

20 JUL 2015

Gregory Soar
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Ref: H201502585

Dear Mr Soar

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your letter of 4 July 2015 requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) data on the number of deaths per year attributable to pharmaceutical drugs.

Cause of death data is coded using the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems. This classification breaks deaths down by the type of drug and the intent with which it was taken.

I have attached a table which shows the number of deaths with an underlying cause of death that is drug related from 2000 to 2012.

Most of these deaths are intentional self-poisonings (suicides) and accidental poisonings. Accidental poisoning includes accidental overdoses, wrong drug given or taken in error, drugs taken inadvertently, and accidents in the use of drugs, medicaments and biological substances in medical and surgical procedures.

If you have any queries about this data, please direct them to Analytical Services, Ministry of Health. They can be contacted by phone on (04) 496-2000, fax on (04) 816-2898 or by e-mail (data-enquiries@moh.govt.nz).

I trust this information fulfils your request.

Yours sincerely



Michael Hundleby
Acting National Director
National Health Board

Total drug related deaths by age and sex, total population
ICD-10 categories only

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total drug related deaths	77	101	106	109	100	111	96	117	128	138	136	142	157
Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of opioids	10	12	25	10	11	8	8	0	0	1	4	2	1
Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of cannabinoids	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of sedatives or hypnotics	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of cocaine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of other stimulants, including caffeine	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of hallucinogens	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of volatile solvents	1	5	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mental and behavioural disorders due to multiple drug use and use of other psychoactive substances	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Harmful use of non-dependence-producing substances	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drug-induced polyneuropathy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drug-induced interstitial lung disorders	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Allergic contact dermatitis due to drugs in contact with skin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Irritant contact dermatitis due to drugs in contact with skin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unspecified contact dermatitis due to drugs in contact with skin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Generalised skin eruption due to drugs and medications	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Localised skin eruption due to drugs and medications	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reactions and intoxications due to drugs administered to fetus and newborn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accidental poisoning by and exposure to nonopioid analgesics, antipyretics and antirheumatics	1	0	1	1	1	2	2	1	3	3	3	2	2
Accidental poisoning by and exposure to antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic, antiparkinsonism and psychotropic drugs, not elsewhere classified	7	5	15	7	7	11	9	17	15	29	24	26	19
Accidental poisoning by and exposure to narcotics and psychodysleptics [hallucinogens], not elsewhere classified	7	17	10	16	19	27	18	35	38	37	31	35	42
Accidental poisoning by and exposure to other drugs acting on the autonomic nervous system	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to other and unspecified drugs, medicaments and biological substances	4	1	4	1	4	6	4	3	10	5	3	11	8
Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to nonopioid analgesics, antipyretics and antirheumatics	0	1	1	4	2	0	6	1	3	1	1	4	2
Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic, antiparkinsonism and psychotropic drugs, not elsewhere classified	21	32	22	29	23	28	24	20	30	25	28	25	32
Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to narcotics and psychodysleptics [hallucinogens], not elsewhere classified	7	7	10	14	11	8	8	14	9	18	22	17	20
Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to other drugs acting on the autonomic nervous system	0	0	3	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	3	1	0
Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to other and unspecified drugs, medicaments and biological substances	4	6	4	7	5	7	6	6	10	8	8	8	4
Assault by drugs, medicaments and biological substances	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Poisoning by and exposure to nonopioid analgesics, antipyretics and antirheumatics, undetermined intent	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Poisoning by and exposure to antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic, antiparkinsonism and psychotropic drugs, not elsewhere classified, undetermined intent	4	10	6	7	4	2	5	7	5	2	1	2	3
Poisoning by and exposure to narcotics and psychodysleptics [hallucinogens], not elsewhere classified, undetermined intent	3	3	2	3	6	5	2	6	1	1	4	2	5
Poisoning by and exposure to other drugs acting on the autonomic nervous system, undetermined intent	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Poisoning by and exposure to other and unspecified drugs, medicaments and biological substances, undetermined intent	1	0	1	2	3	3	0	1	1	1	0	1	1
Drugs, medicaments and biological substances causing adverse effects in therapeutic use	5	0	0	2	2	1	0	1	1	6	1	4	14

Note that in 2006 we implemented a WHO change. Now people with a history of substance abuse who die of accidental poisoning are coded to the poisoning code instead of the dependence code