

# Provincial Overdose Emergency Monthly Situational Report – September 2017

**This report covers the Fraser Health region, with data to the end of September 2017 unless otherwise noted.** All data are preliminary and subject to change as additional information is received.

During September 2017 there was a decrease in the number of overdose deaths and no change in the number of overdose events seen at Emergency Departments in the Fraser Health region.

**Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths:** There were fewer overdose deaths in September (n=27) compared to August (n=37). Overdose deaths from January to September 2017 were 66% and 151% higher than the first nine months of 2016 and 2015, respectively. In the first nine months of 2017, fentanyl was detected in 81% of illicit drug overdose deaths in Fraser Health. Fentanyl-detected illicit drug deaths from January to September 2017 were 29% higher than in 2016.

**Suspected Overdose Events:** In September, compared to August, there was no change in the number of suspected overdose events seen in Fraser Health Emergency Departments. BC Ambulance responded to fewer suspected overdoses in September than in August (461 vs. 537, respectively).

**Take Home Naloxone:** 92 new sites have joined since April 2016, bringing the total number of Take Home Naloxone sites in Fraser Health to 113. There were 6,156 kits dispensed from January to August 2017.

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

## Actions in Fraser Health

### Supervised Consumption Services and Overdose Prevention Sites:

- Public Health Nurses and Mental Health & Substance use staff conducted outreach in Surrey, Langley, Abbotsford, Chilliwack, and Maple Ridge as part of the enhanced income assistance cheque week response, with a focus on naloxone and harm reduction supply distribution and overdose response; in one community, there were 254 client interactions and 13 referrals to support services made during the 4-day enhanced outreach.
- As of October 1, 2017, 725 unique clients made 11,614 visits to the SafePoint Supervised Consumption Site. There were 191 overdose events and 0 overdose deaths at SafePoint, which opened June 8, 2017.

### Mental Health & Substance Use Services:

- Expanded Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) Clinic services in Abbotsford
- Planning for additional OAT clinics in more communities continues The Intensive Case Management Team began services in Langley. The Team serves individuals with severe substance use who may be mentally ill and/or homeless by finding and maintaining housing and addressing their substance use, mental illness, general health and other needs in order to stabilize their lives.

## Education:

- Staff continued to provide overdose prevention, recognition and response training and support to various government and non-government service providers such as: Trauma informed practice workshops for Emergency Department Nurses; Harm Reduction training for Fraser Health's Home Health staff; Peer engagement training for a community fentanyl overdose working group; naloxone dispensing and administration training sessions for various community groups such as high risk youth

## Community-Based Response and Prevention:

- Staff worked with peers in local business engagement/poster campaign; conducted four days of poster campaign in male dominated services/industries to reach this cohort of people most affected by the fentanyl crisis. The outreach campaign was well received by businesses
- Staff participated in various community events, discussions and forums around naloxone, harm reduction and the overdose crisis such as Burnaby Run for Life event and supported Douglas College Nursing students' OD resource table at Health & Wellness Fair
- Webinars for staff held on the community-based response vision and goals, roles and reporting structures, ongoing community activities and upcoming initiatives such as the school-based response
- Staff enrolled in BC Centre on Substance Use online Addiction Medicine Diploma program
- Workshop was held with building trades industry representatives to identify actions specific to the building trades to respond to the overdose crisis

## Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths – Fraser Health Region

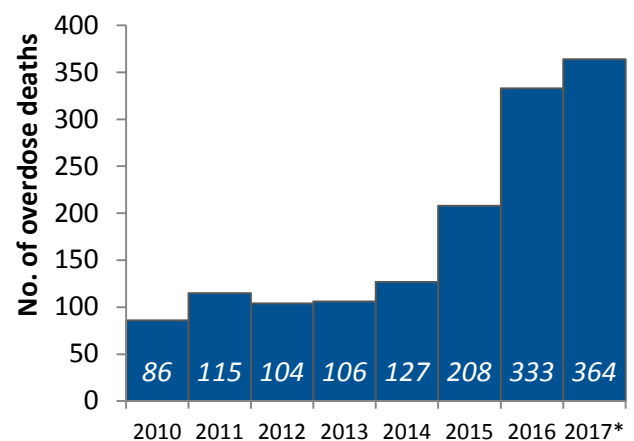
*Data Source: BC Coroner Service (additional details below). Preliminary numbers, subject to change.*

Overdose deaths within Fraser Health increased sharply in 2015 (Figure 1) and continue to be higher than historical levels. In Fraser Health, there were 27 overdose deaths in September, 2017 (Appendix-Figure 2).

- From January to September 2017, the annualized rate, per 100,000, of overdose deaths was lower in Fraser Health (27.0) compared to B.C. (30.6).
- In Fraser Health, overdose deaths during the first nine months of 2017 were 66% and 151% higher, compared to the first nine months of 2016 and 2015, respectively.
- From January to September 2017, the overdose death rate was highest among 30-39 year olds (Appendix-Figure 3). From January to September 2017, males accounted for 85% of all overdose deaths.
- In 2017, according to the BC Coroners Service, 86% of overdose deaths in Fraser Health happened inside, with 68% in private residences; 13% occurred outside on sidewalks, streets, vehicles, parks, etc.

- Among illicit drug overdose deaths in Fraser Health during 2016 where the Coroner's investigation is complete, 41% were using substances alone at the time of fatal overdose.
- Data up to September 2017 showed that fentanyl was detected in 81% of overdose deaths in the region, compared to 63% during 2016.

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



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

## Emergency Department – Suspected Overdose Events

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

During September 2017, there was little change in the number of suspected overdose events across Fraser Health Emergency Departments (EDs). There were 369 suspected overdose events in September compared with 368 events in August (Appendix-Figure 4).

From January to September 2017:

- There were 3,914 suspected overdose events seen at Fraser Health EDs (Appendix-Table 2).
- The majority of overdose events were among males (70%), and the highest numbers of events were among those 19-29 years old (35%), followed by those 40-59 years old (28%), and 30-39 (26%). Males aged 19-59 accounted for 63% of all suspected overdose events.
- Opioids were associated with 73% of the suspected overdose events; this is likely an underestimate due to patients and clinicians being uncertain of the exact composition of the substances consumed.
- 10% 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.*

*Preliminary data on suspected overdose events attended by BC Ambulance up to the end of September 2017.*

In September 2017, paramedics attended 461 suspected overdose events within Fraser Health, compared to 537 events during August (Appendix – Figure 5). These numbers will likely increase as additional data are received.

From January to September 2017, paramedics responded to 5,278 suspected overdose events within the Fraser Health region (Appendix – Table 3). The age and sex profile of

suspected overdose events were similar to trends seen in Emergency Departments; the majority of the events were among males (70%) and those aged 19-39 years (52%).

From January to September 2017:

- 73% of suspected overdose events resulted in the patient being transported to a hospital.
- Paramedics administered naloxone during 1,494 (28%) overdose events; additional naloxone may have been given by other first responders and by community members before paramedics arrived at the scene.
- Home/residence (39%) and street/highway (34%) were the most common locations where paramedics attended suspected overdose events.

## Naloxone Distribution

*Data Source: BC Take Home Naloxone Program, BC Centre for Disease Control, data extracted November 30, 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 (THN) kits. Between April 2016 and September 2017, 92 new sites were added, bringing the total number of sites to 113. Furthermore, 152 community sites in the region have registered to receive naloxone boxes for in-facility overdose response.

In the first eight months of 2017, there were 6,419 THN kits dispensed in Fraser Health. During 2016, 4,659 THN 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://www.fraserhealth.ca/overdose) to learn more about where kits may be obtained.

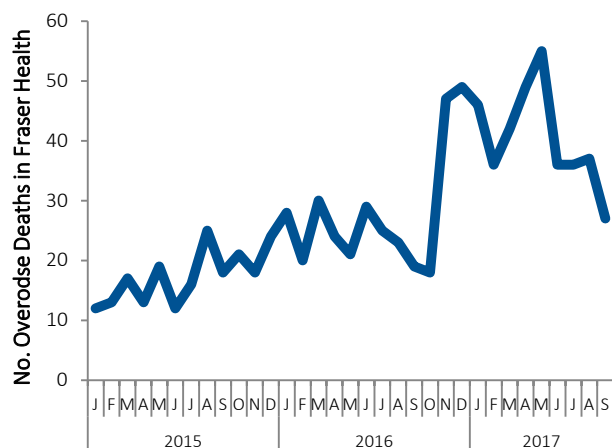
## Additional Information

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.**

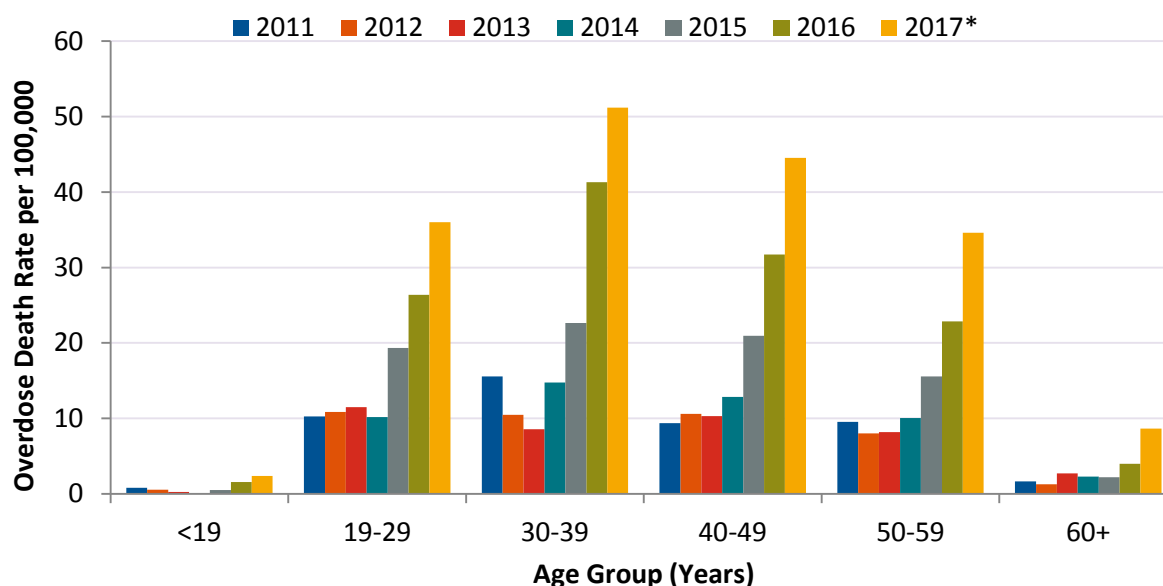
	No. Deaths Jan-Sep 2017	Projected* No. Deaths 2017	No. deaths 2016	% Increase (2017* vs. 2016)
<b>BC</b>	<b>1,103</b>	<b>1,471</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Fraser Health^</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>46</b>
Surrey	133	177	121	47
Maple Ridge	26	35	27	28
Abbotsford	35	47	39	20
Langley (City+ Township)	28	37	31	20
Burnaby	35	47	39	20
Chilliwack	21	28	12	133
Coquitlam	21	28	13	115
New Westminster	14	19	11	70
Other communities	51	68	40	70

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

\* Projected based on available months in 2017.

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

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

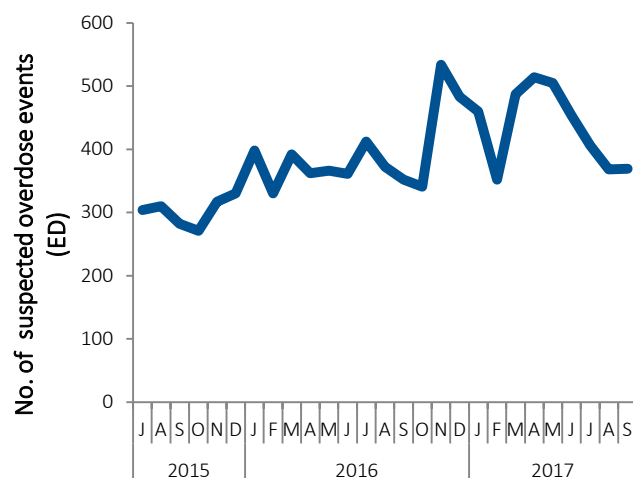


\* Annualized rate based on available months in 2017.

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

## 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 Sep 2017 (Avg. past 12 months~)	No. events 2017 Jan-Sep (Rate per 100,000) *	No. events 2016 (Rate per 100,000)
Abbotsford	40 (44.3)	379 (423)	476 (398)
Agassiz-Harrison	6 (<5)	23 (373)	30 (365)
Burnaby	29 (27.1)	240 (151)	307 (145)
Chilliwack	34 (35.3)	314 (506)	281 (340)
City of Langley	7 (14.8)	132 (784)	142 (632)
Coquitlam	14 (14.9)	138 (153)	146 (121)
Delta	10 (10.0)	95 (143)	111 (125)
Hope	0 (<5)	19 (388)	23 (353)
Maple Ridge	19 (26.5)	247 (472)	339 (486)
Mission	11 (12.7)	111 (403)	116 (316)
New Westminster	16 (14.3)	122 (246)	184 (278)
Pitt Meadows	<5 (<5)	35 (295)	52 (329)
Port Coquitlam	12 (12.3)	100 (265)	124 (247)
Port Moody	5 (6.5)	56 (263)	70 (247)
Surrey	110 (153.1)	1,358 (413)	1,685 (385)
Township of Langley	17 (13.9)	124 (168)	179 (181)
White Rock	<5 (<5)	41 (296)	44 (238)
<b>Non-Fraser Residents</b>	37 (41.2)	380 (n/a)	394 (n/a)
<b>Fraser Health</b>	<b>369 (439.3)</b>	<b>3,914 (342)</b>	<b>4,703 (308)</b>

<sup>^</sup> Community based on reported residential address. Homeless people assigned to the community where Emergency Department was located.

\* Rate annualized based on available months for 2017.

Based on average of past 12 months, including the most recent month.

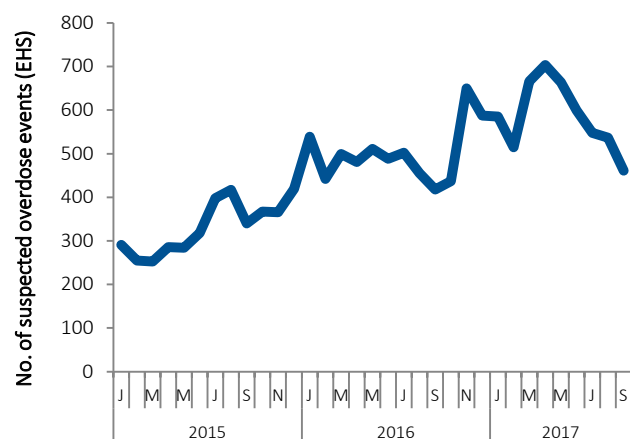
Counts under five not reported as they are potentially identifiable.

Restricted to those 13 years of age or older. Population estimates for 2016 are used effective the September 2017 report; all rates have been adjusted accordingly.

## Suspected Overdose Events attended by BC Ambulance

Data on suspected overdose events attended by BC Ambulance are current to the end of September 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 Sep 2017 (Avg. past 12 months <sup>~</sup> )	No. events 2017 Jan-Sep (Rate per 100,000) *	No. events 2016 (Rate per 100,000)
Abbotsford	59 (55.8)	504 (562)	574 (480)
Agassiz-Harrison	<5 (<5)	29 (471)	36 (438)
Burnaby	43 (45.6)	420 (265)	495 (234)
Chilliwack	43 (42.1)	372 (599)	378 (457)
City of Langley	19 (26.2)	242 (1,437)	256 (1,140)
Coquitlam	19 (27.7)	259 (287)	283 (235)
Delta	19 (15.5)	153 (230)	154 (174)
Hope	<5 (<5)	33 (674)	30 (460)
Maple Ridge	29 (34.9)	327 (625)	437 (626)
Mission	12 (16.3)	155 (562)	124 (337)
New Westminster	19 (26.3)	230 (463)	272 (411)
Pitt Meadows	5 (<5)	47 (396)	51 (322)
Port Coquitlam	9 (15.4)	128 (340)	159 (317)
Port Moody	<5 (<5)	37 (174)	38 (134)
Surrey	157 (235.5)	2,142 (652)	2,452 (560)
Township of Langley	15 (19.7)	173 (234)	229 (232)
White Rock	<5 (<5)	27 (195)	40 (217)
<b>Fraser Health</b>	<b>461 (579.3)</b>	<b>5,278 (461)</b>	<b>6,008 (394)</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. Population estimates for 2016 are used effective the September 2017 report; all rates have been adjusted accordingly.

## 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 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 the BC Centre for Disease Control. Data are based on Patient Care Forms completed by paramedics for each event they attend. The data on the most recent 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 events and not confirmed cases. These numbers many change as data entry is finalized.

Suspected overdose 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.