

Recent highlights

- The Government of Canada has taken action to support people who use drugs during COVID-19, for more information please visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/helping-people-who-use-substances-covid-19.html>

Access to treatment



- Funding pilot projects on injectable opioid agonist treatment
- Improving access to treatment services through an [Emergency Treatment Fund](#) that has mobilized over \$300M for provinces and territories
- Facilitated opioid agonist treatment by allowing the [import of medications](#) approved elsewhere, [methadone prescribing and the use of diacetylmorphine and hydromorphone](#)
- Supporting up to an additional 25 community-based opioid agonist treatment sites in First Nations and Inuit communities
- Funding pilot projects on safer supply and injectable opioid agonist treatment through [Substance Use and Addictions Program](#)



Awareness and prevention

- Expanding public awareness around [opioids](#) and the harms of stigma:
 - [Know More Campaign](#) awareness tour for teenagers and young adults that has visited nearly 200 sites
 - Distributed more than 1 million [wallet cards](#)
 - [Videos](#) on opioids, stigma, and responding to an overdose viewed more than 16 million times
- Supported the development of [opioid prescribing guidelines](#) and [national treatment guidelines for opioid use disorders](#)
- Sharing best practices for addressing [substance use stigma within the Canadian health system](#), including through use of [compassionate and non-stigmatizing language](#)

Evidence

- Continuing to engage with the [Canadian Pain Task Force](#) to assess best and leading practices that could improve the prevention and management of chronic pain in Canada, including the release of a [report](#) on the state of chronic pain in Canada
- Coordinating [national data collection and publishing quarterly reports](#) on apparent opioid related deaths and harms

Access to harm reduction



- Approved [40 supervised consumption](#) sites which have been visited more than 2.1 million times, reversed over 16,000 overdoses without a single death at a site, and made over 74,000 referrals to health and social services
- Supported the [Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act](#), which provides some legal protection for individuals who seek emergency help during an overdose
- Continued facilitation of access to [naloxone](#), including remote communities and isolated First Nations and Inuit communities
- Announced finalists of the [Drug Checking Technology Challenge](#)

Tainted drug supply



- Working with domestic and international partners to reduce the illegal opioid supply
- Supporting [education and training for law enforcement](#)
- Equipped [border agents with tools](#) to intercept fentanyl and other dangerous substances at the border
 - Seized more than 5kg of fentanyl at the border in 2018-2019
- Opioids were identified 21,725 times in [exhibits* submitted by law enforcement and public health officials in 2019](#)



OPIOID RELATED HARMS in Canada

Since January 2016 there have been:

15,393

Apparent opioid-related deaths, or 11 per day

19,377

Opioid-related poisoning hospitalizations, or 13 per day

While lower numbers of opioid-related harms have been noted in 2019 compared to 2018, trend analysis indicate no significant decrease and rates have remained high

In 2019:

Deaths

3,823

Apparent opioid-related deaths:

94%

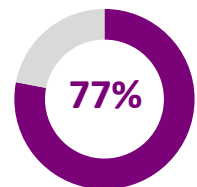
Were accidental



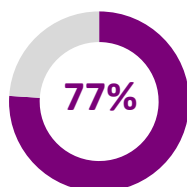
Among accidental opioid-related deaths: **3 in 4 were male**

68% Were among young and middle aged adults (20-49 years)

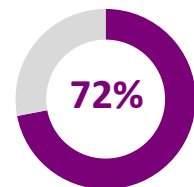
31% Were among older adults (≥ 50 years)



Involved fentanyl or fentanyl analogues



Involved non-pharmaceutical opioids*



Involved one or more types of non-opioid substances

*Among deaths with completed investigations from six provinces

Hospitalizations

4,435

Opioid-related poisoning hospitalizations

62%

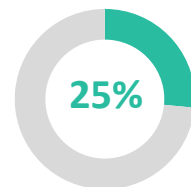
Were accidental



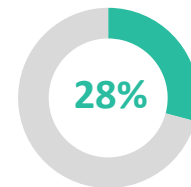
Among accidental hospitalizations: **3 in 5 were male**

49% Were among young and middle aged adults (20-49 years)

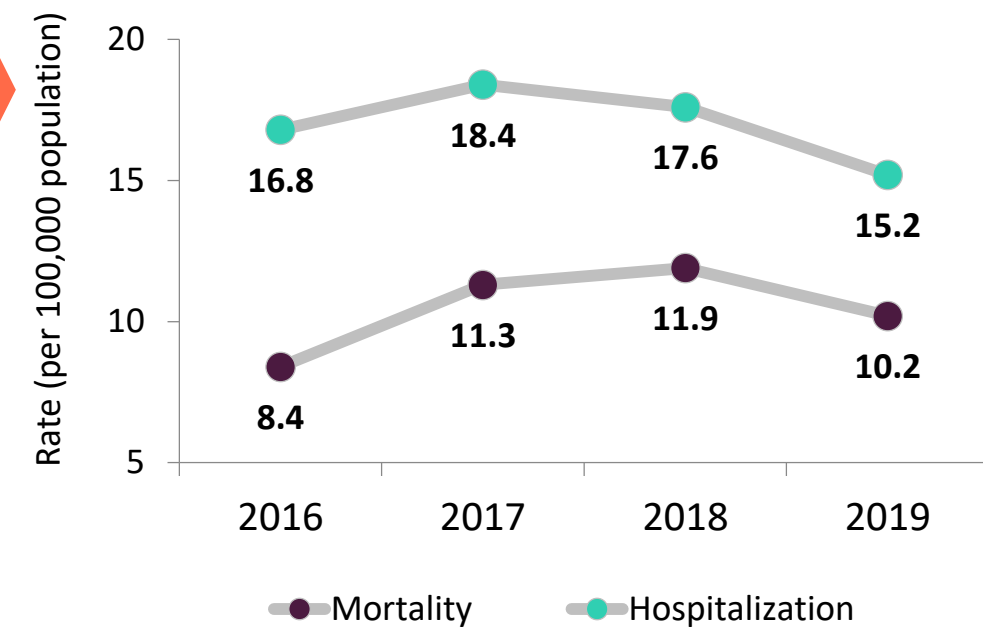
46% Were among older adults (≥ 50 years)



Involved fentanyl or fentanyl analogues



Involved one or more types of non-opioid substances



Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

>21,000

EMS responses for a suspected opioid overdoses



Based on available data from **9** provinces and territories: **3 in 4 were male**

75% Were among young and middle aged adults (20-49 years)

22% Were among older adults (≥ 50 years)

Apparent opioid-related death data from BC and QC (2018, 2019) includes deaths related to all illicit drugs including, but not limited to, opioids. Rates reported for apparent opioid-related death have not been adjusted for existing differences in provincial and territorial age distributions. Data on opioid-related poisoning hospitalizations were available from the Discharge Abstract Database (DAD), a national administrative database from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI); data from Quebec were not available at time of analysis. There is currently no national case definition for suspected opioid-related overdoses attended by Emergency Medical Services; each region reports EMS data based on their respective provincial/territorial case definition. New or revised data reported will be reflected in future updates.



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