

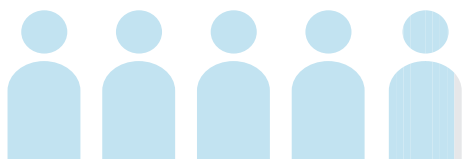
TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS AND EVENTS NORTHERN REGION

JANUARY - JUNE 2023



TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS

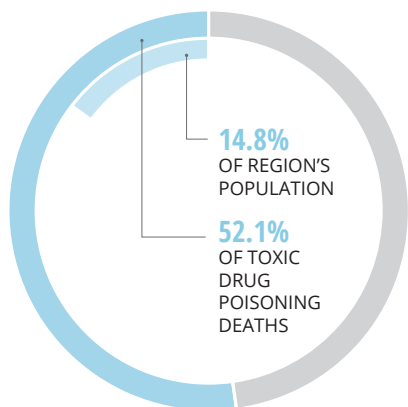
NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO DIED
OF TOXIC DRUG POISONING



49

 EQUALS
10 DEATHS

FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE ARE
DISPROPORTIONATELY REPRESENTED
IN TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS



TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS

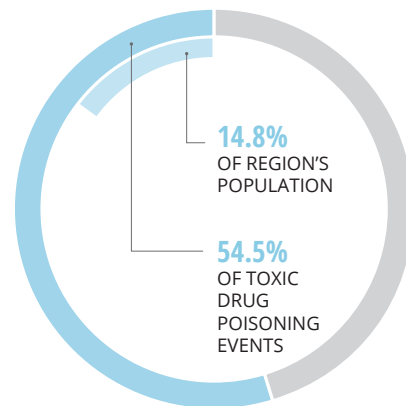
NUMBER OF
TOXIC DRUG
POISONING
EVENTS ATTENDED
BY PARAMEDICS

232

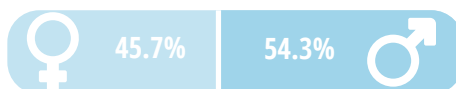
23.2↓

PERCENTAGE
DECREASE COMPARED
TO 2022 (JAN-JUNE)

FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE ARE
DISPROPORTIONATELY REPRESENTED
IN TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS



PERCENTAGE OF EVENTS BY SEX



NOTES ABOUT TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS:

- Most toxic drug poisoning *events* are non-fatal and represent instances where paramedics were called and responded to an overdose, whereas toxic drug poisoning *deaths* represent people who overdosed and died.
- The negative impacts of single or repeated toxic drug poisoning events on an individual can include: heart conditions, liver and kidney problems, brain damage, decrease in mental health, disconnection from support networks, and loss of spiritual and/or cultural connections.
Source: www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/health-consequences-drug-misuse/introduction
- The data used to calculate the percentage of toxic drug poisoning events experienced by First Nations people is based only on health records where a Personal Health Number (PHN) was available. The number of First Nations toxic drug poisoning events attended by paramedics and the percentage increase in First Nations people experiencing events are likely underestimated due to the limited availability of PHNs in the data. Unfortunately, not all toxic drug poisoning events have a PHN associated with them.
- Toxic drug poisoning events that were treated successfully in community and events where 9-1-1 was not called are not captured in this data.



RESPONDING TO AND HEALING FROM TOXIC DRUG SUPPLY POISONING

NORTHER REGION JANUARY - JUNE 2023

ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE FNHA TO SAVE LIVES AND SUPPORT HEALING

Province-wide Initiatives:

- The FNHA is in a Level 2 Emergency response structure to the Toxic Drug Emergency.
- First Nations harm reduction grants funded 106 community-based events, harm reduction positions and projects. Email HRgrants@fnha.ca to learn more.
- Harm Reduction Hub provides community workers and health care providers with easy access to harm reduction services and supplies while building networks of support to help expand harm reduction options in First Nation communities (email harmreduction@fnha.ca for access).
- **Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT)** is a medical harm reduction tool to help people through withdrawal from opioids (email harmreduction@fnha.ca to learn more).
- The FNHA dispenses **injectable and nasal naloxone** to individuals and communities. **Not Just Naloxone** training is provided in workshops to learn how to use naloxone within a wholistic, decolonizing context.
- Courageous Conversations webinar series and events to start conversations around substance use and harm reduction. The FNHA also launched the *Courageous Conversations on Substance Use Toolkit* and *Healing Indigenous Hearts Facilitator Guidebook*.
- The FNHA continues to offer the **First Nations Virtual Substance Use and Psychiatry Service**, connecting psychiatrists and addictions specialists with First Nations people and their family members for culturally safe care planning, treatment and healing.

Northern Region Initiatives:

- Relaunched the Phones for Peers Initiative. This initiative aims to provide cell phones to vulnerable community members, and is done in partnership with the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC). Contact Brandon.Prince@fnha.ca for more info.
- In a partnership with Northern Health, the Northern Region is sending out toxic drug alerts, which aim to alert people to the presence of toxic drugs in their community.
- Continuation of Indigenous Harm Reduction support for First Nation Communities.
- Discussions and training regarding mental health and wellness, harm reduction and naloxone training in-person to 50 communities in the North and many virtual training sessions. This included Treatment Center Pathway presentations and applications.
- Providing mental health and wellness supports and accessible services.

REGIONAL WELLNESS AND CULTURAL SUPPORTS

Regional contact email

MWResponse.North@fnha.ca

Northern BC Crisis Line – Call 1-888-562-1214, 24 hours per day, seven days a week

Drug Alerts –Text JOIN to ALERTS (253787)

Emotional and Cultural Support

Tsow Tun Le Lum Society – Call 1-888-403-3123 (toll-free) or visit www.tsowtunlelum.org

Indian Residential School Crisis Line is a national service for anyone experiencing pain or distress as a result of their residential school experience. Call toll-free 1-866-925-4419. www.irsss.ca/trauma-informed-cultural-support-requests

KUU-US Crisis Service – Call 1-800-KUU-US17 (588-8717) for an immediate response. 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

Métis Crisis Line is a service of Métis Nation British Columbia. Call 1-833-MétisBC (1-833-638-4722)

Hope for Wellness Help Line offers immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention by phone or online chat. Call toll-free 1-855-242-3310 or start a confidential chat with a counsellor at www.hopeforwellness.ca

Fentanyl Test Strips – Fentanyl test strips are available at all OPS and SCS sites in BC and you can also use the them at home. The FNHA will reimburse costs for up to 100 fentanyl testing strips.