

# Provincial Overdose Emergency Monthly Situational Report – March 2017

**This report covers the Fraser Health region, with data up to the end of March 31, 2017.**

During March 2017, there was an increase in the number of overdose deaths and the number of overdose events seen in the Fraser Health region.

**Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths:** There was an increase in the number of overdose deaths in March (n=37) compared to February (n=30). Overdose deaths from January to March 2017 were 26% and 139% higher, compared to the first three months of 2016 and 2015, respectively.

**Suspected Overdose Events:** In March, compared to February, there was an increase in the number of suspected overdose events seen by Fraser Health Emergency Departments.

**Take Home Naloxone:** 57 new sites have joined since April 2016, bringing the total number of Take Home Naloxone sites in Fraser Health to 79. From January to March 2017, 2037 kits were dispensed in the region.

Please visit [fraserhealth.ca/overdose](http://fraserhealth.ca/overdose) to learn more about the Overdose Public Health Emergency and find out where to obtain naloxone.

## Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths - Fraser Health Region

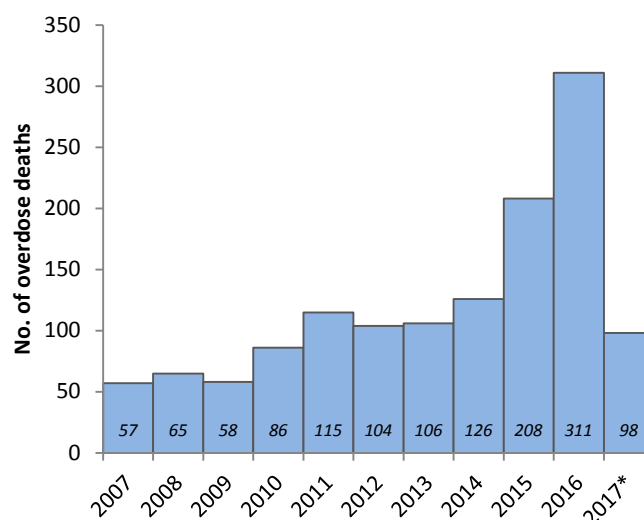
*Data Source: BC Coroner Service (additional details below). Preliminary numbers, subject to change.*

Overdose deaths within Fraser Health increased sharply in 2015 (Figure 1) and continue to be higher than historical levels. During March 2017, there were 37 illicit drug overdose deaths in Fraser Health, compared to 30 deaths during February 2017 (Appendix-Figure 2).

- From January to March 2017, the annualized rate, per 100,000, of overdose deaths was lower in Fraser Health (21.7) compared to B.C. (28.9).
- In Fraser Health, overdose deaths during the first three months of 2017 were 26% and 139% higher, compared to the first three months of 2016 and 2015, respectively.
- From January to March 2017, the overdose death rate was highest among 30-39 year olds (Appendix-Figure 3). From January to March 2017, males accounted for 85% of all overdose deaths.
- In 2017, according to the BC Coroners Service, 82% of overdose deaths in Fraser Health happened inside, with 64% in private residences, and 16% happened outside on sidewalks, streets, vehicles, parks etc.

- Data up to February 2017 showed that fentanyl was detected in 64% of overdose deaths in the region.

**Figure 1. Number of illicit drug overdose deaths within Fraser Health.**



*Data Source: BC Coroner Service, 2017 data for Jan to March only.*

## Emergency Department – Suspected Overdose Events

*Data Source: Fraser Health Emergency Departments (Additional details below). Preliminary numbers, subject to change.*

During March 2017, there was an increase in the number of suspected overdose events across Fraser Health Emergency Departments (EDs). During March, 471 suspected overdose events presented to the 12 EDs in the region, compared to 337 events during the preceding month (Appendix-Figure 4); an increase of 39%.

From January to March 2017:

- There were 1250 suspected overdose events seen at Fraser Health EDs (Appendix-Table 2).
- The majority of events were among males (70%), and the highest numbers of events were among those 19-29 years old (35%), followed by those 30-39 years old (26%). Males aged 19-39 accounted for 43% of all events.
- Opioids were associated with 77% of the suspected overdose events, which is likely an underestimate due to patients and clinicians being uncertain of the exact composition of the substances consumed.
- 9% of the patients with a suspected overdose were admitted to hospital.

## BC Ambulance – Suspected Overdose Events

*Data Source: Patient Care Reports, BC Ambulance, BC Emergency Health Services (Additional details below). Preliminary numbers, subject to change.*

Data on suspected overdose events attended by BC Ambulance current up to end of February 2017.

In February 2017, paramedics attended to 406 events (Appendix – Figure 5) within Fraser Health, compared to 517 events during January.

From January to February 2017, paramedics responded to 923 suspected overdose events within the Fraser Health

region (Appendix – Table 3). The age and gender profile of suspected overdose events were similar to trends seen in Emergency Departments; the majority of the events were among males (72%) and those aged 19-39 years (55%).

From January to February 2017:

- 75% of suspected overdose events resulted in the patient being transported to a hospital.
- Paramedics administered naloxone during 241 (26%) events; additional naloxone may have been given by other first responders and by community members before paramedics arrived at the scene.
- Home/residence (43%) and street/highway (27%) were the most common locations where paramedics attended to suspected overdose events.

## Naloxone Distribution

*Data Source: BC Take Home Naloxone Program, BC Centre for Disease Control, data extracted March 19, 2017.*

Since the declaration of the overdose emergency in April 2016, Fraser Health has worked hard to expand the number of sites distributing Take Home Naloxone kits. Since the declaration, 57 new sites were added, bringing the total number of sites to 79. Furthermore, 72 community sites in the region have registered to receive naloxone boxes for in-facility overdose response.

From January to March 2017, 2037 kits were dispensed in Fraser Health; this was over 340% higher than the same period in 2016. During 2016, 4604 Take Home Naloxone kits were dispensed within Fraser Health.

A prescription is no longer needed to obtain naloxone and individuals can directly purchase naloxone from pharmacies. Please visit [fraserhealth.ca/overdose](http://fraserhealth.ca/overdose) to learn more about where kits may be obtained.

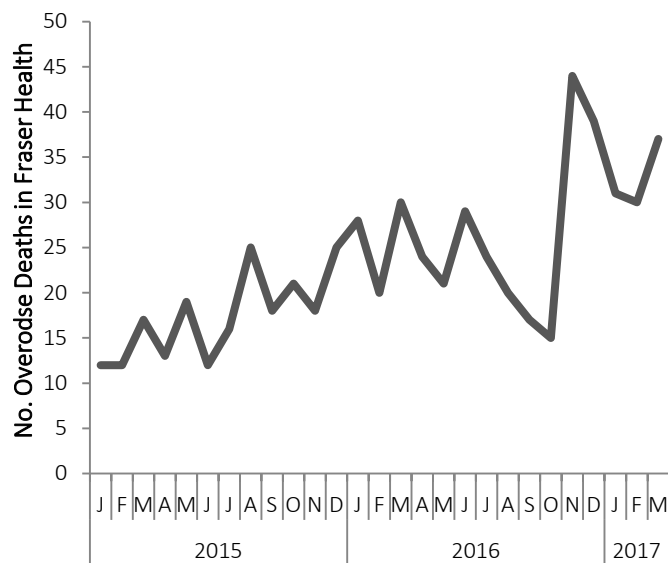
## Additional Information

For more information on the Overdose Public Health Emergency, what you can do and Fraser Health's response, go to <http://www.fraserhealth.ca/overdose>

## Appendix: Data

### Overdose Deaths

**Figure 2. Monthly illicit drug overdose deaths within Fraser Health.**



Data Source: BC Coroner Service. Preliminary data, numbers subject to change.

**Table 1: Illicit drug overdose deaths within Fraser Health.**

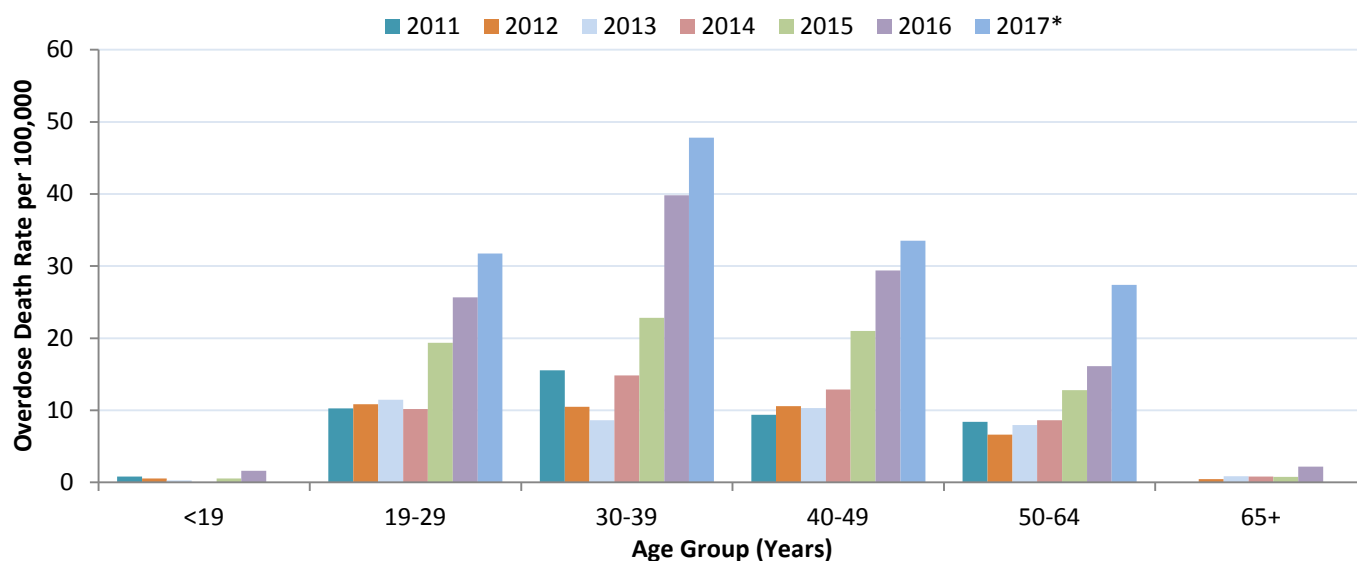
	No. Deaths Jan-Mar 2017	Projected* No. Deaths 2017	No. deaths 2016	% Increase (2017* vs. 2016)
<b>BC</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>1388</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Fraser Health<sup>^</sup></b>	<b>98</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>26</b>
Surrey	37	148	113	31
Maple Ridge	<5	--	27	--
Abbotsford	14	56	39	44
Langley (City+ Township)	9	36	30	20
Burnaby	9	36	35	3
Chilliwack	5	20	9	122
Coquitlam	5	20	13	54
New Westminster	6	24	10	140

<sup>^</sup> BC Coroner assigns location based on location of injury (i.e. overdose) and if that is missing, location of death.

Data source: BC Coroner Service. Preliminary data, numbers subject to change.

\* Projected based on available months in 2017

**Figure 3. Illicit drug overdose death rate per 100,000 people, by age group, within Fraser Health region (2011-2017\*).**

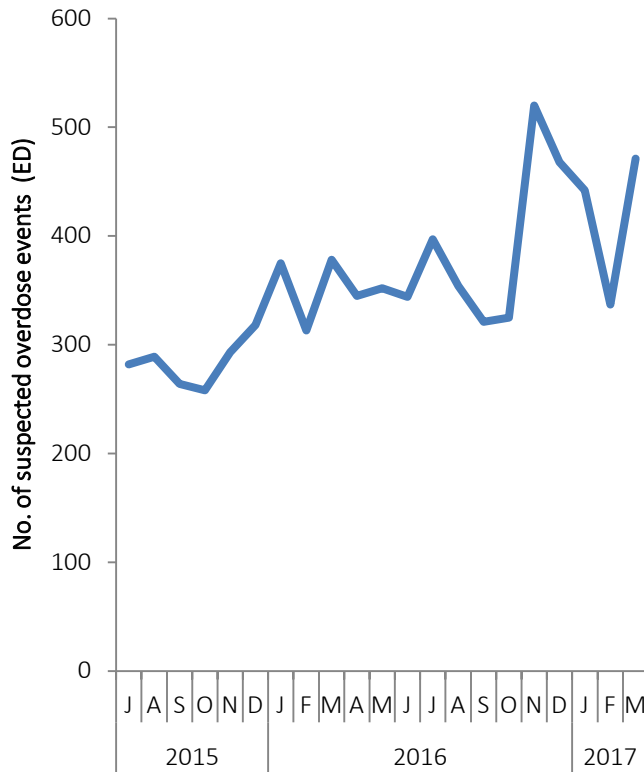


Data source: BC Coroner Service. Preliminary data, numbers subject to change.

\* Annualized rate based on available months in 2017

## Suspected Overdose Visits to Emergency Department

**Figure 4. No. of suspected overdose events seen at Fraser Health Emergency Departments.**



Data Source: Fraser Health Emergency Departments

**Table 2. Suspected overdose events presenting at Fraser Health Emergency Departments.**

Community <sup>^</sup> of residence	No. events Mar 2017 (Avg. past 12 months <sup>~</sup> )	No. events 2017 Jan-Mar (Rate per 100,000) <sup>*</sup>	No. events 2016 (Rate per 100,000)
Abbotsford	44 (43.1)	144 (500)	468 (407)
Agassiz-Harrison	11 (2.5)	6 (302)	29 (365)
Burnaby	27 (24.7)	74 (146)	296 (147)
Chilliwack	37 (25.7)	99 (534)	267 (361)
City of Langley	17 (13.0)	58 (1070)	133 (614)
Coquitlam	24 (13.4)	49 (180)	141 (130)
Delta	15 (9.5)	27 (123)	104 (119)
Hope	-- (2.1)	-- (240)	23 (345)
Maple Ridge	34 (28.5)	89 (552)	325 (504)
Mission	25 (10.5)	42 (484)	113 (326)
New Westminster	11 (15.0)	42 (280)	178 (297)
Pitt Meadows	-- (4.0)	10 (268)	51 (342)
Port Coquitlam	5 (10.5)	25 (207)	120 (249)
Port Moody	5 (5.8)	21 (303)	65 (235)
Surrey	146 (130.7)	386 (365)	1588 (375)
Township of Langley	12 (12.6)	29 (132)	171 (195)
White Rock	10 (3.6)	16 (358)	40 (224)
Non-Fraser residents	50 (35.1)	129 (n/a)	380 (n/a)
<b>Fraser Health</b>	<b>471 (389.7)</b>	<b>1250 (357)</b>	<b>4492 (322)</b>

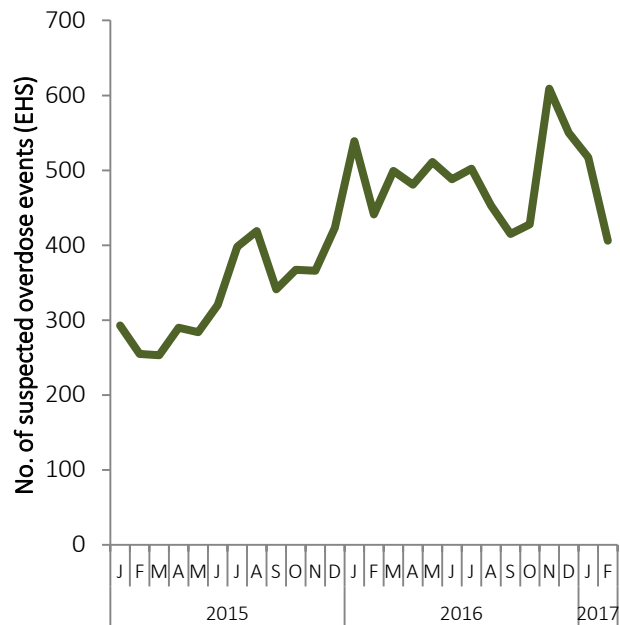
<sup>^</sup> Community based on reported residential address. Homeless people assigned to the community where Emergency Department was located  
<sup>~</sup> based on average of past 12 months, including the most recent month  
<sup>\*</sup> Rate annualized based on available months for 2017  
 -- counts under 5 not reported as they are potentially identifiable

Restricted to those 13 years of age or older

## Suspected Overdose Events attended by BC Ambulance

Data on suspected overdose events attended by BC Ambulance current up to end of February 2017.

**Figure 5. No. of suspected overdose events attended by BC Ambulance service, within Fraser Health Region.**



Data Source: Patient Care Records data from BC Emergency Service. Preliminary data, numbers subject to change.

**Table 3: Suspected overdose events attended by BC Ambulance service, within Fraser Health Region.**

Community of event <sup>^</sup>	No. events Feb 2017 (Avg. past 12 months <sup>~</sup> )	No. events 2017 Jan-Feb (Rate per 100,000) *	No. events 2016 (Rate per 100,000)
Abbotsford	56 (50.2)	115 (599)	572 (497)
Agassiz-Harrison	-- (2.7)	-- (151)	37 (466)
Burnaby	31 (40.3)	70 (208)	484 (239)
Chilliwack	20 (32.5)	63 (510)	373 (503)
City of Langley	30 (22.9)	65 (1799)	255 (1176)
Coquitlam	23 (23.3)	47 (258)	281 (257)
Delta	5 (12.1)	17 (116)	152 (173)
Hope	-- (2.9)	9 (808)	31 (464)
Maple Ridge	30 (35.9)	72 (670)	408 (632)
Mission	6 (9.2)	16 (277)	124 (358)
New Westminster	15 (21.4)	36 (360)	269 (448)
Pitt Meadows	-- (4.1)	9 (361)	48 (321)
Port Coquitlam	13 (13.0)	23 (286)	149 (309)
Port Moody	-- (3.1)	5 (108)	37 (133)
Surrey	149 (193.0)	329 (466)	2395 (566)
Township of Langley	19 (19.0)	40 (273)	229 (260)
White Rock	-- (3.2)	5 (168)	40 (224)
<b>Fraser Health</b>	<b>406 (488.2)</b>	<b>923 (396)</b>	<b>5884 (421)</b>

Please note: Numbers for the most recent month are likely an underestimate and will increase as entry of BC Ambulance Patient Care Forms is completed.

<sup>^</sup> Community based on location where the paramedics attended to the suspected overdose event

<sup>~</sup> based on average of past 12 months, including the most recent month

\* Rate annualized based on available months for 2017

-- counts under 5 not reported as they are potentially identifiable

Restricted to those 13 years of age or older

## Notes on Data Sources

Please note that numbers in this report are likely an underestimate. This is because first responders (fire, police or paramedics) are not called to all overdose events, not all events are seen at emergency departments and the algorithms used to detected events do not capture all the overdoses.

### *BC Coroner Service*

Coroner numbers are preliminary and subject to change as investigations are finalized. Coroner assigns location to events based on location of overdose and location of death. The Coroner's fentanyl overdose report is one month behind overdose deaths reports due to additional time needed for fentanyl testing. Currently, the BC Coroner service combines numbers for City of Langley and Township of Langley.

The coroner illicit drug category includes street drugs (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, methamphetamine, etc.), medications that may not have been prescribed to the deceased, combinations of the above, with prescribed medications, and origin of drug not known. Additional information can be found in BC Coroner reports <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/death-investigation/statistical-reports>.

### *Fraser Health Emergency Department Data*

Fraser Health Overdose Surveillance system is a dynamic syndromic surveillance system which captures suspected overdose events among those 13 years of age or older. These are suspected events and not confirmed cases. These numbers may change as data entry is finalized. The suspected overdose events include those associated with opioids, stimulants, hallucinogens, and unspecified substances. Events were identified based on physician's discharge diagnosis, patient's stated complaint, chief complaint code assigned at triage and nursing notes associated with the chief complaint. Locations are assigned based on reported residential postal code.

### *BC Ambulance*

Fraser Health receives weekly data from BC Ambulance, BC Emergency Health Services (EHS) via BC Centre for Disease Control. Data are based on Patient Care Forms completed by paramedics for each event they attend. The data on latest cases is delayed by a few weeks due to time needed for collection, transmission and entry of the information. Patient Care Forms are completed for more than 90% of the events attended by paramedics. These are suspected overdose vents and not confirmed cases. These numbers many change as data entry is finalized.

The suspected overdoses events are identified based on naloxone administration, provisional impression of 911 dispatch and provisional impression of the paramedics. We remove events suspected of not being overdose events and those associated primarily with alcohol. Locations are assigned based on latitude and longitude of the location where ambulance was dispatched. In addition to ambulance, other services (police, fire, community organizations etc.) may also be present during an overdose response in the community.