



NHS Education for Scotland

**Bereavement Education Conference 2022: 'Supporting those who are bereaved following substance use' promotional clip**

**Speaker:** Martha Rae, Senior Virtual Family Support Practitioner, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs.

I'm Martha Rae, I'm from Scottish Families affected by Alcohol and Drugs and I am a Senior Virtual Family Support Practitioner. My role is working on our bereavement service, which offers support and counselling to those who have been bereaved as a result of alcohol or drugs.

'Supporting those who are bereaved following substance use' will involve lots of discussion around the common complexities that people are faced with during their grief kind of process, when somebody has died as a result of alcohol or drugs, or if alcohol or drugs are featured in their life. We'll be talking a bit about how stigma impacts bereavement, and what we can do as individuals and as professionals, to help support people and to also challenge stigma.

The main take-aways from this workshop are that every death caused by drugs or alcohol is preventable and therefore premature. There is going to be a big focus on stigma and talking about stigma; the reason we do this is because stigma is really feeding into this kind of perpetual cycle that we have - I believe it's killing people. It is also stopping people coming forward for support after somebody has died. That creates really isolating – a real sense of isolation for people who are – who have lost someone as a result of alcohol or drugs. Another main take-away is that we all play a part in perpetuating stigma and so I really ask people to have a look into themselves and into their roles professionally, as to how we can start challenging this, and also looking at how we can help really support people who are impacted by bereavement following substance use.

The film was produced in October 2022 and can be found at <https://www.sad.scot.nhs.uk/events/2022-conference/> or <https://vimeo.com/757232937>

For more information visit [www.sad.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.sad.scot.nhs.uk) or contact [supportarounddeath@nes.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:supportarounddeath@nes.scot.nhs.uk)

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