

## Proclamation of Support of International Recovery Month 2017

This September sees the 28<sup>th</sup> International Recovery Month being marked across the world. In Scotland, we face the tragedy of an increasing loss of life due to substance use related causes, while at the same time we are experiencing strong growth of recovery groups and communities.

Our heartfelt sympathies go out to the families, friends, colleagues and neighbours of those who have died; the whole country is diminished by the premature deaths of our citizens however it occurs. Our deep gratitude is extended to all those individuals in recovery, family members, treatment providers and supporters in groups and community's all over Scotland who are turning their grief into action. By creating local spaces where it is easier to find recovery from addictions, they are making a difference to us all.

In Scotland we are continuing to embrace recovery from addiction as the main thrust of our drug strategy 'The Road to Recovery'. Now 9 years old, we have started work to refresh this strategy, however, the central message remains, that recovery from addiction is possible.

The Partnership for Action on Drugs in Scotland (PADS) is supporting the governments thinking and action on several key themes in addiction, and is helping to support the growth of the recovery movement in Scotland.

We are delighted that the PADS Communities sub group is hosting the first ever gathering of Scotland's recovery groups at the start of International Recovery Month. This event will provide an opportunity for these groups, and others, to consider more deeply how we might work together to challenge stigma and create communities where recovery from addiction flourishes, at a time where our communities have a crucial role to play in helping to build a fairer, more equitable country, where suffering meets support.

Scotland is not alone in facing these challenges; we are taking our place in the international community of those countries exploring addiction and recovery through a health lens. We are also taking our place in international recovery month with events in many areas of Scotland that will be making recovery from addiction more visible and more achievable for those affected.

We send our support to Recovery Walk Scotland 2017, taking place in Dundee on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September, and wish the event every success in showing that it is possible to recover from addiction, and to invite more people to do so.

