

Apparent deaths related to opioid overdose in New Brunswick

Summary of 2016 and Quarter 1 of 2017

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2016 and 2017 (Quarter 1) Data

Introduction

This quarterly surveillance report focuses on all unintentional mortalities caused by any opioid overdose (including fentanyl). The Chief Coroner's Office collects these data and shares them with the Department of Health. Data on deaths, including intentional, related to any type of drugs (opioids and non-opioids) are also included.

The number of apparent opioid overdose deaths may change over time for any given month as certification of cause of death may lead to a change in classification in some instances.

Caution should be used while interpreting region-specific or age-specific rates because of the small numbers involved that can lead to unstable rates.

Definitions used in this report:

- Non Fentanyl Opioids: Includes buprenorphine metabolites, codeine, dihydrocodeine, heroin, hydrocodone, hydromorphone (total, unconjugated), meperidine, methadone, monoacetylmorphine, morphine (unconjugated, unconjugated-RIA), normeperidine, oxycodone, tapentadol, tramadol.
- Fentanyl-related opioids: Includes fentanyl, norfentanyl, acetylfentanyl, 3-methylfentanyl, carfentanil, butyrylfentanyl.
- Any Opioid: Either non Fentanyl opioid or Fentanyl-related opioid.
- Prescription opioid/fentanyl: A medically prescribed opioid/fentanyl to the same deceased person.
- Illicit opioid/fentanyl: Street opioid/fentanyl or opioid/fentanyl medically prescribed to a person other than the deceased person.
- Mixed: Opioid mixed with other substances, which include, but not limited to, alcohol, benzodiazepines, cocaine, etc.

Summary of 2016 data

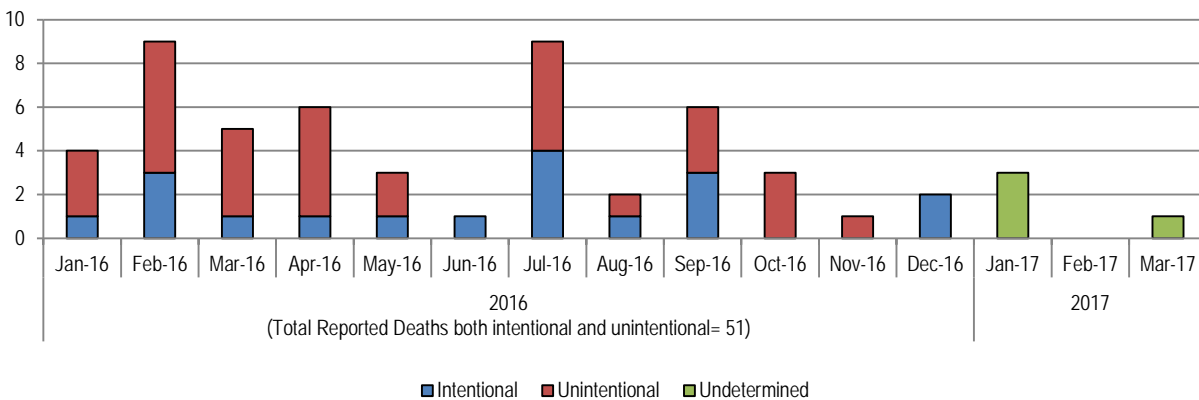
- Fifty-one deaths (including both intentional and unintentional) due to any type of drug (opioids and non-opioids) occurred in 2016, of which 29 (57%) were related to opioids.
- Twenty-three of the 29 death related to opioids were unintentional, of which 3 were associated with Fentanyl. Fentanyl was not associated with any of the intentional deaths.
- Of the 23 unintentional opioid overdose deaths:
 - o 15 were males, and 8 were females.
 - o Overall crude mortality rate for New Brunswick due to unintentional opioid overdose was 3 per 100,000 population.
 - o About three-quarter (74%, n=17) of the deceased individuals were between 30 and 59 years old, with the highest numbers being in the 40 to 49 age group.

- About three-quarter (74%, n=17) of deaths were reported in the Judicial Districts of Moncton (n=9) and Saint John (n=8). However, the highest unintentional opioid overdose mortality rate was in Campbellton, with a rate of 7.7 per 100, 000 population resulting from 2 reported deaths.
- The highest number of deaths occurred in the 1st quarter of 2016 (n=11), followed by the third quarter (n=6).
- Ten deaths were due to illicit opioid use, nine were due to prescribed opioid use, and 4 were from an undetermined source.
- Thirteen (60%) of the unintentional opioid overdose deaths were due to opioid mixed with other substances.
- Of the 3 fentanyl-related deaths: 2 were males using illicit fentanyl (1 mixed with other substances), and 1 was a female using prescribed fentanyl (not mixed with other substance).

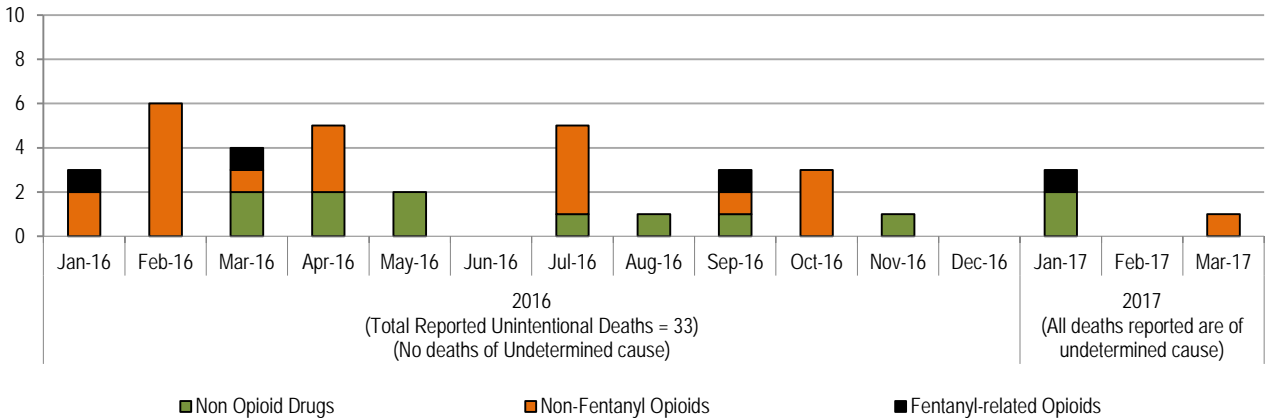
Summary of 2017 (Quarter 1) data: Data up to end of March 2017

- All deaths reported to-date are, at this time, of undetermined intent.
- In the first 3 months of 2017, 4 deaths were associated with overdose from any type of drug (opioids and non-opioids); of which 2 were related to opioids (one was associated with Fentanyl). Both of the opioid-related deaths were in Moncton.

Graph 1. Deaths associated with **all** drug overdose (opioid and non-opioid) by intent (**intentional, unintentional or undetermined**) and month of death, 2016 and 2017 (Quarter 1), New Brunswick. (Data source: Chief Coroner Office, May 2 2017)



Graph 2. Deaths associated with unintentional/undetermined drug overdose, by drug type and month of death, 2016 and 2017 (Quarter 1), New Brunswick. (Data source: Chief Coroner Office, May 2 2017)



Graph 3. Age distribution of unintentional opioid overdose deaths by sex and source, New Brunswick, 2016

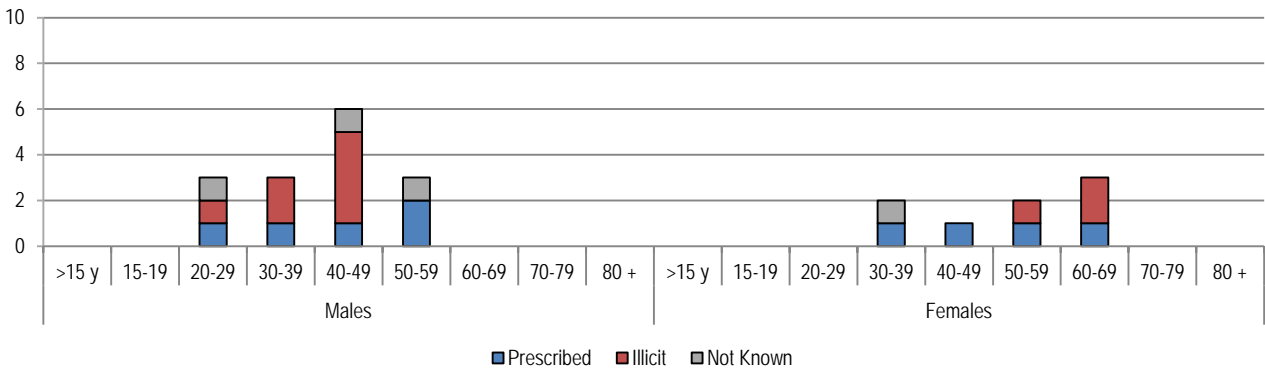


Table 1. Crude mortality rate due to unintentional opioid overdose, by judicial district, NB, 2016.

| 2016 | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Judicial District(s) | Number of deaths reported | % from total Opioid overdose death | Rate per 100,000 population |
| Bathurst | 1 | 4% | 1.3 |
| Campbellton | 2 | 9% | 7.7 |
| Edmundston | 1 | 4% | 2.1 |
| Fredericton/ Woodstock | 0 | 0% | 0.0 |
| Moncton | 9 | 39% | 4.2 |
| Miramichi | 2 | 9% | 4.4 |
| Saint John | 8 | 35% | 4.6 |
| New Brunswick | 23 | 100% | 3.1 |

Source for rate calculations: OCMOH, Communicable Disease Control Branch. The denominators used were 2015 population estimates received from Statistics Canada, Demography Division; March 2016.