

Appendix 4 - Drug-Related Death Definition

The 'baseline' definition for DRD in Scotland is derived from the UK Drugs Strategy and covers the following cause of death categories (ICD10 codes are given in brackets):

- a) Deaths where the underlying cause of death has been coded to the following sub-categories of 'mental and behavioural disorders due to psychoactive substance use':
 - i. opioids (F11);
 - ii. cannabinoids (F12);
 - iii. sedatives or hypnotics (F13);
 - iv. cocaine (F14);
 - v. other stimulants, including caffeine (F15);
 - vi. hallucinogens (F16);
 - vii. multiple drug use and use of other psychoactive substances (F19).

- b) Deaths coded to the following categories and where a drug listed under the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) was known to be present in the body at the time of death:
 - i. accidental poisoning (X40 - X44);
 - ii. intentional self-poisoning by drugs, medicaments and biological substances (X60 - X64);
 - iii. assault by drugs, medicaments and biological substances (X85);
 - iv. event of undetermined intent, poisoning (Y10 - Y14).

A number of categories that may be regarded as 'drug-related' deaths are excluded from the definition because the underlying cause of death was not coded to one of the ICD10 codes listed above. Examples of deaths which are not counted for this reason are:

- deaths coded to mental and behavioural disorders due to the use of alcohol (F10), tobacco (F17) and volatile substances (F18);
- deaths from AIDS where the risk factor was believed to be the sharing of needles;
- deaths from drowning, falls, road traffic and other accidents (except the inhalation of gastric contents, or choking on food) which occurred under the influence of drugs;
- deaths due to assault by a person who was under the influence of drugs, or as a result of being involved in drug-related criminal activities;
- deaths due to infections from contaminated drugs, such as *Clostridium noyvi* or anthrax.
- deaths where a drug listed under the Misuse of Drugs Act was present because it was part of a compound analgesic or cold remedy.

- **Additional Lothian case review exclusion criteria:** intentional or accidental overdoses involving only controlled drugs prescribed to the individual in cases where there had been no previous history of substance misuse.