

Publication Summary



The National Drug Related Deaths Database (Scotland) Report 2011

Publication date - 30 April 2013

About this Release

This is the third report from the National Drug Related Deaths Database (NDRDD) for Scotland and reports on the calendar year 2011. This is supplementary to the previously published, in August 2012, national reporting of drug-related deaths in Scotland by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) 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 2011, there were 438 cases identified as eligible for inclusion in the NDRDD cohort (an increase from 365 in 2010).
- Over three quarters (78.3%) were male, over half (53.4%) lived in the most deprived areas in Scotland and the 35-44 years age group accounted for the highest proportion of deaths (38.1%).
- Over two fifths (44.5%) of the cohort, where known, were a parent or parental figure.
- Where known, nearly two thirds (63%) had a history of drug injecting and over three quarters (77.4%) had a medical condition recorded in the 6 months prior to death.
- Where known, almost two thirds of individuals (64.5%) had been in contact with a drug treatment service at some point in their lives.
- Where known, in the 6 months prior to death, one third (34.3%) had been released from police custody and almost a fifth (18.1%) had been released from prison.
- This year's report includes data on drugs 'present' in the body and drugs 'implicated' in the death. The presence of a drug in the toxicology of the deceased individual does not necessarily mean that the drug was implicated in (contributed to) the death.
- In the vast majority of cases (97%) more than one drug was present in the toxicology and in 68.9% more than one drug was implicated in the death.
- In relation to drugs present, the proportion of deaths with heroin/morphine and alcohol has decreased over the period 2009-2011, while the proportion of deaths with methadone, diazepam and anti-depressants has increased over this period.

- In 2011, diazepam was the drug most frequently found to be present in the body at death (81.4%) and methadone was the drug most frequently implicated in the death (53.4%).
- The majority of individuals (150, 60.7%) with methadone found in their toxicology were not in receipt of a methadone prescription at the time of death.
- Where known, almost three quarters (73.8%) of individuals in the 2011 NDRDD cohort were not currently in receipt of a prescribed substitute drug.

Background

Against a background of the ongoing rise in the number of drug related deaths in recent years in Scotland, the 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 case definition of a drug-related death for the 2011 NDRDD data collection is based on the UK wide definition as reported by the 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

Garry Hecht
Senior Information Analyst
garryhecht@nhs.net
0141 282 2293

Linsey Galbraith
Principal Information Analyst
linsey.galbraith@nhs.net
0131 275 6227

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.

Official Statistics

Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of 'Official Statistics'. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The Code of Practice is produced and monitored by the UK Statistics Authority which is independent of Government. Under the Code of Practice, the format, content and timing of statistics publications are the responsibility of professional staff working within ISD.

Further information on ISD's statistics, including compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, and on the UK Statistics Authority, is available on the [ISD website](http://www.isdscotland.org/About-ISD/About-Our-Statistics/) www.isdscotland.org/About-ISD/About-Our-Statistics/