

National Naloxone Programme Scotland

Monitoring Report 2015/16

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About this release

Accidental overdose is a common cause of death among users of heroin, morphine and similar drugs, which are referred to as opioids. Naloxone is a drug which reverses the effects of a potentially fatal overdose with these drugs.

This report from the Information Services Division presents information on the number of take-home naloxone kits issued by the National Naloxone Programme in Scotland. It also reports changes since the establishment of the programme in the numbers of opioid-related deaths following prison release or hospital discharge.

Main points

- A total of 8,146 take-home naloxone kits were issued in Scotland in 2015/16, an increase of 10% on the previous year.
- For Scotland as a whole, supply of kits more than doubled, from 52 kits per 1,000 problem drug users in 2011/12 to 132 per 1,000 in 2015/16.
- In 2015/16, 7,214 kits were issued in the community (an 11% increase on the previous year) and 932 kits were issued by prisons upon release (a 6% increase).
- The percentage of kits distributed as a repeat supply increased each year from 12% in 2011/12 to 38% in 2015/16. In 2015/16, 748 repeat kit supplies were made because the previous kit was reported as having been used to treat an opioid overdose.
- In 2015, of all opioid-related deaths, 4.7% occurred among people who had been released from prison in the previous four weeks. This was significantly lower than the 9.8% observed before the programme, though the figures should be treated with caution because of the relatively small number of opioid-related deaths within four weeks of prison release.
- The percentage of all opioid-related deaths that occurred among people who had been discharged from hospital in the previous four weeks showed no consistent trend, changing from 9.7% before the programme (2006-10) to 10.3% in 2015.

Background

The overall aim of the National Naloxone Programme was to contribute to a reduction in fatal opioid overdoses in Scotland. Intramuscular injection of naloxone provides time for emergency services to arrive and for further treatment to be given. Following suitable training, take-home naloxone kits are issued to people at risk of opioid overdose in order to help prevent overdose deaths. To help achieve this, in the five years from April 2011 to March 2016, the National Naloxone Programme co-ordinated distribution of take-home naloxone kits from community outlets (usually specialist drug treatment services) and prisons. During this period, NHS Boards were responsible for local delivery of the programme and the cost of naloxone kits was reimbursed by the Scottish Government. While the Scottish Government continues to fund some aspects of the National Naloxone Programme, from 2016/17 NHS Boards assumed responsibility for funding take-home naloxone supplies and responsibility for national oversight was transferred to the Partnership for Action on Drugs in Scotland Harms Group.

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Find out more

Further details are available in: [National Naloxone Programme Scotland Monitoring Report 2015/16](#)

Other ISD publications on drug and alcohol misuse can be found at the [ISD website](#).

The Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPHO) provides information on various aspects of drug misuse in Scotland: [ScotPHO drug misuse section](#).

The next update of this publication will be in August 2017.

ISD and Official Statistics

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