

Update on the Toronto Overdose Action Plan

Board of Health

September 25, 2017

- Community agencies are reporting increases in non-fatal and fatal overdoses.
- Most recent Coroner's data for accidental deaths is for 2016:
 - 125 opioid poisoning deaths
 - 54 opioids + alcohol
- In 2016, fentanyl replaced heroin/morphine as the most commonly present opioid in accidental deaths.

*Source: Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario, compilation and analysis by Toronto Public Health. Data is preliminary only and subject to change.

Toronto Overdose Action Plan: Prevention & Response

- Approved by the BOH in March 2017.
- Comprehensive plan with 10 broad strategies with targeted actions.
- TPH is working with diverse City and community partners to implement the plan.
- New funding:
 - overdose prevention training
 - supervised injection services
 - support implementation of the Action Plan

All governments should develop and implement a comprehensive, evidence-based overdose prevention and response plan.



“This action plan is long overdue. We need to act quickly.”

Consultation participant.

Services in the community should have an overdose prevention and response plan as part of their emergency first aid protocols, where appropriate.



“Naloxone should be required as a first aid response.”

Consultation participant.

Address barriers to calling 911 for medical assistance during an overdose.



“People don’t want to call for help when police are involved.”

Consultation participant.

Supervised injection services should be available to provide a safe and hygienic place to inject drugs with onsite medical intervention in case of overdose.



“Supervised injection services are incredibly important to reduce overdoses.”

Consultation participant.

#5 Drug Checking Programs

Drug checking programs should be available to allow people to test illicit drugs for the presence of toxic contaminants, adulterants or unexpected drugs (e.g. bootleg fentanyl).



“Uncertainty of dose is a major cause of overdose.”

Consultation participant.

Substance use treatment options should be available on-demand, and include a range of options to suit individual needs.



“Different models are important, but so is individual choice.”

Consultation participant.

Governments should identify and prevent potential adverse health consequences such as overdose before changing access to pharmaceutical drugs.



“This crisis has been caused by short-sighted measures that restricted access to pharmaceutical opioids, leading people...to rely on the black market.”

Consultation participant.

#8 Information About Overdose Incidents

All governments should have “real-time” overdose surveillance and monitoring systems in place.

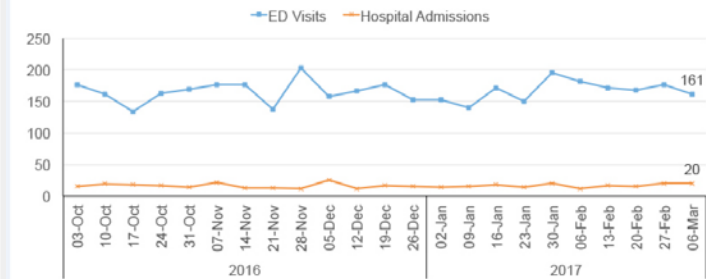
Toronto Overdose Information System

Toronto Public Health is collaborating with the Toronto Overdose Early Warning and Alert Partnership to provide timely information on overdose activity, with a current focus on opioids. Additional data and indicators may be added to this site as they become available.

Health service utilization Deaths Harm reduction Bulletins Data Notes

Emergency department visits and hospital admissions for complications of substance use in Toronto hospitals fluctuated from October 2016 through early March 2017 but no upward or downward trend is indicated. Note that this data source includes visits related to intoxication, addiction, overdose or withdrawal, and it is not limited to opioids. Some Toronto hospitals are also excluded from these data, including CAMH and Sunnybrook. Please see the Data Notes tab for more information on this indicator.

Number of substance-related emergency department visits and hospital admissions by week, Toronto hospitals, October 3, 2016 to March 12, 2017



Source: Acute Care Enhanced Surveillance System. ED and AD Line Listings. October 3, 2016 to March 12, 2017. Extracted March 2017.

“Care should be taken...to ensure confidentiality and human rights are preserved, especially around privacy issues.”

Consultation participant.

All governments should address systemic factors that can lead to overdose and other health harms related to substance use.



“The state of housing right now is terrible and affects individuals in many aspects of their lives.”

Consultation participant.

#10 A Public Health Approach to Drug Policy

Community dialogue is needed to determine what a public health approach to drug policy in Canada would look like.



“Efforts to address stigma against people who use drugs will likely prove limited in the context of criminalization.”

Consultation participant.

Thank you!