

Drug-related deaths among recently released prisoners in Ireland, 1998 to 2007



Suzi Lyons, Simone Walsh & Ena Lynn



Overview

- Overview of National Drug-Related Deaths Index (NDRDI)
- Data sources
- Results
 - First 4 weeks post-release
- Implications





Background of NDRDI

- Comply with Action 67 of 'Building on Experience: National Drug Strategy 2001-2008' (Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation 2001)
- Funded by Dept of Health and Children & Dept Justice
- Comply with European requirements





Aim of NDRDI

- Census of drug and alcohol-related deaths and deaths among substance users in Ireland
- To allow the State to respond in a timely manner with accurate data on drug-related mortality
- Assist in identifying and prioritising areas for intervention, and measure the effect of such interventions





NDRDI Database

- Data sources
 - Coroners files
 - Hospital In-patient Enquiry System (HIPE)
 - General mortality register (GMR)
 - Central Treatment List (CTL)





Type of data collected

- Demographics
- Socioeconomic
 - History of imprisonment
- Dependencies
- Treatment history
- Toxicology
- Cause of death



History of imprisonment

- History of imprisonment recorded if available in the coronial file
- Date of release validated by the Irish Prison Services





Prison Data 1998 to 2007

- 1998 to 2007: 3,465 drug-related deaths
 - 167 (5%) cases had documented history of imprisonment
- At the time of death
 - 34 in prison
 - 17 on temporary release
 - 116 released from prison





Released prisoners (n = 133)



Released prisoners

Table 1 Number of deaths among released prisoners, NDRDI, 1998 to 2007
(n = 133)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
13	14	7	14	17	10	10	23	13	12



Time interval between date of release and date of death

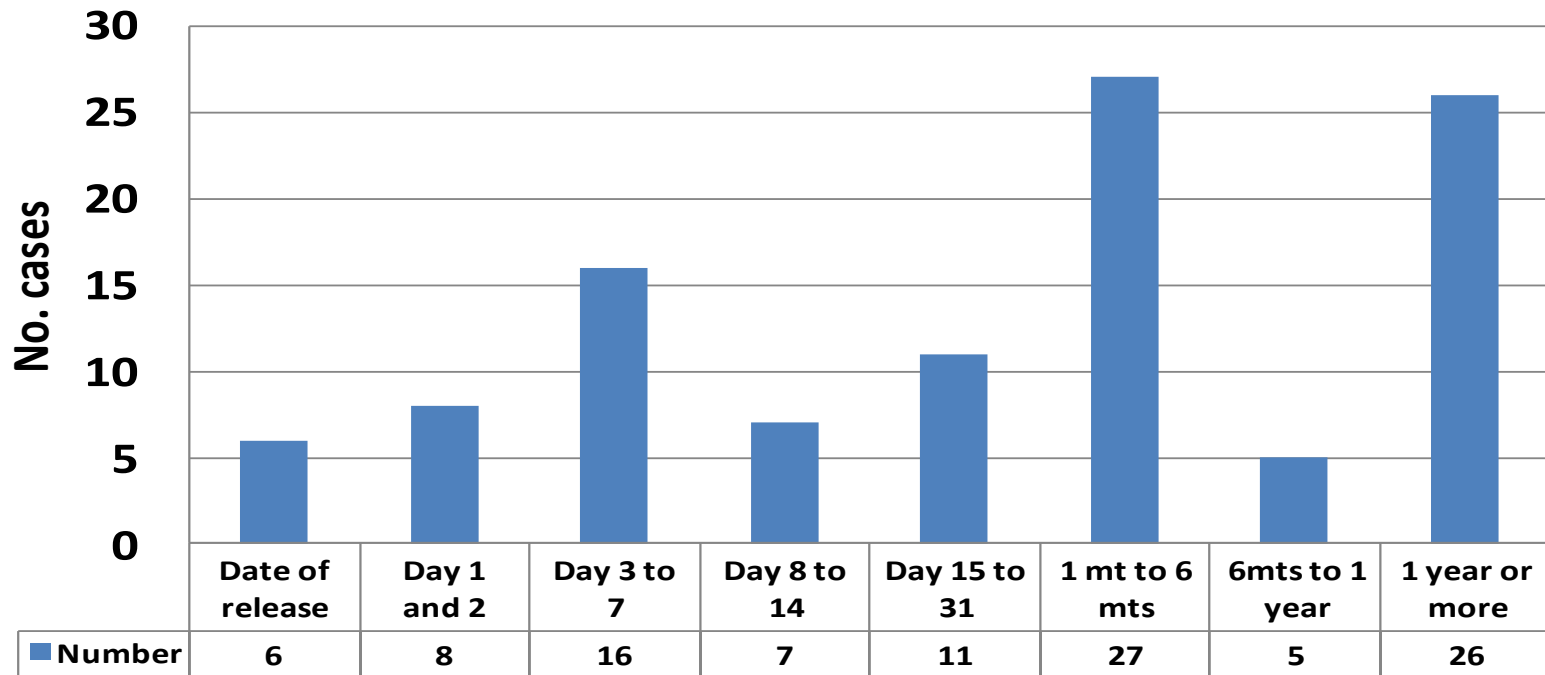


Figure 1 Length of time between date of release and date of death, NDRDI 1998 to 2007 (n = 106)

Type of death

Table 2 Type of death among released prisoners, NDRDI 1998 to 2007 (n = 133)

	Day of release	1 to 2	3 to 7	8 to 14	15 to 31	1 to 6 mts	6 mts to 1 year	1 year or more
Poisoning	67%	75%	75%	86%	91%	59%	40%	58%
Non-poisoning	33%	25%	25%	14%	9%	41%	60%	42%





Description of all released prisoners (at time of death)

- 90% male
- Median age: 27 Years
- 14% homeless
- 82% unemployed
- 58% history of injecting drug use





Description of all released prisoners (at time of death)

- Between day of release and death: median 45 days, range 0 to 6,078
- 63% were poisonings
- 37% were non-poisonings
 - 71% trauma
 - 29% medical





First four weeks post-release



Time interval between date of release and date of death

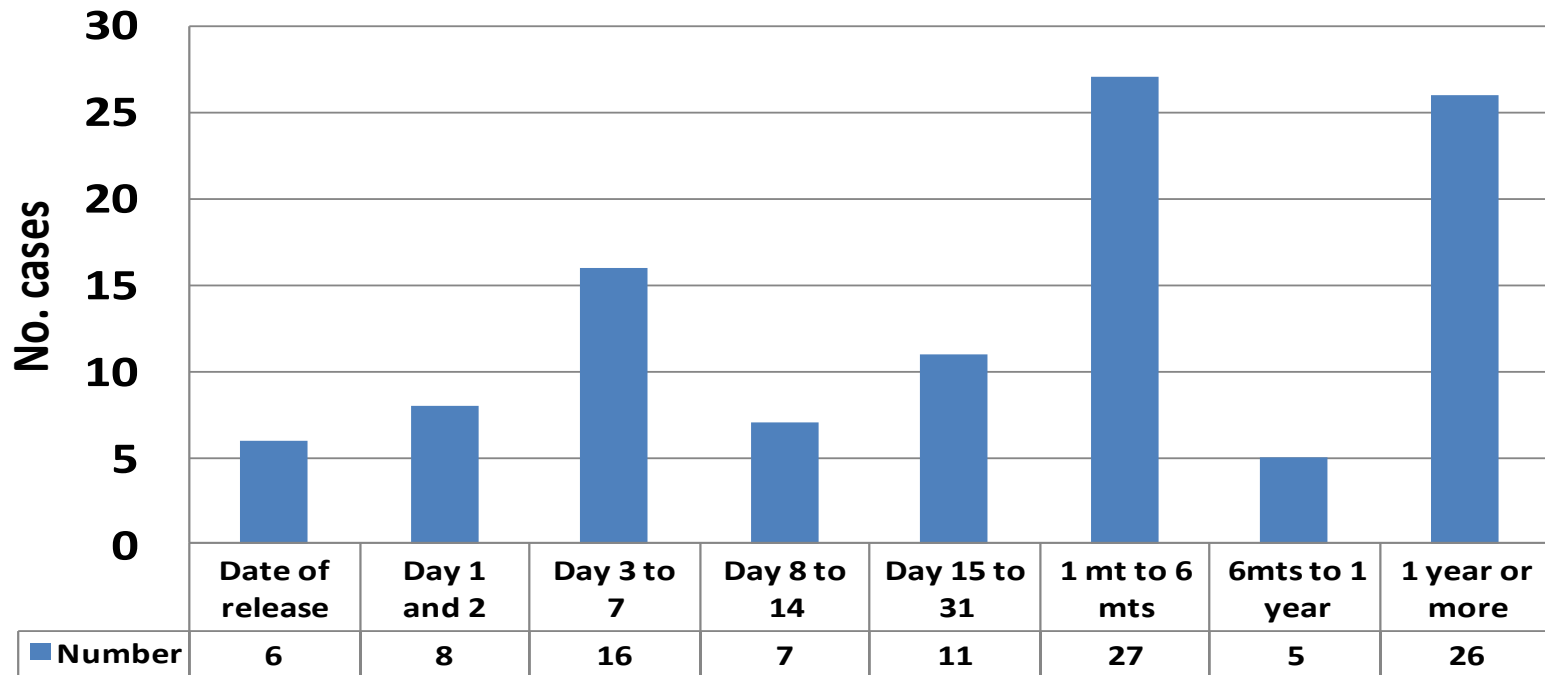


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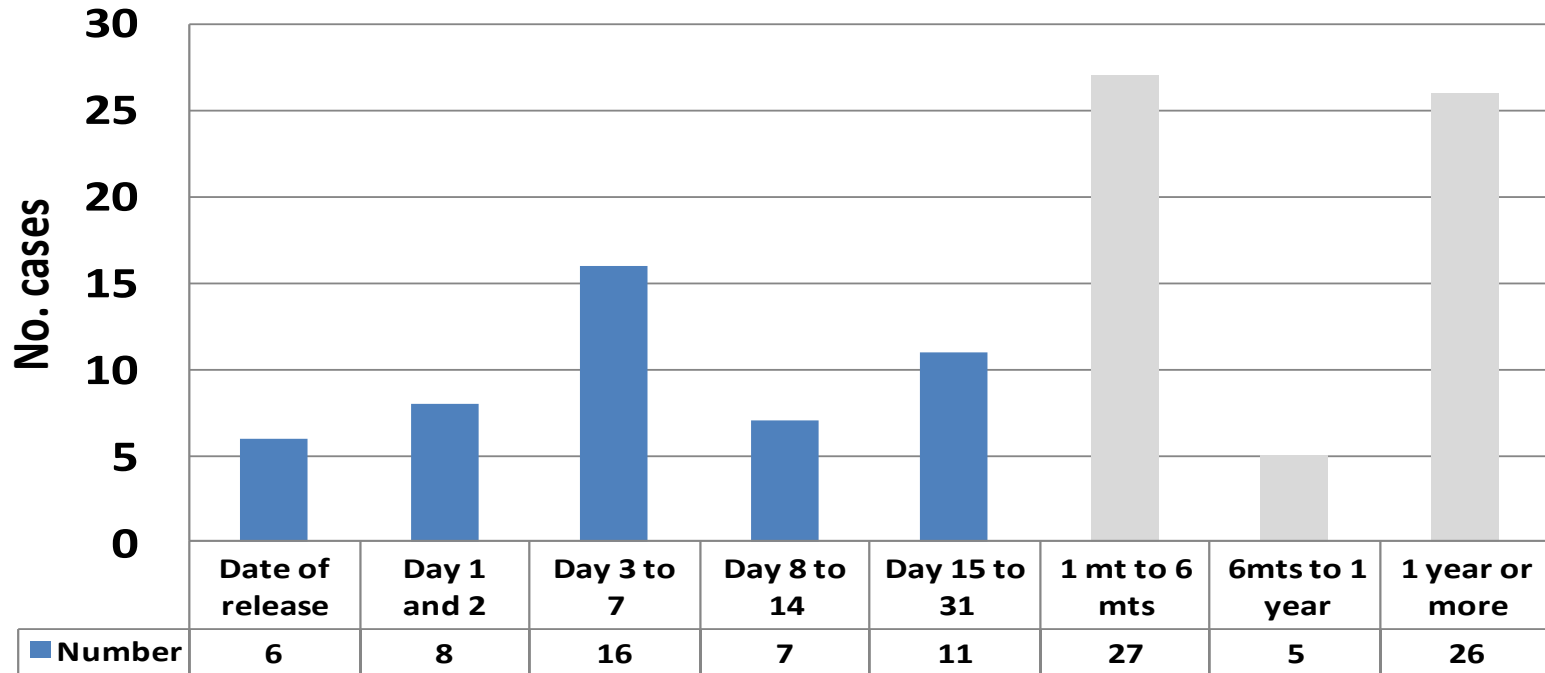


Figure 1 Length of time between date of release and date of death, NDRDI 1998 to 2007 (n = 106)



First Four Weeks of Release From Prison (n=48)

- Between day of release and death: mode 1 day
- 88% male
- Median age: 27 Years
- 79% (38) were poisonings
 - 47% (18) injecting at the time of their death
 - 73% (28) were with someone at the time of their death



Table 3 Type of substances implicated in deaths due to poisonings in the first four weeks of release from prison (n=38), 1998 to 2007

Heroin	50.0%
Methadone	47.4%
Benzodiazepines	44.7%
Antidepressants	15.8%
Cocaine	10.5%
Other Opiates	7.9%
MDMA	7.9%
Volatile inhalants	5.3%
Alcohol	5.3%
Non-opiate analgesics	2.6%
Other prescription medication	7.9%

Multi-response table



Summary

- Underestimation
 - History of imprisonment is not always recorded
- Consistent with other international findings
 - Known high risk group
- Preventable

