**HSE Emerging Drug Trends**

**Monitoring overdoses in services November – December 2023**

**Background**

Media reports and other warnings regarding new and/or novel, potent, adulterated or contaminated drugs have increased over the last decade. However, it is recognised that these reports are often inaccurate, rarely confirmed by toxicology tests and may sometimes be counterproductive to public health messages intended to reduce drug-related harms and deaths (Public Health England, 2016). As you are aware, Nitazenes have been identified on the Dublin drug market linked with a sudden increase in non-fatal overdoses in the Inner City area in November 2023.

In order to respond appropriately to this cluster associated with adulterated heroin, we did require an investigation of the occurrences as well as analytical confirmation of biological and physical samples before issuing factual public health alerts.

This document can be used by local services who wish to report identified patterns, drug trends or cases of concern to the HSE for consideration and to feed into a National Drug-Alert System overseen by the National Clinical Lead for Addiction Services in the National Social Inclusion Office.

The information received from services will be used to inform appropriate responses depending on the level of risk identified.

This document includes the following:

* Form 1: Reporting an Overdose in Your Service
* Form 2: Drug Trend Monitoring November – December 2023

**Form 1: Reporting an Overdose in Your Service**

If an overdose of concern or cluster of overdoses occur in your service, please complete and submit this form as soon as possible to the local CHO Addiction Service Manager for review with the HSE National Social Inclusion Office. Please submit details per form for each separate overdose of concern.

**Name of service:**

**Date of overdose(s):**

1. **Is it known what was taken (please state if there is concern for the product and provide details):**
2. **How was the drug used? (IV, smoked, other):**
3. **Was naloxone used and if so how many doses were needed?**
4. **Were emergency services called and did person go to hospital?**
5. **Was a syringe or sample obtained from the overdose and provided to An Garda Síochána?**
6. **What was the outcome of the overdose? Please provide a summary.**
7. **Please provide any other useful information to help monitor overdose trends:**

**Form 2: Drug Trend Monitoring November – December 2023**

During this period, the HSE National Social Inclusion Office request frequent updates to help monitor trends in Dublin during November – December 2023. Please complete at the end of each week and send to [nicki.killeen@hse.ie](mailto:nicki.killeen@hse.ie).

1. **Please provide an update on current drug trends being reported by your service.**

(For example, do they suspect new products are in circulation, are they being offered synthetic opioids/new products and are they choosing to buy these. Please provide as much information of any new products being discussed such as colour, effects, name, how they are being used, price and other market information etc).

1. **Are these substances leading to any of the following issues for people who attend your services:**

Increase in overdose in service

Increase in reported overdose outside of service

Behaviour issues

Mental health concerns

Other, please state