National Naloxone Programme Scotland
Monitoring Report 2018/19
An Official Statistics release for Scotland

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About this release

This release by Public Health Scotland presents information on the number of take-home naloxone kits issued by the National Naloxone Programme in Scotland. Figures are presented separately for kits issued from community outlets, kits issued in prisons at the point of prisoner release and kits dispensed via community prescription.

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.

Main Points

- A total of 12,135 take-home naloxone kits were issued in Scotland in 2018/19, an increase of 42% from the previous year (8,555). A total of 58,377 take-home naloxone kits were supplied in Scotland between 2011/12 and 2018/19.

- In 2018/19, there were 10,609 take-home naloxone kits issued from community outlets, 844 kits issued in prisons upon release and 682 kits dispensed via community prescription.

Cumulative number of naloxone kits supplied, by source (Scotland; 2011/12 to 2018/19)

- In 2018/19, repeat supplies accounted for 5,742 take-home naloxone kits distributed from community outlets and prisons. Of these, 1,543 (27%) repeat supplies were made because the previous kit was reported as having been used to treat an opioid overdose.
• In 2018/19, it is estimated that 2,778 take-home naloxone kits were issued as a first supply to an individual at risk of opioid overdose. Cumulatively, 25,935 at risk individuals are estimated to have been issued with a first supply of take-home naloxone between 2011/12 and 2018/19.

• At the end of 2018/19, the reach of take-home naloxone (based on the number of at risk individuals supplied with kits between 2011/12 and 2018/19) was estimated to be 453 kits per 1,000 ‘problem drug users’.

Background
The overall aim of Scotland’s National Naloxone Programme is to prevent fatal opioid overdoses. Administration 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, their friends and family and service workers in order to help prevent overdose deaths. 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 direct responsibility for funding take-home naloxone supplies. Following this change and revisions to the regulatory framework, some NHS Boards have also started to dispense take-home naloxone via community prescription.

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Further Information
Data from this publication are available from the publication page on our website.
For related topics, please see the Drugs Misuse pages.

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

The next release of this publication will be spring 2021.

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