

January 2022

BCEHS consistently monitors the overdose call volumes in B.C. This is a snapshot of current data for paramedic-attended overdose calls across the province.

Overdose calls in BC

2021	35,525 (up 31%)
2020	27,067 (up 12%)
2019	24,166 (up 2%)
2018	23,662
2017	23,441 (up 22%)
2016	19,275 (up 57% crisis declared)
2015	12,263

- **2004 - 2015:** Prior to 2016, overdose calls in B.C. fluctuated from 10,000 to 15,000 calls a year.

Overdose Calls Per Day

In 2021, BCEHS paramedics responded to an **average of 97** overdose calls per day in B.C. The 2020 average was 74 overdose calls a day.

Overdose Calls by Health Authority Region

The Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health regions have the highest number of overdose calls, as the two Health Authorities serve about 50 per cent of BC’s population. Every Health Authority had an increase in overdose calls in 2021; Northern Health had the smallest increase at 16%, and well below the provincial increase of 31%. Interior Health and Island Health have relatively similar overdose call volumes.

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
VCHA	6,714	8,697	8,686	9,407	9,041	11,204
FHA	5,927	6,554	6,513	6,478	7,272	10,573
VIHA	3,122	3,821	4,102	3,852	4,466	5,917
IHA	2,599	3,284	3,129	3,097	4,211	5,417
NHA	913	1,085	1,232	1,332	2,077	2,414

Top Five Communities for Overdose Calls

BCEHS dispatch receives the most calls for overdoses from our largest metro centres: Vancouver, Surrey, and Victoria consistently record the most overdose calls.

Vancouver recorded an average of more than **800 overdose calls a month** during 2021.

Vancouver: 9,993 (up 23%)

Surrey: 3,674 (up 49%)

Victoria: 1,952 (up 24%)

Kelowna: 1,588 (up 36%)

Abbotsford: 1,368 (up 46%).

Highest Overdose Months

In July 2021, paramedics in B.C. responded to the highest number of overdoses ever recorded in a single month - **3,606 overdose calls**.

The summer of 2021 recorded the highest number of overdose calls, with June, July, August, and September each recording more than 3,000 overdoses in each month.

- The average monthly call volume, prior to the pandemic, had been about 2,000 overdose calls a month.