

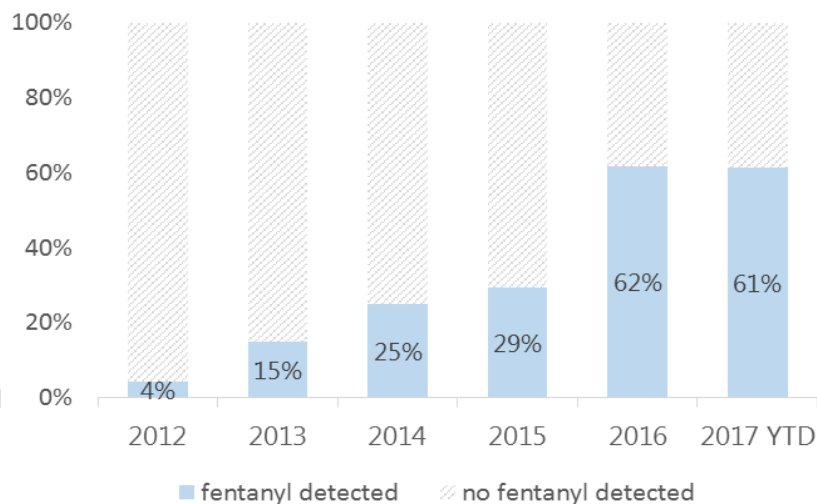
**Inclusion Criteria:** This report summarizes all deaths that occurred between January 1, 2012 and February 28, 2017 for which fentanyl was detected, whether alone or in combination with other drugs, and the death resulted from illicit drug use<sup>[1]</sup>. In the majority of deaths, fentanyl<sup>[2]</sup> was detected in combination with other drugs. Deaths were excluded if the fentanyl was known to be prescribed or the death was suspected to be due to intentional self-harm.

This data has been compiled to better understand overall illicit drug overdose trends in British Columbia and to inform other agencies' public safety strategies in a timely manner.<sup>[1]</sup> Please see the BC Coroners Service website for a summary of illicit drug overdose deaths: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/death-investigation/statistical-reports>. Note that fentanyl-detected data is subject to change as further analogue testing becomes available.

### Summary:

- There were 139 illicit drug overdose deaths with fentanyl detected from January through February 2017. This is a 90% increase over the number of deaths (73) occurring during the same period in 2016.
- From January to February 2017, fentanyl was detected in 61% of illicit drug overdose deaths (139 of 227).
- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority had the highest number (48) of illicit drug overdose deaths with fentanyl detected from January through February 2017, followed by Fraser Health (39) and Vancouver Island Health Authority (29).<sup>[3],[4]</sup>
- The Health Service Delivery Areas with the most fentanyl-detected illicit drug overdose deaths from January through February 2017 were Vancouver HSDA (43), Fraser South HSDA (24), and Okanagan HSDA (15). When looking at individual townships over the same time period, the highest numbers of deaths were seen in Vancouver, Surrey, and Victoria.<sup>[3],[4]</sup>

- A review of toxicological findings for 325 fentanyl-detected illicit drug overdose deaths in 2016 was conducted. In 96% of these deaths, at least one substance other than fentanyl was detected. The four most frequently detected drugs (including alcohol) were as follows:
  - Cocaine (50% of deaths)
  - Ethyl alcohol (38% of deaths)
  - Methamphetamine/amphetamine (34% of deaths)
  - Heroin (32% of deaths)
- Preliminary data for January through February 2017 suggest that the proportion of apparent illicit drug overdose deaths with fentanyl detected (alone or in combination with other drugs) is approximately 61%. Proportions from 2012 to 2017 are as follows:
  - 2012 = 4%
  - 2013 = 15%
  - 2014 = 25%
  - 2015 = 29%
  - 2016 = 62%
  - 2017 (Jan.-Feb) = 61%



Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths With Fentanyl Detected, 2012-2017<sup>[3]</sup>

**Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Month, 2012-2017<sup>[3]</sup>**

Month	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
January	-	5	5	20	44	69
February	-	3	5	8	29	70
Subtotal	-	8	10	28	73	139
March	-	6	9	8	47	
April	1	8	8	12	46	
May	1	3	8	8	37	
June	1	2	6	11	42	
July	-	1	3	14	40	
August	1	4	8	15	37	
September	1	2	9	15	39	
October	-	4	13	16	42	
November	4	6	6	12	85	
December	3	6	11	12	87	
Total	12	50	91	151	575	139

**Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Sex, 2012-2017<sup>[3]</sup>**

Sex	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Female	2	9	21	25	110	24	191
Male	10	41	70	126	465	115	827
Total	12	50	91	151	575	139	1018

**Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Age Group, 2012-2017<sup>[3]</sup>**

Age Group	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
10-18	-	1	-	2	10	-	13
19-29	3	19	28	42	140	35	267
30-39	2	10	33	45	177	46	313
40-49	6	13	19	29	130	27	224
50-59	1	5	7	24	92	23	152
60+	0	2	4	9	26	8	49
Total	12	50	91	151	575	139	1018

**Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Health Authority of Injury, 2012-2017<sup>[3],[5]</sup>**

HA	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Vancouver Coastal	1	10	26	40	149	48	274
Fraser	7	16	29	57	179	39	327
Vancouver Island	1	14	17	21	111	29	193
Interior	2	3	9	21	111	23	169
Northern	1	7	10	12	25	-	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>1018</b>

**Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Month of Death and Health Authority of Injury, 2017<sup>[3],[5]</sup>**

HA	Vancouver Coastal	Fraser	Vancouver Island	Interior	Northern	Total
January	29	20	11	9	-	69
February	19	19	18	14	-	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>139</b>

**Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Health Service Delivery Area of Injury, 2012-2017<sup>[3],[5]</sup>**

HSDA	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Vancouver	1	5	22	32	124	43	227
Fraser South	5	7	13	19	86	24	154
Okanagan	2	1	4	14	59	15	95
South Vancouver Island	1	3	2	8	52	14	80
Central Vancouver Island	-	10	13	10	43	10	86
Fraser North	1	6	15	28	65	8	123
Fraser East	1	3	1	10	28	7	50
Thompson Cariboo Shuswap	-	1	2	4	42	6	55
North Vancouver Island	-	1	2	3	16	5	27
North Shore/Coast Garibaldi	-	5	4	5	15	3	32
Kootenay Boundary	-	-	1	2	4	2	9
Richmond	-	-	-	3	10	2	15
Northeast	-	3	6	4	12	-	25
East Kootenay	-	1	2	1	6	-	10
Northern Interior	1	3	4	7	11	-	26
Northwest	-	1	-	1	2	-	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>1018</b>

**Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Top Townships of Injury, 2012-2017<sup>[3],[5]</sup>**

Township	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Vancouver	1	5	22	32	124	43	227
Surrey	3	4	8	11	62	15	103
Victoria	-	3	2	8	46	14	73
Nanaimo	-	8	12	9	26	6	61
Kelowna	-	-	1	6	37	12	56
Maple Ridge	-	3	7	12	20	-	42
Kamloops	-	1	2	3	28	4	38
Burnaby	-	3	-	6	22	6	37
Langley	1	1	5	6	16	6	35
Abbotsford	-	1	1	6	21	5	34
Other township	7	21	31	52	173	28	312
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>1018</b>

**Notes:**

1. The BCCS operates in a live database environment. Some data for more recent years are based on preliminary circumstances and are subject to change as investigations are concluded. Data are not directly comparable to published counts from previous years.
2. Toxicology testing includes acetyl fentanyl as of November 2015. Testing for W-18 began in August 2016, with no positive cases yet identified. Data will be updated as further analogue testing becomes available.
3. Data for 2017 include cases from January 1 to February 28, 2017.
4. Data are based on location of injury.
5. Death township was used in six cases where injury township was unknown.
6. More information about the health regions can be found at <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/geographic-data-services/land-use/administrative-boundaries/health-boundaries>