



**Scottish
Families**

Affected by Alcohol & Drugs



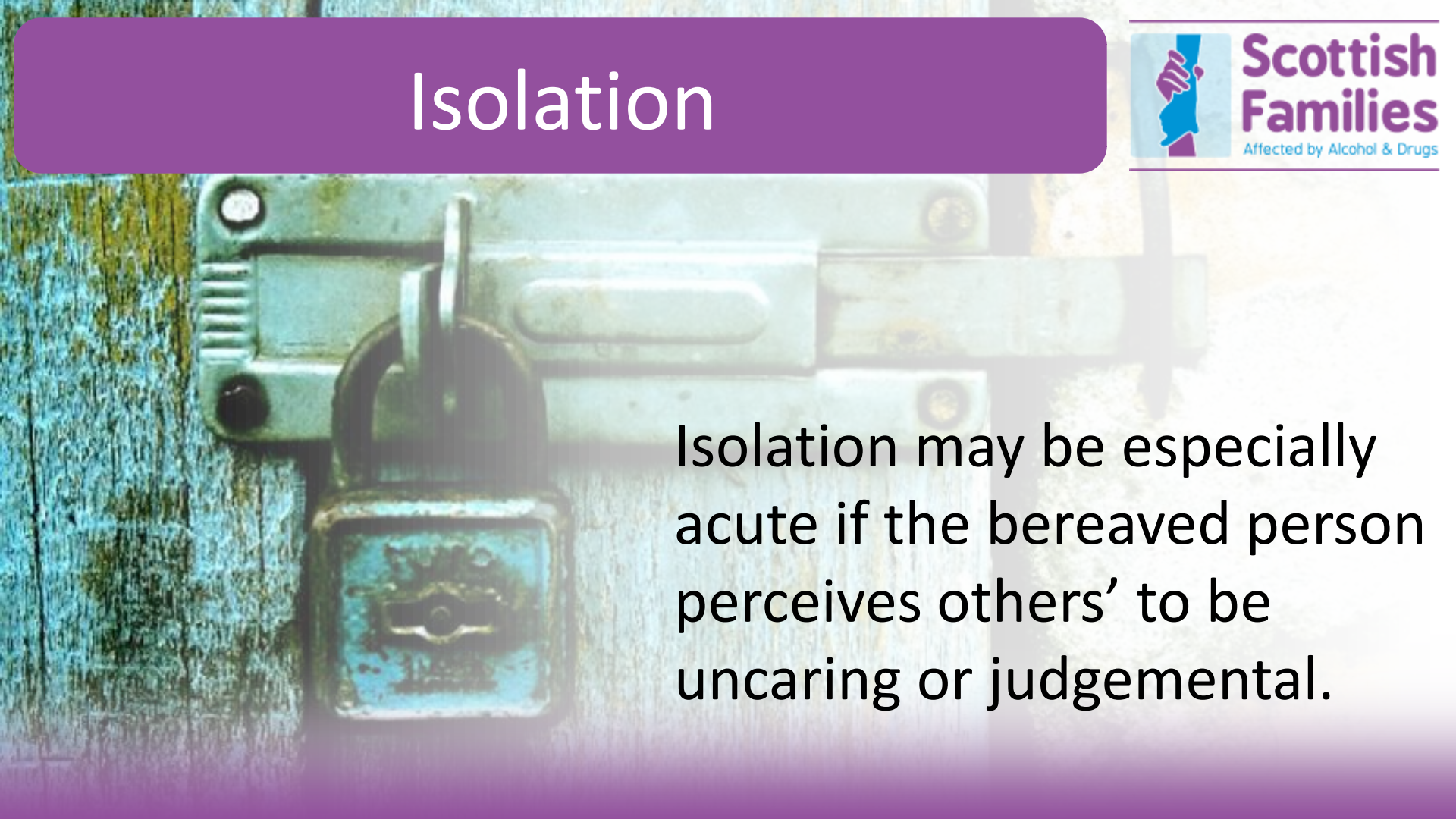
Drug-related Death Bereavement

Stigma



Stigma is a '*stain or attribute*' marking out someone as unacceptable.

Isolation



Isolation may be especially acute if the bereaved person perceives others' to be uncaring or judgemental.

'Double bereavement'


That the family's loved one was lost to drugs and alcohol first – maybe years ago – and then lost again when the person dies.

It is also a factor that strained or broken relationships – not uncommon in families experiencing problems with drug misuse – often complicate the grieving process.

Initial police investigation

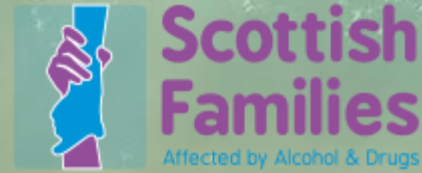


- Police will attend all incidents of a suspected drugs overdose.
- Each incident will be treated as suspicious and may result in someone being charged with supplying drugs to the deceased person.
- Police will always treat the place where someone died as a crime scene.

A person with long dark hair, wearing a dark jacket and blue jeans, is sitting on a set of concrete stairs. They have their hands clasped over their face, suggesting a state of grief or distress. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

Everyone's bereavement is unique, and the most important thing is that people are able to access the support they need, when they need it.

Bereaved through substance use



Guidelines for those whose work brings them into contact with adults bereaved after a drug or alcohol-related death.



Findings



- **Stigma** – interviewees acutely aware of stigma.
- **Support** – formal structures of support were often lacking and professionals could show more empathy.
- **Overall** – responses were immensely varied, therefore support should be flexible and individualised.

Bereaved through substance use



Key Messages

1. Show kindness and compassion.
2. Language is important.
3. Every bereaved person is an individual.
4. Everyone can make a contribution.
5. Working together.

Bereavement Service



Have you lost a loved one due to a drug-related death?

If you are impacted by a drug-related death contact us today to receive:

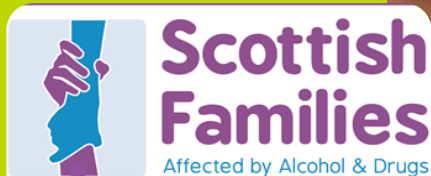
- ***Guidance and information***
- ***Counselling sessions***
- ***Telephone support***
- ***Peer support***



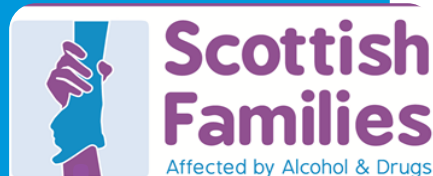
Service provision



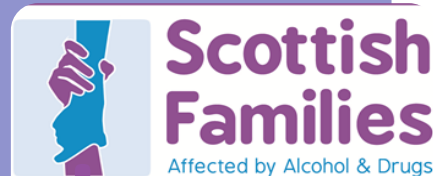
HELPLINE



TELEHEALTH



LOCAL SUPPORT



BEREAVEMENT

08080 10 10 11 helpline@sfad.org.uk