

# Harm Reduction and Healthcare Services for People Who Use Drugs

July 15, 2021- King County Board of Health

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# External Data Dashboard

kingcounty.gov/overdose

## King County Fatal Overdose Dashboard

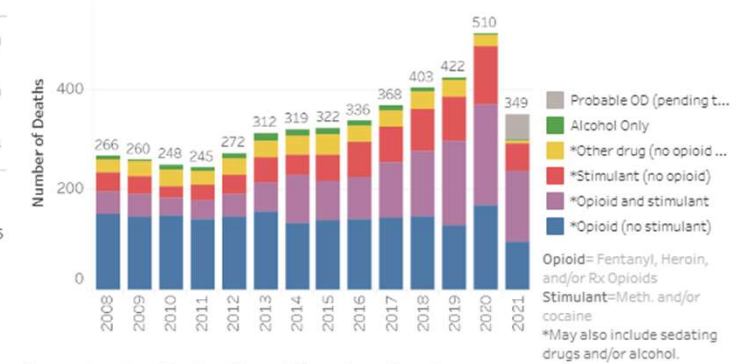
Source: King County Medical Examiner's Office  
As of 7/8/2021

### 2021 YTD Summary

Confirmed Drug Overdose or Alcohol Poisoning	300
Probable (unconfirmed) Overdose	49
Possible (unconfirmed) Overdose	24
# of Overdose Deaths YTD in 2021 that Involved:	
Opioids	237
Fentanyl	##
Methamphetamine	155

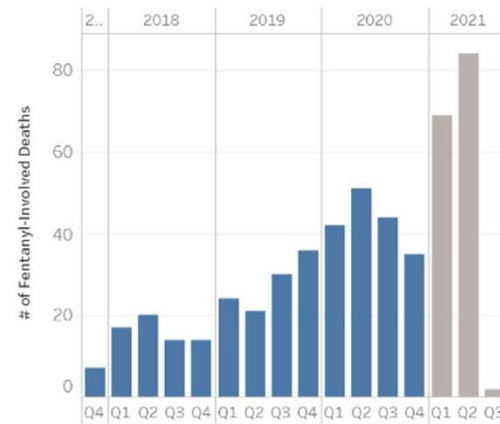
### Drug & Alcohol Poisoning Deaths, King County

(Note: Bar chart can be viewed in terms of counts or rates, each decedent with a toxicology-confirmed overdose death is represented once.)



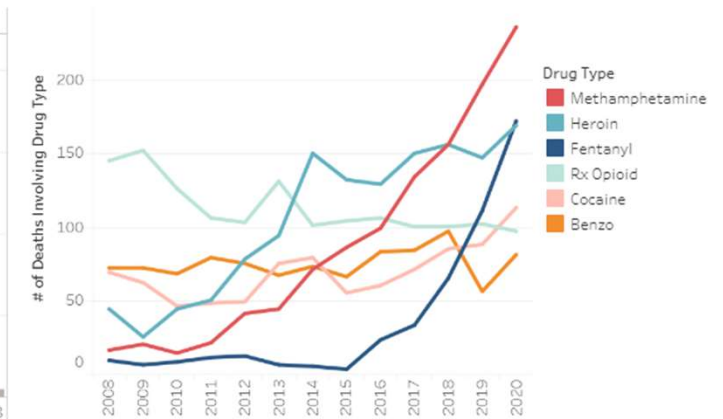
### Number of Fentanyl-Involved Deaths, 2017-2021

(Note: Gray indicates large # of deaths awaiting toxicology results)

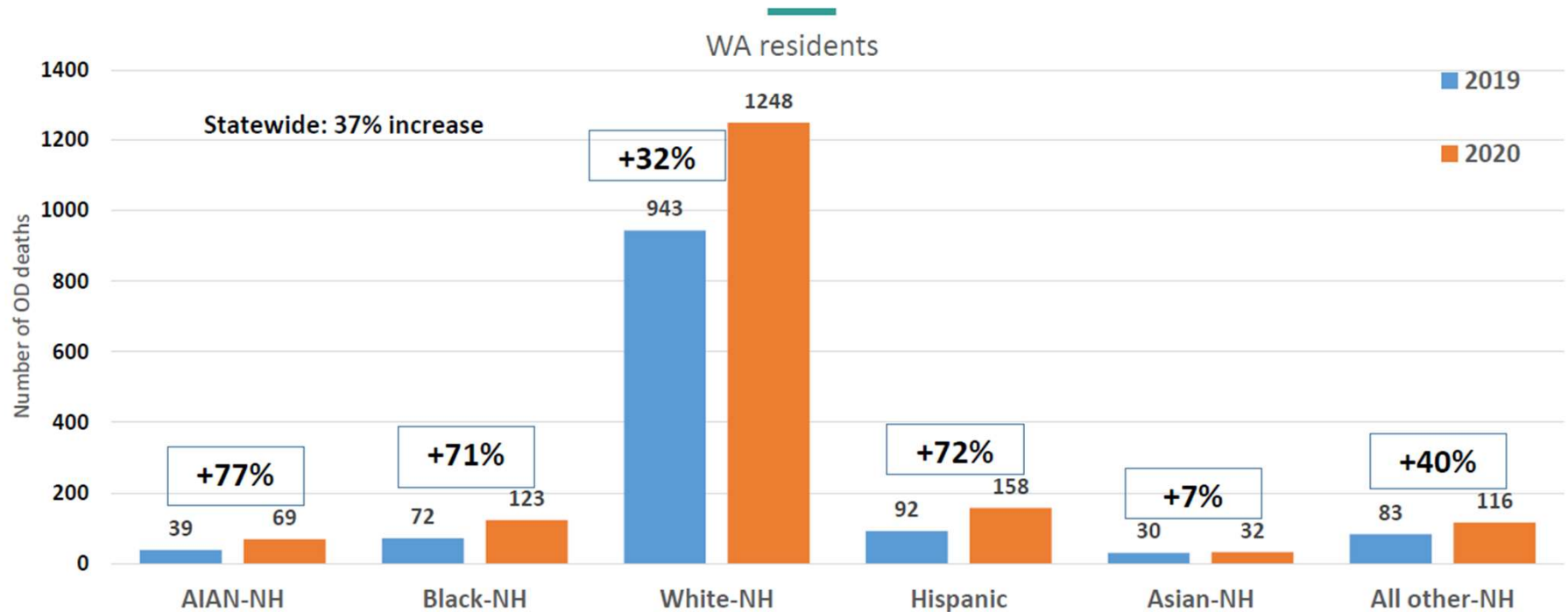


### Drugs Involved in Confirmed Overdose Deaths

(Note: Decedent may be represented in multiple lines)



# Overall drug overdose death counts by race compare 2019 and 2020 (full years)

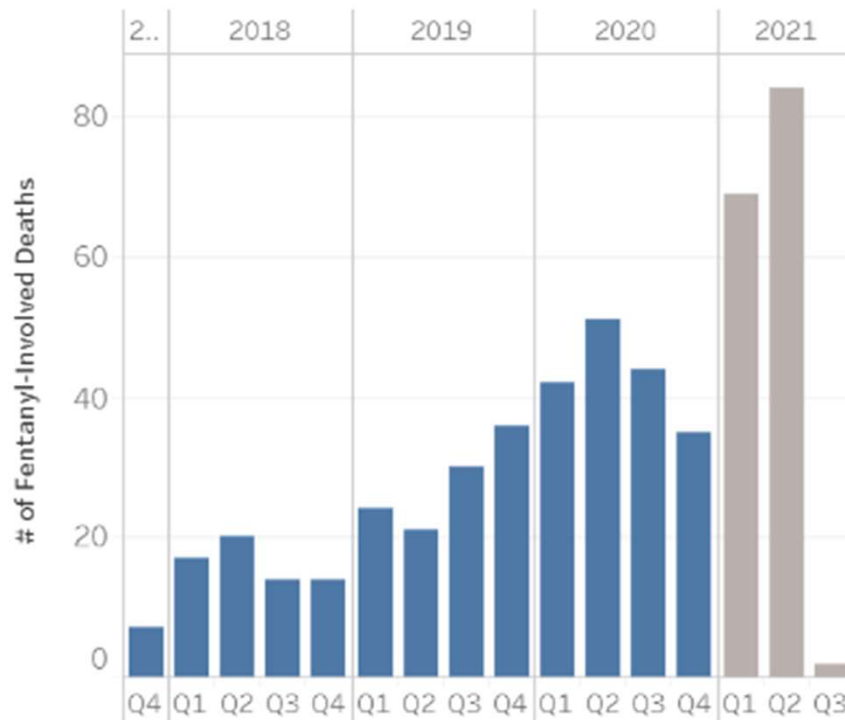


2020 data are preliminary and will change. NH: Non-Hispanic AIAN: American Indian/Alaskan Native  
Data as of 12July2021

All other includes: Native Hawaiian and other pacific islanders, multi-racial and other (NOS)

## Number of Fentanyl-Involved Deaths, 2017-2021

(Note: Gray indicates large # of deaths awaiting toxicology results)



1<sup>st</sup> half 2021:  
153 Confirmed  
Fentanyl Deaths  
(67 still pending)

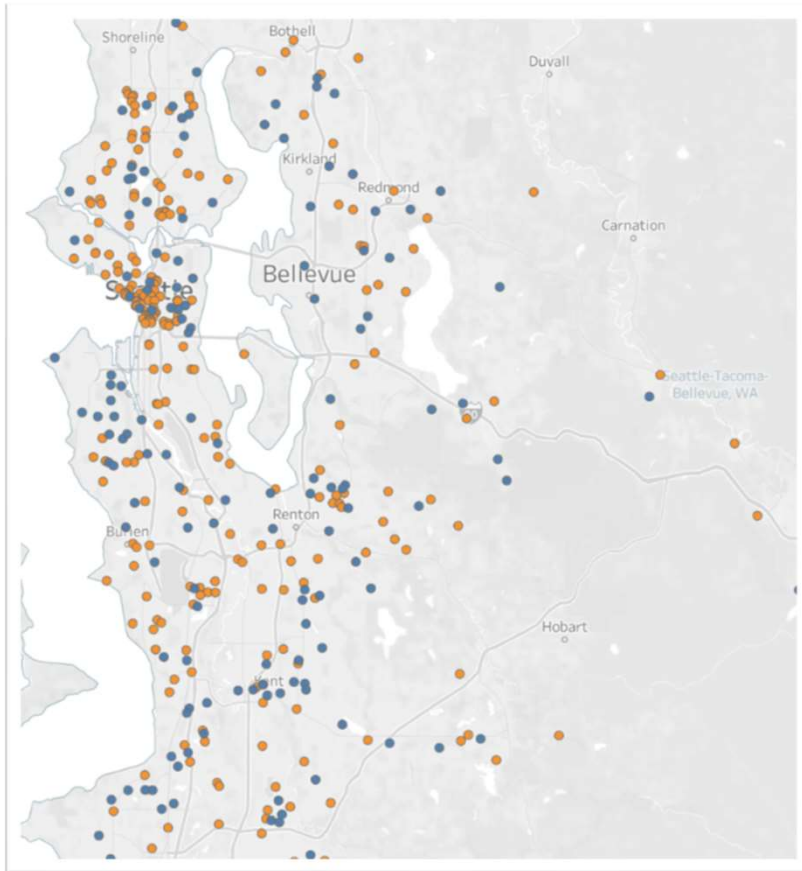
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2020:  
172 Fentanyl  
Deaths

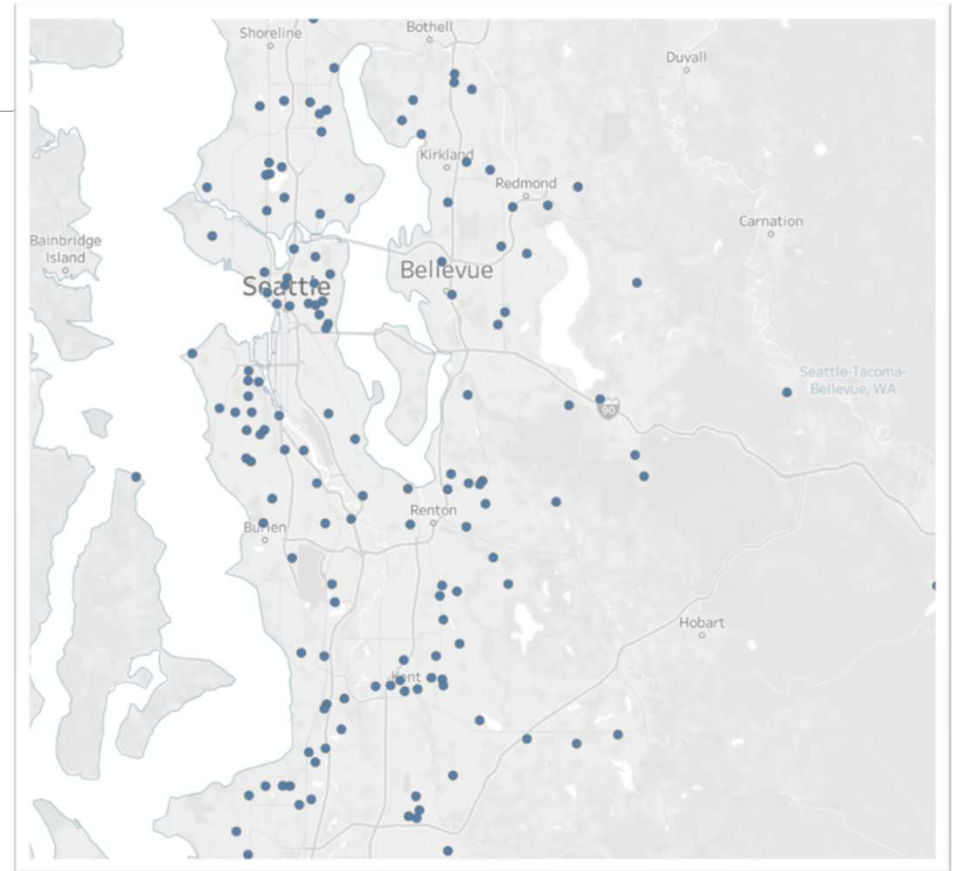


Fentanyl: Still Primarily in Blue M-30s

# Overdose Mapping – Jan 2020 to Present



All Drug Overdose Deaths

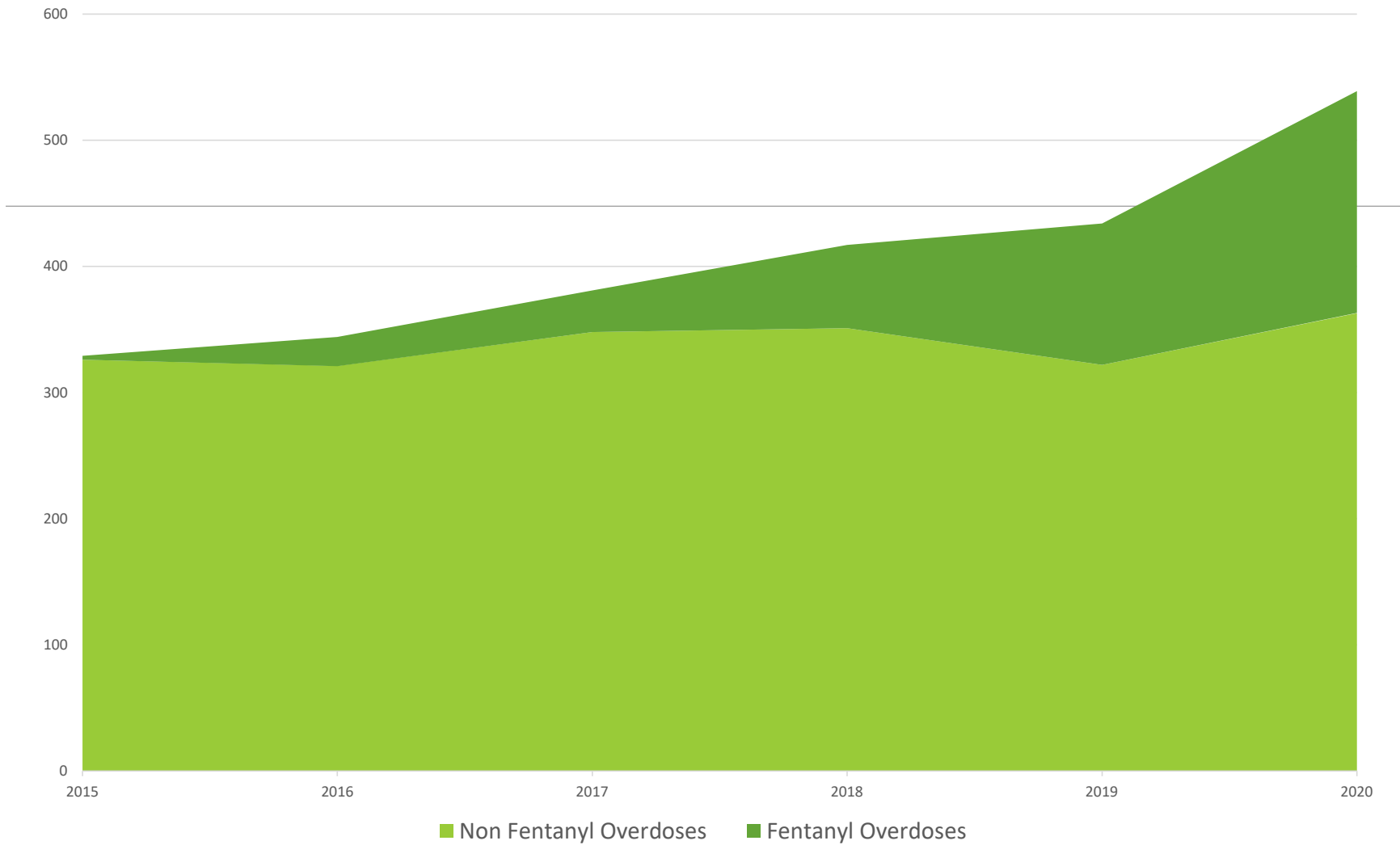


Fentanyl Only

# Individuals Dying of Fentanyl Are Younger

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	Fentanyl Involved	Non-Fentanyl Involved
Under 40	73%	34%
Over 40	27%	66%






# Homeland Security Seizures (KOMU article May, 2021)

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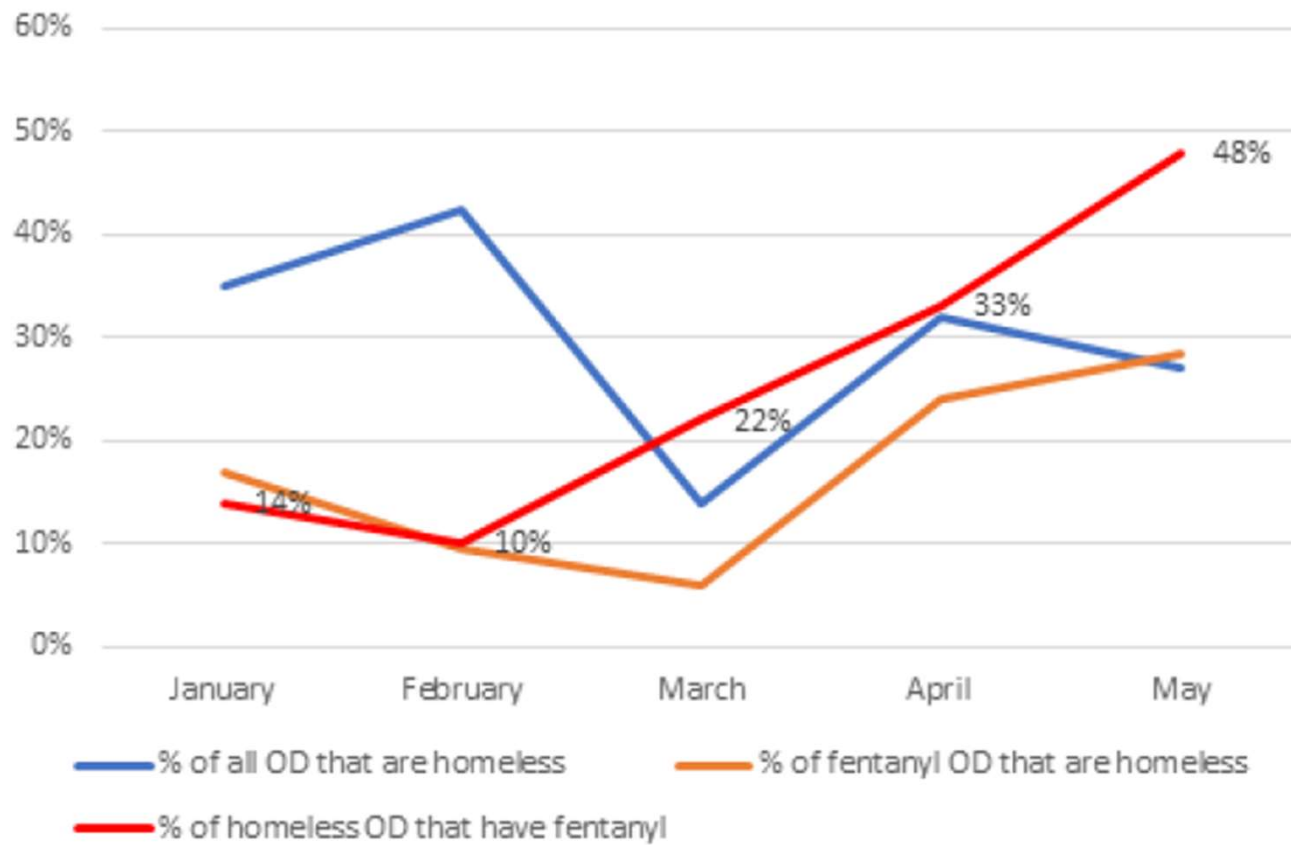
## In the Pacific Northwest:

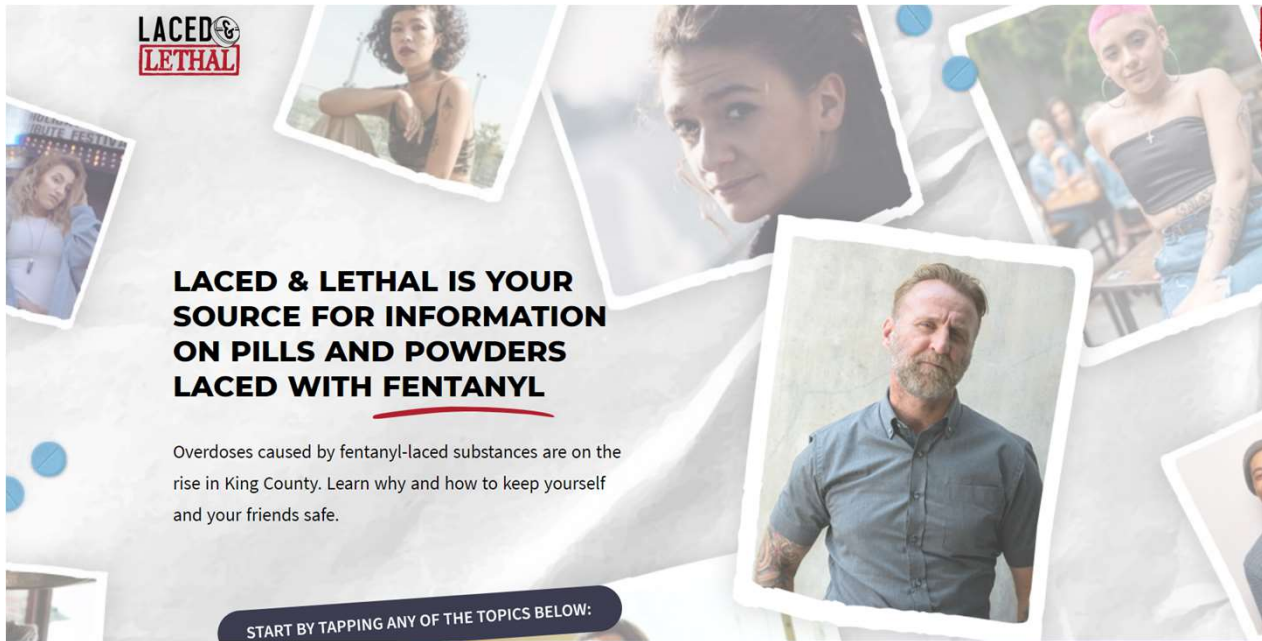
- In 2021: approximately 131 pounds was seized.
- In 2020: approximately 50 pounds was confiscated.
- In 2019: Just 4 pounds were seized by federal agents.

## In Seattle:

- In 2021: 115 pounds of fentanyl were seized.
  - In 2020: 50 pounds were confiscated.
  - In 2019: 3 pounds were pulled from Seattle streets.
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### Fatal OD among homeless, overall and with fentanyl





# What are we doing about it

Laced And Lethal Campaign

Expanded look at data

Targeted ESJ Outreach in Communities

Outreach and Comms

- Social Media
- Blogs
- Youth providers
- Stigma reduction

Drug Alerts

Innovations and expansion in treatment

Expanded Harm Reduction

# Harm Reduction

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# Harm Reduction Principles

- 1) Drug use happens. Minimize harmful effects rather than ignore or condemn.
- 2) Drug use is complex. Some ways of using drugs are safer than others.
- 3) Quality of life (not abstinence) is the criteria for successful interventions and policies.
- 4) Provide non-judgmental, non-coercive provision of services to reduce harm.
- 5) People who use(d) drugs have a voice in programs and policies that serve them.
- 6) People who use drugs are primary agents of reducing harms of their drug use.
- 7) Poverty, class, racism, social isolation, past trauma, sex-based discrimination, and other social inequalities affect vulnerability to and capacity for effectively dealing with drug-related harm.
- 8) Do not minimize or ignore the real harm and danger that can be associated with drug use.


# Harm Reduction in Practice

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- J injects methamphetamine and has been treated in the emergency department for numerous painful skin abscesses. To reduce the number of times he injects and reduce his risk of skin infection, he gets sterile meth smoking pipes from an SSP.
- C is homeless, injects heroin, and exchanges sex for money/drugs. She is observed trading sex for drugs by law enforcement. Rather than be arrested, she is offered intensive case management to connect her with housing and treatment for opioid use disorder.
- A has been using counterfeit pills with fentanyl and witnessed a friend overdose. They obtain naloxone and fentanyl test strips from a local SSP to reduce their own and their friend's risk of overdose.

# Examples of Existing Harm Reduction Services in King County

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- LEAD (arrest diversion)
  - REACH (homelessness outreach)
  - 1811 Eastlake (housing)
  - Navigation Center (housing)
  - Methadone clinics (treatment)
  - Bupe Pathways clinic (treatment)
  - Syringe services programs
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	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
<b>DOWNTOWN</b> <b>Robert Clewis Center</b> 2124 4th Avenue (4th & Blanchard in Belltown)	9am-5pm	1pm-5pm					
<b>CAPITOL HILL</b> <b>Robert Clewis Center 2</b> 1161 Madison Ave (between Madison & Union)	6:30-8:30 pm	6:30-8:30 pm	6:30-8:30 pm	6:30-8:30 pm	6:30-8:30 pm	6:30-8:30 pm	
<b>U-DISTRICT - People's Harm Reduction Alliance (PHRA)</b> NE 47th & Brooklyn (Temporary location)		5-7 pm ☺		5-7 pm	1-5 pm		1-5 pm
<b>SCORE -South County Outreach Referral &amp; Exchange</b> To schedule a delivery, call (206) 214-6040		✓	✓	✓	✓		
<b>NORE - North Outreach Referral &amp; Exchange</b> To schedule a delivery, call (206) 482-2468	✓	✓	✓				
<b>North &amp; East King County PHRA</b> To schedule a delivery, call (530) 454-5410	9am-4pm						
<b>Hepatitis Education Project</b> 1621 S Jackson St, Suite 201 Exchange and Hep C testing For more information, call (206) 732-0311		1-5 pm		1-5 pm			



**Robert Clewis Center**  
2124 4th Ave  
(4th and Blanchard in Belltown)  
Monday to Friday 1:00-4:30 pm  
*Walk-ins welcome!*

**Abscess Treatment and Care**  
HIV/Hepatitis Testing and Counseling  
Hepatitis A and B Vaccinations  
Cold and Upper Respiratory Infection Care  
TB Screening  
Access to Treatment  
Reproductive Health Services

**Got Narcan?**  
**We Do!**



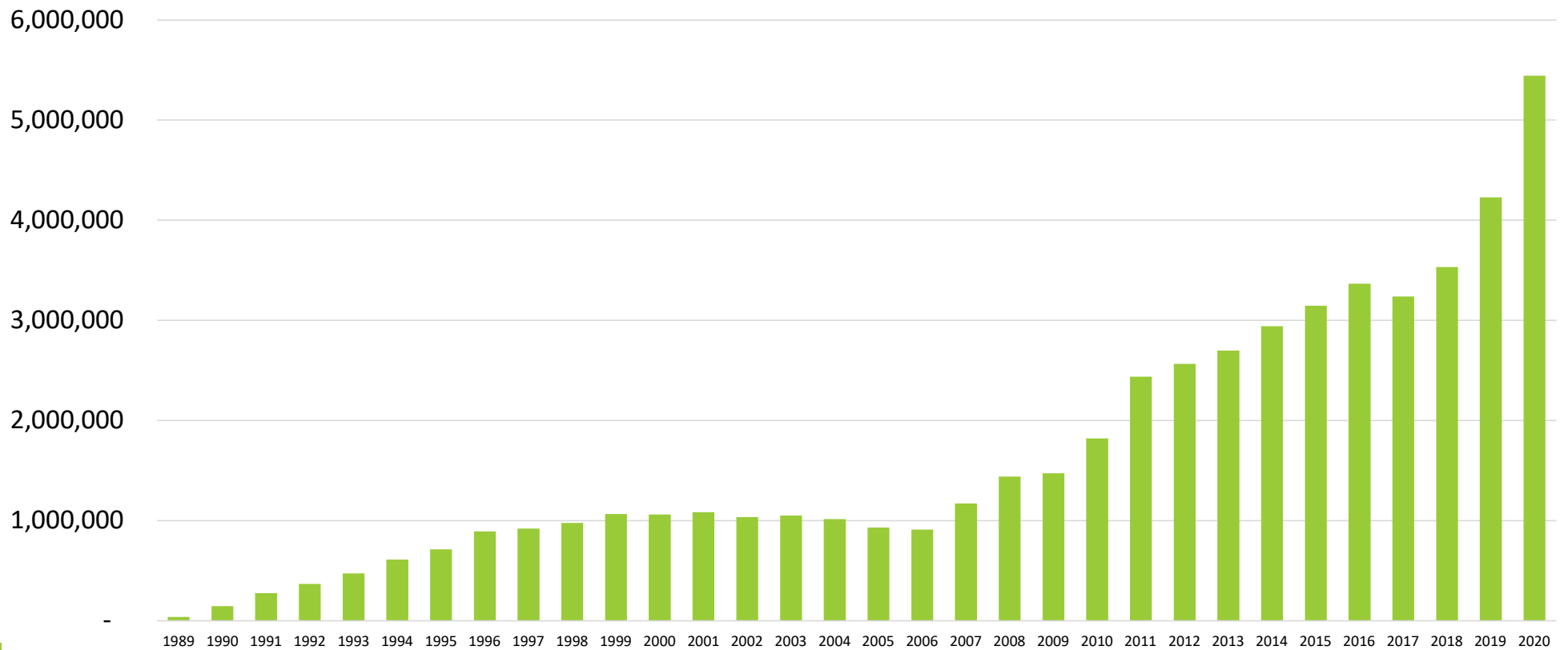
# Impact of Syringe Services Programs (SSPs)

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Evidence-based public health practice:

- 1) SSPs reduce risk of HIV, HCV, and fatal overdose among people who use drugs
- 2) SSPs link people who use drugs to other services including treatment
- 3) SSPs do not increase drug use or crime in the community
- 4) SSPs facilitate syringe disposal and are associated with less syringe litter
- 5) CDC recommends needs-based syringe access

# Annual Syringe Distribution PHSKC SSP Sites, 1989-2020



# PHSKC SSP Service Statistics, 2020

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- Provided >5 million syringes through fixed and mobile sites
- 19,708 exchange encounters
- 778 medical clinic patients
- 130 clients received social work services
- 2,756 customers trained to reverse opiate overdose using naloxone
  - 448 overdose referrals documented
- 52% of SSP clients received treatment in the last year (2019 survey)
- HIV cases among PWID declining after 2018 outbreak
  - 2018: 30 HIV cases
  - 2020: 3 HIV cases



Malika Lamont Project Director


# Who We Are

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- Voices of Community Activists and Leaders (VOCAL-WA) is a grassroots organization affiliated with [VOCAL-NY](#).
  - VOCAL-WA builds power among low- and no- income people directly affected by the war on drugs, homelessness, mass incarceration, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic to create healthy and just communities for all.
  - We accomplish this through community organizing, leadership development, public education, participatory research, and direct action.
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# Approach

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- VOCAL-WA works on issue advocacy campaigns that are chosen and led by grassroots community leaders focused on making concrete improvements in their lives.
  - VOCAL-WA also works with policy experts, research partners, and other technical advisers to monitor and report on key budget, legislative, and policy issues affecting our communities.
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# Current Projects

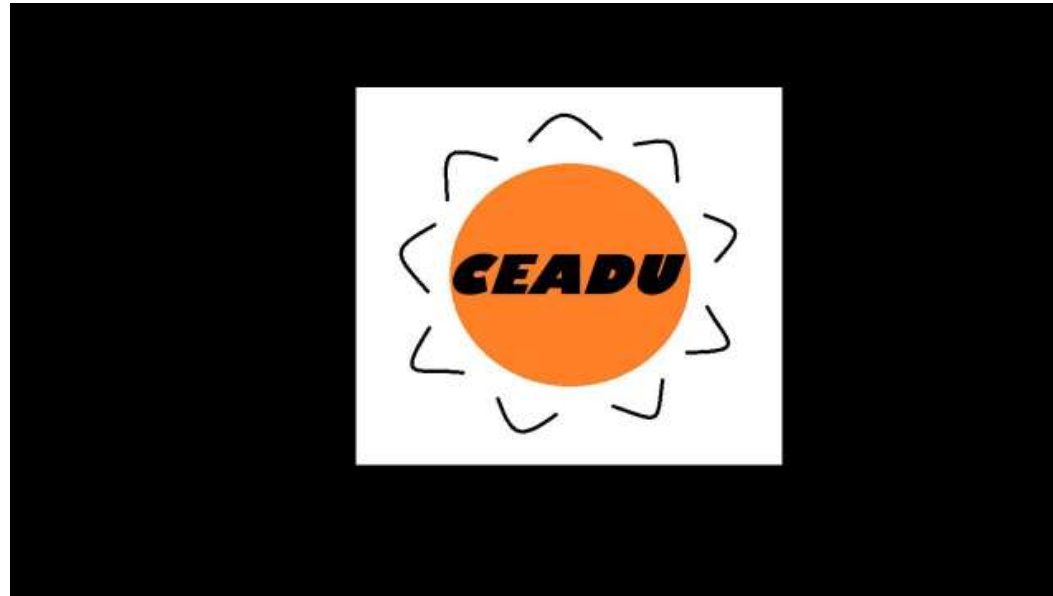
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- Just Access to Health
- Core Group
- Co-LEAD co-hort
- Care First
- Faith and Harm Reduction
- Overdose Emergency Innovative Recovery Taskforce

# Council of Expert Advisors on Drug Use


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# Role of VOCAL-WA in CEADU

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- Creating and executing the process of member recruitment
  - Hosting and facilitating events to engage potential members
  - Collecting and Sharing information
  - Potentially helping to convene the group once it is formed
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# Central Tenants of Harm Reduction Applied to this Process

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- Ensures that people who use drugs and those with a history of drug use routinely have a real voice in the creation of programs and policies designed to serve them.
  - Affirms people who use drugs, themselves as the primary agents of reducing the harms of their drug use, and seeks to empower users to share information and support each other in strategies which meet their actual conditions of use.
  - Establishes quality of individual and community life and well-being—not necessarily cessation of all drug use—as the criteria for successful interventions and policies.
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# Central Tenants of Harm Reduction Applied to this Process

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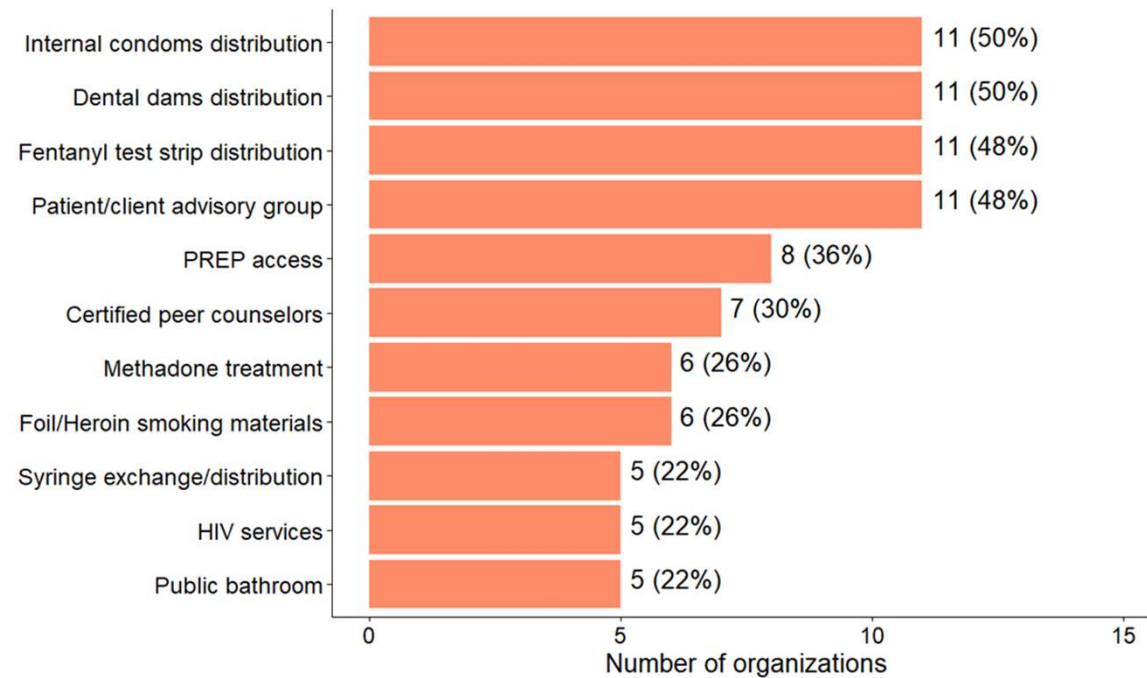
- Recognizes that the realities of poverty, class, racism, social isolation, past trauma, sex-based discrimination and other social inequalities affect both people's vulnerability to and capacity for effectively dealing with drug-related harm.

# Harm Reduction Services Survey

- Interviews with 23 agencies that serve people who use drugs in King County
- What services are needed and what are the barriers?

	Currently Offer	Would like to offer, but currently unable to	Not within our scope of service	Other
<b>Syringe Services</b>				
Syringe Exchange	7 (30%)	<b>5 (22%)</b>	9 (39%)	2 (9%)
Syringe Distribution	11 (48%)	3(13%)	7 (30%)	2 (9%)
<b>Smoking Services</b>				
Meth Pipe Distribution	7 (30%)	4 (17%)	10 (43%)	2 (9%)
Crack Pipe Distribution	7 (30%)	4 (17%)	10 (43%)	2 (9%)
Foil or other Heroin smoking materials	5 (22%)	<b>6 (26%)</b>	10 (43%)	2 (9%)
<b>Drug Checking</b>				
Fentanyl Test Strip Distribution	9 (39%)	<b>11 (48%)</b>	2 (9%)	1 (4%)
Drug Checking On Site	5 (22%)	5 (22%)	11 (48%)	2 (9%)
Drug Checking through outside lab	3 (13%)	5 (22%)	11 (48%)	3 (13%)
<b>Sexual Health</b>				
External Condoms distribution	20 (91%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
Internal condoms distribution	5 (23%)	<b>11 (50%)</b>	4 (18%)	2 (9%)
Lube distribution	12 (55%)	4 (18%)	4 (18%)	2 (9%)
Dental Dams distribution	2 (9%)	<b>11 (50%)</b>	6 (27%)	3 (14%)
PREP access	5 (23%)	<b>8 (36%)</b>	6 (27%)	3 (14%)
<b>MOUD</b>				
Methadone treatment	4 (17%)	<b>6 (26%)</b>	9 (39%)	4 (17%)
Buprenorphine treatment	17 (74%)	0 (0%)	2 (9%)	4 (17%)

# Most Requested Service Additions



# Fentanyl Test Strip Distribution

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- ❑ 12,850 Fentanyl Test Strips Distributed to Agencies
- ❑ Individuals will soon be able to request fentanyl test strips by mail
- ❑ Fentanyl overdose prevention and test strip trainings offered to partner agencies

**Coming soon:** Vending machines with naloxone and fentanyl test strips available in the community

# Questions

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