

FRASER HEALTH OVERDOSE RESPONSE PUBLIC REPORT

November 2020 – January 2021

<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/overdose>



Contents

- 3** **New and Noteworthy**
 - 'Lifeguard' App Saves Overdosing B.C. Man's Life, Twice
 - Suspected Benzodiazepine in Fentanyl

- 4** **Program Updates**
 - Mental Health and Substance Use Services
 - Emergency Network Updates

- 5 – 8** **Fraser Health Surveillance Summary**
 - Fatal Overdoses
 - Overdoses Attended by BC Ambulance
 - Overdose Prevention & Supervised Consumption Sites
 - Drug Checking
 - Opioid Agonist Therapy

New and Noteworthy

'LIFEGUARD' APP SAVES OVERDOSING B.C. MAN'S LIFE, TWICE



'Lifeguard' app saves overdosing B.C. man's life, twice

Rowan Buffet (alias) was using fentanyl to ease severe pain in his leg. The Lifeguard app he downloaded alerted White Rock firefighters of his location after he had blacked out. They were able to save his life twice thanks to Lifeguard.

"According to BC Emergency Health Services, as of Feb. 28 there have been a total of 3,705 unique Lifeguard app users, and 30,113 all-time sessions. To date, Lifeguard usage has prompted 60 emergency responder calls and 14 overdose reversals."

A full news article can be found [here](#).

SUSPECTED BENZODIAZEPINE IN FENTANYL



There has been an increase in overdoses in Chilliwack. These overdoses appear to be associated with a bluish green substance being sold as fentanyl.

The substance may be contaminated with benzodiazepines. Naloxone may not fully reverse the effects of an overdose with this substance.

For further details, see our alert [here](#).

To sign up for FH Overdose Alerts, visit [here](#).

Program Updates

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

- The Virtual Health Addictions Clinic (VHAC), which opened March 24th, 2020, continues to see great success in increasing access to addiction medicine support through support provided to community Opioid Agonist Treatment clinics, Emergency Response Centres and Isolation Centres. Between November 2020 and January 2021, VHAC saw 180 unique clients for 483 visits and started / restarted 99 individuals on OAT
- The Fraser South Rapid Access to Addictions Care (RAAC) in Surrey remains one of the busiest addictions clinics in the province, with 549 Opioid Agonist Treatment inductions completed in the period between November 2020 and January 2021. This model has now expanded to the Fraser North RAAC at the Royal Columbian Hospital MHSU Wellness Centre in New Westminster.

EMERGENCY NETWORK

- Approximately 157 ED Nurses and Physicians participated in the 2-part Trauma & Resiliency Informed Practice (TRIP) in Emergency workshop. Emergency Network and Mental Health and Substance Use leads conducted a formal evaluation of this in partnership with the Mental Health Commission of Canada. The course has been received extremely well by staff and the official report and analysis will be released in March 2021. We are integrating TRIP into standard staff orientation, procedures and policies
- Seven Fraser Health Emergency Department teams are participating in the provincial Learning about Opioid Use Disorder (LOUD) in ED project. The aim is to improve care to people who present to ED who have opioid use disorder and increase the accessibility of buprenorphine-naloxone through Emergency Departments
- A 2-part virtual Harm Reduction in Emergency course will be rolled out in February and March, 2021 for all ED staff, with staff wages funded by the LOUD initiative. This will align with Fraser Health's new Harm Reduction Policy.
- Continued spread and education for ED staff around Safer Injection Kits, Take Home Naloxone and buprenorphine-naloxone (Suboxone) through ongoing safety huddles, inservices and education sessions.
- Distributed Opioid Response Newsletter (Dec. 2020) focused on Harm Reduction, Safer Injection kits and TRIP to ED staff and MHSU leads.
- ED Network is in the process of developing a regional standardized course for orientation of new staff with an overview of opioid response, trauma informed practice, resiliency, safety conversations, addiction, Opioid Agonist Treatment and Harm Reduction. Launching April 16, 2021.

Fraser Health Surveillance Summary

January 2021

FATAL OVERDOSES

According to the BC Coroners Service, there were 52 suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths in Fraser Health in January 2021 (Table 1). This is a 148% increase from the number of deaths reported in the same month last year, with 21 deaths in January 2020. Compared to 2020, the largest increases in January 2021 were in Maple Ridge, Abbotsford, and Burnaby.

Table 1: Illicit drug toxicity deaths within Fraser Health, January 2020 to January 2021

Community [^]	Jan 2021	2020	% change (2021 vs. 2020)
Abbotsford	7	66	27
Burnaby	6	58	24
Chilliwack	2	34	-29
Coquitlam	2	27	-11
Langley (City & Township)	2	39	-38
Maple Ridge	5	36	67
New Westminster	3	35	3
Surrey	19	215	6
Other communities	6	62	16
Fraser Health	52	572	9
BC	165	1,726	15

Data Source: BC Coroners Service Public Report to January 2021.

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

Illicit drug toxicity deaths reported by BC Coroners Service include illicit drug overdoses involving street drugs (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, methamphetamine, etc.), medications that were not prescribed to the deceased, combinations of the above, with prescribed medications, and those overdoses where the origin of drug is not known.

[^]Community assigned based on location of overdose and if that is missing, location of death.

OVERDOSES ATTENDED BY BC AMBULANCE

NOTE: Starting with the July 2019 report, Fraser Health’s surveillance definition of suspected overdose events attended by BC Ambulance Service has been modified to include only probable opioid overdose events and suspected overdose events excluding medication overdoses.

In December 2020, BC Ambulance Services responded to 554 overdoses across Fraser Health. The total number of ambulance-attended overdoses in Fraser Health increased by 21% in 2020 compared to 2019. Almost all Fraser Health communities saw marked increases in overdoses, especially Delta, New Westminster, and Agassiz/Harrison (see Table 2).

Table 2: Suspected overdose events attended by BC Ambulance Service within Fraser Health, January 2019 to December 2020

Community [^]	2020*			2019		
	Dec (Avg. past 12 months [~])	Jan-Dec	Rate per 100,000 Jan-Dec	Jan-Dec	Rate per 100,000 Jan-Dec	Rate change 2020* vs. 2019
Abbotsford	65 (71.8)	862	635	750	560	13
Agassiz/Harrison	<5 (<5)	40	416	27	283	47
Burnaby	62 (46.9)	563	251	463	208	20
Chilliwack	44 (41.7)	500	554	397	449	23
City of Langley	17 (17.3)	208	796	178	700	14
Coquitlam	16 (27.4)	329	247	268	205	20
Delta	14 (15.9)	191	191	120	121	57
Hope	<5 (<5)	54	673	46	575	17
Maple Ridge	28 (30.4)	365	460	317	409	12
Mission	23 (18.1)	217	531	183	455	17
New Westminster	26 (31.0)	372	518	240	340	52
Pitt Meadows	<5 (<5)	22	121	22	124	-3
Port Coquitlam	15 (15.0)	180	323	140	257	26
Port Moody/ Anmore/ Belcarra	<5 (<5)	49	143	45	134	7
South Surrey/White Rock	12 (14.3)	172	179	117	124	44
Surrey	188 (172.5)	2,070	473	1,768	414	14
Township of Langley	31 (25.3)	303	262	206	183	43
Fraser Health	554 (541.4)	6,497	387	5,287	321	21

Data source: Patient Care Record data from BC Emergency Health Services. Restricted to those 13 years of age or older.

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 overdose events include those associated with opioids or other recreational drugs.

[^]Community assigned based on location where the paramedics attended to the suspected overdose event.

^{*}Rate annualized based on available months for 2020.

[~]Average of past 12 months, including the most recent month.

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

OVERDOSE PREVENTION & SUPERVISED CONSUMPTION SITES

Please see the Fraser Health website for a list of [overdose prevention sites](#) and [supervised consumption sites](#).

Table 3: Visits and overdoses reversed at overdose prevention sites and supervised consumption sites in Fraser Health, July-September 2020 and October-December 2020

	Visits for consumption		Overdoses reversed [^]	
	Oct-Dec 2020	Jul-Sep 2020	Oct-Dec 2020	Jul-Sep 2020
Overdose prevention sites total	7,365	7,370	22	8
Supervised consumption sites total	6,101	6,914	85	43

[^]Among visits for consumption.

DRUG CHECKING

To find a drug checking site near you, please click [here](#).

Table 4: Drug checking volumes in Fraser Health, July-September 2020 and October-December 2020

Tests performed		Fentanyl positive		% Fentanyl positive	
Oct-Dec 2020	Jul-Sep 2020	Oct-Dec 2020	Jul-Sep 2020	Oct-Dec 2020	Jul-Sep 2020
50	49	42	33	84	67

Data source: Agiloft and BC Centre for Substance Use.

Table 5: Drug checking by substance in Fraser Health, July-September 2020 and October-December 2020

Buy-as	Tests performed		Fentanyl positive		% Fentanyl positive	
	Oct-Dec 2020	Jul-Sep 2020	Oct-Dec 2020	Jul-Sep 2020	Oct-Dec 2020	Jul-Sep 2020
Opioid [^]	44	30	40	29	91	97
Stimulant	4	11	2	2	50	18
Psychedelic	1	2	0	0	0	0
Depressant	0	1	0	0	0	0
Other*	1	5	0	2	0	40
All substances	50	49	42	33	84	67

Data source: Agiloft and BC Centre for Substance Use.

[^]Opioid includes heroin, fentanyl, or 'down'.

*Other includes substance mixtures. For example, heroin and methamphetamine, cocaine, and heroin.

OPIOID AGONIST THERAPY

Table 6: Opioid Agonist Therapy, November 2020 – January 2021

Clinics	Methadone [^]	Suboxone [^]	Kadian [^]
Abbotsford	18	3	4
Burnaby	5	5	0
Chilliwack	26	17	8
Creekside Detox	15	55	8
Creekside RAAC	354	265	98
Langley	38	67	22
Maple Ridge	26	20	10
Maxine Wright	10	1	1
MHSU UCRC	14	6	2
Mission	6	7	1
Quibble Creek	26	5	3
RCH OAT Clinic	12	13	1
RCH RAAC	10	8	4
Roshni Clinic	5	4	0
SHOP Clinic	5	0	7
Surrey ICM Team	2	2	3
VHAC	83	40	23
White Rock	28	24	3
Grand Total	683	542	198

[^]Numbers may also include restarts