



PERTH & KINROSS INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

20 SEPTEMBER 2023

ANNUAL UPDATE ON SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

**Report by Chief Officer
(Report No. G/23/122)**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide an update to the IJB on substance use services including embedding and implementing the MAT (Medication Assisted Treatment) Standards and work to progress the outcomes of the current ADP Strategic Delivery Plan 2020-23.

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended the IJB:

- 1.1 Notes progress in embedding and implementing the MAT Standards.
- 1.2 Notes progress with ADP Strategic Delivery Plan 2020-23
- 1.3 Retrospectively approves the ADP Annual Reporting Survey 2023, attached as Appendix 1
- 1.4 Requests an update in 12 months' time.

2. SITUATION/BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

2.1 ADP Governance

- 2.1.1 The Integration Joint Board (IJB) is the legal entity responsible for the strategic planning and commissioning of integrated community health and care services including drug and alcohol services. The Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) has responsibility for the operational delivery of these services and is the lead partner for the ADP and will report at least annually to the IJB on performance and progress.
- 2.1.2 Perth and Kinross Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) provides strategic leadership across Perth and Kinross for all agencies working within the alcohol and drugs field and other agencies with a significant role to play such as housing and education. As the success of this work requires the collaboration and efforts of a wide range of partners across the public, independent and voluntary sectors the work of the Alcohol and Drug Partnership provides reports to the IJB, COG, Community Planning

Partnership, Children, Young People and Families Partnership, as well as to the Executive Leadership in NHS Tayside and Perth and Kinross Council.

- 2.1.3 The multi-agency partnership approach to reducing substance use mortality and harm is overseen by the Perth and Kinross Chief Officer's Group for Public Protection (COG), of which the Chief Officer is a member and the COG. In line with the terms of reference for the COG, the ADP Chair is in attendance and provides regular reports.
- 2.1.4 The ADP is part of the Community Planning Partnership. Through this, the ADP works with partner organisations to try and address wider issues which impact on substance use including reducing poverty and improving the mental and physical health of the population.
- 2.1.5 Perth and Kinross ADP takes a multi-agency and collaborative approach to the allocation of funding from a number of sources. The main sources are NHS Tayside, Perth and Kinross Council and ringfenced monies from the Scottish Government via NHS Tayside.

2.2 Drug-related deaths in 2022

- 2.2.1 National data was published in August 2023 for [Drug-related deaths in Scotland in 2022](#). There were 1,051 recorded drug use deaths in 2022, which is 21% (279 deaths) fewer than in 2021. In Perth and Kinross, the number of drug use deaths was 21 in 2022, which is 5% (1 death) more than in 2021.
- 2.2.2 The age standardised five-year average drug use death rate between 2018 and 2022 for Scotland was 23.4 per 100,000 population. This is an increase of 0.5 per 100,000 from the previous five-year period. In Perth and Kinross, the rate between 2018 and 2022 was 18.4 per 100,000. This is an increase of 0.1 per 100,000 from the previous period.
- 2.2.3 The age standardised death rates are presented as they take account of the size of the population and its age structure, to promote more reliable comparisons over time and/ or between areas.

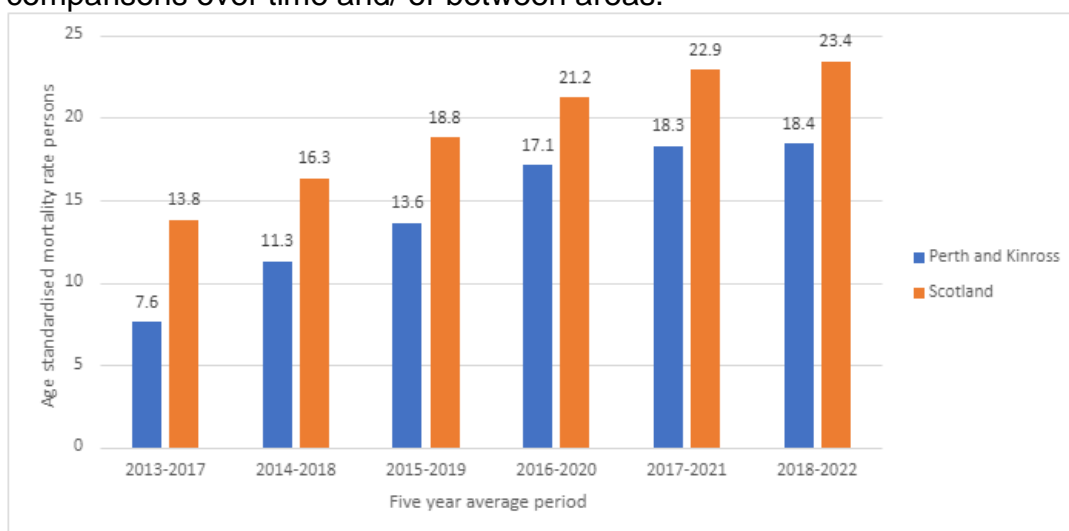


Figure 1. Age-standardised five-year drug use death rate for Perth and Kinross and Scotland

2.3 MAT Standards

2.3.1 In response to the increasing number of drug deaths across Scotland, the Scottish Government published the Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards in 2021. The ten Standards aim to reduce drug-related harm, including premature death, through a programme of sustained funding, workforce development, system and culture change across services and wider communities. In 2022-23, the Scottish Government tasked all areas with implementing and embedding Standards 1-5.

2.3.2 In June 2023, PHS (Public Health Scotland) published a benchmarking report on the progress that ADPs are making. [National benchmarking report – MAT standards](#). Using a RAGB rating system, Perth and Kinross has made good progress and achieved three provisional greens and two ambers by April 2023. Subsequent work has seen the provisional green criteria met for all of the first five Standards.

2.4 Alcohol-specific deaths

2.4.1 There were 1,276 alcohol-specific deaths in Scotland in 2022. This is an increase of 2% (31 deaths) since 2021 and is the highest number of deaths registered since 2008. In Perth and Kinross, there were 32 alcohol-specific deaths in 2022. This is an increase of 6% (2 deaths) since 2021.

2.4.2 The age standardised five-year average alcohol-specific use death rate between 2018 and 2022 for Scotland was 21.2 per 100,000 population. This is an increase of 0.4 per 100,000 from the previous five-year period. In Perth and Kinross, the rate between 2018 and 2022 was 17.0 per 100,000. This is an increase of 1.7 per 100,000 from the previous period.

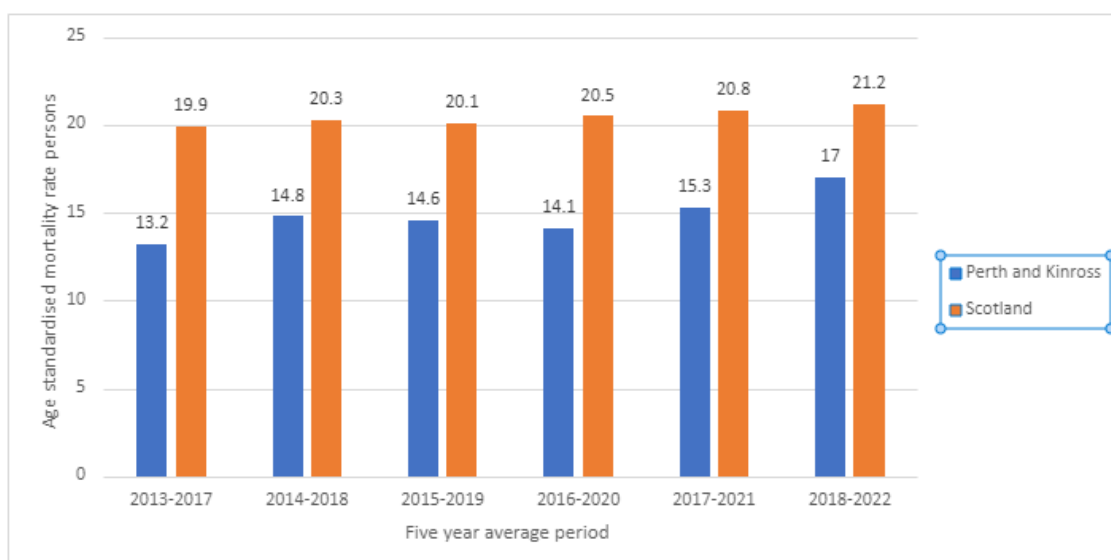


Figure 2. Age standardised five-year averages of alcohol-specific deaths in Perth and Kinross and Scotland.

2.4.3 Data from iDART (Integrated Drug and Alcohol Recovery Team) shows that the number of people seeking support with drug issues has fallen, from 313 in 2021-22 to 211 in 2022-23. The number of people seeking support with alcohol issues has also fallen from 395 referrals in 2021-22 to 368 referrals in 2022-23. However, there has been an increase in the number of people seeking support for both alcohol and drug use, with 37 people recorded in 2022-23 compared with fewer than 10 in 2021-22. Current caseloads for iDART remain high, with 670 people working with the service, and an increasing number of people presenting with complex needs in addition to poly drug use including physical health and mental health issues.

3. ADP STRATEGIC DELIVERY PLAN 2020-23

3.1 Outcomes

3.1.1 The Perth and Kinross ADP Strategic Delivery Plan 2020-23 was refreshed in 2023 in response to the volume of change and new challenges that have arisen since the plan's inception in early 2020. These include the publication of the Drug Death Task Force Final report "Changing Lives" and the Scottish Government's response to this, the publication of the National Mission on Drug Deaths Plan 2022-26 and the MAT Standards in 2021.

3.1.2 The Strategic Delivery Plan has six outcomes which together contribute to the overall aim of the plan to reduce the harms associated with alcohol and drugs and facilitate opportunities for recovery for people affected by substance use. The outcomes are:

Outcome 1: Fewer people suffer harm as a result of alcohol and drug use.

Outcome 2: Risk is reduced for people who take harmful drugs.

Outcome 3: People receive high quality treatment and recovery services.

Outcome 4: People at most risk have access to treatment and recovery.

Outcome 5: Quality of life is improved by addressing multiple disadvantages.

Outcome 6: Children and families affected by substance use will be safe, healthy, included and supported.

3.1.3 Significant progress has been made during 2022-23 in achieving the aims of the Plan. Relevant performance information and examples of work that has been undertaken to progress each outcome is highlighted below. Further information can also be found in Appendix 1: ADP Annual Reporting Survey 2023-23 – Perth and Kinross.

3.2 Fewer people suffer harm as a result of alcohol and drug use

3.2.1 Prevention of the harms associated with substance use and early intervention to support people with substance use issues needs to be viewed in relation to other policy areas such as education and social inclusion. Crucial to achieving this is the development of education-based, person-centred approaches which aim to reach all children and young people. Recent work with young people in Crieff and Blairgowrie highlights this approach.

3.2.2 Young people from Crieff have been working with Perth and Kinross Council's Services for Young People and Hillcrest Futures to create an interactive and informal approach to drug education. The Drug and Alcohol Ambassadors Project has seen the creation of an eight-week peer education programme which gives young people, who are deemed to be engaging in risk-taking behaviour, the opportunity to learn about the risks they are taking and the consequences from their peers. Following the successful launch of the project in Crieff, plans are in development to run this in other areas of Perth and Kinross in 2023-24.

3.2.3 The ADP has co-funded, with the Perth and Kinross Council Safer Communities Team, a project run by the SCYD (Strathmore Centre for Youth Development) which focuses on the impact substance use is having on young people in the Blairgowrie and Rattray area. The project team worked with 124 pupils in four local schools running four-week programmes focusing on team building, alcohol and drug awareness and accessing support and services. The team also regularly attended Blairgowrie High School where they ran a pop-up stall to provide information and ran interactive workshops on smoking/vaping, alcohol and drugs.

3.3 Risk is reduced for people who take harmful drugs

3.3.1 Timely access to services, readily available needles and syringes and accessible Naloxone when required, all contribute to a reduction in the harms that are caused by people using substances.

3.3.2 In response to MAT Standard 4, which focuses on the provision of harm reduction, working on a Tayside wide basis, harm reduction support has been expanded. This includes training and equipping staff with a carry-pack of equipment and supplies to increase the supply of IEP (Injecting Equipment Provision) at the point of receiving OST (Opiate Substitution Therapy). In addition, the IEP service also provides IEP when iDART (integrated Drug and Alcohol Recovery Team) conduct outreach visits and provides harm reduction support to new patients who attend clinics.

3.3.3 The last three years has seen a continued increase in the number of Take-Home Naloxone (THN) kits issued in Perth and Kinross. There were 658 THN kits issued in 2022-23 compared with 339 in 2020-21. Increases in kits supplied by iDART and by peers have significantly contributed to this. Plans are in place to support all local pharmacies to carry a supply of kits to increase the supply to more community members.

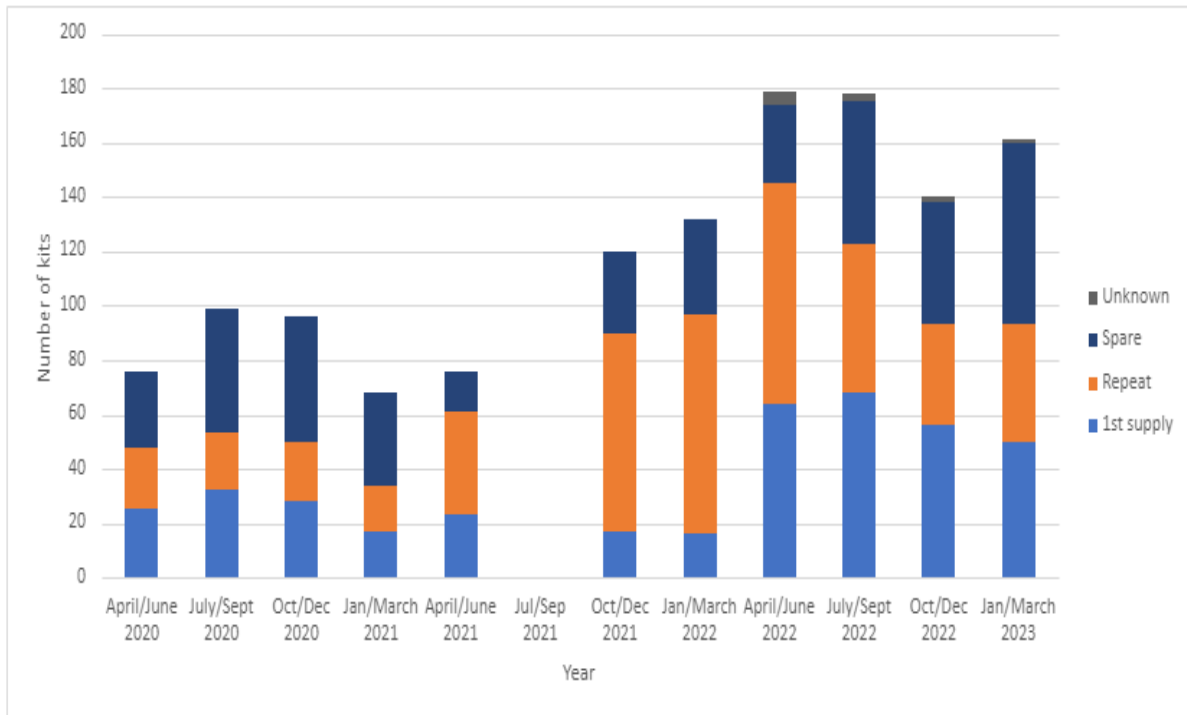


Figure 3. Number of Take-Home Naloxone (THN) Kits issued in Perth and Kinross

Note: Data for July –September 2021 is missing owing to a database handover issue

3.3.4 In 2022-23, the average number of needles and syringes distributed per person who used drugs problematically was 46.6. This is a large reduction from the previous year when the average number was 85.9. This reduction potentially reflects local shifts in the numbers of people using crack cocaine and benzodiazepines rather than opiates.

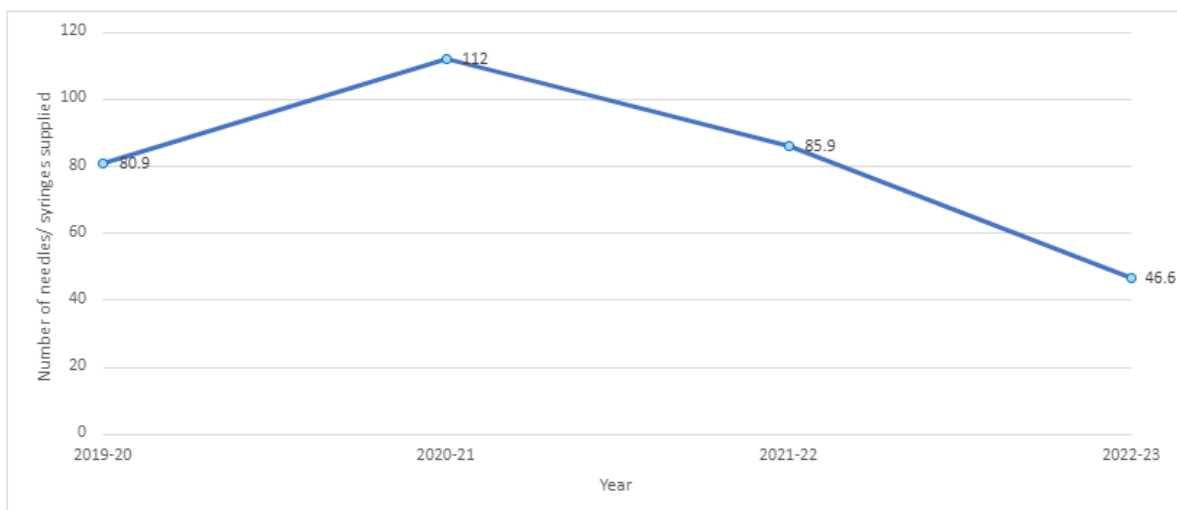


Figure 4. Number of needles/ syringes supplied per unique IEP (Injecting Equipment Provision) client in Perth and Kinross.

3.3.5 There has been a continued expansion of the available options for accessing IEP across services. Hillcrest Futures delivers an enhanced harm reduction and IEP service in Perth and Kinross. This includes assessment, overdose awareness, injecting equipment provision, blood borne virus testing, vaccination, and wound care. This is based with iDART in Drumhar Health Centre. In 2022-23 Hillcrest Futures expanded their provision to include Skinnergate and began outreach IEP drop-ins at Greyfriars, CATH day centre and OWLS (One-Stop Women's Learning Service).

3.4 People receive high quality treatment and recovery services.

3.4.1 A significant amount of work has been undertaken throughout 2022-23 to ensure that a range of services are available to people which are good quality, provide compassionate responses and are person and family centred.

3.4.2 Improving the coordination of all community-based substance use services has continued. IDART has a fully integrated, multi-disciplinary model which provides seamless support to help people manage and address substance use issues.

3.4.3 The continued development of iDART has been supported by the implementation of an integrated management structure and the creation of new posts to enable the team to expand its work. This has included the recruitment of a social worker with specialist mental health experience to provide support to clients with dual diagnosis of mental health and substance use issues and the recruitment of two workers to provide substance use support to people who have been given community sentences by the courts.

3.4.4 To meet the requirements of MAT Standards 1,2 and 5, which are concerned with access to treatment and choice, drug and alcohol procedures and pathways were reviewed and practical changes implemented where required. These included the introduction of same day prescribing, initially one day a week. In 2022-23, 13 people benefitted from this service. Information about treatment options provided to service users to enable informed decisions; linkages to other support services made and strengthened to support people at risk and a review of staff caseloads to ensure staff have the capacity to work with service users to support their continued engagement with services. As a result of these changes people can choose the treatment best suited to their needs and will be able to start their treatment earlier.

3.4.5 Following a declining trend in waiting times performance, the last six months of 2022-23 saw a steady improvement, resulting in 94% of people referred for help with problematic drug or alcohol use having to wait no longer than three weeks for specialist treatment that supports their recovery. This was the result of the implementation of same day prescribing, improvements in recording processes and an increase in staffing capacity of both clinical and administrative staff.

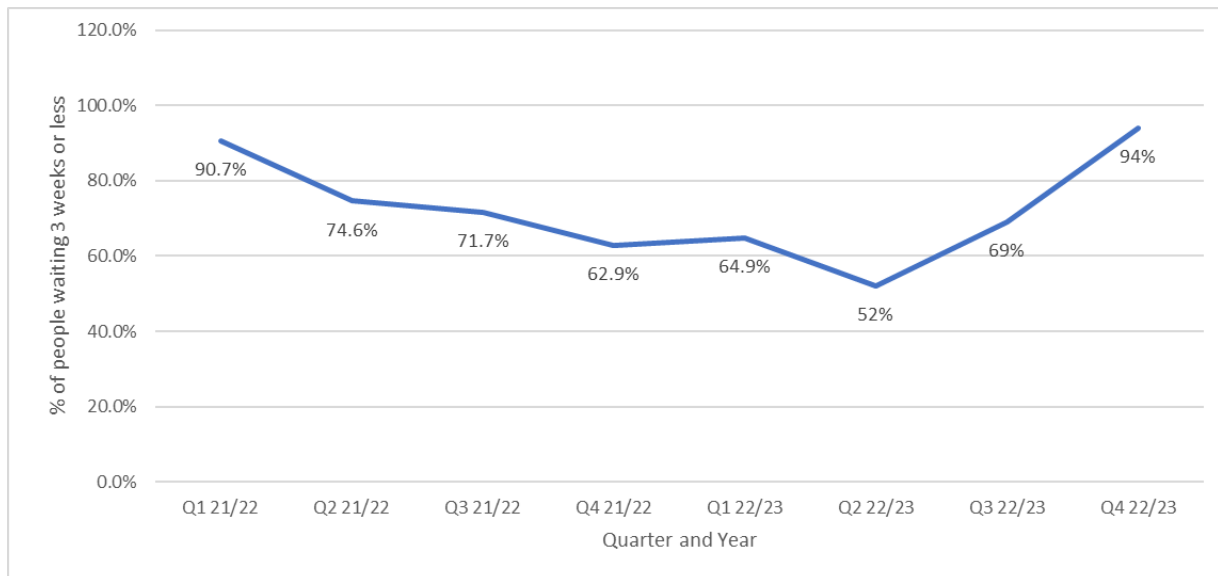


Figure 5: Waiting times for people accessing specialist substance use treatment in Perth and Kinross

- 3.4.6 As part of the criteria for MAT Standard 2, which concerns choice of treatment, methadone and long and short-acting buprenorphine formulations are required to be equally available in local formularies and dispensing locations. Buprenorphine, which causes significantly less sedation than methadone and its long-acting injectable formulation, Buvidal, allows dosage intervals of up to several weeks.
- 3.4.7 85 people in Perth and Kinross were prescribed Buvidal, the long-acting injectable formulation of buprenorphine, in the community in 2022-23. The use of Buvidal has continued to produce positive outcomes for people by reducing the number of non-fatal overdose incidents and allowing people to remain in treatment.
- 3.4.8 In order to ensure a range of treatment options are available, the Perth and Kinross residential rehabilitation pathway and screening group was established in 2021-22 to support people who wanted to access this treatment option. In 2022-23, 17 requests to access residential rehabilitation facilities were approved by the screening group, costing £255,409 in total.
- 3.4.9 Perth and Kinross ADP and other local ADPs are currently working with HIS (Health Improvement Scotland) to review and enhance the current pathways into and out of residential rehabilitation to ensure that this is an effective form of treatment for as many people as possible.
- 3.4.10 In response to the high number of referrals for support with alcohol issues, iDART expanded its treatment options by trialling a community alcohol detox service. The service supported 14 people in 2022/23 and because of this success, is now looking at ways to expand its work to increase patient numbers and to potentially offer a service to people who require support with benzodiazepine use.

3.4.11 TCA's (Tayside Council on Alcohol) local counselling and creative therapies service has also seen an increase in referrals for support with local issues. TCA received 272 referrals in 2022-23; an increase of 27 referrals compared to the same time last year. To cope with the high demand, TCA have utilised counselling students to create additional capacity. This has had a significant impact on waiting times, following first contact assessment, reducing the average time from first referral to being allocated to a counsellor from 6-8 weeks to 3-4 weeks.

3.4.12 The recovery community is a vital part of a person's recovery journey and 2022-23 saw the expansion of this. There are now eight recovery cafés operating throughout Perth and Kinross with cafes in Perth City, Aberfeldy, Dunkeld, Pitlochry, Blairgowrie, Crieff, Kinross, HMP Perth with a further cafe planned in Letham. There are also a variety of groups in operation which provide wider social interaction helping people to be at ease and work through difficult times. These include a walking group, fishing group, badminton group, art and craft group and a woman's wellbeing group.

3.4.13 Feedback suggests members feel more empowered. For example:

"This is the longest I have been abstinent over 6 months now and I am now able to participate at other activities." - "I've never been sober for years, been in and out of Detox nearly monthly this has opened my mind up toward my own recovery." - "This gets me out of my flat and has stopped my loneliness. I now have a friend!"

3.4.14 The first RecoverMay took place across Perth and Kinross during May 2023. The purpose of RecoverMay is to highlight what recovery means to people with living and lived experience of recovery, their families and carers and people working in support services. During the month, an art exhibition, podcasts, social media promotions, and other events took place to highlight recovery from both substance use and mental health. As part of the art exhibition, a short film titled "Walk the Inch" was premiered, which had been created by residents of HMP Perth, showing the journey of an individual entering and leaving the prison.

3.5 People most at risk have access to treatment and recovery

3.5.1 The focus of MAT Standard 3 is for services to proactively identify those people who are most at risk of harm from substance use and ensure they are offered support. Perth and Kinross benefits from the operation of several groups who work to achieve these aims.

3.5.2 These include the substance use multiagency referral hub which reviews all referrals to substance use services to link people to the most appropriate service; the prisoner release multiagency group which meets to improve coordination of prisoner release information, the HMP Perth Persons of Concern review group which meets daily to consider residents in crisis and the NFOD (Near-Fatal Overdose) Group which meet to review all near-fatal overdose incidents and provide support to those individuals who have experienced this.

3.5.3 93 people were discussed by the NFOD group during 2022-23 and where required, were offered assistance via an assertive outreach service provided by Hillcrest Futures and Positive Steps, in partnership with iDART. This number is slightly less than in 2021-22 when there were 98 people discussed by the group and highlights the positive impact the formation of the group has had on the number of NFOD incidents since its inception.

3.5.4 Following the success of the Tayside NFOD model, the Perth and Kinross NFOD group are working with the newly appointed Tayside NFOD coordinator, to review the pathway and to consider how to co-ordinate the work of the other groups who work with individuals who are at risk.

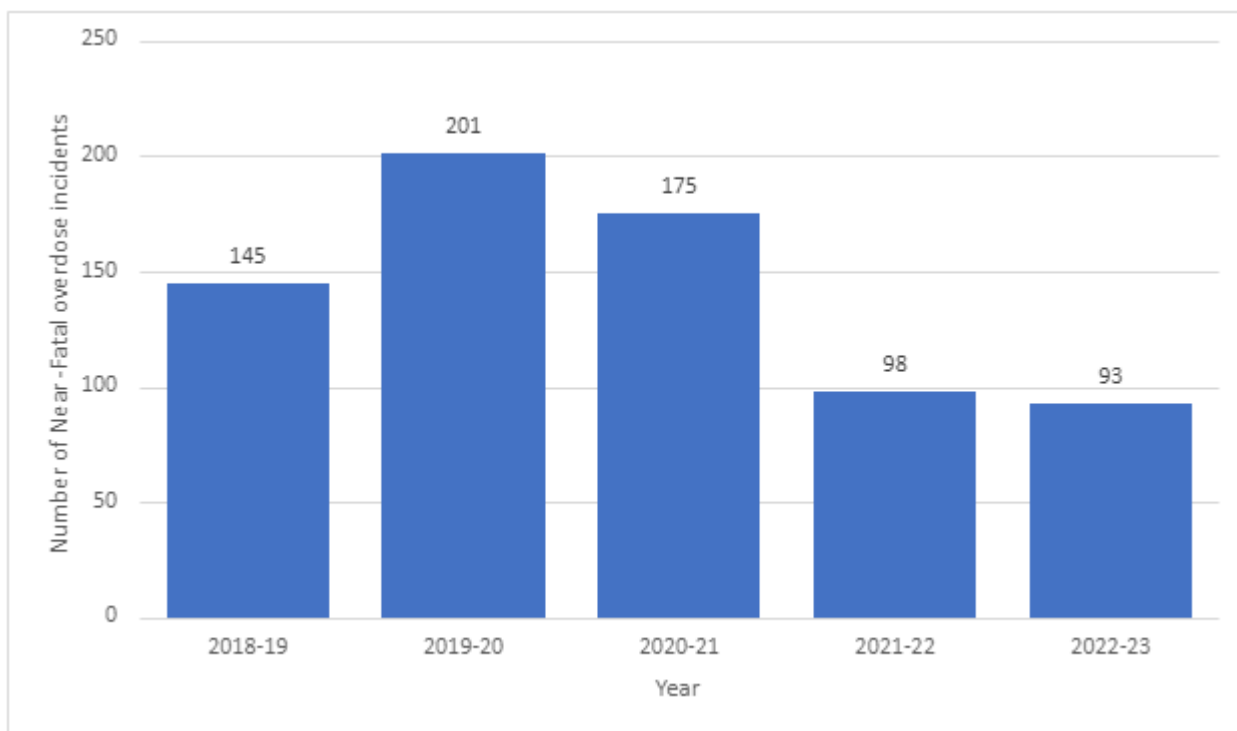


Figure 6. Number of Near-Fatal Overdose incidents reported to the Perth and Kinross NFOD Group by year.

3.6 Quality of life is improved by addressing multiple disadvantages

3.6.1 In addition to high quality treatment and recovery services, people with substance use issues require access to health and social care services to improve their quality of life. Much of the focus of MAT Standards 6-10 is concerned with achieving this.

3.6.2 Work is already underway to implement MAT Standards 6-10 to meet the April 2024 deadline. This has seen the Tayside Drug and Alcohol Psychology Service progressing with the recruitment of a psychology assistant whose key role will be to improve access to psychological interventions. The ADP has also been working with Perth and Kinross Council's new Trauma Coordinator to ensure that appropriate trauma awareness training is available to all staff working in key services.

- 3.6.3 MAT Standard 9 concerns the development of pathways for people with co-occurring substance use and mental health issues. Work is now underway at a Tayside level to carry out this work. Locally, the development a model for integrated mental health and substance use provision will help to support this work. Work to date has seen the creation of a service manager post with responsibility for both mental health and substance use services and the recruitment of a social work post within iDART to specifically work with people who are experiencing both substance use and mental health issues.
- 3.6.4 The ADP is continuing to work with the Community Justice Partnership to support services who are working with people with substance use issues and who are currently part of the justice system. The partnerships are collaborating on a range of projects and includes jointly funding an arrest referral test of change to explore how best to support people with substance use issues who are arrested and held in police custody. The service supported 92 people in 2022-23 with housing, mental health, substance use and finance needs.
- 3.6.5 The partnerships have also collaborated to develop and jointly fund a new model of voluntary throughcare to support people on short term sentences, which is being delivered by colleagues from CATH (Churches Action for the Homeless) and APEX. Face-to-face interaction both pre- and post-liberation has seen success with 39 people supported during the year. Plans are in development to expand to model to offer the service to remand and long-term prisoners.
- 3.6.6 In addition, initial work to implement the MAT Standards across the prison estate by April 2025 has been taking place, supported by the PHS MIST (MAT Standards Implementation and Support Team). The ADP is a member of the HMP Perth implementation group and early work has included the production of an induction booklet for families, a new process being tested to ensure all prisoners are registered with a GP on release and further expansion of the recovery hub.

3.7 Children and Families affected by substance use will be safe, healthy included and supported.

- 3.7.1 A key strategic aim of the ADP is to ensure that a whole family/ system approach is embedded across services. The ADP has funded several projects that are designed to implement a Whole Family Approach. These include providing funding for a project worker for the Families Empowering Communities project, which is a community-led intervention in Letham and Crieff which seeks to reduce disadvantage and inequality for families by encouraging co-designed solutions and foster better collaborative working between community members and services. Some of the positive outcomes the project has achieved to date include the provision of whole family support and one-to-one support, the development of a wellbeing group for primary aged children and a summer activity programme designed by parents.
- 3.7.2 The ADP is also a member of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund Steering Group which aims to increase provision of early intervention and preventative holistic family support that addresses the needs of families, including those

with substance use issues, at the earliest time of need. Work is ongoing to identify gaps in current service provision and how these can be addressed.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 2022-23 saw the ADP make significant progress in achieving the aims of its current Strategic Delivery Plan. A further reduction in the number of drug-related deaths in Perth and Kinross, a significant reduction in waiting times and the implementation of MAT Standards 1-5 all contributed to this progress. Further details are in the ADP Annual Reporting Survey 2022-23 in Appendix 1.
- 4.2 However, there is still much work to do as the numbers for both drug-related deaths and alcohol-related deaths remain high, as do the number of referrals to alcohol and drug services. Therefore, during 2023-24, several key actions will be progressed. These include the implementation of MAT Standards 6-10, the expansion of the successful community alcohol detox service and consideration of how to respond to the emerging trend of benzodiazepine and stimulant use, both locally and across Tayside.
- 4.3 A new three-year ADP Strategic Delivery Plan will also be developed which will allow partners to plan and respond flexibly to the short- and longer-term challenges and monitor the impact of their response.

Authors

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Kenny Ogilvy	ADP Chair	
Charlie Cranmer	ADP Coordinator	

Appendix 1: ADP Annual Reporting Survey 2022-23 – Perth and Kinross.