

Monthly Opioid Update – July 2020

Vermont’s multi-faceted approach to addressing substance use disorder involves coordination between multiple state agencies and community partners in the areas of prevention, treatment, recovery and law enforcement.

Access to Treatment

9,004 Estimated Vermonters age 18+ receiving MAT in **hubs and spokes** Q1 2020*

0 People waiting for hub services**

15-20k Estimated people with OUD in need of treatment (includes people in treatment)

Research shows that MAT is the most effective treatment for OUD.

Drug Disposal

85 Drug disposal locations available statewide*

11,194 Pounds of drugs collected in state-funded programs between July 2019 and June 2020**

Most people who misuse prescription opioids get them from friends or family. Convenient disposal options may decrease misuse of unused prescriptions.

Overdoses (Accidental)

Fatal Overdoses

61 2020 opioid fatalities as of May 2020 compared to 41 as of May 2019**

80% Of 2020 fatal overdoses involve fentanyl, through May 2020**

Nonfatal Overdoses

29.3 Rate of nonfatal opioid overdoses per 10,000 ED visits in May 2020** compared to the May 2019 rate of 27.5

People who die from accidental overdoses may have more than one substance in their system.

Prescription Monitoring

Vermont Total MME Dispensed



46% Reduction in opioid analgesics dispensed between Q1 2016 and Q1 2020*

3.9% Of Vermont population received opioid analgesics in Q1 2020

Nearly 80% of people who use heroin had previously misused prescription opioids. Limiting use to the minimum medically necessary amount is best practice.

Recent Highlights

- Medication assisted treatment for opioid use disorders among people enrolled in Medicaid has continued to increase during the COVID-19 emergency even as other types of substance use disorder treatment has decreased.
- The [Q1 2020 VPMS report](#) shows that the amount of opioid pain relievers dispensed decreased, likely due to the impact of COVID-19 on medical service provision. Benzodiazepine dispensing increased.
- The [2018 VPMS report](#) has been published and the [Naloxone data brief](#) has been updated.

Messaging

- New promotion of VTHelpLink to connect Vermonters to free and confidential information and referral services for substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery.

Sources: Vital Statistics; ESSENCE; VPMS; SATIS; program reporting. Some data are preliminary and subject to change.

* Data updated quarterly

** Data updated monthly

Acronyms

ADAP – Alcohol & Drug Abuse Programs
BRFSS – Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System
CDC – Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
ED – Emergency Department
MAT – Medication Assisted Treatment
MME – Morphine Milligram Equivalent
OD – Overdose
SAMHSA – Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
VPMS – Vermont Prescription Monitoring System
YRBS – Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Definitions

Hub – Regional programs that provide intensive opioid use disorder treatment options, including high intensity Medication Assisted Treatment, and maintain strong connections to area Spokes. There are nine Hubs in Vermont.

Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) – The use of methadone, buprenorphine, or naltrexone, in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, to treat opioid use disorder.

Morphine Milligram Equivalent (MME) – The amount of morphine equivalent to the strength of the opioid dispensed. Using MME allows comparison between types and strengths of opioids.

Opioid Analgesic – Narcotic pain medication

Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) – Recurrent use of opioids causes clinically and functionally significant impairment, such as health problems, disability, and failure to meet major responsibilities at work, school, or home.

Spoke – Office-based opioid treatment settings located in communities across Vermont. At many Spokes, opioid use disorder treatment is fully integrated into general healthcare and wellness services.

More Information

healthvermont.gov/scorecard-opioids

healthvermont.gov/RxAware

healthvermont.gov/opioids

healthvermont.gov/ADAPReports

healthvermont.gov/YRBS

References

healthvermont.gov/DoYourPart

www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm

www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/relationship-between-prescription-drug-heroin-abuse/prescription-opioid-use-risk-factor-heroin-use