



Harm Reduction & the Overdose Emergency

KGH Physicians Society Conference – Opioid Harm Reduction – From Stigma to Respect
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Acknowledgement

I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional and unceded territory of the Sylix (Okanagan) Nation, whose lands we are learning, collaborating and working together on today.

Faculty/Presenter Disclosure

- **Lesley Coates MA, BSW**
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- **Relationships with financial sponsors:**
 - Employed by Interior Health Authority

Disclosure of Financial Support

- No disclosures
- No conflict(s) of interest

Mitigating Potential Bias

- Content is supported by Interior Health
- Programs and services mentioned are run by Interior Health

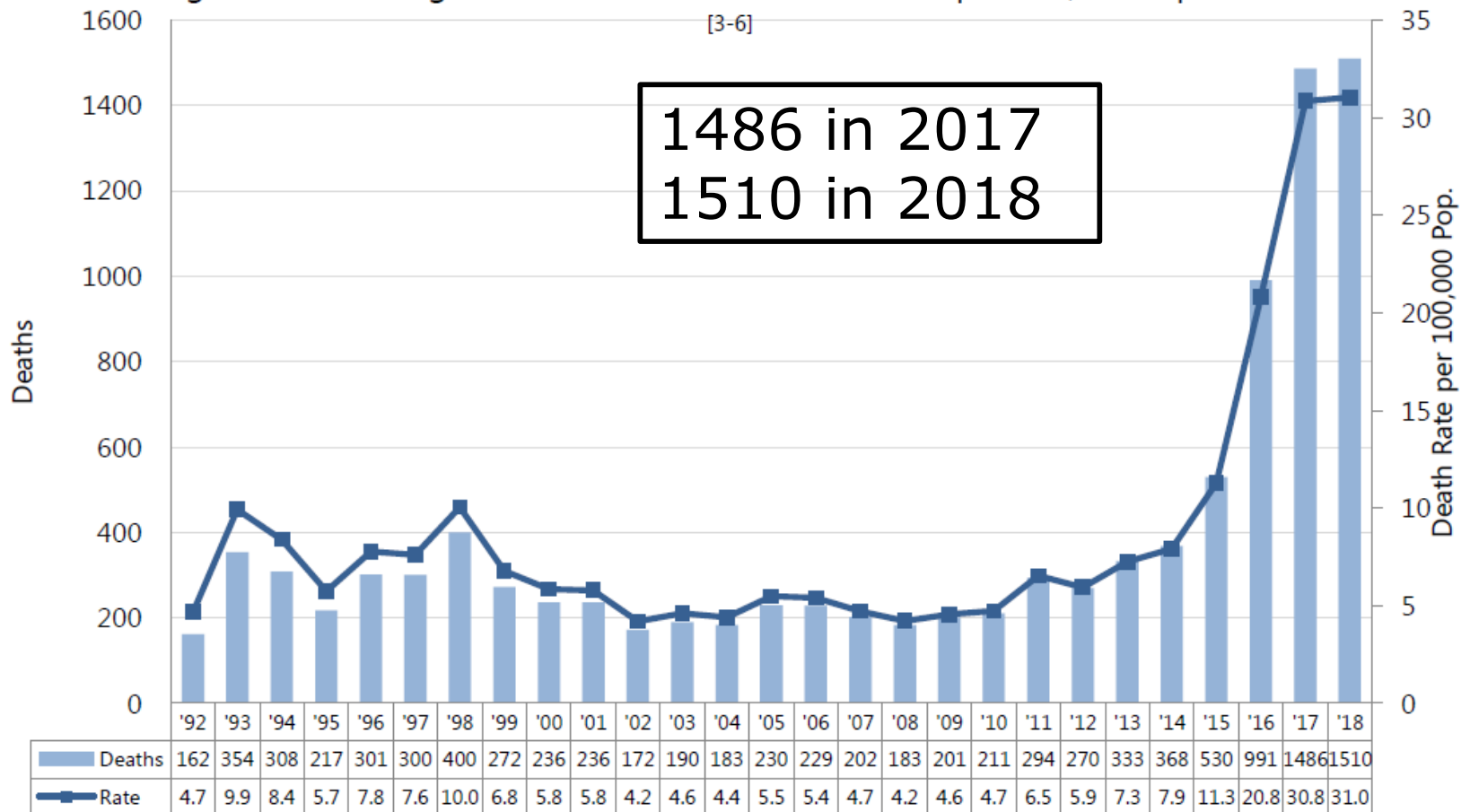
Objectives

- Understand the incidence and distribution of unintentional illicit drug overdoses in the Central Okanagan
- Articulate how harm reduction principles and practices play an important role in preventing overdose deaths
- Identify services available in the Interior Health region to prevent unintentional illicit drug overdoses
- Improve patient outcomes by reducing barriers to accessing health care for people at risk of overdose

Epidemiology of overdose

Overdose Deaths in BC

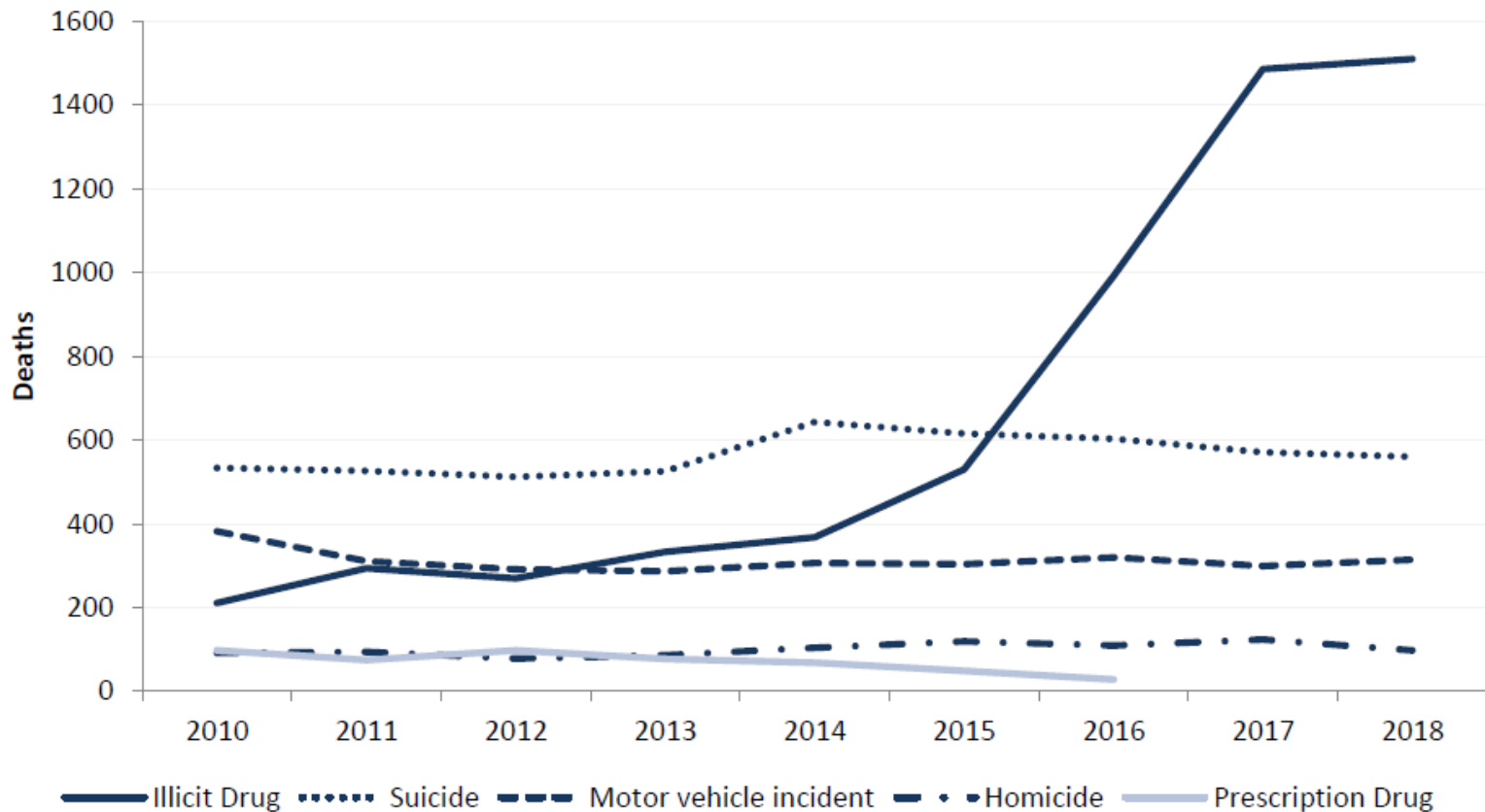
Figure 3: Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths and Death Rate per 100,000 Population



BC Coroners Service. Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths in BC, January 1, 2009 – January 31, 2019.
 Data are preliminary and subject to change.

Overdose Deaths in BC

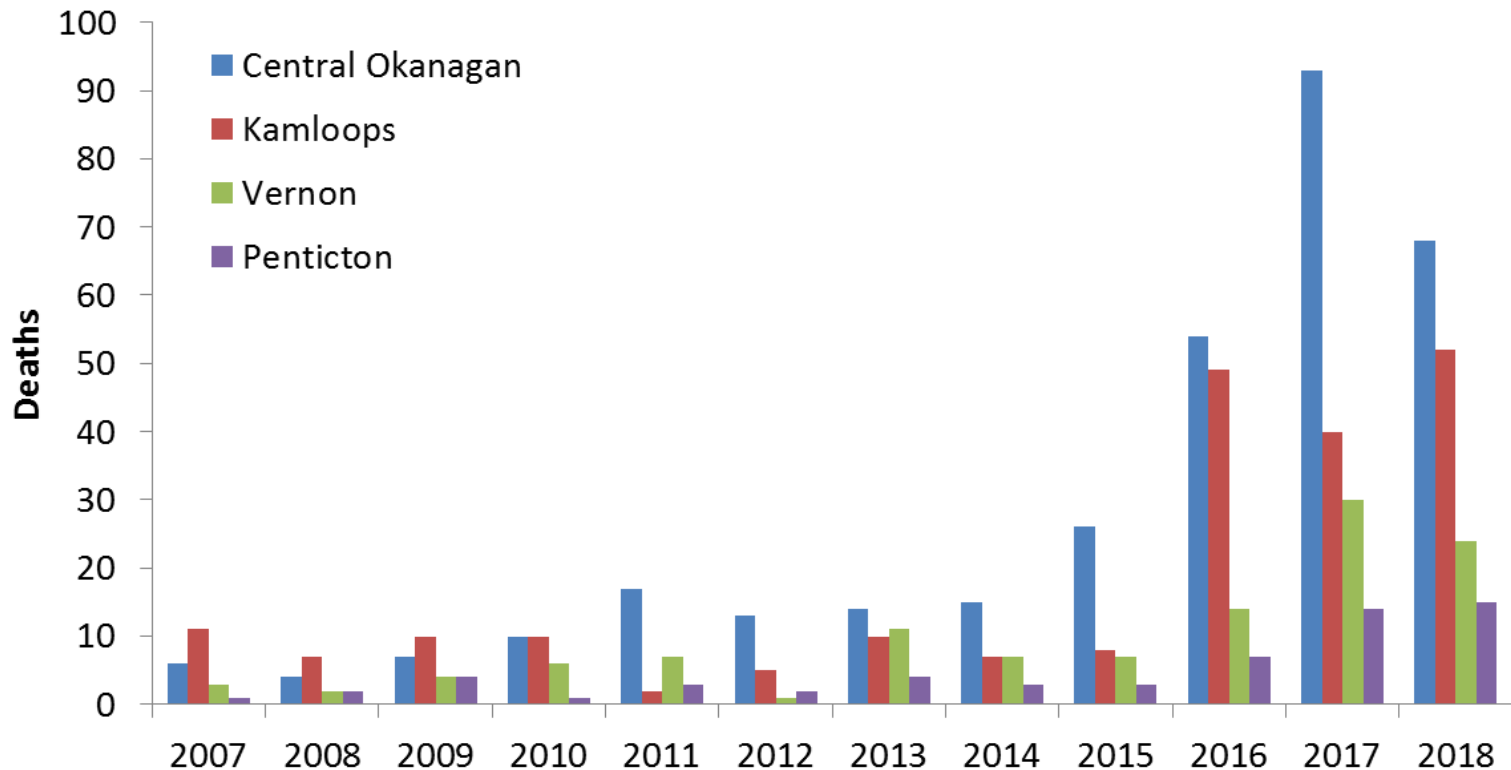
Figure 1: Major Causes of Unnatural Deaths in BC



BC Coroners Service. Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths in BC, January 1, 2009 – January 31, 2019.
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Overdose Deaths in IH by Local Health Area

Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths, Interior Health



NOTE: Annual counts 2007-2013 may not be directly comparable to the counts for 2014-2018

BC Coroners Service

Data are preliminary and subject to change.

Interior Health Context 2018

220 deaths



Demographics:

- **78%** males
- Aged **15-69 years** (avg 40)



Location:

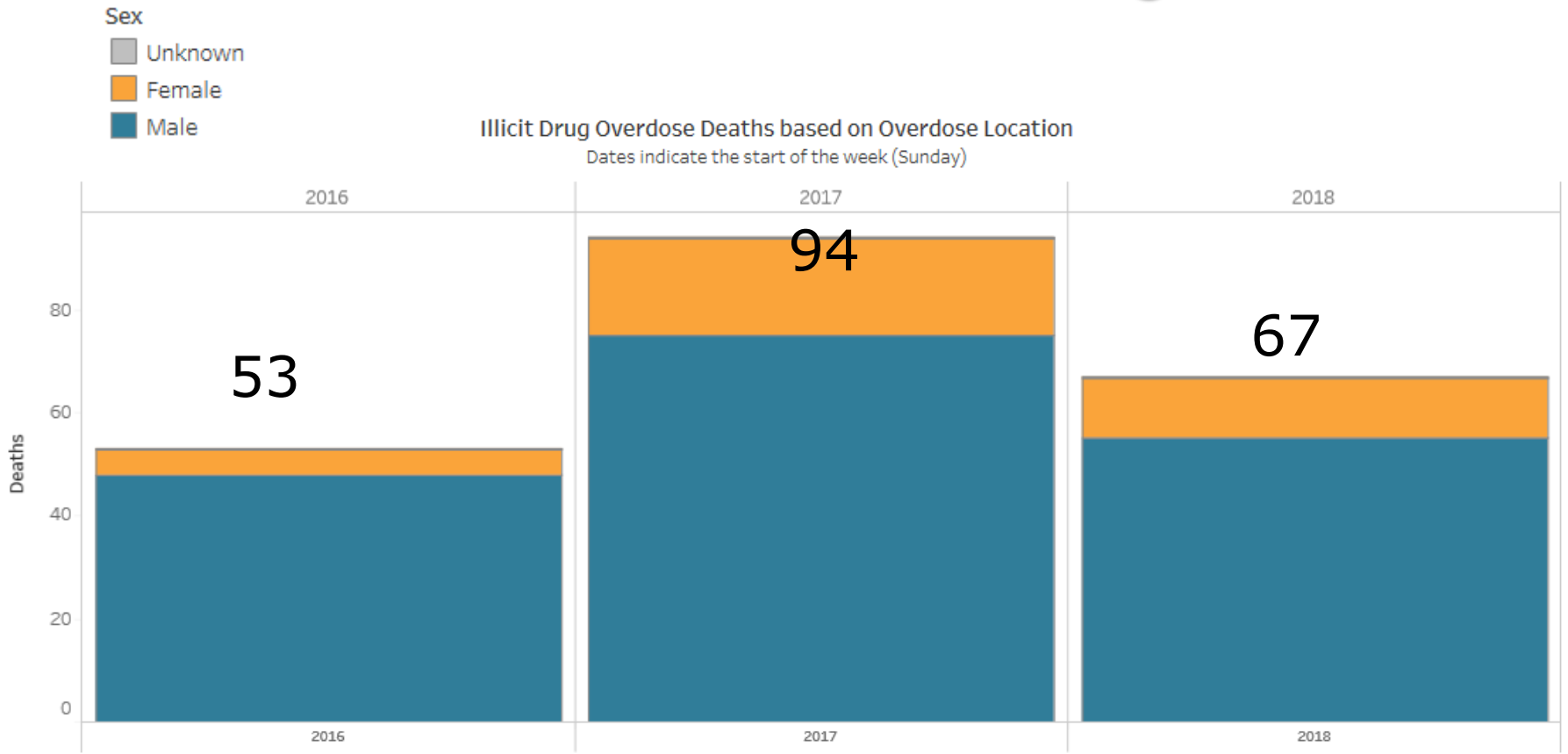
- **67%** occurred in **private residence**
- **13%** occurred in **other residence**
- **13%** occurred **outside**
- **5%** occurred **other inside**



OD Death Rate:

- **31/100,000**
- **84%** fentanyl detected

Overdose Deaths in Central Okanagan LHA



BC Coroners Service.
Data are preliminary and subject to change.

Central Okanagan LHA Context in 2018



Demographics:

Slightly more males



Location:

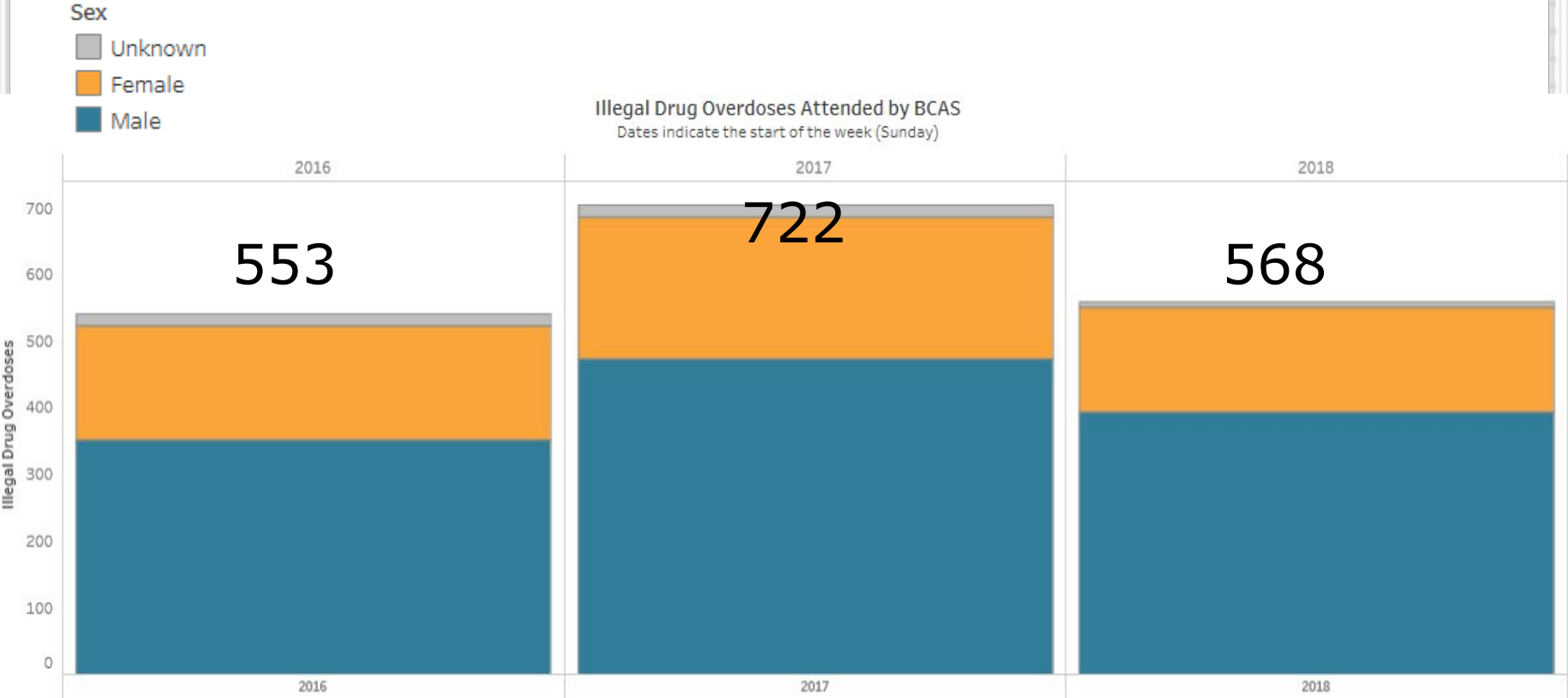
More in private residence.



OD Death Rate:

- **Higher rate than IH rate**
- **Higher fentanyl detected**

Overdoses Attended by Ambulance Central Okanagan LHA



BC Emergency Health Services.
Data are preliminary and subject to change.

Deeper understanding – BC Coroners' Investigation findings (2016-2017)

- Reviewed 136 overdose deaths in IH
 - Almost 90% used alone
 - 79% had a connection with health care services in the last year – pain and mental health
 - 60% of people experiencing a reported overdose event visited the ED in the year prior to their death

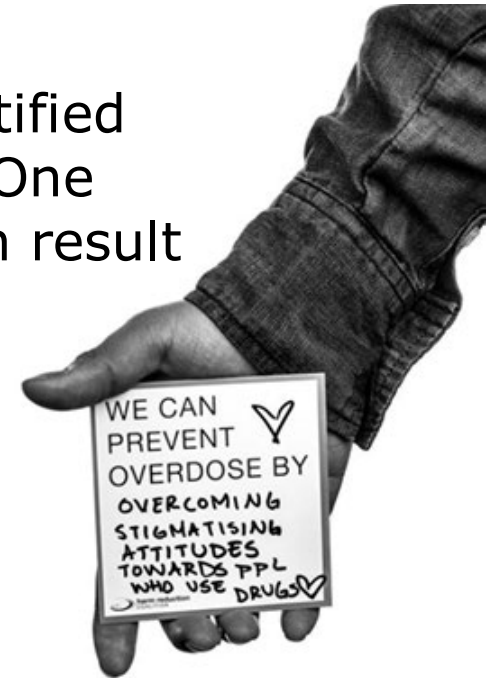


Kelowna Use Safe Campaign

Number one theme:

“Stigma, shame and judgement coupled with a tough love approach are killing people.”

“In half of all engagements participants identified being treated poorly in the medical system. One poor experience with the medical system can result in people not seeking care.”



Harm Reduction

What is Harm Reduction?

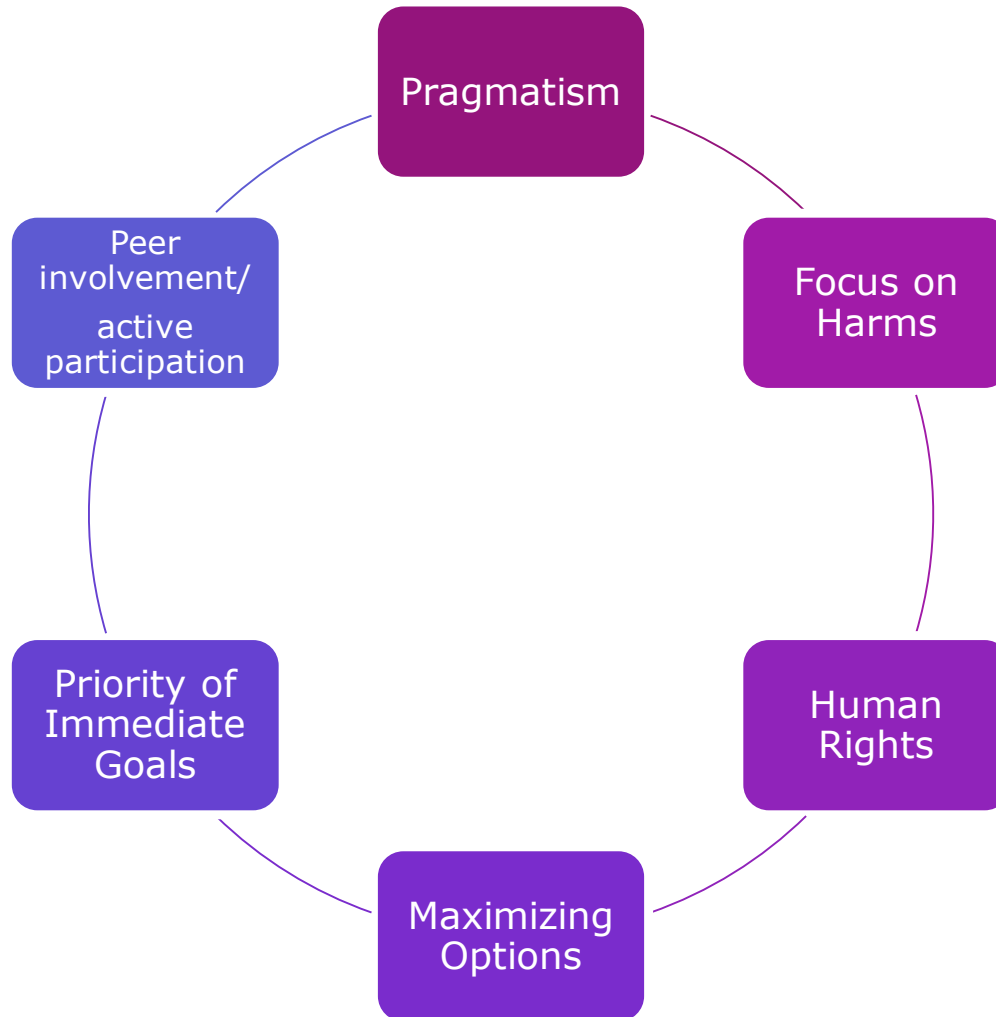
- Harm reduction is the umbrella term for programs, policies and practices that aim to **reduce the negative consequences** associated with behaviours that are typically considered high risk.
- Focused on **increasing safety** and **minimizing injury, disease and death** related to high risk behaviours such as substance use.





Harm reduction is grounded in **social justice and human rights** – it focuses on positive change and on working with people without judgement, coercion, discrimination, or requiring that they stop using drugs as a precondition of support

Principles of Harm Reduction



Services

Continuum of Substance Use

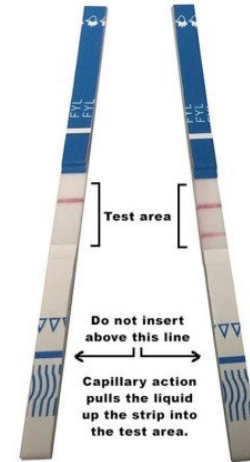


Take Home Naloxone



Approx. 3000 reported distributed in 2018 in COK

Drug Checking



ONE RED LINE MEANS POSITIVE FOR FENTANYL TWO RED LINES MEANS NEGATIVE FOR FENTANYL

Fentanyl test strips

- 7 locations in IH
- Home testing pilot

FTIR machine

- 2 locations in IH

OAT, iOAT



Supervised consumption



Trauma
Informed
Practice
Training

Harm
Reduction
Policy

New Grad
Nurses
training

Community
Action
Teams

Internal
campaigns



Improving patient outcomes

Language Matters

Another option available for addicts

Staff May 8, 2019 Updated 10 hrs ago

Harm reduction: a fairy tale

One day, some rats came to town and began causing trouble. They were taking poison, which made them act strange and even killed some of them. They stole shopping carts from stores and littered streets and parks with poison packs, creating risk, especially to children.

Entertainment

Starved to play junkie

WENN - Apr 9, 2018 / 6:21 am

HEALTH April 22, 2019 3:13 pm

Warning in B.C.'s Interior about 'trippy' drug linked to 'zombie' outbreak in U.S.

By Staff The Canadian Press

Language Matters

Use person first language

- *Person who uses drugs, person with a substance use disorder*

Reflect the medical nature

- *Substance use disorder/ sterile supplies
positive/negative test results*

Use language that empowers

- *Opted not to/ experiencing barriers to treatment.*

Avoid slang or idioms (junkie, dirty, clean)

Harm Reduction in Practice

- Understand substance use as a way of coping and assess what can be done to reduce the risk.
- View every health care encounter as an opportunity to change the trajectory of someone's substance use and life.
- Ensure that the use of substances does not preclude someone from receiving high quality care

Questions?

