RCN Scotland response to Proposed Drugs Death (Prevention) (Scotland) Bill
The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) is the world’s largest professional organisation and trade union
for nursing staff, with members in the NHS, independent and third sectors. RCN Scotland promotes
patient and nursing interests by campaigning on issues that affect members, shaping national health
policies, representing members on practice and employment issues and development opportunities.

1. What are your views on the proposed Bill?
RCN members debated and subsequently passed a resolution at our 2022 Congress which called on
RCN Council to lobby the UK Government to support the introduction of safer injecting facilities
across the UK.
RCN Scotland therefore supports any attempts to introduce overdose prevention centres in
Scotland.
RCN Scotland does not have a view on the proposal to create a Scottish Drug Deaths Council and we
also cannot comment on the assertion in the consultation that OPCs can be established without
amendment to the Misuse of Drugs Act and therefore we are partially supportive of the Bill overall.

2. Do you think legislation is required, or are there are other ways in which th

As the consultation notes, an OPC was effectively set up in Glasgow and operated without legislation
and with the sup

this staffing requirement on other services must be adequately planned for as part of wider
workforce planning. As stated above, current levels of nursing vacancies, particularly in mental
health nursing, would need to be addressed as a matter of priority alongside the introduction of any
new services.
Any licensing regime would need to ensure clear governance and support with safeguarding and
supervision on top of more general continuing professional development skills. The service would
also need to ensure that staff are supported and managed where users overdose and cannot be
revived.
5. What are your views on the proposal for a new body, the Scottish Drug Deaths Council?
There is a need for ongoing accountability, scrutiny and strategic oversight of drugs deaths, however
we hold no view on whether this would be best achieved through a new body (such as a SDDC) or