

This profile presents some statistics regarding drug use and treatment in Torbay.

Torbay Council's Public Health [Alcohol and Drugs](#) page signposts treatment, support and information.

Drug Treatment

Torbay has 971 persons in treatment at specialist drug misuse services (2023/24, [OHID](#)). This is a high rate per 1000 adult population compared to England and has increased steadily over the decade from 708 persons in 2013/14.

In 2022/23, only 1 person had to wait more than 3 weeks to start treatment but in 2023/24, 57 people (13.7%) had to wait ([OHID](#)).

266 clients entering drug treatment (72.7%) identified as having a mental health treatment need were receiving treatment for their mental health (increasing and similar to England's 74.5%, [OHID](#)).

In 2023, 5.9% of Torbay's opiate users (34 users and broadly in line with England) successfully completed drug treatment ([OHID](#)) as defined by not re-presenting for treatment again within 6 months. Opiates are a range of drugs that contain amongst others: Heroin, Morphine, Codeine and Fentanyl.

In 2023, a much higher 30% of Torbay's non-opiate users (119 users, in line with England but decreasing) successfully completed drug treatment (didn't re-present within 6 months).

Drug Treatment Demographics and Details

The following details are from OHID's public-facing [National Drug Treatment Monitoring System](#) (NDTMS), numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.

The total number of Torbay adults in treatment has been steadily rising (faster than the South West and England) from 710 in 2013/14 to 970 in 2023/24 with 420 being new presentations, 675 men (70%) and 300 women. For the 18-29yrs age group (17%), the number of men has been rising recently. For the 30-49yrs age group (58%), both have been slowly rising. For the 50yrs+ age group (25%), since 2011, the number of men has increased from 30 to 180, and the number of women from 15 to 60.

For 2023/24, 205 (21%) were parents living with children, although children can still be greatly affected when they are not living with a parent.

Of new presentations in 2023/24, 29% were in regular employment which has increased as a

proportion over the last decade, 44% unemployed / economically inactive, and 24% long term sick/disabled.

Of all in treatment for 2023/24, 41% used opiate (not crack cocaine), a decade ago this accounted for 72%, 38% cannabis, 28% cocaine (rising from 6% a decade ago), 18% opiate and crack cocaine (rising from 7% a decade ago) and 12% benzodiazepine. For 18-29yrs, 61% used cannabis and 48% cocaine, with cocaine use rising the fastest. Cocaine use, cannabis use, and opiate and crack cocaine use are rising in the 30-49yrs age group and also 50yrs+ age group where opiate (not crack cocaine) use is 65% with numbers increasing.

For 2023/24, the main source of referral was self, family and friends (56%), followed by criminal justice (20%) and health services and social care (17%). 13% waited 3-6 weeks and 1% over 6 weeks. 100% were treated in a community setting. 55% were in treatment for less than 1 year, 9% 1-2 years, 9% 2-4 years, 8% 4-6 years and 18% over 6 years.

For all in treatment, the percentage successfully exiting and completing treatment (2023/24) is 38%, while the percentage dropping out is 44%. NDTMS define successful completion as no further contact for at least 22 days. OHID Fingertips use 6 months.

The total number of Torbay adults in treatment for **opiates** is 565 in 2023/24 with 150 being new presentations, 390 men (69%) and 170 women. For the 18-29yrs age group (7%), numbers are falling. For 30-49yrs (58%), the number of men is falling. For 50yrs+ (35%), the number of men is rising fast and the number of women is rising. For opiates, about a quarter complete treatment successfully (but OHID Fingertips shows this falling to about 6% after 6 months).

The total number of Torbay adults in treatment for **non-opiates only** is 185 in 2023/24 with 115 being new presentations, 135 male (73%) and 50 female. The number of women is rising and the number of men is rising fast (up from 85 in 2019). In 2024, about half completed treatment successfully (Fingertips shows this falling to about 30% after 6 months).

The total number of Torbay adults in treatment for **non-opiates & alcohol** is 220 in 2023/24 with 155 being new presentations, 145 men (66%) and 75 women, both rising quickly. About half completed treatment successfully (Fingertips shows this falling to about 30% after 6 months).

Unmet Treatment Needs

2023-24 estimates of opiate and/or crack users in Torbay are: opiate and/or crack 1086 (opiates only 761; crack only 113; both opiates and crack 212). The unmet treatment need for 2023-24 is estimated at 47% for opiate and/or crack; 50% opiates only; 74% crack only and 21% both opiates and crack.

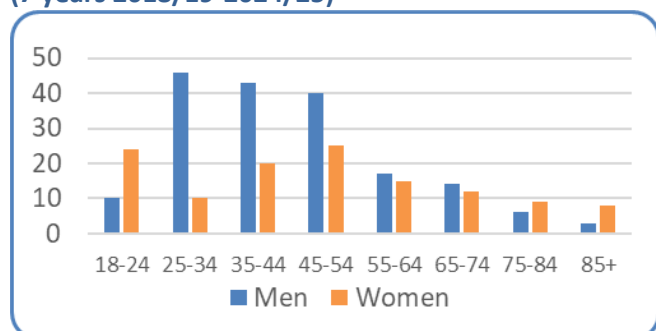
Young People

In 2023/24, there were 35 males and 15 females in treatment, 5 aged under 14yrs, 15 aged 14-15yrs, and 25 aged 16-17yrs, and 100% successful completion. The most common problem substances were: cannabis 90%; alcohol 60%; solvents 20%; ecstasy 20%; cocaine 20%; ketamine 10% ([NDTMS](#)) (all figures rounded and each person can have more than 1 substance).

Substance Misuse Hospital Admissions

Fig 1 shows the numbers of hospital admissions for substance misuse, for men and women of different ages (190 for men and 145 for women in a period of 7 years). Rates are similar to England except for Torbay 18-24yrs men and Torbay 25-34yrs women having lower rates.

Fig 1 Torbay substance misuse hospital admissions (7 years 2018/19-2024/25)



Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Digital

The most common primary diagnosis for both men and women is poisoning from other opioids (70 episodes men, 81 for women). Heroin poisoning was 18 episodes for men and 5 for women. Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of opioids was 13 for men and 9 for women, due to cocaine another 7 for men, due to cannabinoids another 6 for men, and due to multiple drug use or other psychoactive

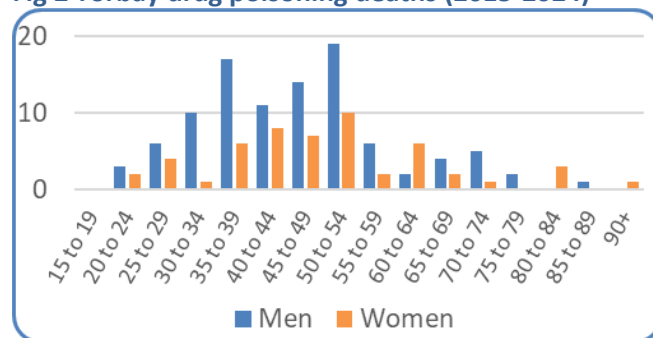
substances another 11 for men. Poisoning due to other synthetic narcotics: 14 for men. Cocaine poisoning: 11 for men. Toxic effect of gases, fumes, vapours, solvents etc: 13 for men (1/3 self-harm), 12 for women (1/2 self-harm).

Self-harm was the cause of many admissions, causing 66% across 18-54yrs women, peaking at 75% for those aged 18-24yrs. For men it was mainly older ages, causing 40% for over 25s. For 18-24yrs women, self-harm poisoning with medicines caused 13x more admissions (220).

Drug Deaths

Deaths from drug misuse, usually over 20 residents per 3 year period have been rising in line with England ([OHID](#)) but the definition is narrow and many recent inquests have been delayed. More men die than women.

Fig 2 Torbay drug poisoning deaths (2015-2024)



Source: Primary Care Mortality Database

Fig 2 shows the number of drug poisoning deaths for Torbay men and women of different ages during the 10 years 2015-2024. Torbay has about 15 deaths registered a year (10 men, 5 women) (2015-2024) but current numbers are being affected by coroner inquest delays. About 30% of these deaths are suicide or undetermined intent.

Drug Crimes

460 of the 11,741 total crimes recorded for Torbay Community Safety Partnership in the year ended March 2024 were drug offences. There were 482 drug offences the previous year. Per 1,000 households, Torbay's rate is lower than Exeter's and Plymouth's but higher than the Devon and Cornwall average. ([Recorded crime data by Community Safety Partnership area - Office for National Statistics](#))

Torbay Healthy Learning

[Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use among Young People in England, 2021: Data Tables](#)

[Torbay Drug and Alcohol Partnership](#) (TDAP)