

TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS AND EVENTS NORTHERN REGION

JANUARY - JUNE 2022



TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS

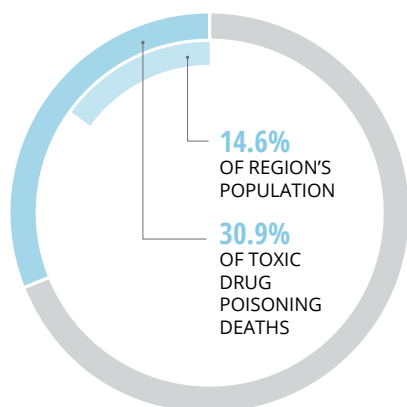
NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO DIED
OF TOXIC DRUG POISONING



25

 EQUALS
10 DEATHS

FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE ARE
DISPROPORTIONATELY REPRESENTED
IN TOXIC DRUG POISONING DEATHS



TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS

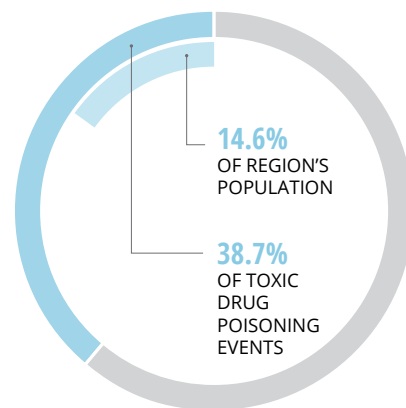
NUMBER OF
TOXIC DRUG
POISONING
EVENTS ATTENDED
BY PARAMEDICS

326

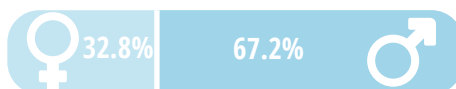
14.8↑

PERCENTAGE
INCREASE COMPARED
TO 2021 (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.

RESPONDING TO AND HEALING FROM TOXIC DRUG SUPPLY POISONING

NORTHER REGION JANUARY - JUNE 2022

ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE FNHA TO SAVE LIVES AND SUPPORT HEALING

Province-wide Initiatives:

- **Harm Reduction Hub** provides community workers and healthcare providers with easy access to harm reduction services and supplies. The 'Hub' also helps build networks of support to help expand harm reduction options in First Nation communities.
- **Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT)** is a medical harm reduction tool to help people through withdrawal from opioids. Email harmreduction@fnha.ca to learn more.
- **Honouring Our Lost Loved Ones** is a digital space to honour and remember the loved ones we've lost to the toxic drug supply crisis. Stories can be shared via video, photo, artwork or audio recording.
- First Nations harm reduction grants funded 89 community-based events, harm reduction positions and projects. Email HRgrants@fnha.ca to learn more.
- The **Courageous Conversations** tool kit is being developed to support ongoing community conversations about harm reduction, substance use and stigma.
- **From the Art** is a virtual art exhibit featuring artwork from people who have been personally affected by drug overdose. The exhibit is intended to spark new conversations surrounding substance use and the toxic drug crisis.

Northern Region Initiatives:

- Continuation of First Nation harm reduction and naloxone training workshops in 30 of 55 First Nation communities in the North, including mental health and wellness service access and referrals to treatment centers.
- Supported the increase in networking of Indigenous peer coordinator outreach and harm reduction services in the urban centers of Fort St. John, Prince George, Quesnel and Terrace.

LEVEL 2 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Recognizing the severe impacts of the toxic drug emergency, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the FNHA has moved into a level 2 emergency response in alignment with the Emergency and Disaster Management and Business Continuity Policy. Level 2 status means:

- Enhanced coordination, including onboarding teams with special skill sets/areas of expertise
- Mobilization and re-assignment of resources or services required to support response
- Collaboration with partners to ensure communities can access culturally safe supports and services

REGIONAL WELLNESS AND CULTURAL SUPPORTS

Regional contact email

MWResponse.North@fnha.ca

Northern BC Crisis Line – Call 1-888-562-1214, 24 hours per day, seven days a week

Emotional and Cultural Support

Tsow Tun Le Lum Society – Call 1-888-403-3123 (toll-free) or visit 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-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 www.hopeforwellness.ca