

# Monthly Opioid Update – September 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

**8,959** Estimated Vermonters age 18+ receiving MAT in **hubs and spokes** Q2 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\*

**10,057** Pounds of drugs collected in state-funded programs between September 2019 and August 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

**82** 2020 opioid fatalities as of July 2020 compared to 60 as of July 2019\*\*

**87%** Of 2020 fatal overdoses involve fentanyl, through July 2020\*\*

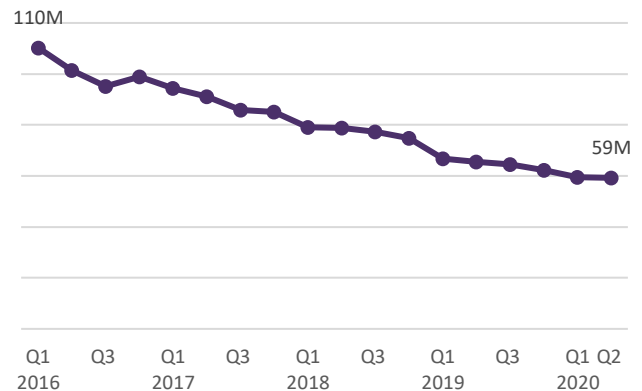
### Nonfatal Overdoses

**29.1** Rate of nonfatal opioid overdoses per 10,000 ED visits in July 2020\*\* compared to the July 2019 rate of 15.1

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 Q2 2020\*

**3.6%** Of Vermont population received opioid analgesics in Q2 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

- Three new briefs based on a Vermont opioid user harm reduction evaluation were published. Topics include [stimulant use](#), [initiation of opioid use](#), and [perception of calling 911 for an overdose event](#).

## Messaging

- The Vermont Department of Health’s prescription opioid campaigns "Do Your Part" and "Over the Dose" will be included in the CDC’s new Opioid Resource Exchange (ORE) scheduled to launch this fall. ORE is an online catalog of opioid-related materials for other states to search, reference, or adapt.

## 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** – Opioid Use Disorder

**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](https://healthvermont.gov/scorecard-opioids)

[healthvermont.gov/RxAware](https://healthvermont.gov/RxAware)

[healthvermont.gov/opioids](https://healthvermont.gov/opioids)

[healthvermont.gov/ADAPReports](https://healthvermont.gov/ADAPReports)

[healthvermont.gov/YRBS](https://healthvermont.gov/YRBS)

## References

[healthvermont.gov/DoYourPart](https://healthvermont.gov/DoYourPart)

[www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm](https://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](https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/relationship-between-prescription-drug-heroin-abuse/prescription-opioid-use-risk-factor-heroin-use)