| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-1754  Responded to: 18 June 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**Under the Freedom of Information Act, I request the Police Scotland to respond to the following questions:**

**Does Police Scotland have a duty to uphold human rights, particularly within Police Scotland and the wider public sector. Does the Police Scotland not have a responsibility to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and above all, to monitor and stop torture, inhumane or degrading treatment of detainees in police custody in Scotland.**

**What has the Police Scotland done to stop discriminatory treatment of detainees, not my words but those of Angela Constance MSP then Minister for Drugs and Alcohol Policy. She used those words, whilst speaking to the Citizens Participation and Public Petition Committee.**

**PE1900 Access to prescribed medication for detainees in police custody | Scottish Parliament Website**[**https://www.parliament.scot/get-involved/petitions/view-petitions/pe1900-access-to-prescribed-medication-for-detainees-in-police-custody**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.parliament.scot%2Fget-involved%2Fpetitions%2Fview-petitions%2Fpe1900-access-to-prescribed-medication-for-detainees-in-police-custody&data=05%7C02%7Cfoi%40scotland.police.uk%7C21300e29327840a7d03b08dda4cdc957%7C6795c5d3c94b497a865c4c343e4cf141%7C0%7C0%7C638847925932562624%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=wzOo7A7%2FBk3TTeU1MxYy%2BvNJpGsxv86i%2FOaMpZyEiv0%3D&reserved=0)

**This statement was made by her, when she was speaking about Police Scotland handing Dihydrocodeine to detained heroin addicts, instead of their prescribed medication (Methadone), other medications were also refused without the consent of the detainees.**

**Dihydrocodeine is unlicensed and was not always prescribed by doctors, but was also remotely prescribed by nurses by phone, and dispensed by custody staff. Since 2007 it has not been approved for the treatment of heroin addiction.**

**The dangers of Dihydrocodeine was explained to the committee by Dr Carole Hunter:**

**“Dr Carole Hunter, BSc, BA, MSc, DASR, MRPharmS, is the Lead Pharmacist, Addiction Services, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.nnCarole's pharmacy degree was obtained at Robert Gordon's in Aberdeen in 1978. She has extensive experience in community pharmacy in Scotland and England and owned her own pharmacy for 10 years in the 1990s. During that time she established one of the area's first pharmacy needle exchanges. In 2003 she succeeded Kay Roberts as Area Pharmacy Specialist in Drug Misuse for NHS Greater Glasgow. Since 1990 she has been a Doping Control Officer with the UK Antidoping programme and has been a member of the drug testing teams at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester 2002, the Winter Olympics in Vancouver in 2010 and the recent London Olympics. In Dec 2009 she was appointed to the Scottish Government’s Drug Strategy Delivery Commission. She is a member of the national Drug Death Forum and currently chairs the national naloxone advisory group and the Scottish Specialist Pharmacists in Substance Misuse group.”**

**Dihydrocodeine, she explained should never be given to heroin addicts except in exceptional circumstances, and then only after an examination by a specialist and with constant observation. Both the SPA and Police Scotland know this, yet custody staff still hand out Dihydrocodeine to detainees.**

**In Grampian especially Elgin, custody staff store Dihydrocodeine on behalf of NHS Grampian ( NHS Grampian stop giving it to addicts in other places in March 2024). This despite Police Scotland knowing that there is not a controlled drugs license in place in their custody suites for NHS Grampian or Police Scotland.**

**If Police Scotland had, had a Controlled Drugs Liaison Officer (CDLO) in place, which I believe is a statutory requirement, then how many thousands of drugs death would have been avoided.**

I must advise the information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

By way of explanation, as you may be aware, the Act provides a right of access to recorded information only.  Questions seeking the creation of comment or opinion in relation to a particular query, are not therefore valid in terms of [section 8 of the Act](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2002/13/section/8).

We must also advise that the provision of medical care within Police Scotland custody facilities is the responsibility of the NHS.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@foi.scot) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.