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Almost 2,600 people were admitted to Scottish hospitals due to an overdose from opioids last year.

The figures, revealed in a Scottish parliamentary written answer to Miles Briggs, Scottish Conservative shadow health secretary, also highlight that opioid overdose has increased by 17 percent since 2007, meaning that over 26,000 people have been admitted to Scottish hospitals due to an opioid overdose in the last ten years.

The statistics also show that opioid overdose has increased by 75 percent in the last twenty years.

Opioids are a class of drugs that include the illegal drug heroin, synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, and pain relievers available legally by prescription, such as oxycodone (OxyContin®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), codeine, morphine, and many others.

The Scottish Conservatives have said that this is further evidence of an increasing opioid problem in Scotland that is not currently being tackled effectively.

Miles Briggs, Scottish Conservative shadow health secretary said:

“Opioid use, addiction and overdose is clearly a serious and increasing problem in Scotland.

“The SNP’s plan to tackle illegal drug use and addiction is not working and is simply maintaining dependency.

“The SNP has failed to stop the steady increase of opioid use and almost 2,600 people overdosed and found themselves in hospital last year alone.

“The Scottish Conservative plan to tackle drug addiction would give every problem drug user a Life Plan and would ensure that 20 percent more Scots accessed treatment.

“Our plan would tackle addiction head on and halve the level of drugs deaths in Scotland.

“The SNP is woefully complacent regarding Scotland’s drug use. The problem is getting worse and it is destroying people’s lives.

“The SNP must take action now, focus on rehabilitation and recovery and stop this devastating cycle of drug use, overdose and death.”