

Vital Events – Deaths – 2018 – Hypothermia Deaths

Main points

- In 2018 there were 41 deaths in Scotland that involved hypothermia. This represents a 58% decrease since 2000 and a 61% decrease since the recent high of 106 in 2002. Of these 41 deaths, hypothermia was the underlying cause in 14 deaths and a contributing factor in 27. More information about the distinction between underlying causes and contributory factors can be found on the [Death Certificates and Coding the Causes of Death](#) section of the NRS website.
- Of the 41 deaths involving hypothermia in 2018, 19 were male (46%) and 22 were female (54%). Since 2000, there have been 1,294 deaths involving hypothermia, of which 57% were male and 43% were female. ([Table 1](#))
- Deaths involving hypothermia are more common in older age groups. In 2018, there were only three hypothermia related deaths of people under the age of 45. Of the 41 deaths involving hypothermia, 30 (73%) were of people age 65 or over. The most common age group for deaths involving hypothermia was 85+ years with 13 deaths. ([Table 2](#))
- In 2018, the health boards with the greatest number of deaths involving hypothermia were Greater Glasgow and Clyde (8), Highland and Tayside (both 7). The three island health boards, Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland, had no deaths involving hypothermia in 2018. Caution must be used when comparing incidence of deaths involving hypothermia across subnational areas because the numbers are very small and fluctuate year on year. ([Table 3](#))
- In 12 out of Scotland's 32 council areas there were no deaths involving hypothermia and in a further 12, there was only one death involving hypothermia. This compares to 2000 where there were only five council areas with no deaths and five with one death involving hypothermia. ([Table 4](#))