

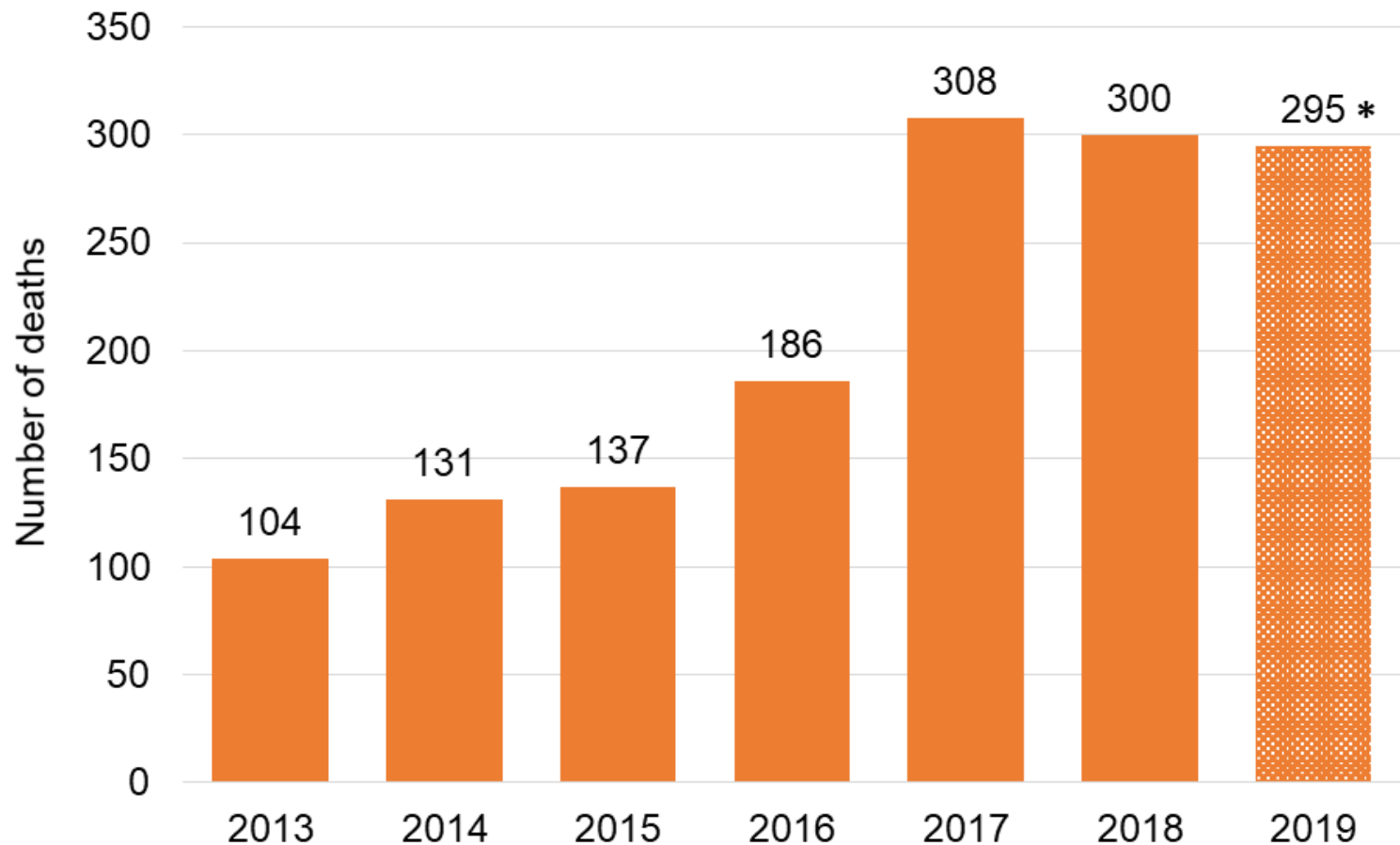
Toronto Overdose Action Plan: Status Report 2020

Board of Health

June 8, 2020

Opioid overdose deaths in Toronto

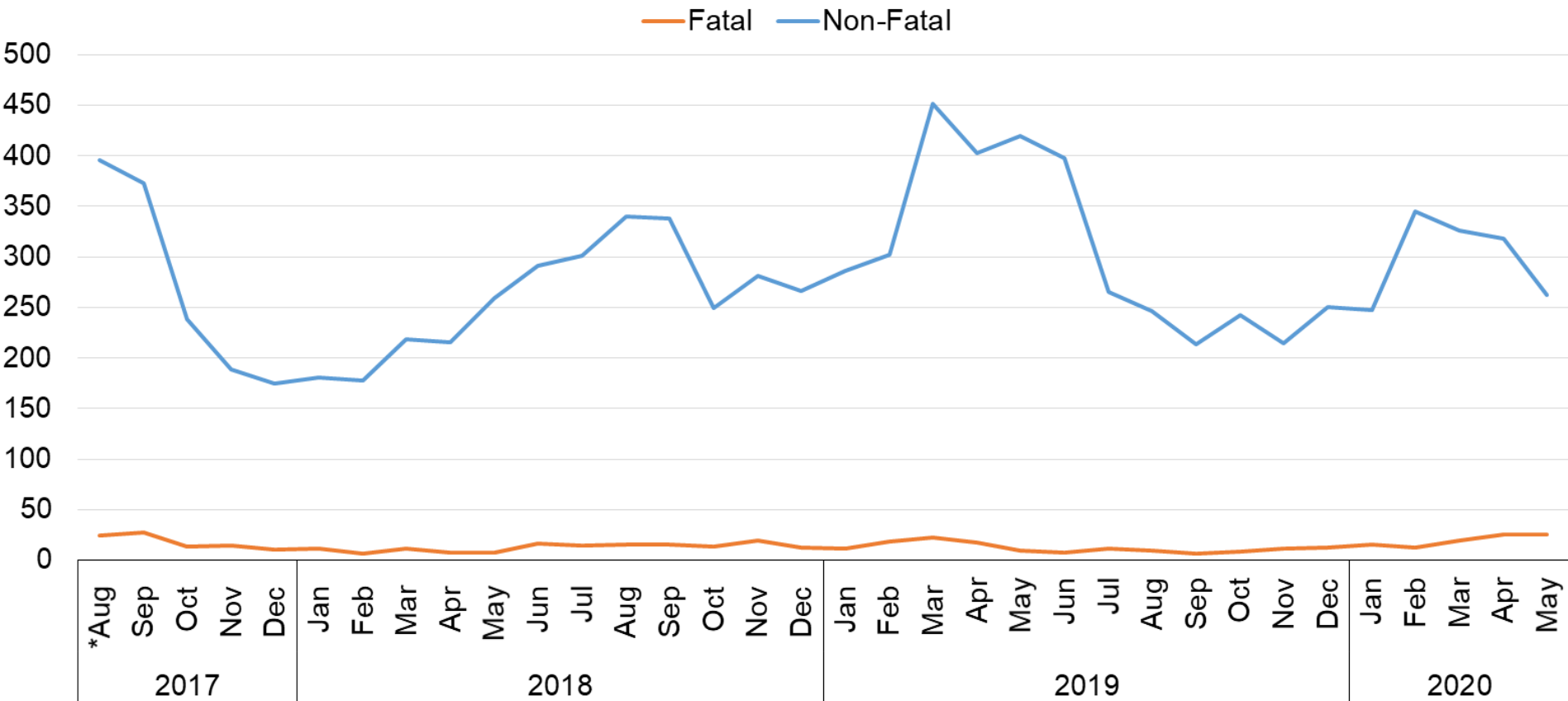
2013 to 2019



*Preliminary data. Numbers are expected to change as Coroners complete investigations.

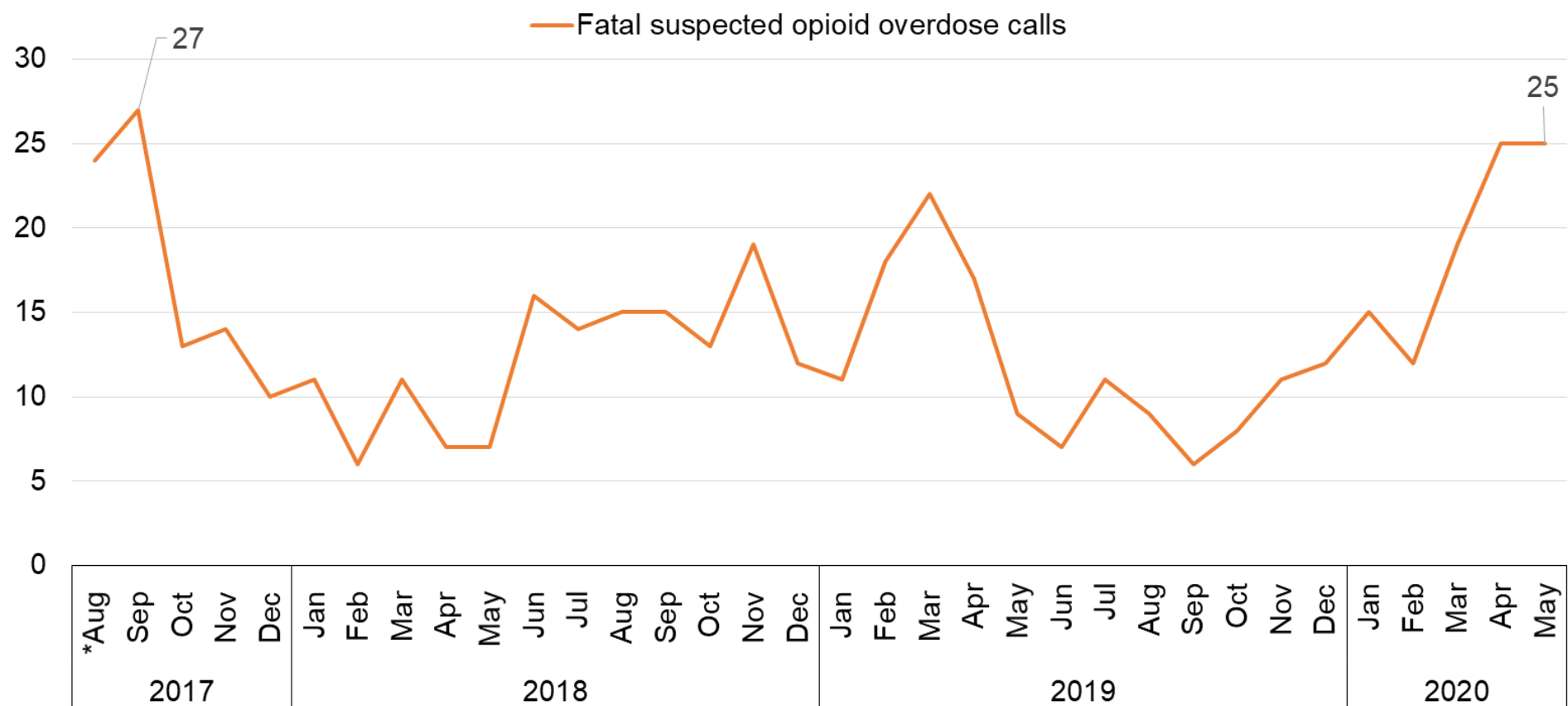
Sources: Public Health Ontario. Interactive Opioid Tool. 2013 to 2019. Accessed in May 2020; and Communications with PHO, May 2020

Suspected opioid overdoses and fatalities attended by paramedics



Source: Toronto Paramedic Services

Suspected opioid fatalities attended by paramedics



Source: Toronto Paramedic Services

Current context

- We are experiencing dual public health crises: the ongoing opioid poisoning crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This is having negative impacts on people who use drugs:
 - reduced service hours/capacity
 - toxic, unregulated drug supply
 - lack of safe supply options
 - criminalization

Highlights of action taken

- Decriminalization advocacy
- Funding for community-based overdose prevention and response initiatives
- Toronto drug checking project
- Building relationships with Indigenous service providers
- Women and drug policy working group

Highlights of action taken

- Toronto Academic Health Science Network/Toronto Public Health Opioid Task Force
- Proposed harm reduction policy for Toronto Community Housing Corporation
- Improved communications to the community

Federal government:

- decriminalize possession of all drugs for personal use during the pandemic
- increase funding for safer supply programs
- support the TPH injectable hydromorphone program
- support capacity building re: overdoses involving benzodiazepines

Provincial government:

- convene an opioid task force
- support safer supply programs, and medications required
- support expansion of supervised consumption services + virtual models
- fund services to adapt to COVID-19
- fund grief and trauma supports

Recommendations

- Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario to examine possible role of COVID-19 in opioid overdose deaths
- Toronto Central LHIN to fund comprehensive crisis support services for people who use drugs

Toronto Public Health remains committed to working with our community and institutional partners to improve our collective overdose prevention and response, which is even more critical at this time.