

To: DAAT Board
Report by: Performance Manager: Safer Communities Team
Subject: Confidential Inquiry into Drug Related Deaths
Date: 6th December 2012

1. Recommendation

The DAAT Board continue to monitor the number of drug related deaths on an annual basis.

2. Background

Since 2004, annual confidential inquiries have considered local drug related deaths that fit within the Office of National Statistics (ONS) definition 'deaths where the underlying cause is poisoning, drug abuse, or drug dependence and where any of the substances are controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971)'. This definition excludes deaths involving alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances and drugs listed under the Misuse of Drugs Act which form part of an analgesic or cold remedy (e.g. co-proxamol); those deaths caused by secondary infections and deaths from road traffic accidents and other accidents which occurred under the influence of drugs.

The reasons for using the above definition are twofold. Firstly, the Department of Health Action Plan (Department of Health, 2001) and the Update Drugs Strategy (Home Office, 2002) targets to reduce drug-related deaths are based on the identification of cases according to the ONS definition. Secondly, other definitions of drug-related deaths, such as that used by the National Programme of Substance Abuse Deaths, are over-inclusive; counting deaths caused by overdoses of antidepressants, anti-psychotics and anticonvulsants in individuals who do not have a history of drug abuse or dependency.

3. Confidential Inquiry 2012

The table below shows the number of drug related deaths included in the local DRD inquiries by year of death, as well as the number of deaths per 100,000 East Sussex population reported to St Georges since 2005.

Year	CONFIDENTIAL INQUIRY		np-SAD DATA	
	Number	Rate per 100,000 aged 16+	Number	Rate per 100,000 aged 16+
2005	12	2.95	23	5.66
2006	17	4.18	20	4.92
2007	17	4.08	17	4.08
2008	7	1.68	9	2.16
2009	21	4.98	26	6.17
2010	17	4.01	25	5.89
2011	11	-	-	-

In 2011, a confidential inquiry was carried out that looked at all deaths received in East Sussex DAAT since 2004. A total of 94 individuals were examined and a robust report produced. When deducing the direction of the 2012 inquiry, it was decided that a different direction should be taken. Research was therefore undertaken in relation to those clients with social care involvement to ascertain whether there was any information on CareFirst that would indicate opportunities for earlier intervention. However, there was nothing to suggest there might have been and as such, there was no additional information to inform a confidential inquiry.

The Confidential Inquiry was discussed at the Treatment Performance Group on 24 September 2012. At this meeting it was agreed that while the number of drug related deaths have been identified and will continue to be monitored, there is little value in including any additional personal information about these deaths in a local inquiry as the conclusions and recommendations are likely to be the same as previous inquiries.