**Drug related deaths in Scotland continue to rise**

Directors of Public Health in Scotland and NHS Health Scotland note today’s [published figures from National Records of Scotland](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/deaths/drug-related-deaths-in-scotland) on drug related deaths for 2015 showing a further increase in deaths.  As stated in the national strategy, [the Road to Recovery](http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2008/05/22161610/0), preventing drug related deaths and other harms associated with problem drug use needs to be part of a wider response to addressing the needs of vulnerable people, tackling poverty and the damaging effects of deprivation.

Directors of Public Health and NHS Health Scotland support the past work of the National Forum on Drug Related Deaths, and the Scottish Government’s renewed partnership action, together with the contribution of the new national sub-group on reducing harms as part of this approach.

**Director of Public Health at NHS Health Scotland, Dr Andrew Fraser said:**  
“Every drug related death is a tragedy and it is all the more regrettable as the number of lives lost, and families affected, continues to rise.  Men in their late thirties and early forties are at greatest risk.  Supporting the health and social needs of the drug-dependent groups in our population is critical; we must increase our efforts to provide effective addiction services and support to address their complex needs.”