

# Monthly Overdose Surveillance - Public Update

Release Date: January 2021

This **monthly** update summarizes data on illegal drug overdoses reported to Island Health. Unless otherwise specified, data are presented for the Island Health region overall. How up to date the data are varies by source. Notes on data sources are provided on page 9. Symbols used on this page include: higher than (↑), lower than (↓), and similar to (~).

## Coroners Service



**11** Deaths (November 2020)  
 ↓ the average for previous 12 Months (23 Deaths)  
**56%** of deaths occurred in **private residences** (2020 Year to date)  
**85%** were **male** (2020 Year to Date)

**Data Available to:** November 2020  
**Page:** 2

## Emergency Departments (ED)



**142** Overdoses Seen at EDs (December 2020)  
 ↑ the average for the previous 12 months (107 visits)  
**75%** were **male** (2020 Year to date)

**Data Available to:** December 2020  
**Page:** 3

## Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) & Overdose Prevention Services (OPS)



**14,640** visits (December 2020)  
**19** Overdoses Survived Inside SCS & OPS Sites (December 2020)  
 ↓ the average for the previous 12 months (25 Overdoses)  
**79%** were **male** (2020 Year to date)

**Data Available to:** December 2020  
**Pages:** 4-5

## BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS)



**231** Overdoses Attended by BCEHS Paramedics (November 2020)  
 ↑ the average for the previous 12 months (208 Overdoses)  
**74%** were **male** (2020 Year to date)

**Data Available to:** November 2020  
**Page:** 6

## Take Home Naloxone (THN)



**852** THN Kits Distributed (June 2020)

**Data Available to:** June 2020 (Kits) & October 2020 (Sites)  
**Page:** 7

## Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT)



**93** New & **4,495** Active Clients (October 2020)  
**22** New & **323** Active Prescribers (October 2020)

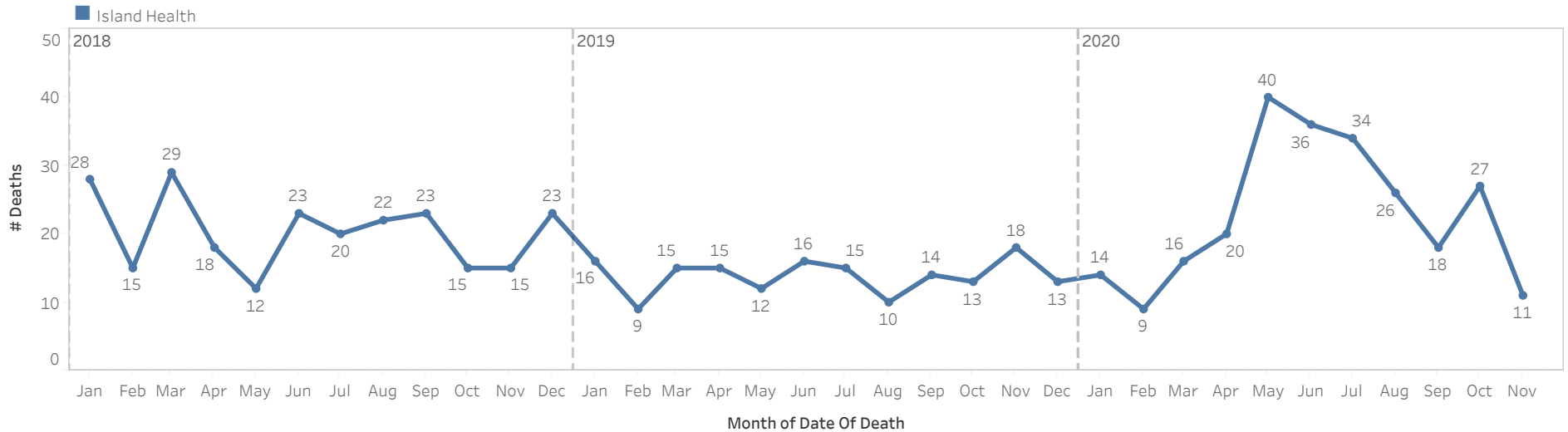
**Data Available to:** October 2020  
**Page:** 8

**Notes on Data Sources**

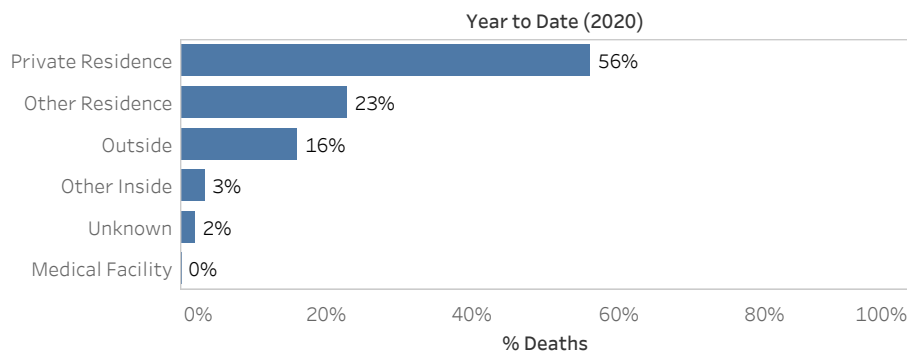
**Page:** 9



**Figure 1** Number of Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Month  
January 2018 to November 2020



**Figure 2** Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Location of Overdose\*  
Year to Date (November 2020)



**Table 1** Sex and Age of Individuals Who Died Following Illicit Drug Toxicity  
Year to Date (November 2020)

Sex	<19	19-39	40+	Average Age
Male	4 (2%)	101 (40%)	146 (58%)	43
Female				43
				Median Age

For most recent BC Coroners Service public report on Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths in BC see: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/life-events/death/coroners-service/statistical-reports>

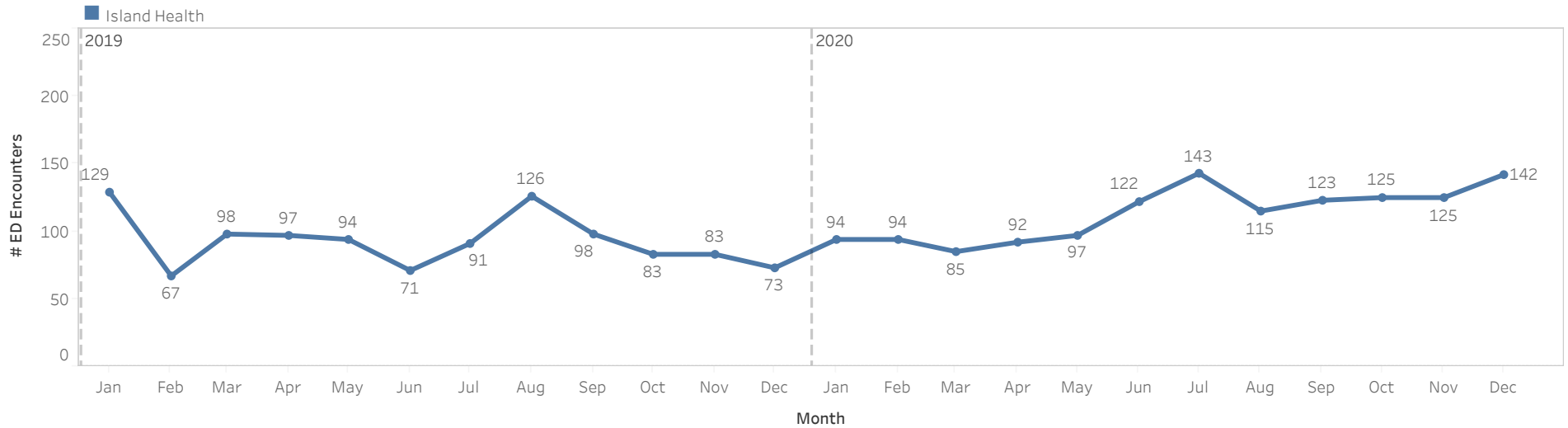
\***Private Residence** - Driveways, garages, trailer homes, retirement/senior residence, and private residence; **Other Residence** - Hotels, motels, rooming houses, halfway homes, safe house and social housing; **Other Inside** - Facilities, occupational sites, public buildings and businesses; and **Outside** - Vehicles, streets, sidewalks, parking lots, public parks, wooded areas and campgrounds; **Medical Facility** - Hospital, hospital: emergency, and specialized care: mental.

<https://www.islandhealth.ca/overdose>

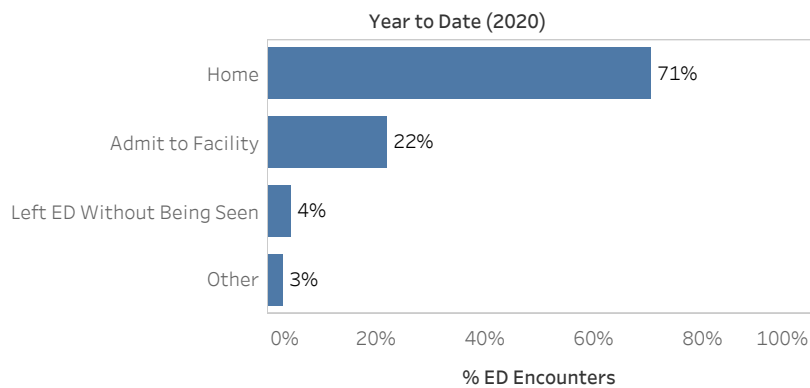


## Emergency Departments (ED)

**Figure 3** Number of Suspected Opioid-Associated Overdoses Seen at Island Health EDs by Month  
January 2019 to December 2020



**Figure 4** Location Where Clients Went After ED Visit  
Year to Date (December 2020)



**Table 2** Gender and Age of Individuals Seen at EDs Following Suspected Opioid-Associated Overdose  
Year to Date (December 2020)

Gender	<19	19 - 39	40+
Male	57 (4%)	718 (53%)	572 (42%)
Female	341 (25%)		

45

Average Age

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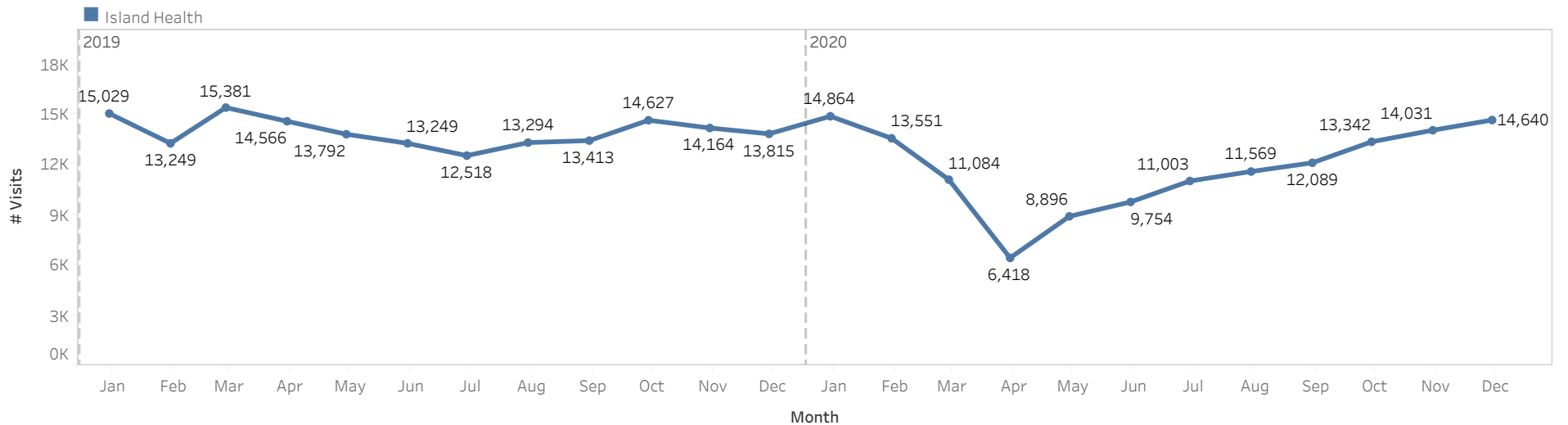
37

Median Age



## Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) & Overdose Prevention Services (OPS) Visits

**Figure 5** Number of Reported Visits to Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) Sites & Overdose Prevention Services (OPS) Sites by Month (all sites combined)  
January 2019 to December 2020



**Table 3** Number of Reported Visits, New Clients, and Return Visits to the Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) Sites & Overdose Prevention Services (OPS)

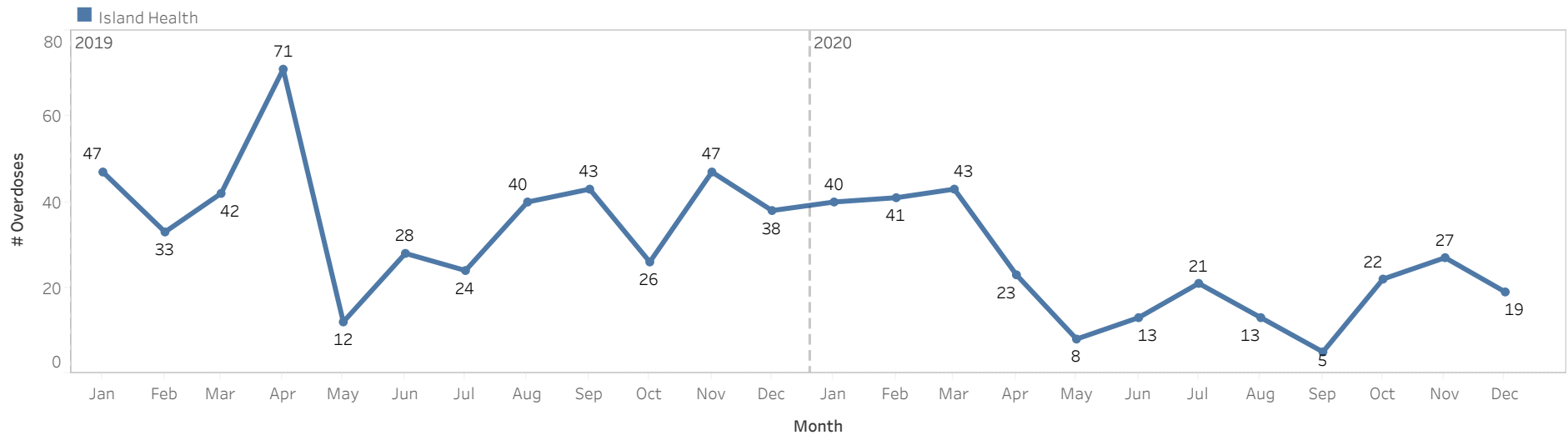
December 2020, Year to Date, and Total Visits to Date

December	Year to Date (2020)	Total Visits to Date
14,640	141,241	522,134



## Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) & Overdose Prevention Services (OPS) Overdoses

**Figure 6** Number of Reported Overdoses **Inside** Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) Sites & Overdose Prevention Services (OPS) Sites by Month (all sites combined) January 2019 to December 2020



**Table 4** Number of Overdoses **Inside** Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) Sites & Overdose Prevention Services (OPS) Sites December 2020, Year to Date, and Overdoses to Date

December	Year to Date (2020)	Total Overdoses to Date
19	275	1,755

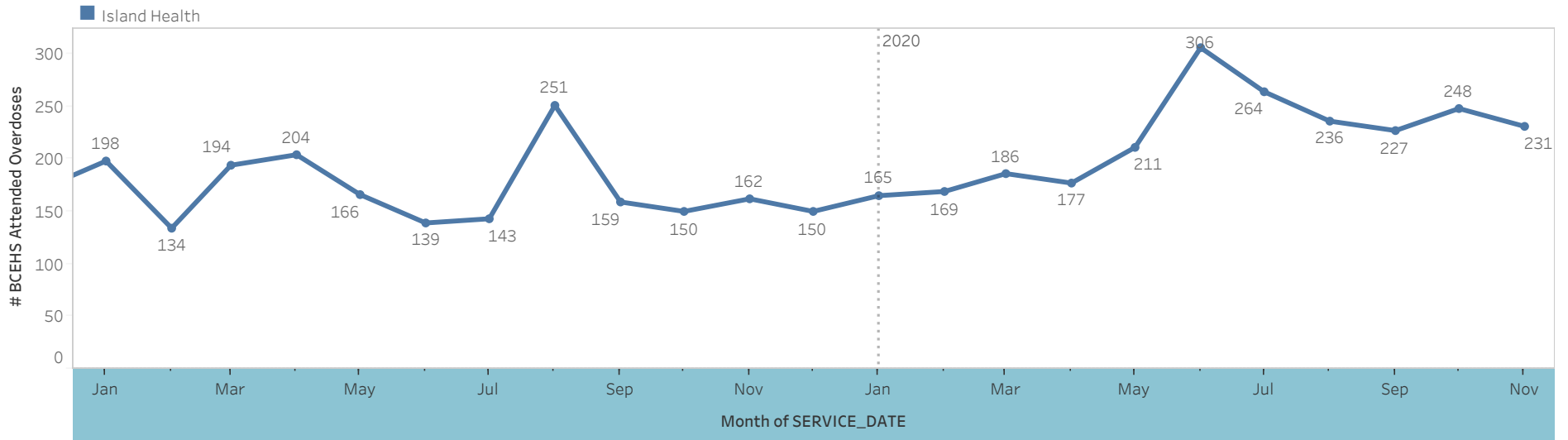
**Table 5** Gender and Age of Overdose Cases Inside Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) Sites & Overdose Prevention Services (OPS) Sites Year to Date (December 2020)

Male	Female	<19	19-39	40 +
203 (79%)	53 (21%)	7 (3%)	164 (61%)	100 (37%)

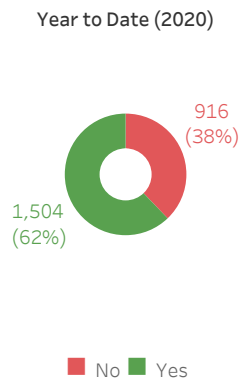
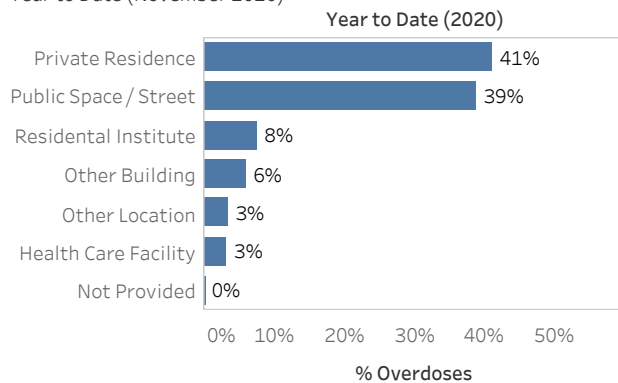


# BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS)

**Figure 7** Number of Overdoses Attended by BCEHS Paramedics  
January 2019 to November 2020



**Figure 8** Location of Pick-Up by BCEHS Paramedics and Proportion Transported to EDs  
Year to Date (November 2020)



**Table 6** Gender and Age of Overdose Cases Attended by BCEHS Paramedics  
Year to Date (November 2020)

	Male	Female	<19	19-39	40+
Count	1,787	621	80	1,203	999
Proportion (%)	(74%)	(26%)	(4%)	(53%)	(44%)

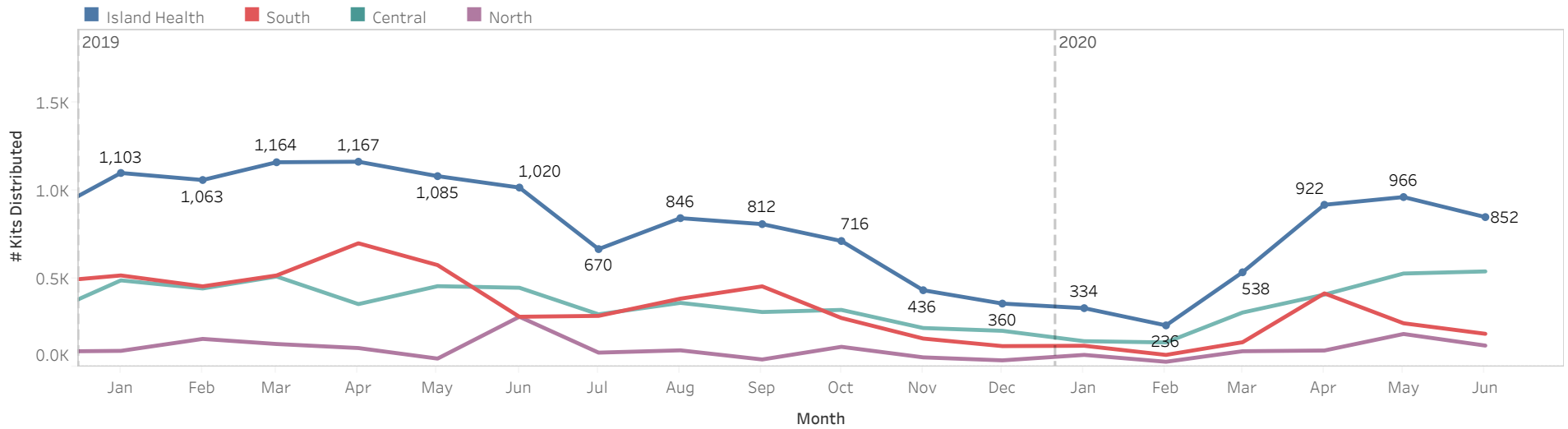
**36.9**  
Average Age

**36**  
Median Age

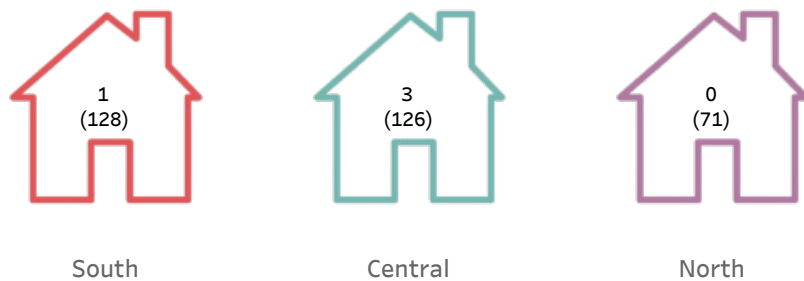


# Take Home Naloxone (THN)

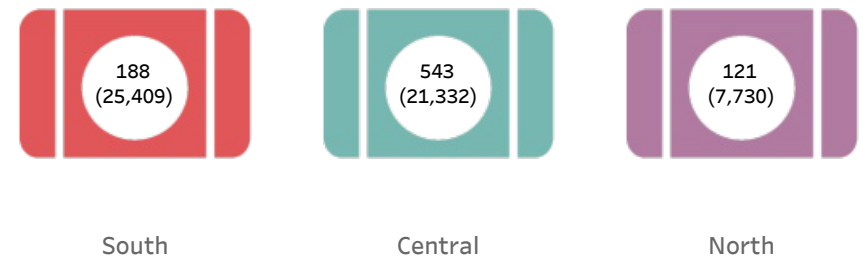
**Figure 7** Number of THN Kits Distributed by Island Health and Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA)  
January 2019 to June 2020



**Figure 8** THN Sites by HSDA  
New Active Sites in October 2020 (Total Active Sites to Date)



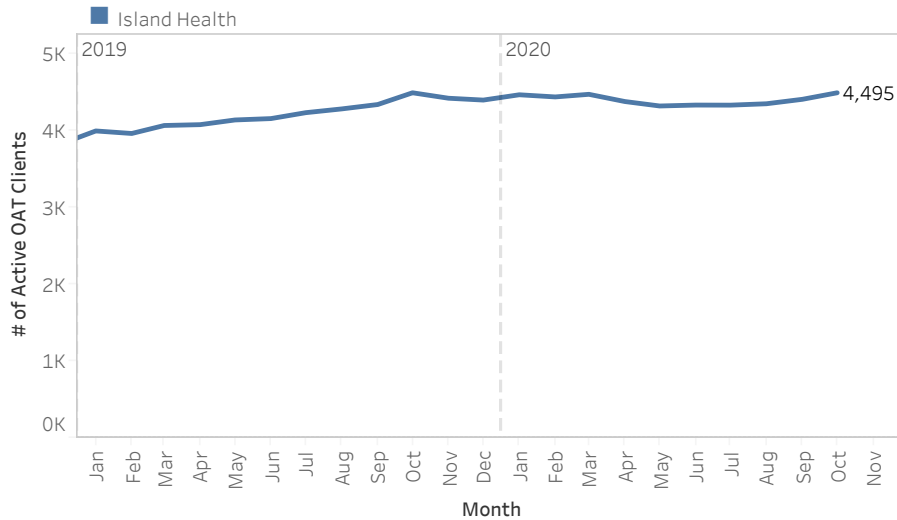
**Figure 9** Number of THN Kits Distributed by HSDA  
Kits Distributed in June 2020 (Total Kits to Date)



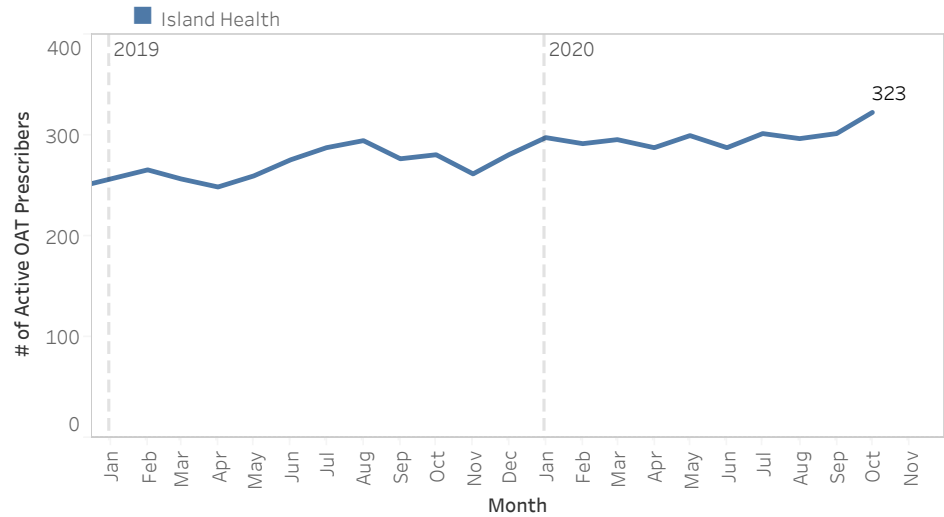


# Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT)\*

**Figure 10** Number of Active OAT Clients  
January 2019 to October 2020



**Figure 11** Number of Active OAT Prescribers  
January 2019 to October 2020



**Table 6** Number of New OAT Clients  
October 2020 and Year to Date

October	Year to Date (2020)
93	679



**Table 7** Number of New OAT Prescribers  
October 2020 and Year to Date

October	Year to Date (2020)
22	171

\*Methadone, buprenorphine/naloxone and sustained release oral morphine, diacetylmorphine, and hydromorphone

Definitions:

**Active OAT Clients** have been dispensed an OAT that drug at least once in a given month.

**New OAT Clients** have been dispensed an OAT drug in a given month AND they have no prior PharmaNet record for that drug.

**Active OAT Prescribers** have at least one client who has filled an OAT prescription in a given month.

**New OAT Prescribers** have at least one client who has filled an OAT prescription in a given month AND the prescriber has not prescribed that drug type in the past.

<https://www.islandhealth.ca/overdose>

Prepared by the Office of the Chief Medical Health Officer





## Coroners Service

- Illicit drug toxicity deaths (terminology as used by the BC Coroners Service Report) reported by the Coroner include overdoses involving street drugs (heroin, cocaine, MDMA, methamphetamine, etc.), medications not prescribed to the deceased, combinations of the above, with prescribed medications, and those overdoses where the origin of the drug is unknown. Both open and closed cases are included. The BC Coroners Service report can be found here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/life-events/death/coroners-service/statistical-reports>
- Location descriptions for Figure 2 (Page 2). **Private Residence** - Driveways, garages, trailer homes, retirement/senior residence, and private residence; **Other Residence** - Hotels, motels, rooming houses, halfway homes, safe house and social housing; **Other Inside** - Facilities, occupational sites, public buildings and businesses; and **Outside** - Vehicles, streets, sidewalks, parking lots, public parks, wooded areas and campgrounds; **Medical Facility** - Hospital, hospital: emergency, and specialized care: mental.



## Emergency Departments (ED)

- Figure 3 includes both Cerner FirstNet and Non-FirstNet facilities (13 sites).
- Table 2 and figure 4 include Cerner FirstNet facilities only (8 sites). Overdoses for Cerner FirstNet sites are identified using a syndromic surveillance algorithm. The algorithm is based on key word searches within the Chief Complaint/Mechanism of Injury, CEDIS Presenting Complaint or Visit Reason data fields.
- Cerner FirstNet facilities are as follows: Campbell River Hospital, Cowichan District Hospital, Comox Valley Hospital, Nanaimo Regional General Hospital, Royal Jubilee Hospital, Saanich Peninsula Hospital, Victoria General Hospital, and West Coast General Hospital.



## Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) and Overdose Prevention Services (OPS)

- Visits and overdoses are reported by Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) sites and Overdose Prevention Services (OPS) sites on a weekly basis.
- Days and hours of operation vary across the 9 sites in operation. The Harbour opened June 18, 2018. Our Place closed July 6, 2018.



## BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS)

- BCCDC provides data on ambulance attended illegal drug overdose events as recorded in the BC Ambulance Service PCR data with paramedic information suggesting illegal drug overdose. There is an inherent data entry delay by several months. Most recent month shown may be an underestimate.
- The case definition was revised May 2019: In PCIS, overdose cases are identified based on naloxone administration OR paramedic impression codes 'Recreational Drug Overdose' AND CARDS 9 [cardiac or respiratory arrest], 23 [overdose/ingestion poisoning], 26 [sick] or 31 [unconscious]], OR impression code: 'Cardiac Arrest: Treated' AND CARD 23 [overdose/ingestion poisoning]. In SIREN, overdose cases are identified based on naloxone administration OR impression code: 'Opioid Related', 'Opioid Related/Overdose', OR impression code: 'Cardiac Arrest' AND CARD 23 [overdose/ingestion poisoning].



## Take Home Naloxone (THN)

- The Provincial Take Home Naloxone program began in August, 2012
- A site is considered active if registered in and approved by the BC Naloxone Program. Sites are excluded from the count if designated as inactive by the program or if the site closes permanently for other reasons.
- THN sites are expected to return distribution records on a regular basis. Distribution numbers represent the number of kits distributed according to records returned by THN sites.



## Opioid Agonist Therapy

- Data from PharmaNet (BC Ministry of Health) is used to monitor uptake of OAT in British Columbia
- **New OAT Clients:** A client has been dispensed a drug in a given month AND they have no prior PharmaNet record for that drug.
- **Active OAT Clients:** A client is considered to be on a particular OAT drug when they have been dispensed that drug at least once in a given month. Data represents clients who filled prescriptions, not all clients who were written prescriptions.
- **New OAT Prescribers:** When at least one client has filled an OAT prescription in a given month AND the clinician has not prescribed that drug type in the past.
- **Active OAT Prescribers:** When at least one client has filled an OAT prescription in a given month.

For comparisons to other BC Regional Health Authorities see BC Centre for Disease Control Overdose Response Indicators: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/data-reports/overdose-response-indicators>  
 For reports relating to THN and FORB programs, including the BC CDC THN Annual Report 2018: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/data-reports/harm-reduction-and-substance-use>