

Cash to fund drug and alcohol support slashed

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Money to tackle drug and alcohol addiction has been cut again, new figures have revealed.

In a letter to Holyrood's Health Committee, it was confirmed there has been a £1.5 million reduction in funding for drug and alcohol partnerships.

This is despite drugs deaths in Scotland reaching a record high last year, and thousands dying as a result of alcohol use.

In her letter earlier this month, health secretary Shona Robison set out figures showing the total investment from a range of agencies – including the Scottish Government – reduced between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

They show the total spend this year was £101,716,000, compared to £103,211,000 in the 12 months before.

Across Scotland, there was considerable regional variation surrounding drug and alcohol addiction funding.

There were heavy reductions in Argyll and Bute (-15 per cent), Dumfries and Galloway (-13.7 per cent) and Glasgow (-11.6 per cent).

In contrast, ADP investment rose by nearly 60 per cent in Angus.

Scottish Conservative Glasgow MSP Adam Tomkins said:

“The drug problem across Scotland is now worse than ever – that’s confirmed by official statistics.

“And while some progress is being made with alcohol, our relationship with drink remains deep-rooted and complex.

“So quite why overall funding has been cut to this extent is a mystery.

“The SNP government keeps saying this is a priority area, yet it’s investing less money to help.

“ADP funding is vital to help people beat their addictions and get their lives back on track. Making a success of these would save lives and benefit both communities and the economy.

“But all the SNP seems interested in is pursuing fix rooms for people to inject heroin, something that will do nothing for those who want a life free from the scourge of drugs.”