

TOXIC DRUG POISONING RESPONSE PUBLIC REPORT, APRIL 2024

ILLICIT DRUG TOXICITY DEATHS

- According to BC Coroners Service, there were 51 illicit drug toxicity deaths in Fraser Health in April 2024.
- This is a 9% increase from the number of deaths reported in the previous month, with 47 deaths in March 2024.
- Compared to 2023, the greatest increases in (projected) drug toxicity deaths in 2024 have been seen in Abbotsford (+19%), Langley (+9%), and Coquitlam (+8%) (Table 1).



Figure 1: Illicit drug toxicity deaths within Fraser Health, January 2013 to April 2024

Toxic drug supply emergency declared on 14 April 2016 (two dash grey line)

COVID-19 emergency declared on 17 March 2020 (short dash grey line)

Data source: BC Coroners Service. Preliminary data, numbers subject to change. Numbers include both open and closed cases.

Illicit drug toxicity deaths reported by BC Coroners Service include those involving street drugs (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, methamphetamine, etc.), medications that were not prescribed to the deceased but obtained on the street, from unknown means, and where the origin of drug is unknown.

* To April 2024.



Table 1: Illicit drug toxicity deaths within Fraser Health, January 2023 to April 2024

Community**	Jan-Apr 2024	Jan-Dec 2023	% Change (2024* vs. 2023)	
Fraser East				
Abbotsford	36	91	19	
Chilliwack	8	59	-59	
Fraser North				
Burnaby	16	51	-6	
Coquitlam	9	25	8	
New Westminster	9	38	-29	
Fraser South				
Langley	17	47	9	
Surrey	67	237	-15	
Other Fraser Health Communities	39	155	-25	
Fraser Health	201	703	-14	

Data source: BC Coroners Service to Apr 30, 2024.

Preliminary data, numbers subject to change. Numbers include both open and closed cases.

Illicit drug toxicity deaths reported by BC Coroners Service include those involving street drugs (heroin, cocaine, MDMA,

methamphetamine, etc.), medications that were not prescribed to the deceased, combinations of the above, with prescribed medications, and where the origin of drug is not known.

**Community assigned based on location of injury and if that is missing, location of death.

*Year to date; count annualized based on available months for 2024.



PARAMEDIC-ATTENDED TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS

- Paramedics responded to 621 suspected toxic drug poisoning events across Fraser Health in April 2024; this is a 5% increase compared to the average of the previous 12 months (Table 2).
- Compared to 2023, the greatest increases in the projected rate of paramedic-attended toxic drug poisoning events in 2024 have occurred in Coquitlam (+15%), Port Coquitlam (+14%), and Chilliwack (+10%) (Table 2).
- Compared to 2023, the largest decreases in the projected rate of paramedic-attended toxic drug poisoning events in 2024 have occurred in Pitt Meadows (-75%), Delta (-41%), Hope*** (-37%), Agassiz / Harrison*** (-31%), and New Westminster (-27%) (Table 2).

Figure 2: Quarterly rate of suspected paramedic-attended drug poisoning events in Fraser Health, January 2015 to April 2024



Toxic drug supply emergency declared on 14 April 2016 (two dash grey line)

COVID-19 emergency declared on 17 March 2020 (short dash grey line)

Data source: Patient Care Record data from BC Emergency Health Services. Preliminary data, numbers subject to change.

Suspected toxic drug poisoning events include those associated with opioids or other drugs.

* To April 2024; rates for incomplete quarters are projected based on available months for 2024.



 Table 2: Suspected paramedic-attended toxic drug poisoning events within Fraser Health, January 2023 to

 April 2024

	2024*			2023		
Community**	Apr (Avg. past 12 months~)	Jan-Apr	Rate per 100,000 Jan-Apr	Jan-Dec	Rate per 100,000 Jan-Dec	% Rate change 2024* vs. 2023
Fraser East						
Abbotsford	84 (87.9)	350	578	990	562	3
Agassiz / Harrison***	<5 (<5)	11	276	46	398	-31
Chilliwack	74 (60.2)	269	697	715	637	10
Hope***	<5 (<5)	13	428	61	681	-37
Mission	22 (20.1)	89	519	266	530	-2
Fraser North						
Burnaby	49 (47.4)	196	205	533	190	7
Coquitlam	42 (25.8)	131	224	329	195	15
Maple Ridge	36 (40.8)	157	458	472	472	-3
New Westminster	44 (35.3)	118	387	469	527	-27
Pitt Meadows	<5 (<5)	<5	41	35	164	-75
Port Coquitlam	20 (11.2)	57	249	147	219	14
Port Moody / Anmore / Belcarra	<5 (<5)	18	122	48	113	8
Fraser South						
City of Langley	17 (16)	61	547	204	639	-14
Delta	6 (10)	28	69	139	116	-41
South Surrey / White Rock	7 (10.7)	43	106	129	109	-3
Surrey	193 (191.2)	810	413	2203	388	6
Township of Langley	17 (18.5)	70	136	223	149	-9
Fraser Health	621 (590.1)	2424	333	7009	332	0

Data source: Patient Care Record data from BC Emergency Health Services to Apr 30, 2024.

Preliminary data, numbers subject to change. Numbers for the most recent month are likely an underestimate and will increase as entry of BC Ambulance Patient Care Form is completed. Numbers may change with data quality and analysis refinements and are not directly comparable to numbers reported previously.

Suspected toxic drug poisoning events include those associated with opioids or other drugs.

**Community assigned based on location where the paramedics attended the event.

*Rate annualized based on available months for 2024.

~Average of past 12 months, does not include the most recent month.

***Rates may fluctuate due to small population size.

Counts under five are reported as <5 as they are potentially identifiable.