

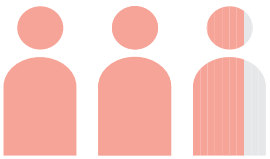
# TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS AND EVENTS INTERIOR REGION

JANUARY - JUNE 2023



## TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS

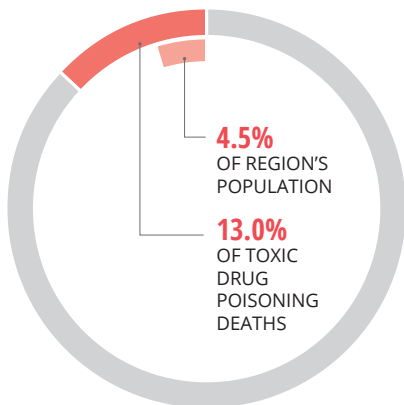
NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO DIED  
OF TOXIC DRUG POISONING



27

 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

199

3.4↓

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](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.



# RESPONDING TO AND HEALING FROM TOXIC DRUG SUPPLY POISONING

INTERIOR 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

### Interior Region Initiatives:

- Hired a second Regional Addictions Specialist and a Wellness Navigator.
- Offering a variety of workshops including Naloxone training, Not Just Naloxone and Anti-Stigma.
- Promoting and facilitating access to Naloxone, harm reduction supplies and fentanyl test strips.
- Resource development for drug checking and locations; information on clinicians.
- Advocacy for emergency access to withdrawal management and treatment beds.
- Providing awareness and access to information for OAT, withdrawal management services, treatment centres and recovery opportunities.
- Hosting information sessions on Treatment Centre Pathways.
- Harm Reduction Newsletters delivered monthly to communities.
- Ongoing Mental Health and Wellness planning with, and specific to, the Interior Region Nations.
- Planning a community forum focusing on knowledge sharing and responses to the Toxic Drug Emergency.
- Researching and exploring the feasibility of diverse harm reduction and recovery options, including drug checking and MAP (Managed Alcohol Programs).

## REGIONAL WELLNESS AND CULTURAL SUPPORTS

### Regional FNHA staff

#### Manager, Interior Region Mental Health & Wellness

[Debra.Robbins@fnha.ca](mailto:Debra.Robbins@fnha.ca)

#### Regional Addictions Specialist

[Shae-Lynn.Boyko@fnha.ca](mailto:Shae-Lynn.Boyko@fnha.ca)

#### Regional Addictions Specialist

[Candace.Giles@fnha.ca](mailto:Candace.Giles@fnha.ca)

#### Indigenous Harm Reduction Educator

[Sadie.Bedard@fnha.ca](mailto:Sadie.Bedard@fnha.ca)

#### Indigenous Harm Reduction Educator

[Alice.George@fnha.ca](mailto:Alice.George@fnha.ca)

#### Mental Health and Wellness Liaison

[Destiny.Dendewicz@fnha.ca](mailto:Destiny.Dendewicz@fnha.ca)

#### Community Crisis Response Lead

[Storme.Sandy@fnha.ca](mailto:Storme.Sandy@fnha.ca)

#### Wellness Navigator, Substance Use

[Hannah.McGrath@fnha.ca](mailto:Hannah.McGrath@fnha.ca)

### Emotional and Cultural Support

**Mental Health Indigenous Clinicians in Interior Region** – email Interior Region Crisis Response team, [Storme.Sandy@fnha.ca](mailto:Storme.Sandy@fnha.ca)

**Interior Region Crisis Support Line** – Call 1833-751-2525 (M-F 8am-4pm) or visit [IRSupport@fnha.ca](mailto:IRSupport@fnha.ca)

**Tsow Tun Le Lum Society** – Call 1-888-403-3123 (toll-free) or visit [www.tsowtunlelum.org](http://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.

**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 1-833-638-4722

**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](http://www.hopeforwellness.ca)