

Borders Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (ADP)

Briefing on Drug Related Deaths

1 Drug deaths in Borders

Borders ADP is committed to reducing the number of 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 2023-24

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
- Using drugs over a long period of time
- 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 this course, you will be able to summarise drug-related deaths in Scotland, identify an overdose and explain how to prevent an overdose.

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

5 Public Protection Committee Training

All course dates can be found on the MS Bookings site using the below link.

[Public Protection Committee Training \(office365.com\)](http://office365.com).