

Drug Death Prevention (Scotland) Bill

About You

Q1. Are you responding as:

An individual

Q2. Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what expertise or experience you have that is relevant to the subject-matter of the consultation:

My younger brother died of an accidental overdose about 18 months ago and whilst an overdose prevention center would not have helped in my brother's specific case based on his individual circumstances and the substances he took but it would have helped many others. What would have helped my brother would be if discussed drug deaths and the use of drugs much more through the lens of public health and harm reduction. My brother did not seek help as he believed he would be judged and criminalised for drugs he was taking to cope with his declining mental health during lockdown. Had he felt about to seek that help, he may still be here.

Q3. Please select the category which best describes your organisation:

No Response

Q4. Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

Please provide your name or the name of your organisation. (Note: The name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication".)

Dan Marshall

Q5. Please provide a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. (Note: We will not publish these contact details.)

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Q6. Data protection declaration

In order to proceed, please confirm that you have read and understood the Privacy Notice contained on Page 1

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice to this consultation which explains how my personal data will be used.

Q7. If you are under 12 and making a submission, we will need to contact you to ask your parent or guardian to confirm to us that they are happy for you to send us your views.

No Response

Your Views On The Proposal

Q8. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill? (please note this is a compulsory question)

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

A public health and harm reduction approach to tackling drug deaths and drug usage is not only the most compassionate thing to do but is also proven to be the most effective. This proposed bill by no means solves all of our problems in this regard but it is a good starting point, it would very quickly begin to save lives and it would act as a strong statement of intent for a more compassionate and sensible approach to drug policy in Scotland.

Q9. Do you think legislation is required, or are there are other ways in which the Bill's aims could be achieved more effectively? Please explain the reasons for your response.

Many people are fearful of seeking support with drug use or helping those struggling as they fear criminalisation due to the illegality of these substances. To combat this, legislation is surely required to make clear the ways in which people can help others without fear of consequences. Clear regulation of overdose prevention centres would also prevent the system from being exploited and from vulnerable people being taken advantage of.

Q10. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal to establish overdose prevention centres?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

These centres already exist informally and save lives. Formally establishing them would help them to reach more at risk people and ensure that vulnerable people accessing them are supported and protected from exploitation.

Q11. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal for a licensing regime to enable the establishment of overdose prevention centres?

Fully supportive

Please provide reasons for your response, including on the proposed conditions for licensing (see pages 12 to 14 of the consultation document) and on the proposal that health and social care partnerships are responsible for licensing and scrutinising OPCs?

These centres already exist informally and save lives. Formally establishing them would help them to reach more at risk people and ensure that vulnerable people accessing them are supported and protected from exploitation.

Q12. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal for a new body, the Scottish Drugs Deaths Council?

Fully supportive

Please provide reasons for your response, including views on the proposed functions of the SDDC (see pages 14 to 16 of the consultation document) and on how it should operate in practice.

Drug deaths need to be responded to through the lens of public health, evidence and harm reduction. In order to do this, a Drugs Deaths Council would need policy and operational independence from government to ensure that quality information and evidence can be gathered with recommendations made on the basis of public health which can then be considered by politicians in the context of wider Scottish Government considerations.

Financial Implications

Q13. Any new law can have a financial impact which would affect individuals, businesses, the public sector, or others. What financial impact do you think this proposal could have if it became law?

some reduction in costs

Please explain the reasons for your answer, including who you would expect to feel the financial impact of the proposal, and if there are any ways you think the proposal could be delivered more cost-effectively.

Reducing drug deaths and incidence of overdose would hopefully reduce the burden on health and police services thus reducing costs for the Scottish Government.

Equalities

Q14. Any new law can have an impact on different individuals in society, for example as a result of their age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

What impact could this proposal have on particular people if it became law? If you do not have a view skip to next question.

Please explain the reasons for your answer and if there are any ways you think the proposal could avoid negative impacts on particular people.

No Response

Sustainability

Q15. Any new law can impact on work to protect and enhance the environment, achieve a sustainable economy, and create a strong, healthy, and just society for future generations.

Do you think the proposal could impact in any of these areas? If you do not have a view then skip to next question.

Please explain the reasons for your answer, including what you think the impact of the proposal could be, and if there are any ways you think the proposal could avoid negative impacts?

At present, those struggling with addiction are often left to fend for themselves and are fearful of seeking help as they believe they may be judged or criminalised. Many of these people may have complex mental health needs which require specialist support but at present, we leave these people to die. A just, healthy society recognises that members of our community may struggle and should strive to make sure that people are supported and that they are never past a point of no return. Giving people a safe space to avoid overdosing and taking a genuinely public health based approach to tackling drug deaths could not only help save lives but could also help give people the opportunity to get their lives back on track.