Tackling Drug Stigma is Everyone's Business.

September 2026

Greater Glasgow & Clyde Drug Stigma Action Group

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On 14 July 2026, the Greater Glasgow and Clyde (GGC) Drug Stigma Action Group launched the "Tackling Drug Stigma is Everyone's Business" Toolkit.

An in person event brought together colleagues and partners to provide an overview of the toolkit, hear about its development, and to discuss how it can support to tackle drug stigma across GGC.

Watch the highlights from the event and hear some of the calls to action identified.

A national priority

Tackling drug stigma is a national priority and it is recognised in the Preventing Harm, Promoting Recovery: Scotland's Alcohol & Drugs Strategic Plan 2026 – 2035 that it continues to be a barrier to accessing help and support which is the biggest protective factor for reducing harm, drug overdose and death.

People who use drugs, people in recovery from drug use, families and communities can experience stigma.

Tackling stigma and understanding how it connects to other ways people are disadvantaged, is vital to addressing drug related harm, including deaths.

Stigma is closely linked to prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination. Stigma intersects with other ways people are disempowered and marginalised (ethnicity, gender and sexual identity among others) often increasing risk and harm.

Tackling drug stigma at all levels is essential to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for people who use drugs and helps people feel a greater connection to society, more included and more likely to access treatment and support for recovery.

Charter of Rights - For people affected by substance use

A recent development in Scotland that supports culture change across services and society is the Charter of Rights for people affected by substance use.

The Charter of Rights sets out the rights you have in Scotland if you are affected by drugs or alcohol, or if someone close to you is. It explains what those rights mean, and what you can expect from the services that support you.

Call to Action

In order to increase the reach and impact of the drug stigma toolkit, implementation requires a partnership approach. The GGC drug stigma action group are seeking support from colleagues and partners in a wide range of services to tackle drug stigma wherever it is encountered. Impactful change requires action and cooperation across the board and for the toolkit to be actively embedded in every day practice across all levels.

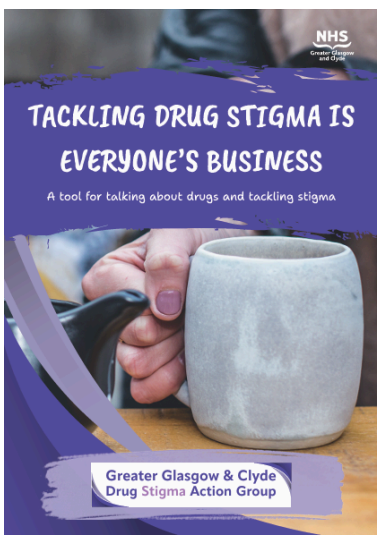
Recognising stigma is the first step to tackling it. When you witness stigmatising behaviour, you have a choice about the action you take. Use the toolkit to take action today.

ACT NOW

Prepared by Claire Marie Blair on behalf of NHSGGC Alcohol and Drugs Health Improvement Team September 2026

‘Tackling Drug Stigma is Everyone’s Business’ Toolkit

The Drug Stigma Toolkit has been designed as a cascading and capacity building resource that aims to support partners, groups and organisations to tackle drug stigma.



Everyone who uses the toolkit is encouraged to reflect on their own attitudes and language and use the resources to start meaningful conversations within teams, services, across communities and to tackle drug stigma wherever it is encountered. By taking action together, we can help create a more compassionate and supportive response to drug harm.

The toolkit includes nine resources that can be used flexibly to meet the needs of different audiences and settings. Further information on each resource is available via the NHSGGC Alcohol and Drug Health Improvement website.

Framing Document

The framing document has been developed to support a consistent and credible narrative about drugs and provides practical tools to tackle drug stigma.

Workshop

The workshop is designed to raise awareness of drug stigma, the impact it can have, and what action can be taken to tackle this.
The workshop can be delivered by anyone who has an interest in tackling drug stigma. No prior experience or qualifications are required to deliver the workshop.

Conversation Cards

The conversation cards have been designed as a tool encourage conversations about drug stigma, challenge assumptions and reflect in a safe and respectful way.

Films

Five films have been created by people with lived and living experience across Greater Glasgow and Clyde, sharing personal perspectives on drug stigma and its impact on individuals affected by drugs.

Communication Pack

The communication pack provides a range of resources to raise awareness of drug stigma, including on social media.

Evaluation

The evaluation questions will help identify who is using the toolkit and in what settings it is being used. This will help assess its reach, highlight any gaps, and identify which groups or settings may benefit from additional support or engagement. By collecting this feedback, we can continue to learn, improve the resources, and ensure the toolkit remains relevant, accessible, and effective in tackling drug stigma.

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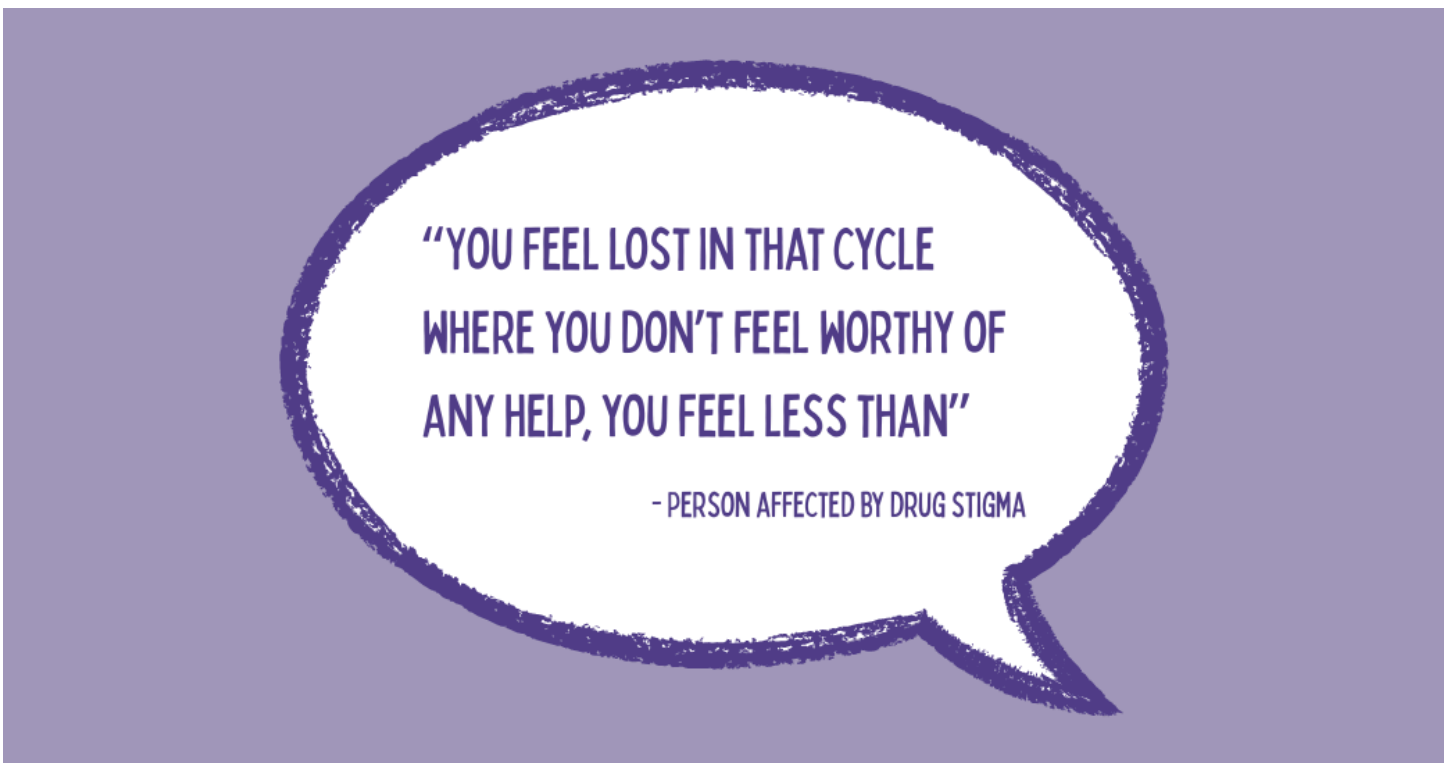

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