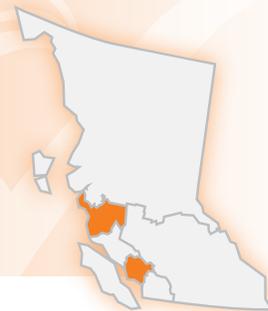


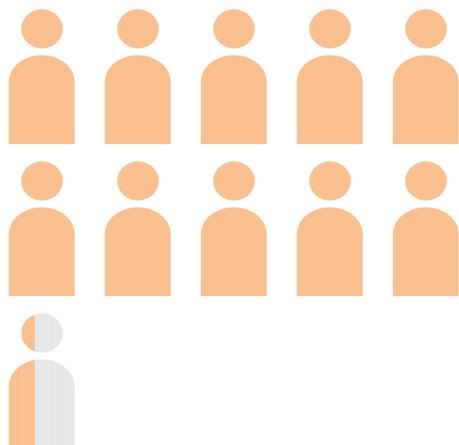
# TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS AND EVENTS VANCOUVER COASTAL REGION

JANUARY - DECEMBER 2021

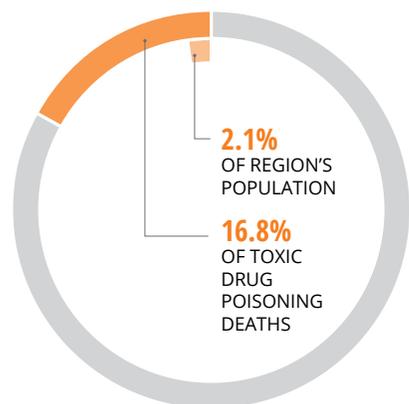


## TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS

NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO DIED  
OF TOXIC DRUG POISONING



FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE ARE  
DISPROPORTIONATELY REPRESENTED  
IN TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS



## TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS

NUMBER OF  
TOXIC DRUG  
POISONING  
EVENTS ATTENDED  
BY PARAMEDICS

1126

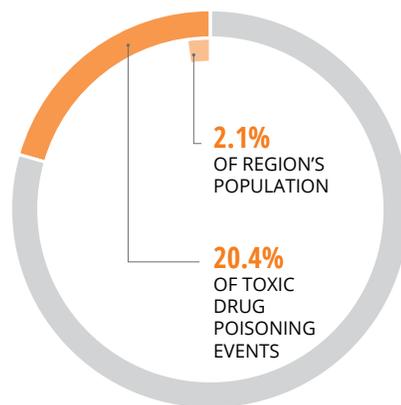
41.6↑

PERCENTAGE  
CHANGE COMPARED  
TO 2020

PERCENTAGE OF EVENTS BY SEX



FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE ARE  
DISPROPORTIONATELY REPRESENTED IN  
TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS



### 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](http://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.



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

The FNHA gratefully acknowledges the health partners that make this data available:  
BC Centre for Disease Control, BC Coroners Service, BC Emergency Health Services, and the BC Ministry of Health.

You may find this information distressing. Cultural support is available at Tsow Tun Le Lum Society.  
Call 1-888-403-3123 (toll-free) or visit [www.tsowtunlelum.org](http://www.tsowtunlelum.org)

# RESPONDING TO AND HEALING FROM TOXIC DRUG SUPPLY POISONING

## A MESSAGE FOR YOU

*"In the face of these immeasurable losses, we need to build hope ... hope that we can turn things around and save lives. But how? By reflecting on how we talk and think about people who use substances – and how we treat them. Let's decide to have those difficult conversations with the people we care about, with people who are using substances."*

**Dr. Nel Wieman**  
Deputy Chief Medical Officer  
FNHA

## ACTIONS THE FNHA IS TAKING TO SAVE LIVES AND SUPPORT HEALING IN 2022

Programs and initiatives the FNHA is currently providing or developing that will positively and directly impact Indigenous people in 2021:

- Twelve community events funded through the Indigenous harm reduction grants in the Vancouver Coastal Region will assist in bringing supports and services closer to home (5 Nations and 7 NGOs).
- Harm Reduction colouring book that highlights peer-based educational resources.
- The Indigenous Holistic Wellness and Addictions Program at the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology is running a cohort of Vancouver Coastal Nation members to complete counselling diplomas.
- Tla'amin First Nation is dispensing opioid agonist therapy (OAT) and Nuxalk nurses are receiving nurse prescribing training through urban partnership programs (Kilala Lelum Health Centre).
- An Indigenous harm reduction portal, created in partnership with Indigenous peers, will provide resources and supports.
- The Courageous Conversations toolkit will support communities in fostering ongoing community conversations and support healing.
- The Sharing-from-the-Heart Circle is a safe virtual space where people who have lost loved ones can share hardships and heal.
- A digital story-sharing platform will connect people to share stories about the loved ones they've lost and help people find a community of support.

## WELLNESS & CULTURAL SUPPORTS IN VANCOUVER COASTAL REGION

**Regional Addiction Specialist**  
Sean.ODonaghey@fnha.ca

**Indigenous Harm Reduction Educator**  
Angel.Gunn@fnha.ca

**Regional Manager, Mental Health & Wellness**  
Riley.David@fnha.ca

### Emotional and Cultural Support is available:

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

**Tsow Tun Le Lum Society**  
1-888-403-3123 (toll-free)  
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. Toll-free 1-866-925-4419.

**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 [hopeforwellness.ca](https://hopeforwellness.ca)