

Borders Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (ADP)

Briefing on Drug Related Deaths

1 Drug deaths in Borders

Tragically the number of people who are dying from a drug related death in Borders and Scotland is increasing. For each person who loses their life, they leave behind grieving family, friends and possibly children.

Borders ADP is committed to reducing the number of accidental drug related deaths in Borders. As part of their reduction strategy the ADP is including this briefing sheet in delegates pack for all training events during 2021-22.

2 What is my role?

All of us can take a role in preventing drug related deaths. Please read the important information below and use it to help identify if the people you work with could be at risk of overdose.

3 Risk factors

Some of the main causes of overdose include:

- Reduced tolerance following a break or reduction in use (e.g. after a period in prison or residential rehabilitation)
- Mixing drugs including alcohol (including prescribed medications)
- Using too much (circumstances such as increased funds or depression can lead to using too much)
- Using alone (no one to intervene or seek medical assistance)
- Injecting drug use
- Purity Levels (illegal drugs can vary in strength, using low purity drugs followed by higher purity drugs may have implications for tolerance levels)

4 Risk times

The following have been identified as high risk times when people would be more at risk of overdose and death:

- On release from prison (especially short sentences)
- On leaving residential rehabilitation or hospital
- When recently had detoxification ('detox')
- Recently relapsed
- When in poor physical or mental health (including respiratory infections)
- After a recent life event, such as bereavement, relationship breakdown or loss of custody of children
- Being a longer-term user

- During festive periods, weekends or holidays

4 Take Home Naloxone

Take Home Naloxone (THN) is a medication which can be used to temporarily reverse an opioid (e.g. heroin) overdose to allow emergency help to arrive. THN is available to anyone at risk of opiate overdose or their family and friend from: Borders Addiction Service, We Are With You Borders and all Injecting Equipment Providers ('needle exchanges').

E-learning on overdose prevention, intervention and Naloxone is now available via Scottish Drugs Forum and will allow you to analyse key aspects of drug-related deaths in Scotland, learn how to prevent an opiate overdose and explains what to do in the case of witnessing an opiate overdose.

By the end of the course, you will also have an understanding of the THN, where to obtain a kit and how to use it in the case of an overdose.

The concise course can be completed in around an hour, or alternatively be completed in separate sittings.

Please see our website for more details: www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/badp

5 Other sources of information

Please be aware that the ADP offers overdose awareness training. Further details can be obtained from our website.

Public Protection Training –Workforce child protection and adult support and protection training

The following courses are provided for multi-agency staff working in adult and children's services. Each course lasts for two hours.

- PP2: introduction to public protection - for people working with adults and children and young people
- PP3: thinking about risk - for people working with adults and children and young people
- CP3: contributing to the process - for people working with children and young people
- ASP3: contributing to the process - for people working with adults

The full calendar of dates and times is available on the [SBPCC training bookings calendar](#)

Thank you for your help