

## Public ED Enhanced Surveillance - Opioid or Suspected Opioid Overdoses in Northern Health:

Updated: January 6, 2021



Opioid or suspected opioid overdose (OD) case definition: a physiological event induced by the suspected introduction of an opioid into the body of a person that results in life-threatening situation and that a reasonable person would believe requires emergency medical assistance.

The data in this report comes from the Emergency Department (ED) Opioid OD Enhanced Surveillance System. Enhanced surveillance of ODs was implemented in response to the OD public health emergency declared by the Provincial Health Officer in April 2016. Data collection began on June 13, 2016 at all Northern Health Emergency Departments and Health Centres. To date we have had **2,079 overdoses** reported to Public Health.

Figure 1 shows OD counts by week. Figure 2 provides a geographical picture of where OD's are reported. Figure 3 provides OD counts by reporting ED community. ED's with less than 5 cases reporting in a quarter are suppressed to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of the patients.

**\*\*A new data collection form was implemented in May 2018 that reduced the number of data elements reported to public health; the patients history of drug use, drug(s) used, and location of use/overdose are no longer tracked.\*\***

This report only includes individuals who present to an ED with an overdose that is known or suspected to be an opioid. Individuals who overdose in the community and do **not** go to an ED are not presented in these numbers. Therefore, caution should be used when generalizing these findings to all overdoses that occur in Northern Health.

**Data are subject to change.**

For more information please go to the BCCDC site at: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/harm-reduction/overdose-data-reports>

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Prepared by: Public Health  
Epidemiologist

Figure 1: Overdose Emergency Department Visits by Week  
(Date Reflects Start of the week: Monday - Sunday)

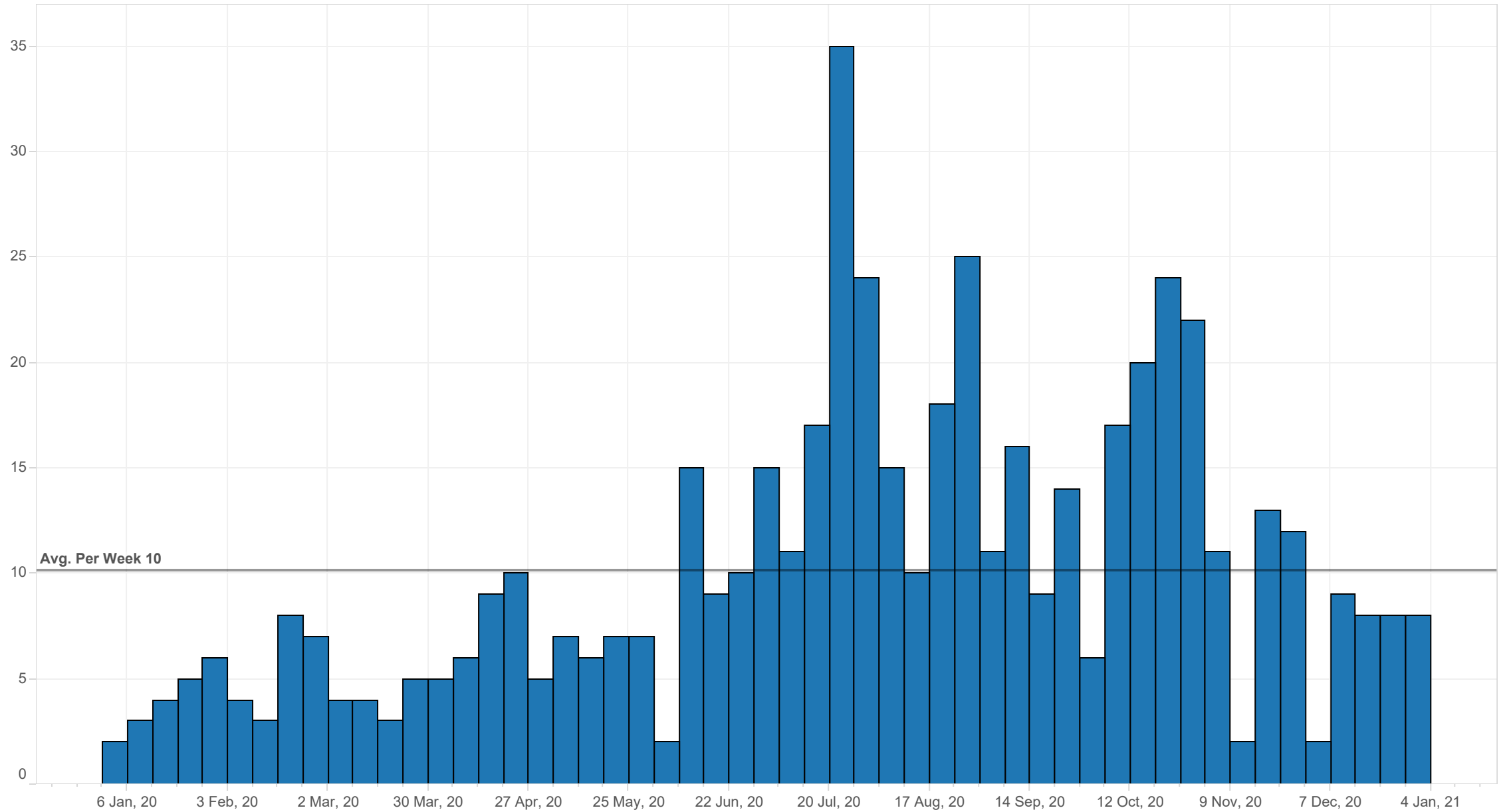
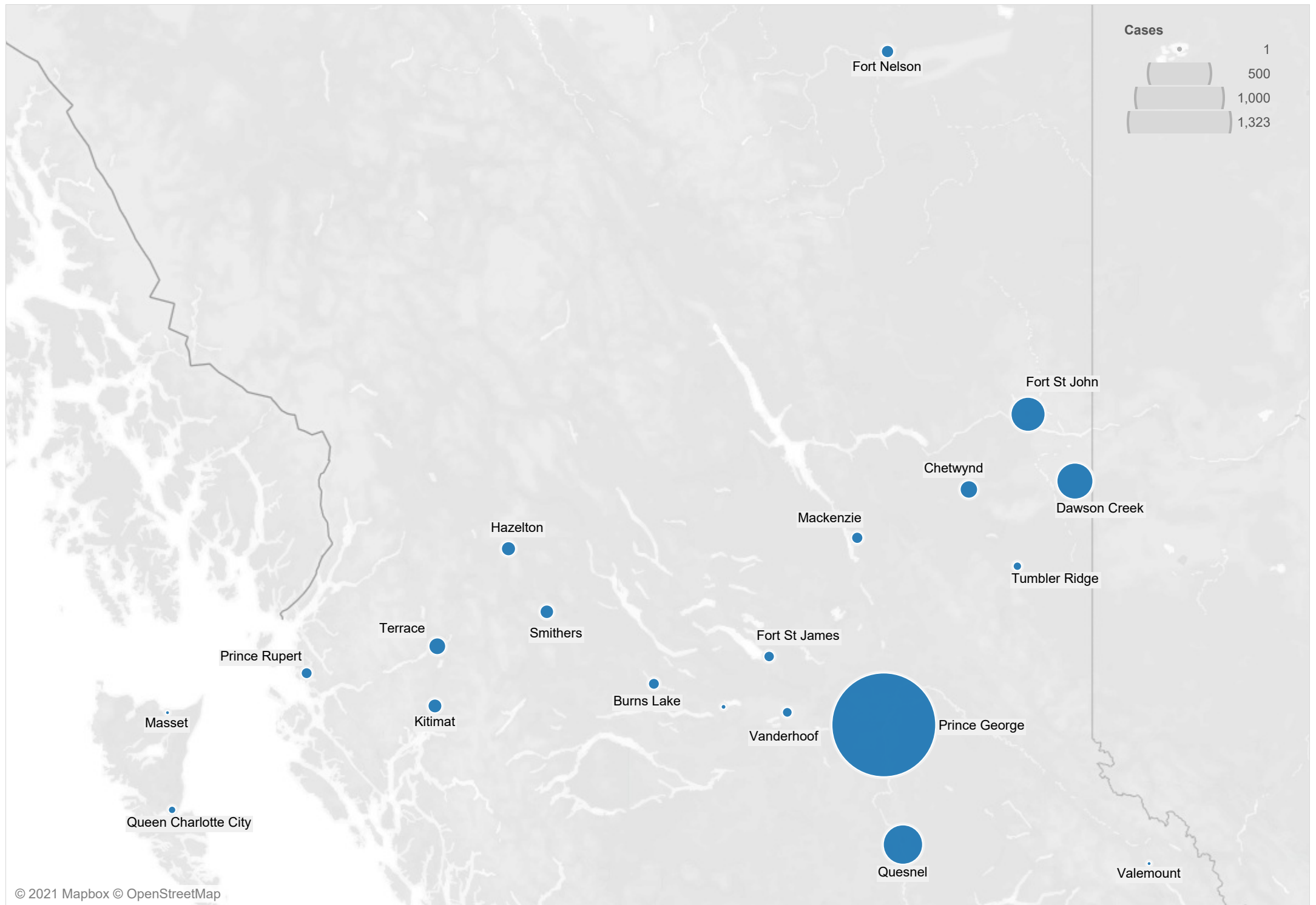


Figure 2: Location of Overdose Emergency Department Visit from June 13, 2016 - Current



**Note:** This data is based on number of cases reported by Emergency Departments and is therefore an underrepresentation of the number of opioid OD's occurring in communities.

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Figure 3. Number of Suspected Overdoses by Reporting ED Community by Quarter

		2017				2018				2019				2020			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>NE</b>	Chetwynd	< 5	7	< 5	< 5	< 5	6	< 5			< 5	< 5				< 5	
	Dawson Creek	13	23	14	15	13	11	12	< 5	10	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	7	6
	Fort Nelson	< 5	< 5		< 5		< 5	< 5	< 5						< 5		< 5
	Fort St John	< 5	7	14	< 5	8	16	6	9	< 5	< 5	< 5		< 5	9	12	9
	Tumbler Ridge	< 5	< 5	< 5					< 5								
<b>NI</b>	Burns Lake	< 5	< 5			< 5		< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5				< 5		< 5
	Fort St James	< 5	< 5	< 5		< 5		< 5									
	Fraser Lake			< 5	< 5												
	Mackenzie	< 5			< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5		< 5		< 5		< 5	< 5		< 5
	Prince George	58	85	90	65	84	81	65	69	55	65	31	41	43	72	170	123
	Quesnel	11	12	21	16	11	< 5	7	< 5	< 5	12	8	< 5	< 5	15	23	11
	Valemount		< 5														
	Vanderhoof	< 5	< 5	< 5				< 5									
<b>NW</b>	Atlin				< 5			< 5									
	Hazelton	9	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5					< 5	< 5	
	Kitimat	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5		< 5				
	Masset						< 5										
	Prince Rupert	< 5		< 5				< 5		< 5							
	Queen Charlotte City	< 5		< 5				< 5							< 5		
	Smithers	< 5	< 5	< 5		< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5		< 5	< 5		< 5	< 5		
	Stewart			< 5													
	Terrace	< 5	6	6	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5		< 5				< 5		

**Note:** This data is based on number of cases reported by Emergency Departments and is therefore an underrepresentation of the number of opioid OD's occurring in communities. In order to ensure individual privacy is maintained, overdose counts by community are reported by quarter, and small counts are reported as <5.

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