Drug-related deaths continue to increase

In 2020 there were 1,339 drug-related deaths, a 5% increase on the previous year and the largest number ever recorded. Drug-related deaths have been increasing since 1996 but since 2013 the upward trend has been steeper.

Largest increase was in 35-54 year olds

Most of the recent increase in drug related death rates* has occurred in the 35-44 year old and 45-54 year old age groups.

Death rates vary geographically

Greater Glasgow & Clyde had the highest death rate* at 30.8 per 100,000 population, followed by Ayrshire & Arran and Tayside with rates of 27.2 and 25.7 per 100,000 population respectively.

* Deaths per 100,000 people

* Age-standardised rates per 100,000 population. Rates not shown for areas with fewer than 10 deaths.