

**Embargoed until February 10, 2022 at 10:00 am**

**Inclusion Criteria:** This report is a companion report to the Illicit Drug Toxicity report (<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/death-investigation/statistical-reports>) to summarize the drugs detected among suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths.<sup>[1]</sup> In the majority of deaths, fentanyl or its analogues,<sup>[2]</sup> whether alone or in combination with other drugs, was detected. Deaths were excluded if there were no illicit substances identified or the death was suspected to be due to intentional self-harm. The detection of a drug does not necessarily indicate that it contributed to death. The final cause of death and the role of the drug will be determined by the coroner based on the full investigation.

New data has been added to this report to report on all drugs detected, along with fentanyl – see page 4 of this report.

This data has been compiled to better understand the types of drugs being detected in recent illicit drug toxicity death in British Columbia and to inform other agencies' public safety strategies in a timely manner.<sup>[1]</sup> *Note that fentanyl-detected data is subject to change as further test results become available*

**Fentanyl Results:**

- Preliminary data in 2021 has found that fentanyl or its analogues have been detected in 83% of all illicit drug toxicity deaths. In 2020, fentanyl or its analogues have been detected in 85% of deaths.
- Post-mortem toxicology results suggest that there has been a greater number of cases with extreme fentanyl concentrations in Apr 2020-Dec 2021 compared with previous months (concentrations exceeding >50ug/L (micrograms/litre).
  - From Apr 2020-Dec 2021, approximately 15% of cases had extreme fentanyl concentrations as compared to 8% from Jan 2019 to Mar 2020.
- Between Apr 2020-Oct 2021, 20% of fentanyl-detected illicit drug toxicity deaths in Vancouver Coastal Health had extreme fentanyl concentrations (>50ug/L) followed by 15% in Fraser Health and 12% in Interior and Island Health.
- Carfentanil has been detected in 187 suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2021 and 66 in 2020.

Figure 1: Percent of Illicit Drug Deaths with Fentanyl Detected

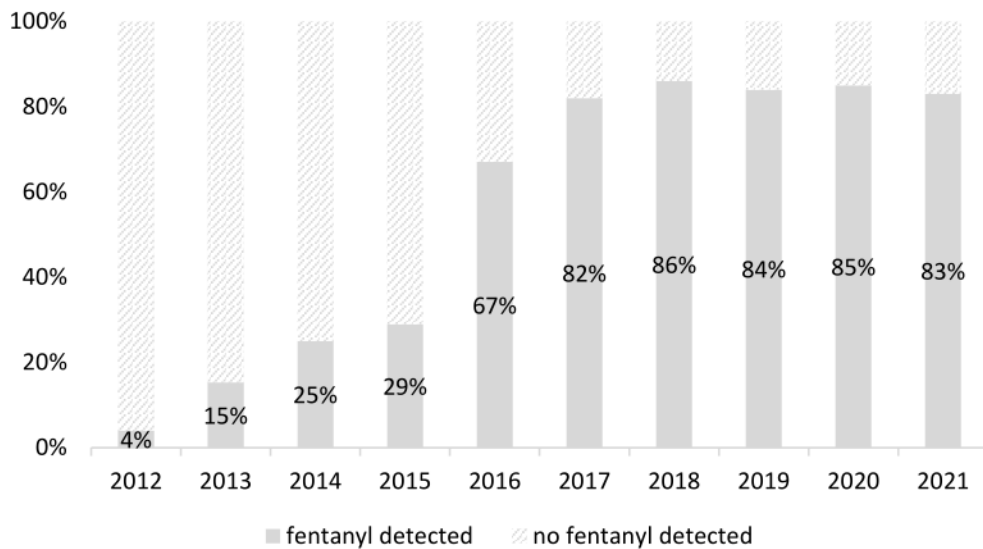
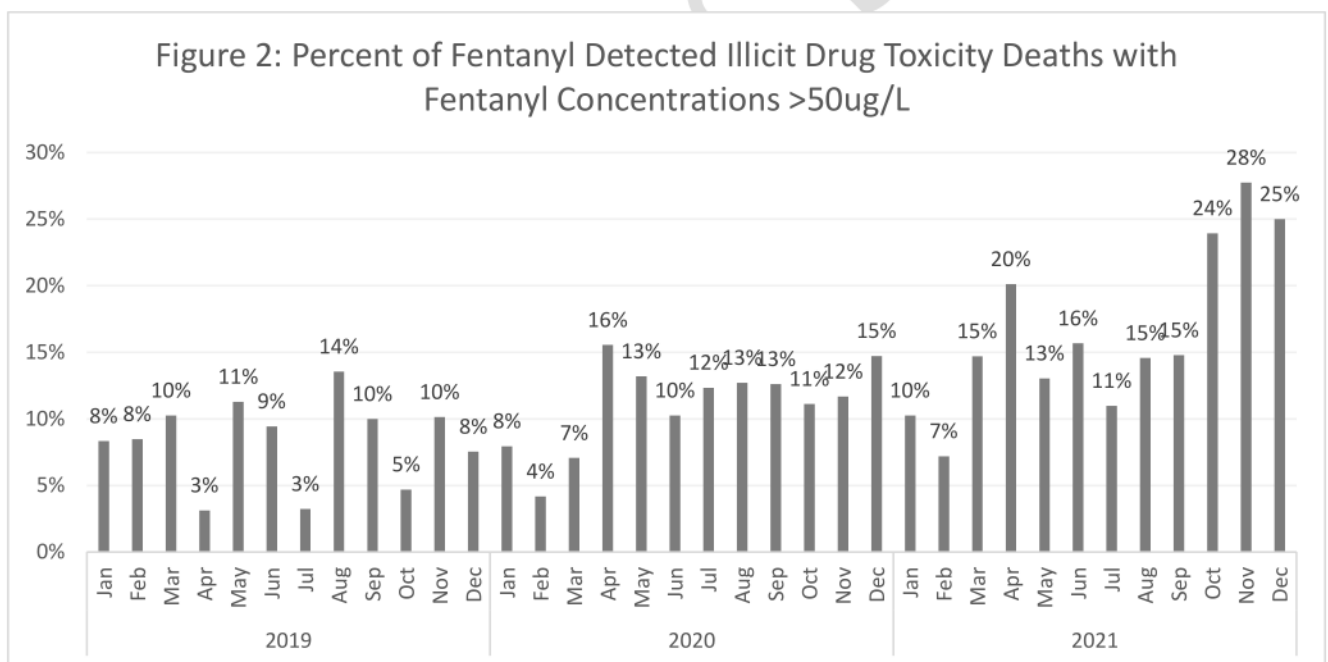
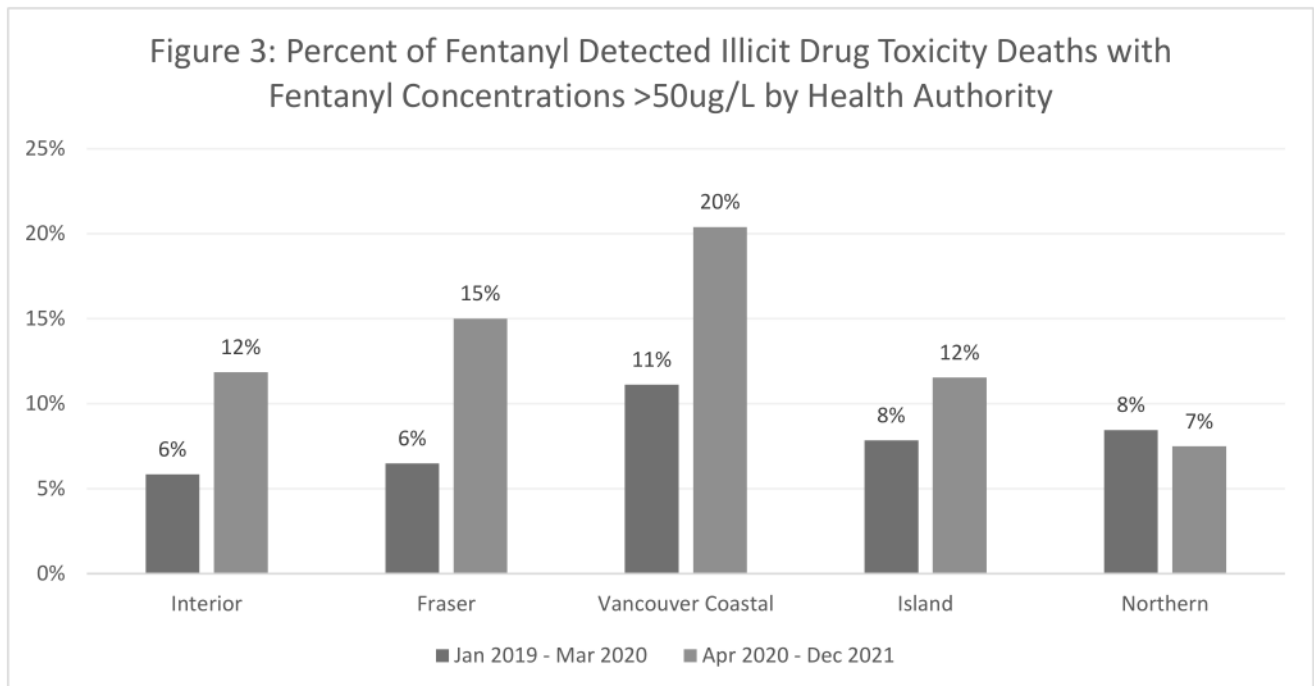


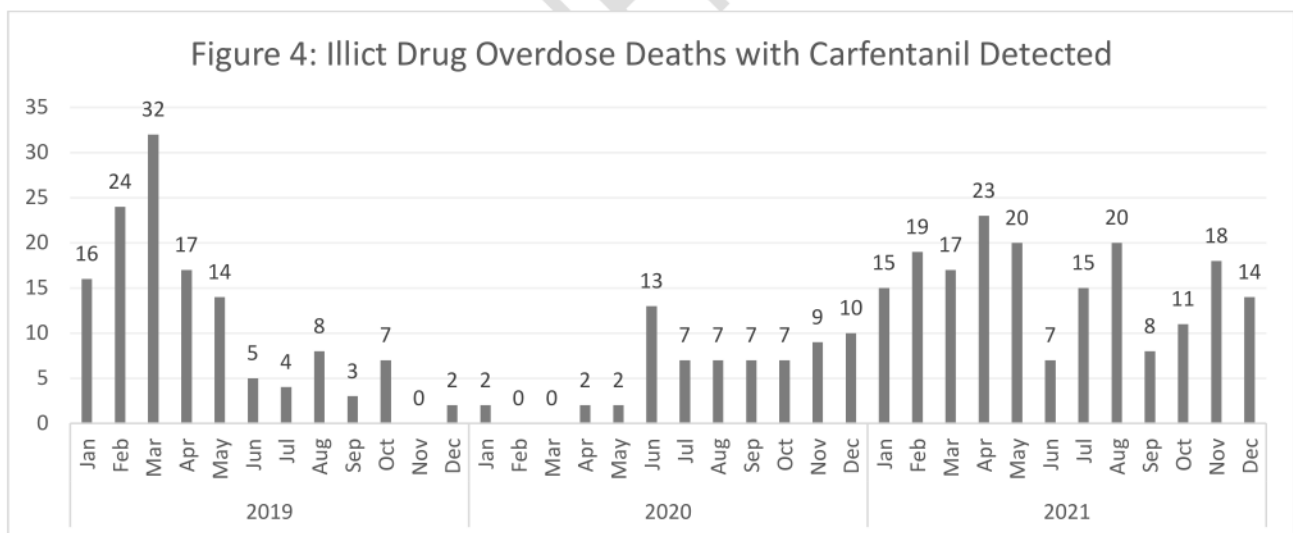
Figure 2: Percent of Fentanyl Detected Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths with Fentanyl Concentrations >50ug/L



\*Data from most recent months are considered preliminary and are subject to change as more tests are completed. Based only on cases where fentanyl concentrations were available.



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### Other Drug Types - Expedited Toxicology Results:

As of July 1, 2020, the B.C. Coroners Service implemented a new expedited testing protocol that tests 21 drugs in a semi-quantitative manner and results are generated within a few days of samples being received.<sup>[4]</sup> Samples from suspected drug toxicity deaths are sent for expedited testing and reported presumptively prior to completing confirmatory testing.

- Results from the new expedited testing protocol have found that about 91% of submitted samples have detected fentanyl and/or its analogues, 74% have detected at least one stimulant, 20% have detected at least one other opioid, and 44% have detected at least one benzodiazepine. *Note that samples sent for expedited testing are a subset of all illicit drug toxicity deaths (reported on page 1) where the initial investigation indicates a drug toxicity related death.*
- The detection rate of benzodiazepines has rapidly increased from 15% of samples in July 2020 to 50% of samples in December 2021. Reference: [Etizolam Fact Sheet \(BCCDC\)](#).
- From Jul 2020–Dec 2021, etizolam has been found in 41% of illicit drug toxicity deaths who have undergone expedited testing.
- Among health authorities, Vancouver Coastal has the highest percentage of other opioids detected (25%), and Fraser has the highest percentage of benzodiazepines detected (54%). The percentage of fentanyl & analogues and stimulants detected was similar across all health authorities.

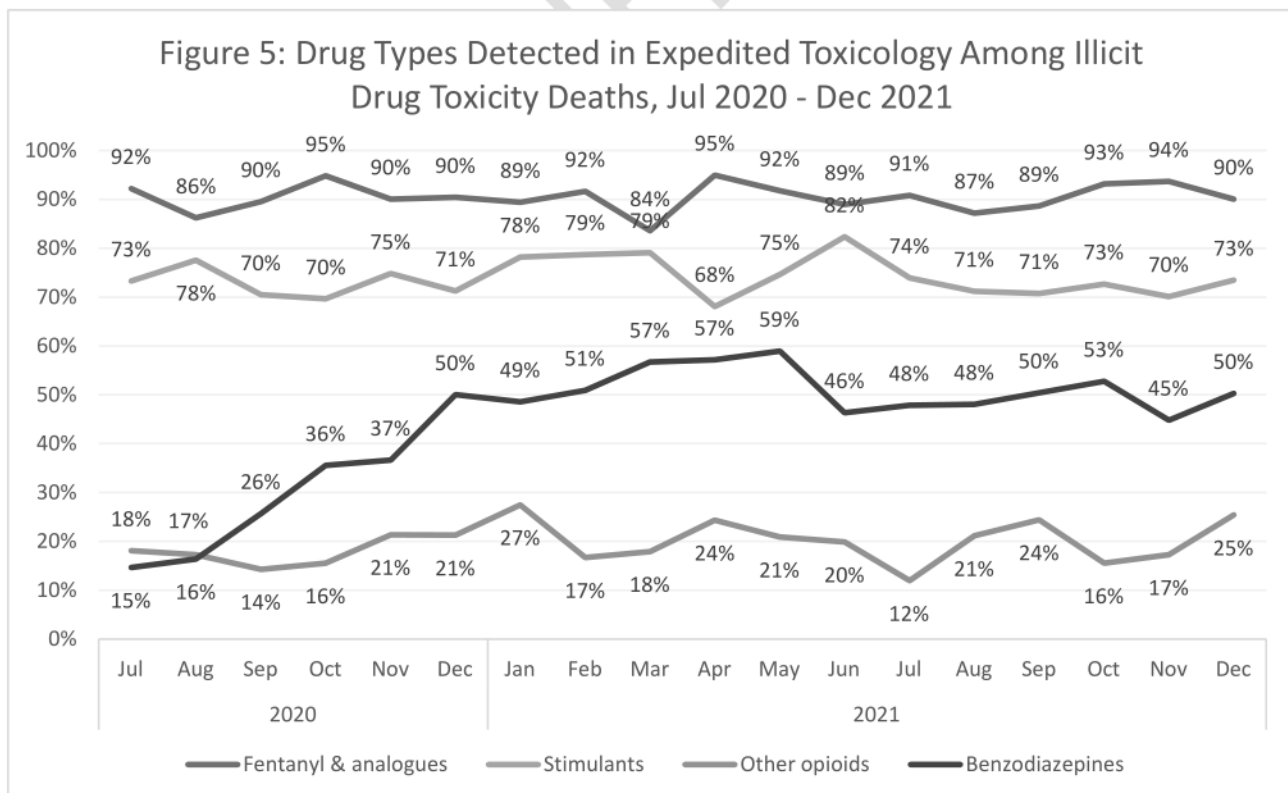


Figure 6: Drug Types Detected in Expedited Toxicology Among Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Health Authority, Jul 2020 - Dec 2021

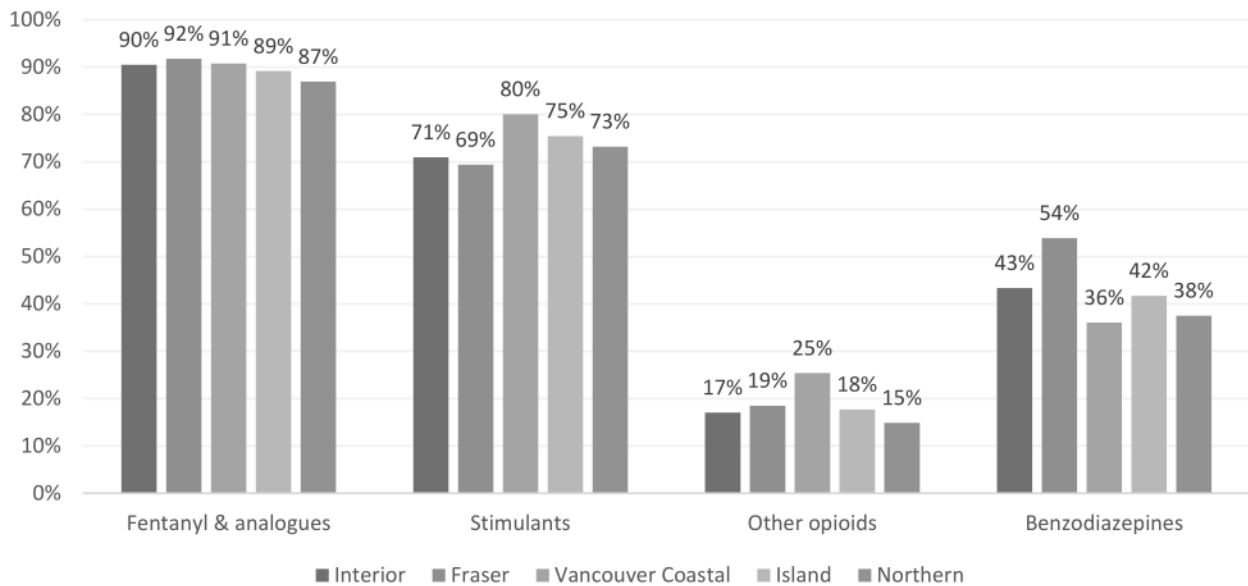
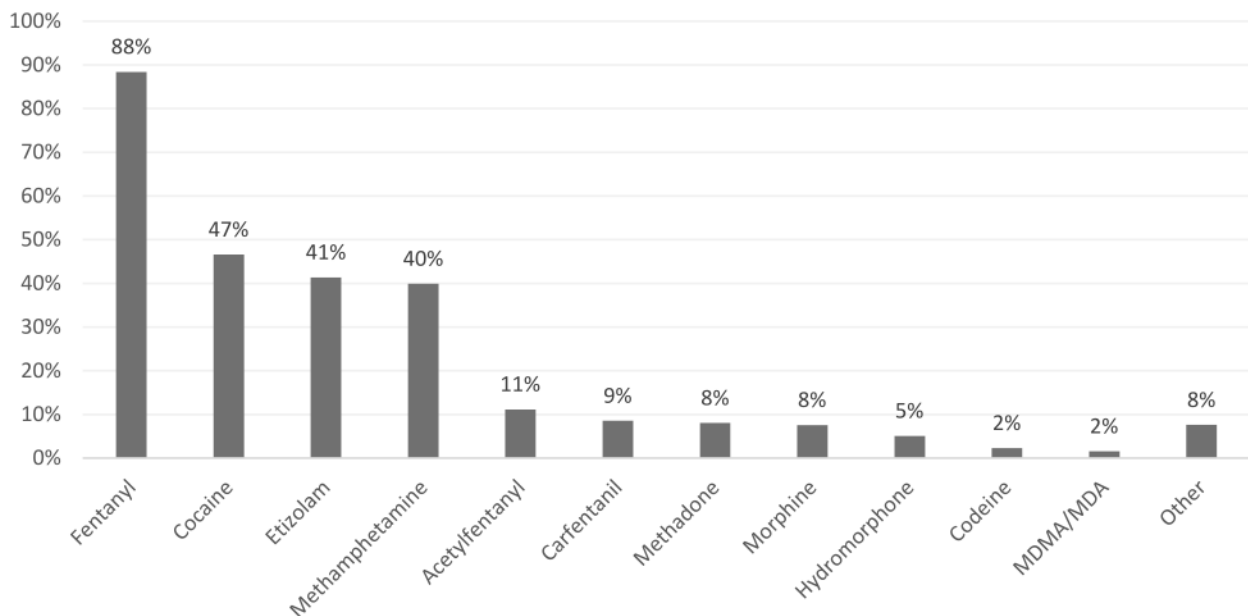


Figure 7: Substances Detected in Expedited Toxicology Among Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths, Jul 2020 - Dec 2021



Notes: presence of acetylfentanyl is mostly likely due to an impurity of illicit fentanyl; concentrations of this drug are low and are unlikely to contribute to toxicity. The presence of morphine indicates prior administration of morphine itself or can arise as a metabolite of codeine or heroin. The number of cases where the decedent actually used morphine is likely much lower.

**Notes:**

1. The BCCS operates in a live database environment. Some data for more recent years are based on preliminary circumstances and are subject to change as investigations are concluded. Data are not directly comparable to published counts from previous years.
2. Toxicology testing includes acetylfentanyl as of November 2015. Standard testing for carfentanil, 3-methylfentanyl, furanylfentanyl, and W-18 began on June 1, 2017. Fentanyl-detected data is derived from testing conducted by the BC Coroners Service.
3. More information about the health regions can be found at <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/geographic-data-services/land-use/administrative-boundaries/health-boundaries>
4. Tests expanded to include screening for the following substances:

Fentanyl & analogues

acetylfentanyl  
carfentanil  
norfentanyl

Stimulants

Cocaine (inc. cocaethylene, benzoylecgonine)  
Methamphetamine/amphetamine  
MDMA/MDA

Other Opioids

6-Monoacetylmorphine  
Codeine  
Hydromorphone  
Methadone (inc. EDDP)  
Morphine  
Oxycodone

Benzodiazepines & analogues

Alprazolam  
Etizolam  
Flualprazolam

## Embargoed until February 10, 2022 at 10:00 am

This report summarizes all unintentional illicit drug toxicity deaths in British Columbia (accidental and undetermined) that occurred between January 1, 2011, and December 31, 2021, inclusive. It includes confirmed and suspected illicit toxicity deaths (inclusion criteria below). *Please note that data is subject to change as investigations are concluded.* <sup>1</sup><https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/life-events/death/coroners-service/statistical-reports>

**Inclusion Criteria:** The illicit drug toxicity category includes the following:

- Street drugs (Controlled and illegal drugs: heroin, cocaine, MDMA, methamphetamine, illicit fentanyl etc.).
- Medications not prescribed to the decedent but obtained/purchased on the street, from unknown means or where origin of drug not known.
- Combinations of the above with prescribed medications.

### 2021 Summary

- In November and December 2021, there were 210 and 215 suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths, respectively. These are the two largest numbers of suspected deaths ever recorded in a month.
- In 2021, there were 2,224 suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths, the most ever recorded in a year. This represents a 26% increase over the number of deaths seen in 2020 (1,767).
- The number of illicit drug toxicity deaths in November and December 2021 equates to about 7 deaths per day. Overall, in 2021, there were on average 6.1 deaths per day.
- In 2021, 71% of those dying were aged 30 to 59, and 78% were male.
- The townships experiencing the highest number of illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2021 are Vancouver, Surrey, and Victoria.
- By Health Authority (HA), in 2021, the highest **numbers** of illicit drug toxicity deaths were in Fraser and Vancouver Coastal Health Authorities (765 and 615 deaths, respectively), making up 62% of all such deaths during this period.
- By Health Authority (HA), in 2021, the highest **rates** were in Vancouver Coastal Health (49 deaths per 100,000 individuals) and Northern Health (48 per 100,000). Overall, the rate in BC is 43 deaths per 100,000 individuals in 2021.
- By Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA), in 2021, the highest **rates** were in Vancouver, Thompson Cariboo, Northwest, Northern Interior, and Fraser East.
- By Local Health Area (LHA), in **2021**, the highest **rates** were in Upper Skeena, Merritt, Enderby, Lillooet, and North Thompson.

- In 2021, 83% of illicit drug toxicity deaths occurred inside (56% in private residences and 28% in other residences including social and supportive housing, SROs, shelters, and hotels and other indoor locations) and 15% occurred outside in vehicles, sidewalks, streets, parks, etc.
- In Vancouver Coastal, other residences (47%) were the most common place of illicit drug toxicity deaths followed by private residences (36%) between 2018 and 2021 (see Table 3, Page 5).
- No deaths have been reported at supervised consumption or drug overdose prevention sites.<sup>2</sup>
- There is no indication that prescribed safe supply is contributing to illicit drug deaths.

### Trends

- Male illicit drug toxicity death rates have remained at a high rate. Female rates have trended higher in recent months (see Figure 4, Page 8).
- Illicit drug toxicity death rates among 19+ years have remained high, while rates among 0-18 years remain stable (see Figure 6, Page 10).
- The proportion of deaths that are 50+ years of age has steadily increased year after year for the past 6 years. In 2021, 38% of deaths were 50 years or over (see Figure 5, Page 9).
- Illicit drug toxicity death rates for all health authority rates remain high (see Figure 7, Page 13).



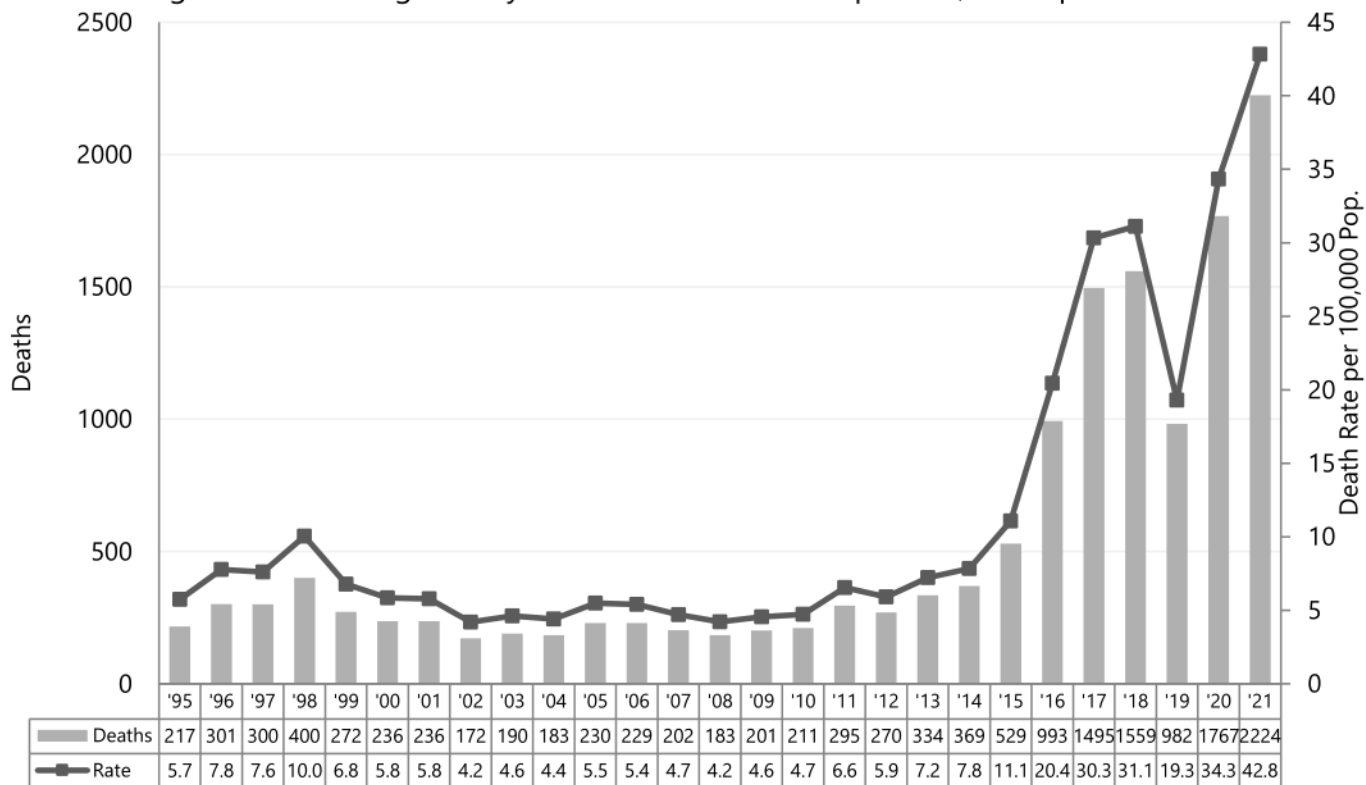
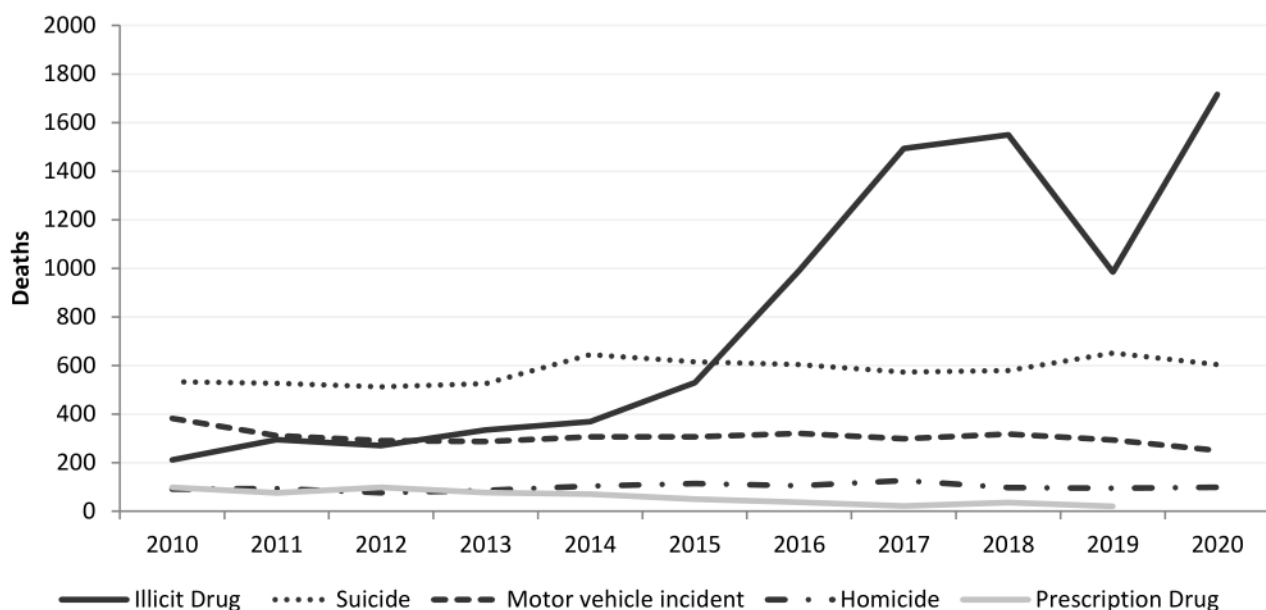
Figure 1: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths and Death Rate per 100,000 Population <sup>[3,5]</sup>

Table 1: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Month, British Columbia, 2011-2021 <sup>[3]</sup>											
Month	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Jan	24	20	20	23	43	85	148	134	94	80	188
Feb	24	17	21	38	31	58	124	108	85	78	173
Mar	25	25	33	28	32	76	130	159	119	119	172
Apr	27	31	31	29	34	72	154	135	82	128	184
May	22	19	28	40	41	51	149	118	88	180	171
Jun	22	25	25	29	34	71	129	116	74	188	169
Jul	33	29	39	25	40	74	122	149	72	185	196
Aug	22	20	21	37	53	65	128	124	84	162	194
Sep	22	16	28	32	50	63	97	139	62	143	153
Oct	23	19	19	35	53	77	98	119	79	176	199
Nov	27	28	31	28	52	140	112	131	81	166	210
Dec	24	21	38	25	66	161	104	127	62	162	215
Total	295	270	334	369	529	993	1,495	1,559	982	1,767	2,224
Average	24.6	22.5	27.8	30.8	44.1	82.8	124.6	129.9	81.8	147.3	185.3

## Comparison to Other Common Causes of Unnatural Deaths from 2010 to 2020:

Figure 2: Major Causes of Unnatural Deaths in BC



*\*Data is preliminary and subject to change. Prescription drug toxicity deaths (accidental and undetermined) include cases where only a prescription drug is involved and reported for closed investigations only to 2019.*

**BC Data by Place of Injury****Table 2: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Place of Injury, BC, 2018-2021<sup>[3]</sup>**

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Inside:				
Private Residence	927 (59.5%)	566 (57.6%)	1,002 (56.7%)	1,235 (55.5%)
Other Residence	377 (24.2%)	259 (26.4%)	461 (26.1%)	554 (24.9%)
Correctional facility/police cell	5 (0.3%)	4 (0.4%)	5 (0.3%)	8 (0.4%)
Medical facility	5 (0.3%)	5 (0.5%)	5 (0.3%)	9 (0.4%)
Occupational site	6 (0.4%)	6 (0.6%)	6 (0.3%)	8 (0.4%)
Public building				
Public washroom	23 (1.5%)	11 (1.1%)	6 (0.3%)	12 (0.5%)
Other area of building	17 (1.1%)	7 (0.7%)	13 (0.7%)	28 (1.3%)
Outside	189 (12.1%)	117 (11.9%)	250 (14.2%)	336 (15.1%)
Unknown	10 (0.6%)	7 (0.7%)	19 (1.1%)	34 (1.5%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,559</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>1,767</b>	<b>2,224</b>

**Table 3: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Place of Injury and Health Authority, BC, 2018-2021<sup>[3]</sup>**

	Interior	Fraser	Vancouver Coastal	Vancouver Island	Northern
Inside:					
Private Residence	658 (63.6%)	1,546 (70.2%)	656 (35.8%)	587 (58.0%)	283 (63.2%)
Other Residence	203 (19.6%)	263 (12.0%)	859 (46.8%)	240 (23.7%)	86 (19.2%)
Other Inside	36 (3.5%)	84 (3.8%)	39 (2.1%)	17 (1.7%)	13 (2.9%)
Outside	126 (12.2%)	286 (13.0%)	259 (14.1%)	158 (15.6%)	63 (14.1%)
Unknown	12 (1.2%)	22 (1.0%)	22 (1.2%)	11 (1.1%)	3 (0.7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,035</b>	<b>2,201</b>	<b>1,835</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>448</b>

Private Residence – includes driveways garages, trailer homes and either decedent's own or another's residence.

Other Residence – includes hotels, motels, rooming houses, SRO (single room occupancy, shelters, social/supportive housing etc.)

Medical facility – includes hospitals, community care facilities, etc

Occupational site – includes locations where the decedent was at their place of work.

Public buildings – includes restaurants, community centres, businesses, clinics, etc.

Outside – includes vehicles, streets, sidewalks, parking lots, public parks, wooded areas, and campgrounds

**BC Data by Drugs Involved:**

- Preliminary data suggests that the proportion of illicit drug toxicity deaths for which illicit fentanyl was detected (alone or in combination with other drugs) was approximately 83% in 2021 and 85% in 2020. *2021 data will change as further toxicology results are received.*
- Post-mortem toxicology results suggest that there has been a greater number of cases with extreme fentanyl concentrations after Apr 2020 compared with previous months (concentrations exceeded >50ug/L (micrograms/litre)).
  - From Apr 2020 – Dec 2021, approximately 15% of cases had extreme fentanyl concentrations as compared to 8% from Jan 2019 to Mar 2020.
- Carfentanil has been detected in 187 suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2021 and 66 deaths in 2020. *This is subject to change as further toxicology results are received.*
- A review of completed cases from 2018-21 indicates that the top four detected drugs relevant to illicit drug toxicity deaths were fentanyl (87%), cocaine (48%), methamphetamine/amphetamine (40%), and other opioids (29%).
- Among the drug types involved in completed illicit drug toxicity death investigations, illicit fentanyl has increased from 5% in 2012 to 85% in 2020. Methamphetamine has also increased from 14% in 2012 to 44% in 2020. Cocaine and other opioids have steadily declined from 2012 to 2020; however, cocaine was involved in 45% of illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2020.
- There is no indication that prescribed safe supply is contributing to illicit drug deaths.

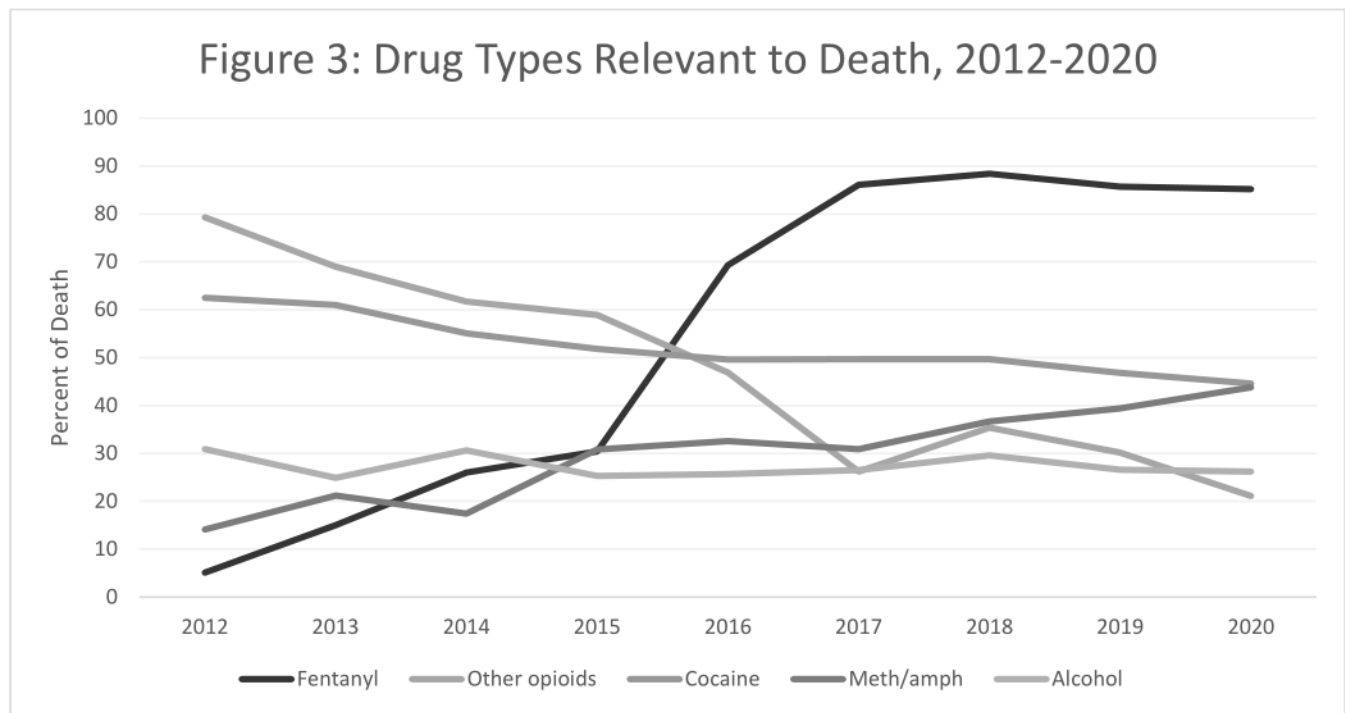
**Table 5: Top Drugs Involved Among Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths, 2018-21**

Drug Detected	BC (n=2,850)
Illicit fentanyl & analogues	86.7%
Cocaine	48.0%
Methamphetamine/amphetamine	39.7%
Other opioids	29.1%
Ethyl alcohol	28.0%
Benzodiazepines	7.9%
Other stimulants	2.8%

**Notes:**

Drugs involved are noted by the coroner as being relevant to the death (this data is only available for concluded investigations). Data does not indicate when a substance was taken.

Fentanyl & analogues includes fentanyl, acetylfentanyl, 3-methylfentanyl, furanylfentanyl, carfentanil, cyclopropyl fentanyl, methoxyacetylfentanyl, 4-fluoroisobutyryl fentanyl, and norfentanyl. Meth/amph includes methamphetamine and amphetamine. Other opioids include heroin, codeine, oxycodone, morphine, hydromorphone, methadone, etc but excludes fentanyl and analogues. Other stimulants include MDMA, MDA, paramethoxymethamphetamine, paramethoxyamphetamine, pseudophedrine, methylbenzodioxylbutamine, methylone, methylphenidate, caffeine, and ephedrine.



### Income Assistance Week:

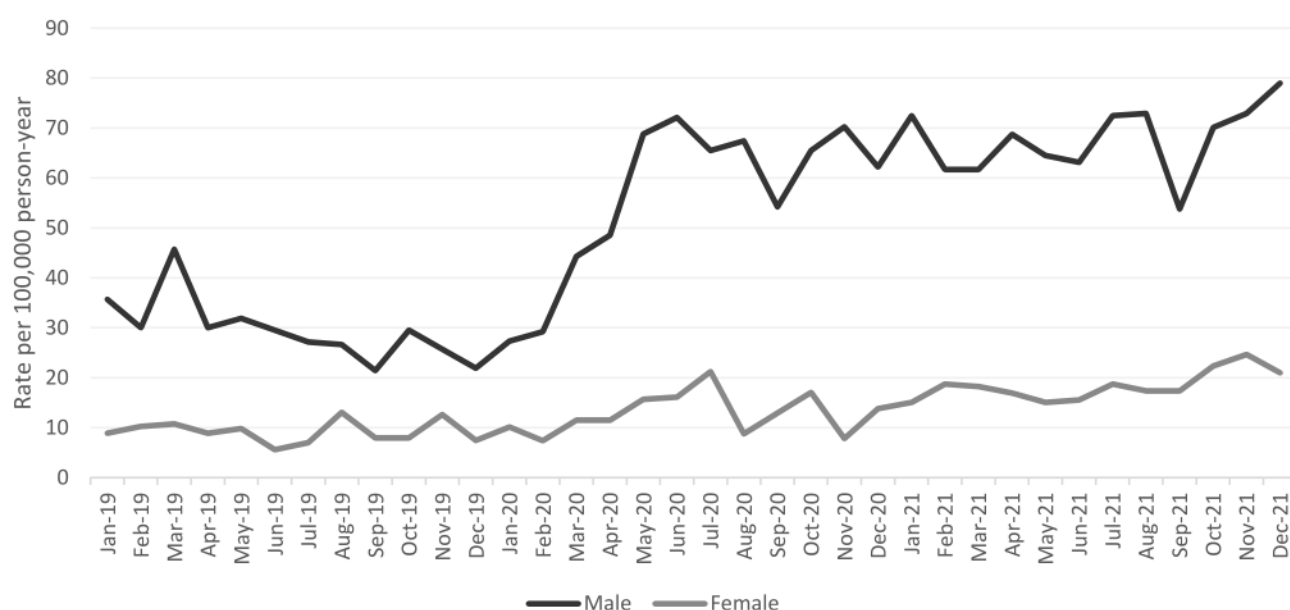
**Table 4: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths per day by Income Assistance Payment Week, 2021<sup>[3,4]</sup>**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg
Income Assistance Payment Week (Wed-Sun)	7.4	6.6	6.2	6.0	5.6	7.4	6.4	7.0	8.4	6.4	9.2	7.6	7.0
All other days of the month	5.8	6.1	5.4	6.2	5.5	5.3	6.3	6.1	4.4	6.4	6.6	6.8	5.9
Total	6.1	6.2	5.5	6.1	5.5	5.6	6.3	6.3	5.1	6.4	7.0	6.9	6.1

- More illicit drug toxicity deaths occurred during the days following income assistance payment (Wed-Sun) than all other days in 2020-21. Income assistance payment dates can be found at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance/payment-dates>.

**BC Data by Sex/Age:****Table 6: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Sex, 2011-2021<sup>[3]</sup>**

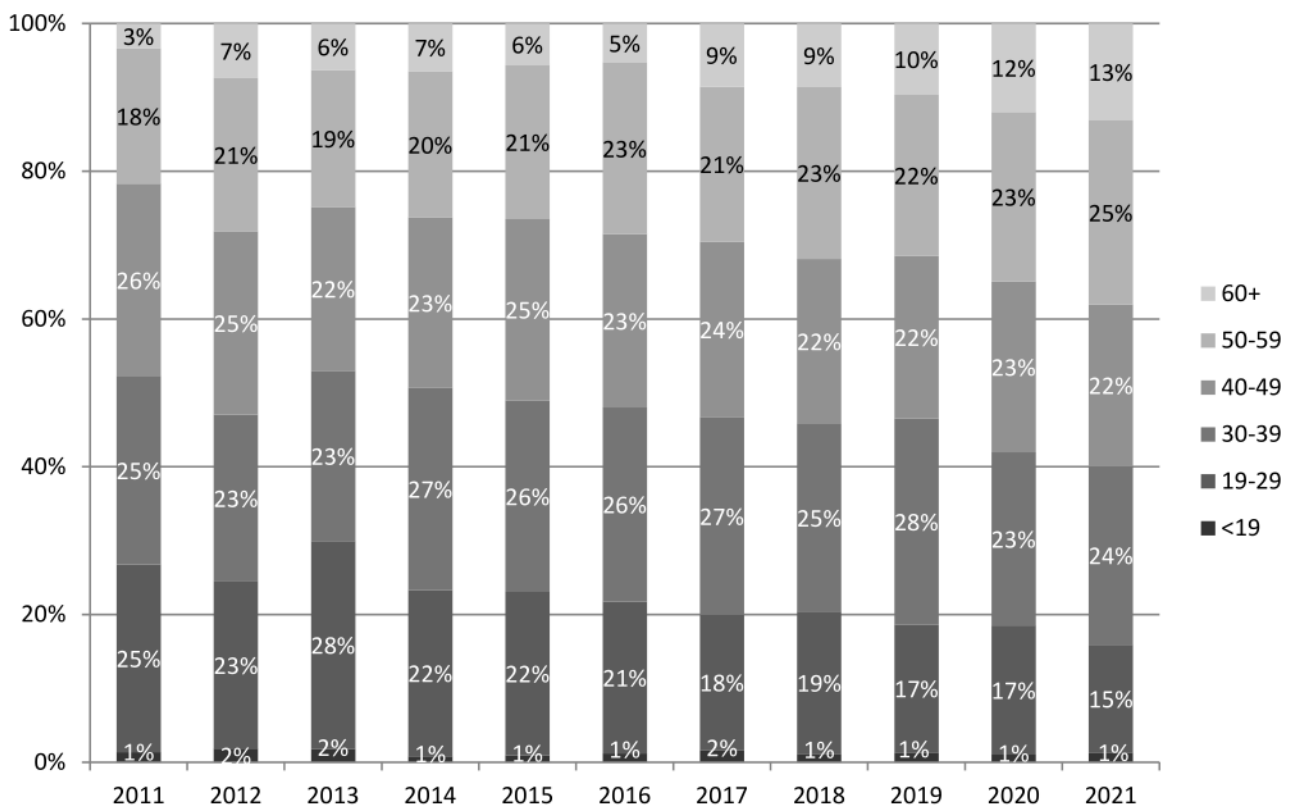
Sex	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Female	82	76	79	86	106	200	272	316	236	334	484
Male	213	194	255	283	423	793	1,223	1,243	746	1,433	1,740
Total	295	270	334	369	529	993	1,495	1,559	982	1,767	2,224

**Figure 4: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates by Sex and Month, 2019-2021****Table 7: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Age Group, 2011-2021<sup>[3]</sup>**

Age Group	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<19	4	5	6	3	5	12	25	18	13	18	29
19-29	75	61	94	83	117	204	273	300	170	309	325
30-39	75	61	77	101	137	261	400	396	274	414	539
40-49	77	67	74	85	130	233	355	348	216	409	485
50-59	54	56	62	73	110	230	314	363	214	405	554
60-69	10	19	21	24	29	50	121	126	91	196	262
70-79	0	1	0	0	1	3	7	8	4	16	30
Total	295	270	334	369	529	993	1,495	1,559	982	1,767	2,224

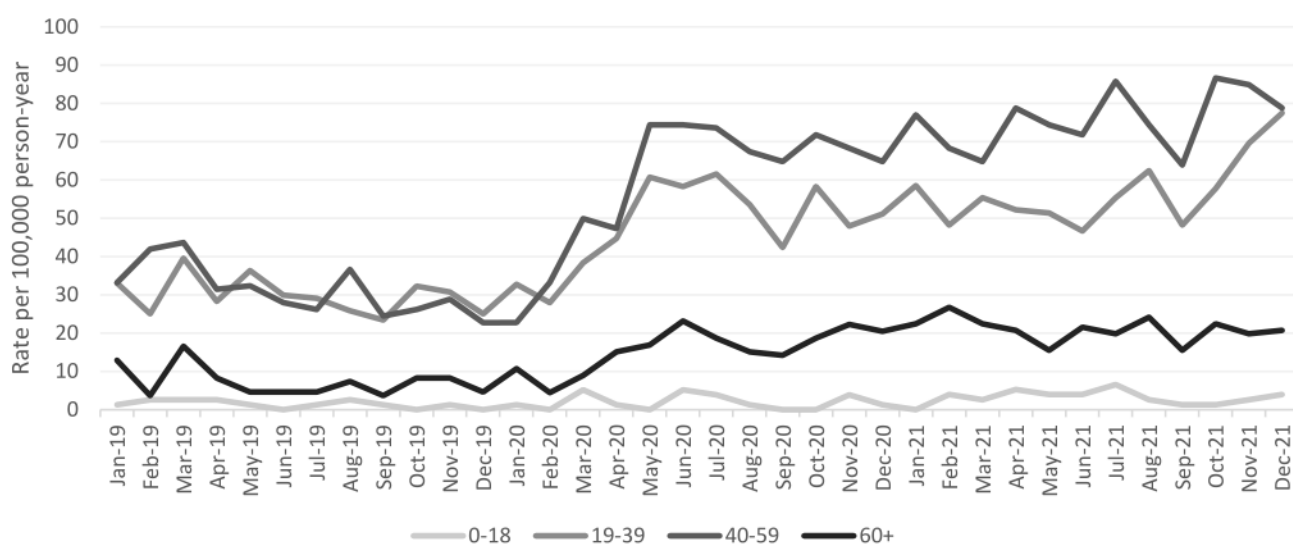
**Table 8: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Age Group and Month, 2021<sup>[3]</sup>**

Age Group	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<19	0	3	2	4	3	3	5	2	1	1	2	3
19-29	31	24	23	28	27	17	15	30	26	31	34	39
30-39	43	37	47	38	38	42	55	49	35	42	54	59
40-49	38	35	38	41	34	33	58	42	35	42	45	44
50-59	50	43	36	49	51	49	40	43	38	57	52	46
60-69	24	27	22	24	14	23	20	25	16	25	20	22
70-79	2	4	4	0	4	2	3	3	2	1	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>215</b>

**Figure 5: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Age Group, 2011-2021**

**Table 9: Age-Specific Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates per 100,000, 2011-2021<sup>[3,5]</sup>**

Age Group	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<19	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.3	0.6	1.3	2.7	1.9	1.4	1.9	3.2
19-29	11.1	8.8	13.5	11.7	16.5	28.5	37.5	40.1	22.2	40.6	42.9
30-39	12.6	10.1	12.6	16.1	21.4	39.7	59.2	56.8	38.0	55.9	71.0
40-49	11.4	10.0	11.1	12.9	19.9	35.7	54.6	53.7	33.3	63.0	74.2
50-59	8.0	8.1	8.8	10.1	15.0	31.1	42.7	49.8	29.5	56.2	77.3
60-69	2.0	3.7	3.9	4.2	4.9	8.1	19.2	19.5	13.8	29.1	38.0
70-79	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.9	1.9	2.0	1.0	3.7	6.6
Total	6.6	5.9	7.2	7.8	11.1	20.4	30.3	31.1	19.3	34.3	42.8

**Figure 6: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates by Age Group and Month, 2019-2021**



**BC Data by Township of Injury:**

<b>Table 10: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Top Townships of Injury in 2021, 2011-2021<sup>[3]</sup></b>											
Township	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Vancouver	69	65	80	102	138	231	374	397	243	419	524
Surrey	42	44	36	44	76	118	181	215	119	222	281
Victoria	17	18	25	20	23	68	95	98	62	122	126
Abbotsford	16	7	10	7	27	40	52	41	44	66	86
Burnaby	10	10	13	11	15	40	44	49	29	57	78
Kamloops	2	5	8	7	7	44	38	47	26	60	77
Kelowna	14	8	12	12	20	47	73	56	34	61	73
Langley	10	5	10	10	10	31	37	33	23	38	56
Prince George	6	10	7	10	12	18	24	51	25	59	55
Chilliwack	8	8	6	6	10	13	22	37	21	37	55
Nanaimo	8	6	20	16	18	30	56	38	27	38	49
Maple Ridge	4	5	10	14	29	28	33	29	13	39	45
New Westminster	6	3	5	9	12	10	24	37	20	37	42
Vernon	7	1	11	6	8	12	24	23	14	27	42
Richmond	4	1	3	3	6	14	28	12	13	19	32
Other Township	72	74	78	92	118	249	390	396	269	466	603
<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>993</b>	<b>1,495</b>	<b>1,559</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>1,767</b>	<b>2,224</b>

**Health Authority Data:****Table 11: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Health Authority, 2011-2021<sup>[3,6]</sup>**

HA	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Interior	38	31	54	47	64	169	246	236	140	288	371
Fraser	115	104	106	126	208	334	494	524	326	586	765
Vancouver Coastal	81	72	95	120	160	276	447	452	280	488	615
Island	45	45	60	55	72	162	242	246	169	271	327
Northern	16	18	19	21	25	52	66	101	67	134	146
BC	295	270	334	369	529	993	1,495	1,559	982	1,767	2,224

**Table 12: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates by Health Authority per 100,000, 2011-2021<sup>[3,5,6]</sup>**

HA	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Interior	5.3	4.3	7.4	6.3	8.4	22.0	31.5	29.6	17.3	35.2	45.2
Fraser	7.0	6.2	6.2	7.3	11.8	18.6	26.9	28.0	17.1	30.3	39.1
Vancouver Coastal	7.3	6.4	8.3	10.4	13.7	23.3	37.4	37.3	22.8	39.4	49.3
Island	6.0	5.9	7.8	7.0	9.0	19.9	29.5	29.5	20.0	31.6	37.7
Northern	5.7	6.3	6.5	7.1	8.5	17.8	22.5	34.1	22.4	44.6	48.3
BC	6.6	5.9	7.2	7.8	11.1	20.4	30.3	31.1	19.3	34.3	42.8

Figure 7: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates by Health Authority and Month, 2019-2021

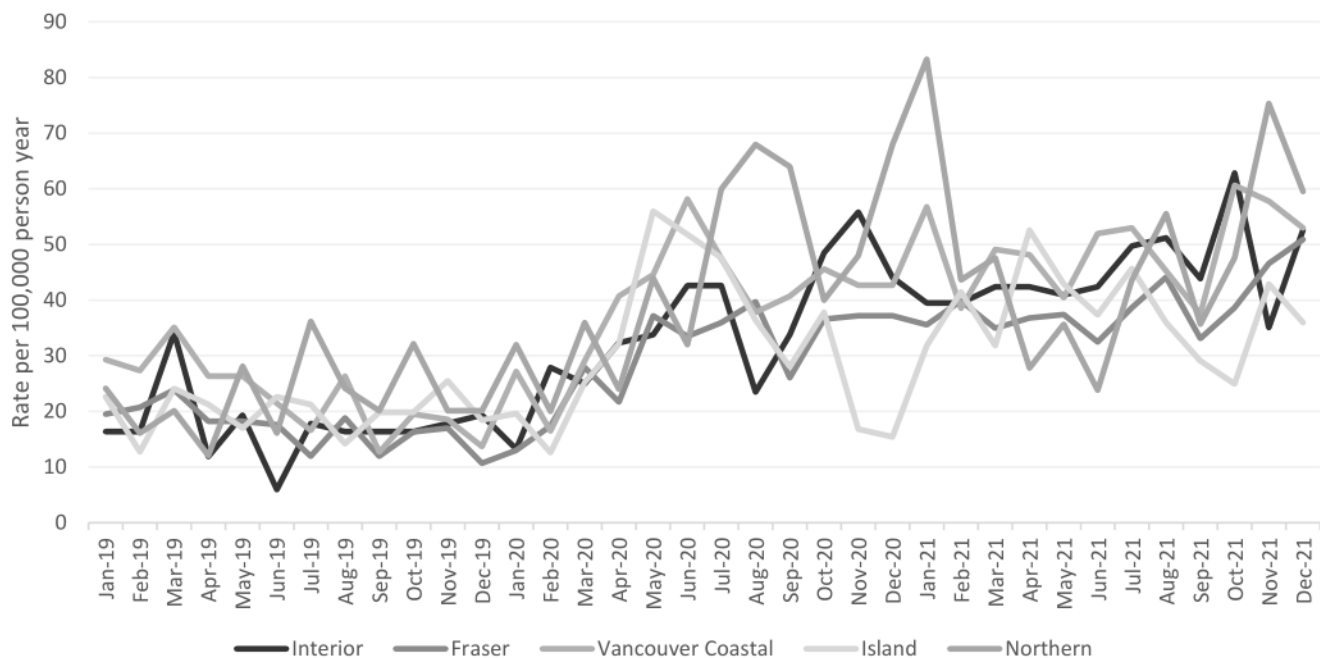
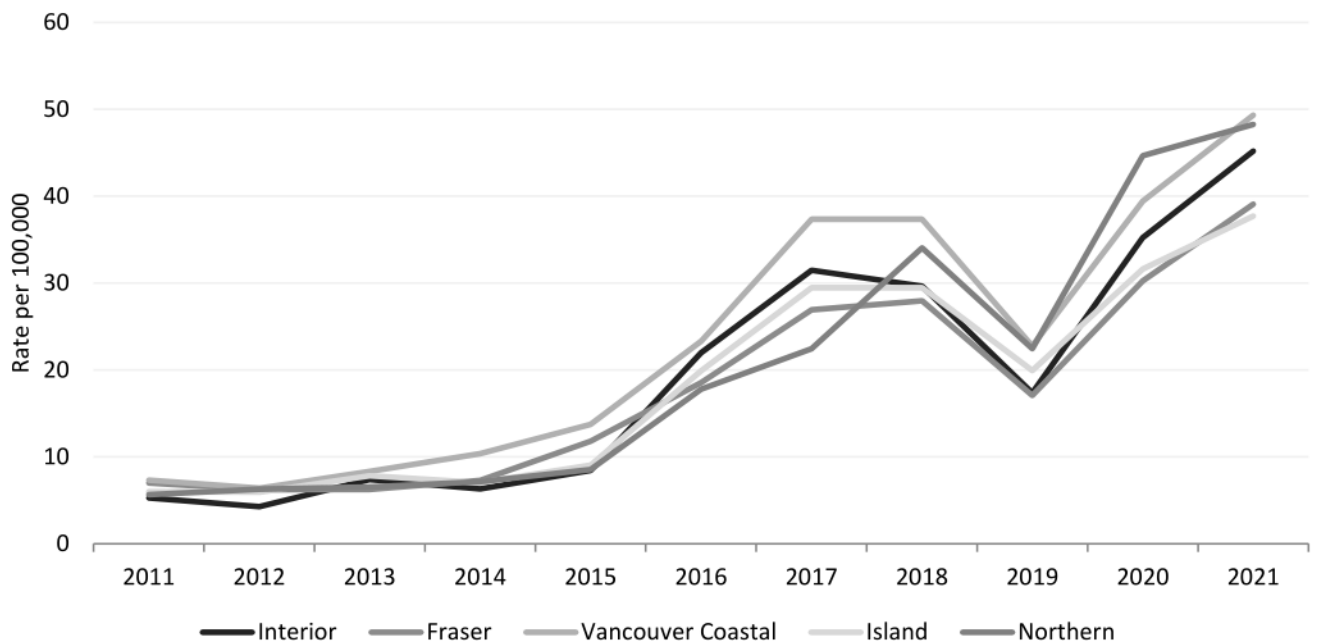


Figure 8: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates by Health Authority, 2011-2021



**Table 13: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Month of Death and Health Authority and Township, 2020-2021<sup>[3,6]</sup>**

Year	Month	Interior	Fraser	Health Authorities			Township		
				Vancouver Coastal	Vancouver Island	Northern	Vancouver	Surrey	Victoria
2020	Jan	9	21	28	14	8	25	9	8
	Feb	19	28	17	9	5	15	11	2
	Mar	17	45	30	18	9	24	17	9
	Apr	22	35	42	23	6	35	18	10
	May	23	60	46	40	11	40	23	22
	Jun	29	54	60	37	8	55	18	16
	Jul	29	58	49	34	15	44	21	17
	Aug	16	64	39	26	17	33	19	11
	Sep	23	42	42	20	16	35	16	7
	Oct	33	59	47	27	10	42	22	13
	Nov	38	60	44	12	12	35	20	4
	Dec	30	60	44	11	17	36	28	3
2021	Jan	27	58	59	23	21	47	20	15
	Feb	27	65	40	30	11	35	28	13
	Mar	29	57	51	23	12	40	15	11
	Apr	29	60	50	38	7	44	26	17
	May	28	61	42	31	9	40	23	12
	Jun	29	53	54	27	6	41	16	9
	Jul	34	63	55	33	11	48	21	12
	Aug	35	72	47	26	14	43	28	8
	Sep	30	54	39	21	9	31	21	7
	Oct	43	63	63	18	12	55	26	6
	Nov	24	76	60	31	19	52	25	7
	Dec	36	83	55	26	15	48	32	9
Total		659	1351	1103	598	280	943	503	248
Average		27.5	56.3	46.0	24.9	11.7	39.3	21.0	10.3

**Table 14: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Health Services Delivery Area (HSDA), 2011-2021<sup>[3,6]</sup>**

HSDA	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
East Kootenay	1	2	4	4	2	13	7	6	1	18	22
Kootenay Boundary	4	4	2	3	6	11	17	15	14	21	29
Okanagan	28	16	33	27	43	78	155	130	84	148	172
Thompson Cariboo	5	9	15	13	13	67	67	85	41	101	148
Fraser East	31	20	20	16	42	67	105	97	84	124	173
Fraser North	25	30	35	51	73	105	148	153	85	180	233
Fraser South	59	54	51	59	93	162	241	274	157	282	359
Richmond	4	1	3	3	6	14	28	12	13	19	32
Vancouver	69	65	80	102	138	231	374	397	243	419	524
North Shore/Coast Garibaldi	8	6	12	15	16	31	45	43	24	50	59
South Vancouver Island	17	21	26	23	26	78	106	123	75	138	140
Central Vancouver Island	17	20	25	25	33	57	99	93	65	101	120
North Vancouver Island	11	4	9	7	13	27	37	30	29	32	67
Northwest	1	0	6	2	6	10	8	14	16	18	41
Northern Interior	8	12	8	11	15	24	35	63	34	85	79
Northeast	7	6	5	8	4	18	23	24	17	31	26
Total	295	270	334	369	529	993	1,495	1,559	982	1,767	2,224

**Table 15: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by HSDA and Month, 2021<sup>[3,6]</sup>**

HSDA	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
East Kootenay	1	3	1	1	2	2	5	2	1	2	1	1
Kootenay Boundary	6	1	3	1	0	2	4	1	3	2	1	5
Okanagan	13	10	10	18	10	14	15	18	14	23	11	16
Thompson Cariboo	7	13	15	9	16	11	10	14	12	16	11	14
Fraser East	12	12	22	8	15	12	18	16	10	15	19	14
Fraser North	20	21	18	22	16	19	18	21	13	17	20	28
Fraser South	26	32	17	30	30	22	27	35	31	31	37	41
Richmond	4	0	5	2	0	8	2	1	2	4	2	2
Vancouver	47	35	40	44	40	41	48	43	31	55	52	48
North Shore/Coast Garibaldi	8	5	6	4	2	5	5	3	6	4	6	5
South Vancouver Island	16	13	13	18	13	10	13	9	10	6	9	10
Central Vancouver Island	5	9	7	10	13	11	11	9	6	10	16	13
North Vancouver Island	2	8	3	10	5	6	9	8	5	2	6	3
Northwest	7	2	2	3	0	3	7	5	2	3	4	3
Northern Interior	9	6	7	1	7	3	3	8	5	6	14	10
Northeast	5	3	3	3	2	0	1	1	2	3	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>215</b>

**Table 16: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates by Health Services Delivery Area per 100,000, 2011-2021<sup>[3,5,6]</sup>**

HSDA	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
East Kootenay	1.3	2.6	5.1	5.0	2.4	15.7	8.4	7.1	1.2	20.7	25.3
Kootenay Boundary	5.1	5.1	2.5	3.8	7.4	13.5	20.7	18.1	16.7	25.0	34.5
Okanagan	8.1	4.6	9.3	7.5	11.6	20.8	40.3	33.2	21.1	36.5	42.2
Thompson Cariboo	2.3	4.1	6.8	5.8	5.8	29.3	28.9	35.9	17.1	41.9	61.1
Fraser East	10.9	6.9	6.8	5.4	13.8	21.6	33.2	29.9	25.4	37.0	51.2
Fraser North	4.0	4.8	5.5	7.9	11.1	15.7	21.8	22.2	12.2	25.5	32.7
Fraser South	8.0	7.2	6.6	7.5	11.6	19.7	28.7	31.9	17.9	31.6	39.6
Richmond	2.0	0.5	1.5	1.5	3.0	6.7	13.4	5.7	6.1	8.8	14.6
Vancouver	10.9	10.0	12.2	15.3	20.6	34.0	54.3	56.9	34.1	58.5	72.6
North Shore/Coast Garibaldi	2.9	2.1	4.2	5.2	5.5	10.4	15.0	14.2	7.9	16.4	19.3
South Vancouver Island	4.6	5.6	6.9	6.0	6.6	19.4	26.1	29.8	17.9	32.4	32.4
Central Vancouver Island	6.5	7.6	9.4	9.2	11.9	20.1	34.6	32.0	22.1	34.0	40.1
North Vancouver Island	9.2	3.3	7.4	5.6	10.3	21.2	28.7	22.8	21.8	23.7	49.3
Northwest	1.4	0.0	8.1	2.7	8.0	13.4	10.7	18.6	21.1	23.6	53.2
Northern Interior	5.6	8.4	5.5	7.5	10.3	16.3	23.7	42.0	22.5	55.9	51.6
Northeast	10.4	8.7	7.0	11.0	5.6	25.4	32.4	33.6	23.7	43.2	35.9
Total	6.6	5.9	7.2	7.8	11.1	20.4	30.3	31.1	19.3	34.3	42.8

**New Table 17: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates (per 100,000 person-years) by Top Local Health Areas (LHA) in 2021, 2016-2021<sup>[3,5,6]</sup>**

Due to small numbers of deaths and population size rates in LHAs, rates may be difficult to interpret.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	No. of Deaths 2021
Upper Skeena	0.0	0.0	44.6	44.2	0.0	175.7	8
Merritt	70.6	79.1	43.1	25.5	16.8	124.9	15
Enderby	13.2	13.1	52.3	0.0	63.7	102.0	8
Lillooet	0.0	47.1	47.7	24.5	74.4	98.6	4
North Thompson	0.0	23.5	46.1	23.2	46.2	92.2	4
Hope	23.5	47.0	45.9	56.5	78.4	90.0	8
Powell River	34.1	24.5	43.7	24.2	57.7	86.4	18
Vancouver	34.0	54.3	56.9	34.1	58.5	72.6	524
Kamloops	39.7	34.1	41.2	22.3	52.9	68.3	87
Terrace	18.9	14.2	28.1	32.3	45.6	68.1	15
Nechako	6.0	6.1	12.2	6.1	30.6	66.7	11
Peace River South	10.7	63.9	35.3	28.2	21.2	63.3	18
Alberni/Clayoquot	15.5	36.8	39.4	32.9	32.5	62.0	21
Vernon	20.2	42.6	35.1	19.4	39.6	58.4	43
Penticton	16.0	36.6	35.9	49.0	37.6	57.1	26
Cranbrook	7.3	11.0	7.2	0.0	35.5	56.8	16
Grand Forks	0.0	44.5	99.4	33.1	32.9	55.5	5
Kettle Valley	27.6	27.9	0.0	0.0	27.3	55.2	2
Greater Campbell River	33.7	42.2	30.5	30.1	31.9	55.0	26
Surrey	25.5	38.0	44.1	23.7	43.3	54.1	281
Prince George	19.1	26.8	52.7	25.1	60.2	54.0	57
Chilliwack	14.3	25.1	37.1	21.1	35.0	53.2	57
Abbotsford	27.0	34.3	26.3	27.5	40.8	52.8	86
Greater Victoria	29.0	41.5	43.1	25.3	49.8	52.1	130
Smithers	5.9	11.7	34.9	17.3	5.7	50.7	9
New Westminster	13.5	31.5	47.3	24.9	44.8	50.1	42
Comox Valley	15.8	24.2	21.0	16.5	19.0	46.9	35
Quesnel	4.1	28.9	24.6	24.6	69.6	45.1	11
Cowichan Valley South	14.7	21.1	44.9	19.1	34.8	44.1	28
South Cariboo	29.6	14.7	29.2	14.5	14.5	43.8	3
Salmon Arm	17.1	14.1	13.8	5.5	27.2	43.5	16
Cowichan Valley West	15.3	15.2	30.0	29.6	14.5	43.4	3



**New Table 17: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates (per 100,000 person-years) by Top Local Health Areas (LHA) in 2021, 2016-2021<sup>[3,5,6]</sup>**

Due to small numbers of deaths and population size rates in LHAs, rates may be difficult to interpret.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	No. of Deaths 2021
Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows	30.3	32.2	27.0	14.3	36.8	42.9	48
Revelstoke	0.0	0.0	68.3	0.0	42.8	42.6	4
Vancouver Island North	8.5	8.5	8.5	25.2	16.7	41.6	5
Arrow Lakes	0.0	21.3	42.3	21.1	41.4	41.5	2
Greater Nanaimo	26.4	50.2	33.9	23.3	34.6	40.8	50
Castlegar	21.0	13.9	0.0	33.9	20.2	40.1	6
100 Mile House	0.0	6.7	20.1	13.4	13.2	39.7	6
Princeton	0.0	122.0	99.9	19.9	58.9	39.2	2
Central Okanagan	26.8	43.7	31.8	19.2	36.8	38.3	86
Sunshine Coast	9.6	22.4	19.0	9.5	22.1	37.7	12
Mission	17.7	38.9	27.6	25.2	25.2	37.5	18
Agassiz/Harrison	29.6	58.0	9.4	9.3	18.6	36.8	4
Keremeos	0.0	56.3	55.6	36.7	72.3	35.8	2
Prince Rupert	28.3	14.1	0.0	14.0	27.8	34.6	5
Cariboo/Chilcotin	15.5	27.2	34.6	11.5	38.2	34.4	9
Langley	20.6	24.0	20.9	14.4	23.5	34.1	56
Kitimat	10.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.6	31.2	3
Oceanside	14.2	20.3	14.0	15.9	37.3	31.1	16
Burnaby	16.4	17.9	19.6	11.4	22.1	30.0	78
Trail	9.9	24.7	9.8	14.5	19.4	29.1	6
Nelson	18.9	14.9	7.4	7.3	25.6	25.4	7
Tri-Cities	9.4	18.1	14.8	7.9	17.7	25.3	65
Howe Sound	7.5	18.9	13.9	2.3	4.6	20.6	9
Kimberley	31.3	0.0	20.3	0.0	0.0	19.7	2
Fort Nelson	17.4	36.5	0.0	0.0	58.7	19.5	1
Southern Okanagan	5.0	14.8	29.2	9.5	14.3	19.0	4
Peace River North	37.7	8.0	37.0	23.6	57.3	18.0	7
Delta	10.1	18.5	18.2	12.6	17.8	16.7	19
Creston	7.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.5	15.0	2
Richmond	6.7	13.4	5.7	6.1	8.8	14.6	32
Golden	14.0	13.7	13.5	0.0	13.1	13.1	1
Southern Gulf Islands	12.4	0.0	6.1	12.1	12.3	12.2	2

**New Table 17: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates (per 100,000 person-years) by Top Local Health Areas (LHA) in 2021, 2016-2021<sup>[3,5,6]</sup>**

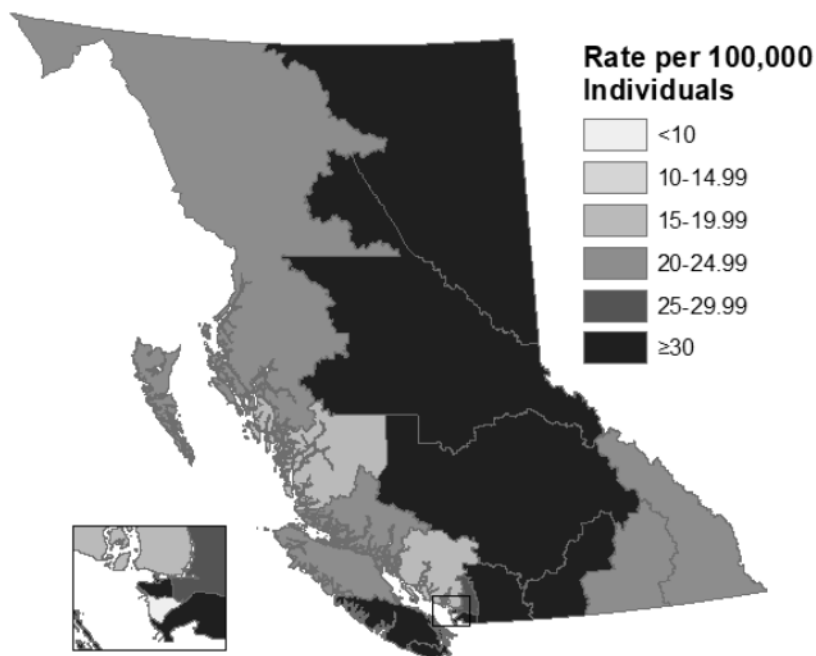
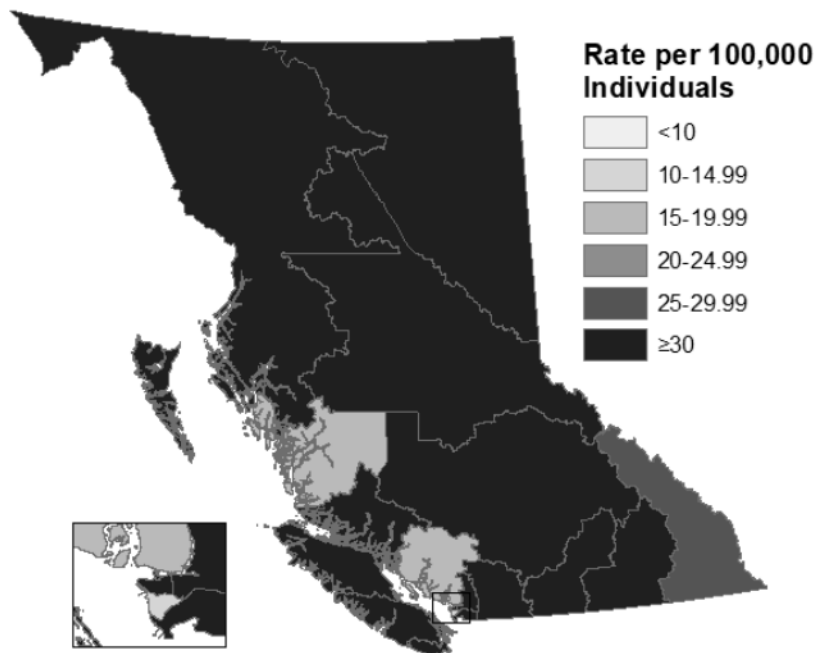
Due to small numbers of deaths and population size rates in LHAs, rates may be difficult to interpret.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	No. of Deaths 2021
North Vancouver	9.5	12.8	10.7	7.9	14.5	9.8	15
Cowichan Valley North	25.5	24.8	14.7	19.4	29.0	9.6	2
West Vancouver/Bowen Island	7.6	9.6	11.4	5.7	13.3	9.5	5
Windermere	40.4	29.9	9.8	0.0	28.2	9.5	1
Armstrong/Spallumcheen	9.4	9.3	9.2	0.0	27.1	9.0	1
Saanich Peninsula	7.4	5.9	10.2	13.0	7.1	5.7	4
Western Communities	2.5	3.6	12.7	2.2	8.7	4.2	4
South Surrey/White Rock	2.0	3.0	5.8	0.9	1.9	2.8	3
Haida Gwaii	0.0	22.5	0.0	44.4	21.7	0.0	0
Fernie	12.6	0.0	0.0	6.0	17.8	0.0	0
Summerland	0.0	31.5	15.6	7.7	15.2	0.0	0
Burns Lake	45.5	0.0	15.3	15.3	0.0	0.0	0

**Note: Table will be updated every four months due to small numbers. LHAs with small populations have been omitted.**

#### Notes:

1. The BCCS operates in a live database environment. Some data for more recent years is based on preliminary circumstances and is subject to change as investigations are concluded. Data are not directly comparable to published counts from previous years.
2. This does not include circumstances where the injury event occurred at an overdose prevention site and death occurred in hospital.
3. 2021 data includes January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.
4. Date of death was used in tables where date of injury was unknown.
5. Population estimates were taken from:  
<https://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/apps/PopulationProjections.aspx>
6. Health Region breakdowns can be found at: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/geographic-data-services/land-use/administrative-boundaries/health-boundaries>

**Figure 9: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rate Maps by Health Services Delivery Area****2020 Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates by Health Services Delivery Area****2021 Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates by Health Services Delivery Area**

References for health regions can be found at: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/geographic-data-services/land-use/administrative-boundaries/health-boundaries>

**List of Townships and Corresponding Health Regions**

Township Name	Health Authority	Health Services Delivery Area
100 Mile House	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
108 Mile Ranch	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
150 Mile House	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Abbotsford	Fraser	Fraser East
Alert Bay	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Armstrong	Interior	Okanagan
Arras	Northern	Northeast
Beasley	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Beaver Falls	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Blue River	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Bowen Island	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Bowser	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Burnaby	Fraser	Fraser North
Burns Lake	Northern	Northern Interior
Cache Creek	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Campbell River	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Canal Flats	Interior	East Kootenay
Castlegar	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Cawston	Interior	Okanagan
Cedar	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Central Saanich	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
Charlie Lake	Northern	Northeast
Chase	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Chemainus	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Chetwynd	Northern	Northeast
Chilliwack	Fraser	Fraser East
Christina Lake	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Clearwater	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Cobble Hill	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Coldstream	Interior	Okanagan
Colwood	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
Comox	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Coombs	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Coquitlam	Fraser	Fraser North
Cortes Island	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Courtenay	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Cowichan Bay	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Cranbrook	Interior	East Kootenay
Crescent Valley	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Creston	Interior	East Kootenay
Cultus Lake	Fraser	Fraser East

**List of Townships and Corresponding Health Regions**

Township Name	Health Authority	Health Services Delivery Area
Cumberland	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Dawson Creek	Northern	Northeast
Dease Lake	Northern	Northwest
Delta	Fraser	Fraser South
Duncan	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Edgewood	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Elkford	Interior	East Kootenay
Enderby	Interior	Okanagan
Errington	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Esquimalt	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
Fairmont Hot Springs	Interior	East Kootenay
Falkland	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Fort Nelson	Northern	Northeast
Fort St. James	Northern	Northern Interior
Fort St. John	Northern	Northeast
Gabriola Island	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Galiano Island	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
Gibsons	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Gillies Bay	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Gold River	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Golden	Interior	East Kootenay
Grand Forks	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Harrison Hot Springs	Fraser	Fraser East
Hope	Fraser	Fraser East
Horsefly	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Houston	Northern	Northwest
Invermere	Interior	East Kootenay
Isle Pierre	Northern	Northern Interior
Kamloops	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Kaslo	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Kelowna	Interior	Okanagan
Kent	Fraser	Fraser East
Kimberley	Interior	East Kootenay
Kispiox	Northern	Northwest
Kitamaat Village	Northern	Northwest
Kitimat	Northern	Northwest
Kitsegucla (Gitsegukla)	Northern	Northwest
Lac La Hache	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Ladysmith	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Lake Country, District Of	Interior	Okanagan
Lake Cowichan	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island

**List of Townships and Corresponding Health Regions**

Township Name	Health Authority	Health Services Delivery Area
Langford	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
Langley	Fraser	Fraser South
Lantzville	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Lee Creek	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Lillooet	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Lions Bay	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Logan Lake	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Lumby	Interior	Okanagan
Mabel Lake	Interior	Okanagan
Mackenzie	Northern	Northern Interior
Madeira Park	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Malakwa	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Maple Ridge	Fraser	Fraser North
Mayne Island	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
Merritt	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Mill Bay	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Mission	Fraser	Fraser East
Nakusp	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Nanaimo	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Nanoose Bay	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Nelson	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
New Denver	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
New Hazelton	Northern	Northwest
New Westminster	Fraser	Fraser North
North Cowichan	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
North Vancouver	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Oak Bay	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
Okanagan Falls	Interior	Okanagan
Olalla	Interior	Okanagan
Oliver	Interior	Okanagan
Osoyoos	Interior	Okanagan
Parksville	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Peachland	Interior	Okanagan
Pemberton	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Pender Island	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
Penticton	Interior	Okanagan
Pink Mountain	Northern	Northeast
Pitt Meadows	Fraser	Fraser North
Port Alberni	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Port Alice	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Port Coquitlam	Fraser	Fraser North

**List of Townships and Corresponding Health Regions**

Township Name	Health Authority	Health Services Delivery Area
Port Hardy	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Port McNeill	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Port Moody	Fraser	Fraser North
Powell River	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Prince George	Northern	Northern Interior
Prince Rupert	Northern	Northwest
Princeton	Interior	Okanagan
Prophet River	Northern	Northeast
Quadra Island	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Qualicum Beach	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Queen Charlotte City	Northern	Northwest
Quesnel	Northern	Northern Interior
Radium Hot Springs	Interior	East Kootenay
Revelstoke	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Richmond	Vancouver Coastal	Richmond
Roberts Creek	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Rock Creek	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Saanich	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
Salmo	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Salmon Arm	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Salt Spring Island	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
Sayward	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Sechelt	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Seton Portage	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Shawnigan Lake	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Sicamous	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Smithers	Northern	Northwest
Sointula	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Sooke	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
South Slokan	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
South Wellington	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Sparwood	Interior	East Kootenay
Squamish	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Sullivan Bay	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island
Summerland	Interior	Okanagan
Surrey	Fraser	Fraser South
Terrace	Northern	Northwest
Trail	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Tumbler Ridge	Northern	Northeast
Ucluelet	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Vancouver	Vancouver Coastal	Vancouver

**List of Townships and Corresponding Health Regions**

Township Name	Health Authority	Health Services Delivery Area
Vanderhoof	Northern	Northern Interior
Vernon	Interior	Okanagan
Victoria	Vancouver Island	South Vancouver Island
West Kelowna	Interior	Okanagan
West Vancouver	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
Whisky Creek	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Whistler	Vancouver Coastal	North Shore/Coast Garibaldi
White Rock	Fraser	Fraser South
Williams Lake	Interior	Thompson Cariboo Shuswap
Winlaw	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Wonowon	Northern	Northeast
Yale	Fraser	Fraser East
Ymir	Interior	Kootenay Boundary
Youbou	Vancouver Island	Central Vancouver Island
Zeballos	Vancouver Island	North Vancouver Island



**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
INFORMATION NOTE**

**DATE:** February 7, 2022  
**CLIFF#:** 267548

**DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE:** N/A  
**PREVIOUS CLIFF #:** N/A

**PREPARED FOR:** Mitzi Dean, Minister of Children and Family Development

**ISSUE:** BC Coroner's Service releasing the "Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths in BC, January 1, 2011-December 31, 2021" report on February 10, 2022

**BACKGROUND:**

On April 14, 2016, the Provincial Health Officer declared a public health emergency under the *Public Health Act* in response to increasing overdoses and overdose deaths in BC.

The BC Coroner's Service (BCCS) provides statistical reports on deaths in BC and posts them publicly on their webpage. Reports are updated as needed and subject to change pending completion of coroner's investigations.

The BCCS releases summary reports of all unintentional illicit drug toxicity deaths in BC, both accidental and undetermined. The currently posted report was released on December 9, 2021, and provides data from January 1, 2021, to October 31, 2021.

**DISCUSSION:**

On February 10, 2022, the BCCS will post an updated report, "Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths in BC, January 1, 2011-December 31, 2021."

November and December 2021 had the largest number of suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths recorded so far, and the 2,224 deaths recorded in 2021 was the most ever recorded in a year.

In 2021, 71% of those who died were 30 to 59 years of age. Rates among 0 to 18 years remain stable and the proportion of deaths of people that are 50 years of age and over has steadily increased for each of the past six years.

In 2021, there continued to be a high proportion of male deaths at 78%. Female rates have trended higher in recent months.

Illicit drug toxicity death rates per 100,000 individuals for all health authorities remain high. The townships experiencing the highest total number of illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2021 are Vancouver, Surrey, and Victoria.

There have been no reported deaths at supervised consumption or drug overdose prevention sites.

The BCCS's companion report, "Illicit Drug Toxicity Type of Drug Data, Data to December 31, 2021" summarizes the drugs detected among suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths. New data has been added to report on all drugs detected, along with fentanyl, to better understand the types of drugs being detected in the recent illicit drug toxicity death in BC and to inform other agencies' public safety strategies in a timely manner.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

MCFD implemented Practice Guidelines for Responding to and Supporting Youth at Risk and/or Parent(s) known to be using illegal Opioids.

MCFD staff participate in the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions' provincial Overdose Emergency Response Centre (OERC) meetings and distribute information from the OERC within MCFD and to Delegated Aboriginal Agencies (DAAs), including the weekly OERC Overdose Dashboard.

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