



## Opioid Response: Q1 2020 Update

July 6, 2020

### Recently Released Data

In June 2020, Alberta Health released the 2020 Q1 “Alberta Opioid Response Surveillance Report”. A summary of key data for Grande Prairie is included below:

- The 2020 Q1 rate of fentanyl related opioid deaths in GP decreased to 15.9 from the 2019 rate of 32.2
  - Red Deer and Lethbridge had the highest rate of fentanyl related opioid deaths in 2020 Q1
- In 2020 Q1, the rate of non-fentanyl related opioid deaths in GP increased from the 2019 rate of 3.7 to 5.3
  - Grande Prairie had the highest rate of non-fentanyl opioid related deaths in 2020 Q1
- 78% of apparent accidental drug poisoning deaths related to fentanyl in Alberta were among males. Among males, the age group to see the highest proportion of deaths was 35 to 39 years; among females, 30 to 39 years
  - Among apparent accidental poisoning deaths related to fentanyl, the most frequent health care utilization within 30 days before the individual’s date of death was having an antidepressant or anxiolytic dispensed, followed by a substance use or mental health related visit.
- 67% of apparent accidental poisoning deaths related to an opioid other than fentanyl in Alberta were among males. Among males, the highest number of deaths occurred among individuals spanning the ages of 50 to 59; among females, 40 to 49, and 60 to 70+
  - Among apparent accidental poisoning deaths poisoning related to an opioid other than fentanyl, having an antidepressant or anxiolytic, or an opioid dispensed from a community pharmacy was the most frequent health care utilization in the 30 days prior to death
- From 2016 to 2020, the proportion of all drug poisoning deaths that were unintentional (accidental) increased from 85% to 93%
  - Compared to 2019, the 2020 Q1 proportion of unintentional (accidental) drug poisoning deaths involving any opioid (non-fentanyl or fentanyl) was 76% of all accidental drug poisoning deaths, with fentanyl occurring in 66% of these deaths

- Compared to 2019, the 2020 Q1 proportion of intentional (suicide) drug poisoning deaths involving any opioid (non-fentanyl or fentanyl) increased from 41% to 83%
- In the first quarter of 2020, all major Alberta municipalities had a decrease in the rate of EMS responses to opioid related events per 100,000 compared to the 2019 annual rate.
  - Grande Prairie saw the most significant decrease of 68%
- In 2020 Q1, the Grande Prairie SCS saw a 14% decrease in visits compared to 2019 Q4
- Preliminary reports from other jurisdictions that indicate a potential spike in opioid related deaths in GP for 2020 Q2<sup>1</sup>
  - Ontario reported a 25% increase in opioid related deaths in March, April, and May
  - B.C. reported a 39% increase in opioid related deaths in April and a 93% increase in May
  - Edmonton reported an increase in opioid related deaths from 133 in June 2019 to 184 in June 2020<sup>1</sup>

### **Actions in Response to the Opioid Crisis**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Community Response</b>	<b>Output</b>
Overdose Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Supervised Consumption Site operated by Northreach since March 11, 2019</li> <li>● Take-home Naloxone Program operated by Northreach since 2015</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3172 SCS visits by 149 unique individuals, 594 Naloxone kits distributed through SCS, 31 overdose events, 30 EMS calls prevented, with 0 fatalities</li> <li>● 26 opioid overdose reversals as a result of the community based Naloxone program</li> <li>● 11,727 needles collected</li> </ul>
Community Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 32 educational workshops on cultural awareness &amp; overdose prevention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 32 opioid related education sessions offered at Northreach Society</li> </ul>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Intermunicipal Opioid Response to develop a data sharing mechanism between Alberta cities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Overdose response guide</li> <li>● Data sharing tool</li> <li>● Capacity building</li> </ul>
City Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community Opioid Response Task Force established by Mayor Given in 2017 to facilitated dialogue between municipal government, community services, health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opioid Response Strategy</li> <li>● Everyoneisimpacted.com (includes local video content and facilitation guides focused on stigma)</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> AHS, “Public Alert: Spike in Opioid Related Emergencies Continues”, June 22, 2020.

	agencies, law enforcement, and community members	
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<sup>i</sup> CBC News, "Pandemic Worsens Canada's Deadly Opioid Overdose Epidemic," June 11, 2020.