



Nordic Studies on Alcohol and Drugs (NAD) is announcing a
CALL FOR PAPERS for a thematic issue on (illicit) drug-related death.

Mortality and premature deaths related to drug use and addiction

As a form of risk behavior drug use can have different adverse effects. It can lead to social exclusion, serious health problems, and even in the worst case, death.

Drug-related deaths are often avoidable and premature, and they often affect young people, causing a high number of years of life lost. In addition to major economic and public health burdens, drug-related deaths are surrounded by vast human suffering by the people using drugs as well as their close ones. Even if there is a rather substantial research literature on drug-related mortality, it is still an inadequately understood social, public health as well as human rights issue. Several questions remain unanswered or poorly understood.

We know that intravenous drug use or polysubstance use are risk factors for drug-related deaths, and especially overdose deaths. In addition, psychiatric comorbidity, unstable housing or witnessing an overdose have shown to be associated with the risk of overdose among high-risk samples of young people (Lyons et al. 2019). Drug-related deaths have shown to be associated with social disadvantage, and with the type of marginalization processes that starts at an early age (Rönkä 2018). Mortality rates vary by regions, time periods and samples (Martins et al. 2015).

We also know that opioid substitution treatment (Sordo et al. 2017), take-home naloxone (McDonald et al. 2017) as well as drug consumption rooms (Potier et al. 2014) are efficient means for preventing overdose deaths. But there are many paths of inquiries that are still undiscovered: There is rather little knowledge on how social, environmental, or situational determinants effect drug-related deaths? To what extent do drug-related deaths reflect the service system's inability to encounter people with both mental health and substance use problems? What are the economic, public health or social costs of drug-related deaths of young people? What kind of role do intergenerational disadvantages play? Moreover, the phenomenon of illicit drugs and their use is ever-changing which requires constant assessments and updates of the existing information. More research is needed to reduce and prevent drug-related deaths.

With this Call for Papers, we kindly invite contributions to a special issue of Nordic Studies on Alcohol and Drugs (NAD) concerning the theme of (illicit) drug-related death.



Scope of issue

This special issue strives to gather a range of research that examine drug-related deaths within a wide scope. The focus is not only on drug-induced deaths or overdoses, but more extensively on deaths that relates to (illicit) drug use. We want to especially emphasize drug-related deaths among young people, but in addition to that we invite scientific articles from a variety of perspectives, such as from the point of view of different minorities or the bereaved. Furthermore, research concerning populations beyond treatment or other less studied populations are called for.

Both quantitative and qualitative empirical papers, reviews, comparative designs, as well as theoretically, politically, or methodologically oriented papers are all welcome. Although contributions from the Nordic countries are encouraged, texts from other parts of the world are also invited. All submissions will be subject to independent double-blinded peer review.

Submission and deadlines

- Article concepts and/or abstracts, max. 1 page: 30th of April, 2024 to karoliina.karjalainen@thl.fi; sanna.ronka@thl.fi; pekka.hakkarainen@thl.fi; tom.kettunen@helsinki.fi
- Full manuscript submissions: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/nad> (tick the box for 'special issue') between 15.5. 2024 and 31.8. 2024
- Journal's format and author guidelines: <https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/NAD>

Guest editors

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