

Opioids

Overview

Opioid use disorder has reached epidemic levels in Washington State and across the country. This public health issue is impacting state and local government, communities, health systems and, most importantly, individuals and families.

In response, Governor Inslee issued [Executive Order 16-09](#) in October of 2016, directing state agencies to work with local public health, tribal governments and other partners to implement an opioid response plan.

The Department of Health and state partners developed the [State Opioid Response Plan](#), focused of four priority goals:

- Prevent opioid misuse and addiction
- Identify and treat opioid use disorder
- Prevent deaths from overdose
- Use data to detect opioid misuse/abuse, monitor illness, injury and death, and evaluate interventions

The plan was revised July 2018 and is being implemented across the state.

Current Health Status

- Opioid overdose deaths are the leading cause of accidental death in many parts of our state. In 2016 there were 694 deaths due to opioid overdose in Washington.*
- Preliminary data for 2017 indicate continued decrease in prescription opioid overdoses and increase in synthetic opioid overdoses.
- According to the 2016 Healthy Youth Survey, 3 to 4% of Washington youth reported using heroin at least once in their lifetime, and 4-5% used pain medication recreationally in any given month.* National data from [Monitoring the Future Study](#) show youth opioid use decreasing.
- Major Washington cities show the highest numbers of overdose deaths, but rates per total population are higher in some rural counties.*

Opioids Resources

Current Work and Initiatives

Opioids

Emerging Issues

Health Equity Concerns

Key Data and Sources

Recommended Strategies

Contact Us

Contact us at P4IPH@doh.wa.gov

[Go to the Health Focus Areas Menu.](#)

* Sources:

DOH 346-083 May 2017

Washington State Department of Health, [2016 Healthy Youth Survey Data Brief](#)

Washington State Department of Health, Opioid-related Deaths in Washington State, 2006–2016, DOH 346-083 May 2017