

**Monday 22nd February, 2021. 12 Noon.**

## **SISCO, FAVOR SCOTLAND, AND MARRIOTT COMMUNICATIONS ANNOUNCE HUGE SUCCESS OF THE #UNHEARDVOICES PANEL**

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Glasgow, Scotland - SISCO, FAVOR Scotland, and Marriott Communications are pleased to announce the huge success of their #UnheardVoices Zoom Panel.

The #UnheardVoices zoom panel was a culmination of the various topics and discussions originally had within the campaign. The panel featured talks from several esteemed guests, including: Darren McGarvey, Dr Suzanne Zeedyk, Iain Smith, Monica Lennon MSP, Bob Doris MSP, Leeh Howell, Karen McKeown, Annemarie Ward, Natalie Logan MacLean, and Samuel Marriott-Dowding. The panel explored several themes related to recovery, addiction, lived experience, and childhood trauma. By highlighting and drawing attention to these themes through an honest and open context, it is hoped that addiction discourse will be furthered and consolidated beside improvements to recovery services, funding allocation, public awareness, and political support.

SISCO CEO, Natalie Logan MacLean stated that:

*“The event was very special and offered a deep and meaningful insight into what's working and what we need to do better. We listened, we heard and we cared. But we have no power to make the changes needed.*

FAVOR Scotland CEO, Annemarie Ward echos a similar sentiment:

*“The Unheard voices campaign will raise the voice of those people & families seeking help & being fatally let down by our current services and structures. Just as our previous campaign you keep talking, we keep dying highlighted the failures systematically in the addiction field #UnheardVoices will specifically highlight how social class and lack of equality, directly impacts addiction & our justice systems.*

*A focus on adverse childhood experiences, trauma, and human rights and how we can all work to advocate better for those who are suffering will be our key theme.”*

Iain Smith of Keegan Smith Defence Lawyers, stated:

*“It was a privilege to take part in the #UnheardVoices event and to listen to a variety of speakers all of whom have something important to say. The adage about listening carefully to those who whisper as they might have something special to say was definitely true.*

*We all need to hear from those affected by decisions and not impose decisions when we don't know what the problems are.”*

SISCO and FAVOR Scotland are continuing efforts to provide compassion and support to vulnerable and marginalised men and women experiencing addiction and adverse mental health, and have seen a successful adaptation to the shifted landscape of support services directly linked to the current pandemic and various restrictions, and regulations.

The development of the #UnheardVoices campaign and the subsequent panel signifies a shift in attitudes towards speaking out about the honest and genuine experiences of addiction and recovery. It is critically important to highlight these unheard ‘voices’ in order to continue building a recovery community centred around compassion and understanding. More events through this campaign will follow to ensure that no voice goes unheard again.

**ENDS**

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### **Editors Notes**

SISCO is a Glasgow-based charity developing and delivering recovery initiatives within the Scottish Prison Service. SISCO's model was set up to offer multiple pathways to recovery and is fundamental to individuals caught up in the cycle of addiction.

Faces & Voices of Recovery Scotland are dedicated to organising and mobilising: the recovery community in recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs, and families, friends and allies into recovery community organisations and networks.

Marriott Communications is a leading communications agency dedicated to developing and delivering impactful campaigns and managing public relations within the political and third sector landscapes.

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