**

Professor John Read, Chair

Olga Runciman

Stevie Lewis, Treasurer

Marnie Wedlake

Dr Rani Bora

Joanna McCabe

**Senior Staff Member:** Administrator, Lucy Fernandes

**Additional info:** We are a registered UK Institute approved by Companies House.

**DECLARATIONS**

**The Trustees declare that they have approved the trustee's report above.**

**Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees**

**Signature**



**Full name** Professor John Read

**Position** Chairperson, IIPDW

**Date** 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name  
International Institute for Psychiatric Drug Withdrawal

1195569

CC16a

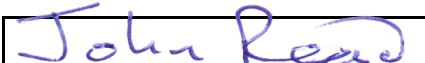
## Receipts and payments accounts

|                        |                |    |                 |
|------------------------|----------------|----|-----------------|
| For the period<br>from | 1st April 2024 | To | 31st March 2025 |
|------------------------|----------------|----|-----------------|

### Section A Receipts and payments

|   | Unrestricted funds<br>to the nearest £ | Restricted funds<br>to the nearest £ | Endowment funds<br>to the nearest £ | Total funds<br>to the nearest £ | Last year<br>to the nearest £ |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>A1 Receipts</b>  |  |                                      |                                     |                                 |                               |
| Charitable Activities (Eventbrite)  | 2,149                                  | -                                    | -                                   | 2,149                           | 2,808                         |
| Donations and Legacies  | 5,608                                  | -                                    | -                                   | 5,608                           | 1,460                         |
| Easyfundraising   | 66                                     | -                                    | -                                   | 66                              | 49                            |
| Investment Income   | 148                                    | -                                    | -                                   | 148                             | 4                             |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
| <b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>                                    | <b>7,972</b>                           | <b>-</b>                             | <b>-</b>                            | <b>7,972</b>                    | <b>4,321</b>                  |
| <b>A2 Asset and investment sales,<br/>(see table).</b>                    |  |                                      |                                     |                                 |                               |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
| <b>Sub total</b>  | <b>-</b>                               | <b>-</b>                             | <b>-</b>                            | <b>-</b>                        | <b>-</b>                      |
| <b>Total receipts</b>   | <b>7,972</b>                           | <b>-</b>                             | <b>-</b>                            | <b>7,972</b>                    | <b>4,321</b>                  |
| <b>A3 Payments</b>  |  |                                      |                                     |                                 |                               |
| Charitable Activities (Admin, Gsuite, Zoom, Subly, GhostMail, Siteground) | 11,546                                 | -                                    | -                                   | 11,546                          | 13,643                        |
| Microgrants (including As Prescribed event)                               | 592                                    | -                                    | -                                   | 592                             | 319                           |
| Governance (External Examiner only)                                       | 972                                    | -                                    | -                                   | 972                             | 1,116                         |
| Miscellaneous   | 29                                     | -                                    | -                                   | 29                              | -                             |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
| <b>Sub total</b>  | <b>13,139</b>                          | <b>-</b>                             | <b>-</b>                            | <b>13,139</b>                   | <b>15,078</b>                 |
| <b>A4 Asset and investment<br/>purchases, (see table)</b>                 |  |                                      |                                     |                                 |                               |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
|   | -                                      | -                                    | -                                   | -                               | -                             |
| <b>Sub total</b>  | <b>-</b>                               | <b>-</b>                             | <b>-</b>                            | <b>-</b>                        | <b>-</b>                      |
| <b>Total payments</b>   | <b>13,139</b>                          | <b>-</b>                             | <b>-</b>                            | <b>13,139</b>                   | <b>15,078</b>                 |
| <b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>   | <b>- 5,167</b>                         | <b>-</b>                             | <b>-</b>                            | <b>- 5,167</b>                  | <b>- 10,756</b>               |
| <b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>   | <b>-</b>                               | <b>-</b>                             | <b>-</b>                            | <b>-</b>                        | <b>-</b>                      |
| <b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>  | <b>16,991</b>                          | <b>-</b>                             | <b>-</b>                            | <b>16,991</b>                   | <b>27,748</b>                 |
| <b>Cash funds this year end</b>   | <b>11,824</b>                          | <b>-</b>                             | <b>-</b>                            | <b>11,824</b>                   | <b>16,991</b>                 |

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

| Categories  | Details  | Unrestricted funds<br>to nearest £ | Restricted funds<br>to nearest £ | Endowment funds<br>to nearest £ |
|---|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>B1 Cash funds</b>  | Current Account Natwest                                | 3,672                              | -                                | -                               |
|   | Savings Account Natwest                                | 8,152                              | -                                | -                               |
|   |  | -                                  | -                                | -                               |
|   | <b>Total cash funds</b>                                | <b>11,824</b>                      | <b>-</b>                         | <b>-</b>                        |
|   | (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s)) | OK                                 | OK                               | OK                              |
|   |  | Unrestricted funds<br>to nearest £ | Restricted funds<br>to nearest £ | Endowment funds<br>to nearest £ |
| <b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>   |  | -                                  | -                                | -                               |
|   |  | -                                  | -                                | -                               |
|   |  | -                                  | -                                | -                               |
|   |  | -                                  | -                                | -                               |
|   |  | -                                  | -                                | -                               |
|   |  | -                                  | -                                | -                               |
| <b>B3 Investment assets</b>   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
| <b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>                                 |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
| <b>B5 Liabilities</b>   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
|   |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
| Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees                         |  |                                    |                                  |                                 |
| Signature   |  | Print Name                         | Date of approval                 |                                 |
|  |  | DR JOHN READ                       | 23.10.2025                       |                                 |