

Contents

Introductory note and acknowledgements	5
Introduction	7
Data sources	8
What are cohort studies and what do they tell us?	8
Key findings from recent mortality cohorts in Europe	10
High mortality rates among problem drug users	10
Excess risk of death among problem drug users	11
What are the major causes of death among problem drug users?	12
Overdoses	13
Deaths caused by diseases	15
Suicide and trauma	17
Risk factors for mortality	18
Public health perspectives and implications	20
Deaths related to drug use: a summary	20
Treatment is protective	20
Overdose prevention	21
Prevention and control of infectious diseases	21
Prevention of suicide and trauma-related deaths	22
Towards a better understanding of drug-related mortality for more effective action	23
Improving our understanding of trends	23
Improving information from cohort studies	23
Conclusion	24
Appendix: Selected mortality studies among problem drug users in Europe, published since 1995 or reported to the EMCDDA	25
Glossary	29
References	30