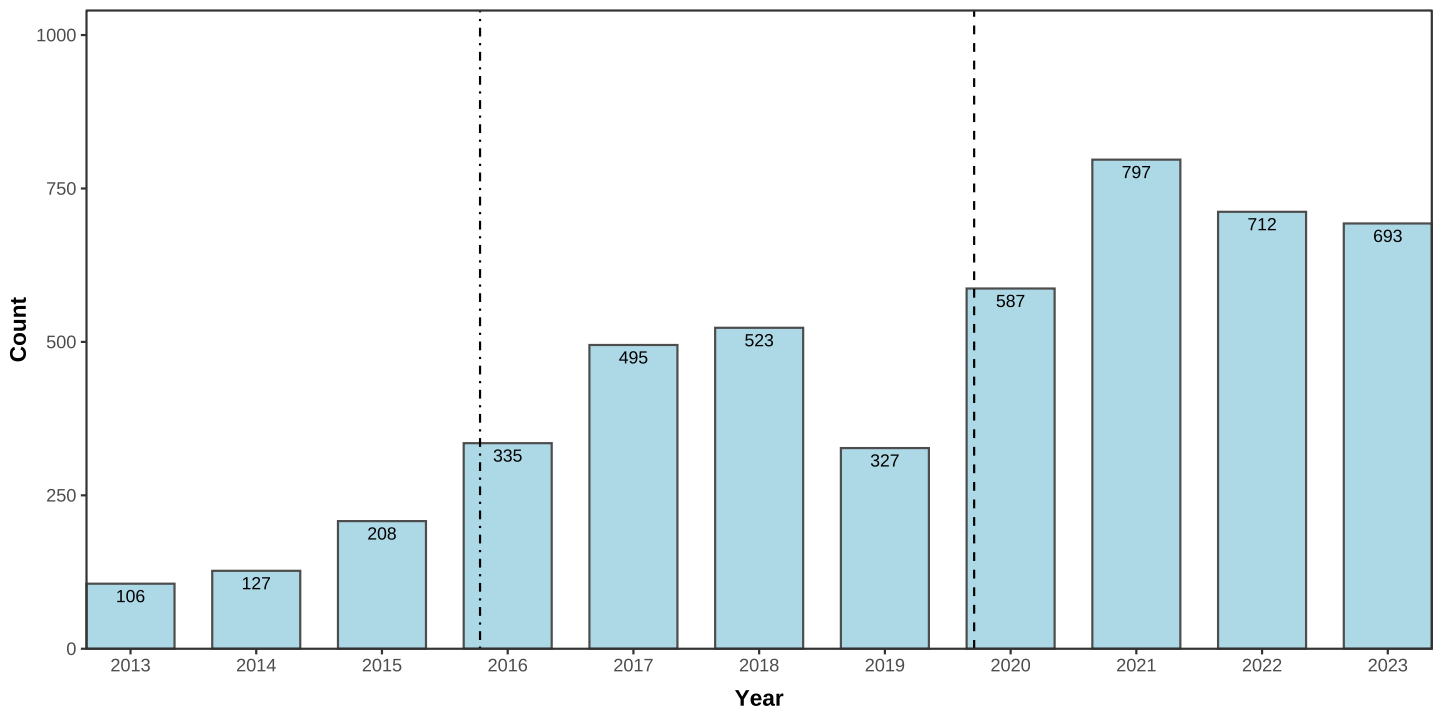


# TOXIC DRUG POISONING RESPONSE PUBLIC REPORT, DECEMBER 2023

## ILLICIT DRUG TOXICITY DEATHS

- According to BC Coroners Service, there were 55 illicit drug toxicity deaths in Fraser Health in December 2023.
- This is a 5% decrease from the number of deaths reported in the previous month, with 58 deaths in November 2023.
- Compared to 2022, the greatest increases in drug toxicity deaths in 2023 have been seen in Chilliwack (+22%) and New Westminster (+19%) (Table 1).

**Figure 1: Illicit drug toxicity deaths within Fraser Health, January 2013 to December 2023**



Toxic drug supply emergency declared on 14 April 2016 (two dash grey line)

COVID-19 emergency declared on 17 March 2020 (short dash grey line)

Data source: BC Coroners Service. Preliminary data, numbers subject to change. Numbers include both open and closed cases.

Illicit drug toxicity deaths reported by BC Coroners Service include those involving street drugs (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, methamphetamine, etc.), medications that were not prescribed to the deceased but obtained on the street, from unknown means, and where the origin of drug is unknown.

**Table 1: Illicit drug toxicity deaths within Fraser Health, January 2022 to December 2023**

<b>Community**</b>	<b>Jan-Dec 2023</b>	<b>Jan-Dec 2022</b>	<b>% Change (2023 vs. 2022)</b>
<b>Fraser East</b>			
Abbotsford	90	92	-2
Chilliwack	60	49	22
<b>Fraser North</b>			
Burnaby	50	69	-28
Coquitlam	25	34	-26
New Westminster	38	32	19
<b>Fraser South</b>			
Langley	47	44	7
Surrey	231	241	-4
Other Fraser Health Communities	152	151	1
<b>Fraser Health</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>-3</b>
<b>BC</b>	<b>2,511</b>	<b>2,383</b>	<b>5</b>

Data source: BC Coroners Service to Dec 31, 2023.

Preliminary data, numbers subject to change. Numbers include both open and closed cases.

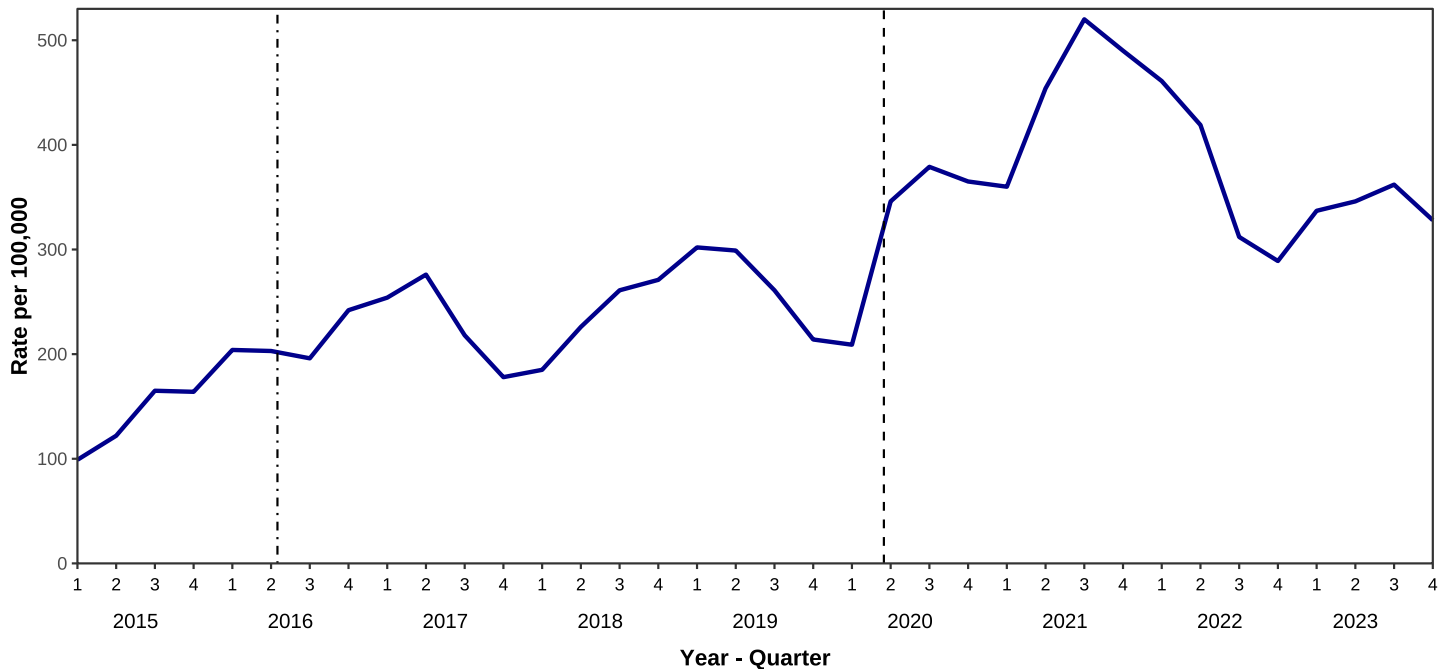
Illicit drug toxicity deaths reported by BC Coroners Service include those involving street drugs (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, methamphetamine, etc.), medications that were not prescribed to the deceased, combinations of the above, with prescribed medications, and where the origin of drug is not known.

\*\*Community assigned based on location of injury and if that is missing, location of death.

## PARAMEDIC-ATTENDED TOXIC DRUG POISONING EVENTS

- Paramedics responded to 517 suspected toxic drug poisoning events across Fraser Health in December 2023; this is a 12% decrease compared to the average of the previous 12 months (Table 2).
- Compared to 2022, the greatest increases in the rate of paramedic-attended toxic drug poisoning events in 2023 have occurred in Hope\*\*\* (+38%), Chilliwack (+27%), New Westminster (+10%), and Port Coquitlam (+10%) (Table 2).
- Compared to 2022, the largest decreases in the rate of paramedic-attended toxic drug poisoning events in 2023 have occurred in City of Langley (-37%), Mission (-28%), and Abbotsford (-24%) (Table 2).

**Figure 2: Quarterly rate of suspected paramedic-attended drug poisoning events in Fraser Health, January 2015 to December 2023**



Toxic drug supply emergency declared on 14 April 2016 (two dash grey line)

COVID-19 emergency declared on 17 March 2020 (short dash grey line)

Data source: Patient Care Record data from BC Emergency Health Services. Preliminary data, numbers subject to change. Suspected toxic drug poisoning events include those associated with opioids or other drugs.

**Table 2: Suspected paramedic-attended toxic drug poisoning events within Fraser Health, January 2022 to December 2023**

Community**	2023			2022		
	Dec (Avg. past 12 months~)	Jan- Dec	Rate per 100,000 Jan- Dec	Jan-Dec	Rate per 100,000 Jan-Dec	% Rate change 2023 vs. 2022
<b>Fraser East</b>						
Abbotsford	100 (80.8)	1003	680	1284	889	-24
Agassiz / Harrison***	<5 (<5)	43	432	39	399	8
Chilliwack	56 (60.7)	733	771	565	609	27
Hope***	5 (5.1)	60	725	43	526	38
Mission	16 (24.5)	269	628	365	869	-28
<b>Fraser North</b>						
Burnaby	40 (44.5)	535	221	551	231	-5
Coquitlam	17 (27.9)	330	233	373	269	-13
Maple Ridge	31 (38.8)	474	555	482	579	-4
New Westminster	24 (40.8)	469	602	418	548	10
Pitt Meadows	<5 (<5)	36	197	44	246	-20
Port Coquitlam	<5 (12.7)	147	255	131	231	10
Port Moody / Anmore / Belcarra	5 (<5)	51	142	54	154	-8
<b>Fraser South</b>						
City of Langley	21 (16.8)	205	795	321	1,258	-37
Delta	13 (11.6)	142	137	156	152	-10
South Surrey / White Rock	15 (10.2)	128	120	144	141	-15
Surrey	154 (182.5)	2226	468	2282	491	-5
Township of Langley	13 (19.5)	228	186	232	193	-4
<b>Fraser Health</b>	<b>517 (587.3)</b>	<b>7079</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>7484</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>-7</b>

Data source: Patient Care Record data from BC Emergency Health Services to Dec 31, 2023. Restricted to those 13 years of age or older. Preliminary data, numbers subject to change. Numbers for the most recent month are likely an underestimate and will increase as entry of BC Ambulance Patient Care Form is completed. Numbers may change with data quality and analysis refinements and are not directly comparable to numbers reported previously.

Suspected toxic drug poisoning events include those associated with opioids or other drugs.

\*\*Community assigned based on location where the paramedics attended the event.

~Average of past 12 months, does not include the most recent month.

\*\*\*Rates may fluctuate due to small population size.

Counts under five are reported as <5 as they are potentially identifiable.