

TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS AND EVENTS INTERIOR REGION

JANUARY - JUNE 2021



TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS

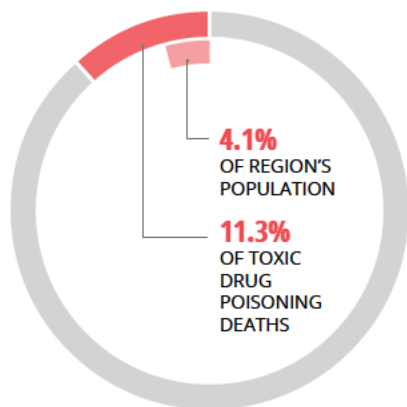
NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO DIED
OF TOXIC DRUG POISONING



18


EQUALS
10 DEATHS

FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE ARE
DISPROPORTIONATELY REPRESENTED
IN TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS



TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS

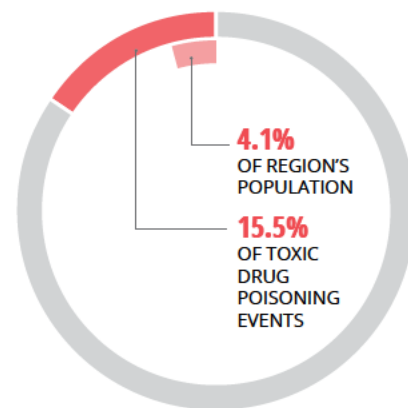
NUMBER OF
TOXIC DRUG
POISONING
EVENTS ATTENDED
BY PARAMEDICS

195

17.5↑

PERCENTAGE
CHANGE COMPARED
TO 2020 (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.



ACTIONS TAKEN BY FNHA INTERIOR REGION TO PREVENT TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS

JANUARY - JULY 2021

PREVENT PEOPLE FROM DYING



- **Distribution of naloxone (nasal spray):** The FNHA dispensed 497 doses of nasal naloxone spray to individuals through community pharmacies in the Interior region, and 695 nasal naloxone kits to 11 First Nations communities/organizations in the Interior through bulk ordering from January to July 2021 (each kit contains two doses).
- **Lifeguard App:** Promoted and encouraged use of the app. Learn more about the app [here](#).

KEEP PEOPLE SAFE WHEN USING



- **Harm Reduction Policy:** Increased awareness with community members and leadership of the newly-approved [policy](#), which outlines five key action areas: provision of Indigenous harm reduction services, expansion of substitution therapies, and support of pharmaceutical alternatives to toxic street drugs.
- **Not Just Naloxone training:** Interior Region training session on November 24 and 25, 2021. Register here: <https://interceptum.com/s/en/NJN>
- **Staff: Hired two Indigenous Harm Reduction Educators:** Alice George at Alice.George@fnha.ca and Tonya Robitaille at Tonya.Robitaille@fnha.ca.
- **Peer support:** Provided support for peer initiatives that are offered directly within the seven nations through Nation Shared Services and one peer support worker at the Kamloops Aboriginal Friendship Center.

CREATE AN ACCESSIBLE RANGE OF TREATMENT OPTIONS



- **FNHA's Virtual Substance Use and Psychiatry Service (VSUPS):** Strongly encouraged the use of [VSUPS](#), which provides virtual access to psychiatrists, addictions specialists and care coordinators to First Nations people and their family members.
- **Youth treatment beds:** Increase in provincially-funded youth beds – ten beds at [The Bridge Youth & Family Services](#) in Kelowna and ten beds at New Beginnings in Kamloops.
- **Treatment options:** Continued to advocate for increased Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT), registered nurse prescribing, and other withdrawal management programs within the Nations.

SUPPORT PEOPLE ON THEIR HEALING JOURNEYS



- **Courageous Conversations Webinar Series:** Supported a webinar in Kamloops in March in which 64 people participated in difficult conversations about substance use.
- **New mental health and cultural support service:** Piloted a new service for connecting people to Indigenous health providers for support. Individuals can call 1-833-751-2525 or email IRSUPPORTS@fnha.ca. A crisis response worker completes a short intake and referral process, then a health provider contacts the client directly.