

January, 2021

BCEHS is consistently monitoring the potential overdose/poisoning call numbers. This is a snapshot of current data for paramedic-attended overdose call volumes across the province.

Overdose calls in BC

2020 27,067 (up 12% over last year)
2019 24,166
2018 23,662
2017 23,441
2016 19,275
2015 12,263

- **2004 - 2015:** Overdose calls in B.C. fluctuated from 10,000 to 15,000 a year.
- **2016:** BCEHS saw a dramatic increase in overdose call volumes (19,275).
- **2017:** Paramedics called to 23,441 overdose calls, representing a 21.6% increase from 2016.
- **2018:** Overdose call volumes plateaued, and the year ended with 221 more calls than in 2017 (23,662)
- **2019:** Overdose calls remained steady (up 2%) (24,166)
- **2020:** Overdose calls spiked during the pandemic with the highest number of overdose calls to date (27,067) up 12%.

Overdose Calls by Health Authority Region

The Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health regions have the highest number of overdose calls; these regions serve more than 50% of BC's population.

Vancouver Coastal was the only region to have a *decrease* in overdose calls in 2020. The Northern Health region had significantly higher overdose call volumes, up 56%.

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

Overdose Calls Per Day

BCEHS paramedics responded to an average of **74** overdose/poisoning calls per day in B.C. during 2020.

Highest Overdose Month

In July 2020, paramedics in B.C. responded to the highest number of overdose calls ever recorded in a month, since the opioid crisis was officially declared in 2016.

Paramedics were called to 2,706 overdose calls in July; 87 overdose calls a day.

- The average monthly call volume had been about 2,000 calls a month.

Top Five Communities for Overdose Calls

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

Vancouver averages about **22** overdose calls a day to BCEHS paramedics

In Vancouver

2020	8,144 (decrease)
2019	8,589
2018	7,895

In Surrey

2020	2,467
2019	2,151
2018	2,473

In Victoria

2020	1,569
2019	1,412
2018	1,531

Kelowna

2020	1,168
2019	869
2018	928

Prince George

2020	999
2019	626
2018	594