

# Publication Summary



## The National Drug Related Deaths Database (Scotland) Report 2010

Publication date – 28 February 2012

### About this Release

This is the second report from the National Drug Related Deaths Database (NDRDD) for Scotland and reports on the calendar year 2010. This is supplementary to national reporting of drug related deaths in Scotland by the National Records of Scotland (NRS), formerly the General Register Office of Scotland, and reports on a **subset** of the overall drug related deaths. Drawing from a wide range of data sources, the NDRDD provides a comprehensive picture of these deaths and sets them in a wider context such as the individual's social circumstances and their previous contact with health and criminal justice services. This provides insight for both policy and practice for development of optimal preventive, harm reduction and therapeutic interventions to reduce drug related deaths.

### Key Points

- In 2010, a total of 365 cases were identified as eligible for inclusion in the NDRDD.
- Over three quarters (79.2%) were male; over half (54.8%) lived in the most deprived areas with the age groups 25-34 and 35-44 years having the highest frequency of deaths (35.9% and 32.3% respectively).
- Co-morbidities in the six months prior to death were common with over half (55.4%) having a psychiatric condition (55.4%) and almost half (47.6%) having had problematic alcohol use.
- The majority had died in a home, either their own (53.3%) or someone else's (26.9%) with, where known, someone present at the scene in over half (62.4%) of cases. Resuscitation had been attempted by a friend, witness, relative, spouse or partner in 116 cases.
- Where known, nearly two thirds (62.4%) had been in contact with a drug treatment services at some point prior to their death.
- Diazepam was the most commonly reported drug found in over three quarters of cases (77.5%) followed by Heroin/Morphine (63.7%) and Methadone (44.9%). *It should be noted that these are reports of drugs found in the body, there is not attribution as to whether they caused the death or not.*

## Background

Against a background of the ongoing rise in the number of drug related deaths in recent years in Scotland, the National Drug Related Death Database (NDRDD) was established at ISD to collect in depth information on the nature and circumstances of individuals who have died a drug related death. The National Forum on Drug Related Deaths oversees and supports the NDRDD.

The case definition of a drug related death for the 2010 NDRDD data collection is based on the UK wide definition as reported by the National Records for Scotland (NRS) for national reporting **but excludes confirmed suicides**.

Surveillance of every drug related death in a locality is commonly recorded by local critical incident monitoring groups. The process for identification of a drug related death is variable but will normally include collaboration between members of the critical incident monitoring group, the police and the local Procurator Fiscal. Each area has a Data Collection Co-ordinator whose role is to collate the information on each drug related death. They work closely with local critical incident monitoring groups and key partners.

The main data sources for the required data collection items within the NDRDD record were generally similar across all areas of Scotland. These include the Police Sudden Death Report, Pathology Report, GP notes, and other specialist drug treatment notes.

## Contact

### **Dr Lesley Graham**

Associate Specialist

[Lesley.graham@nhs.net](mailto:Lesley.graham@nhs.net)

0131 275 6322

### **Gordon Bruce**

Database Manager

[gordon.bruce@nhs.net](mailto:gordon.bruce@nhs.net)

0131 275 7096

## Further Information

Further information can be found in the [Full Publication Report](#) or on the [ISD website](#)

### **About ISD**

Scotland has some of the best health service data in the world combining high quality, consistency, national coverage and the ability to link data to allow patient based analysis and follow up.

Information Services Division (ISD) is a business operating unit of NHS National Services Scotland - and has been in existence for over 40 years. We are an essential support service to NHSScotland and the Scottish Government Health Department and others, responsive to the needs of NHSScotland as the delivery of health and social care evolves.