

British Columbia's Response to the Opioid Overdose Emergency

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Ministry of Health, British Columbia

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Increase in Opioid Overdoses

- Rising fatalities from illegal drug overdoses in BC noted in 2015 and early 2016
- Fentanyl detection rising rapidly, detected in 62% of overdose deaths to date in 2016 vs. 29% of overdose deaths in all of 2015
- Fentanyl was detected in 61% of overdose deaths in the first three months of 2017
- **931 illicit drug overdose deaths** for all 2016
 - 514 overdose deaths in all of 2015
 - 366 overdose deaths in all of 2014
- **347** illicit drug overdose deaths for Jan – Mar 2017



Paul Adkin (right) died on Sept. 28, leaving behind grieving friends and family members, including dad Tom and brother Matt (left).

‘THE MESSAGE HAS TO GET OUT. THESE ARE FAMILIES LIKE US THAT HAVE TRAGICALLY LOST A BRIGHT LIGHT. THIS NEVER SHOULD HAVE HAPPENED.’





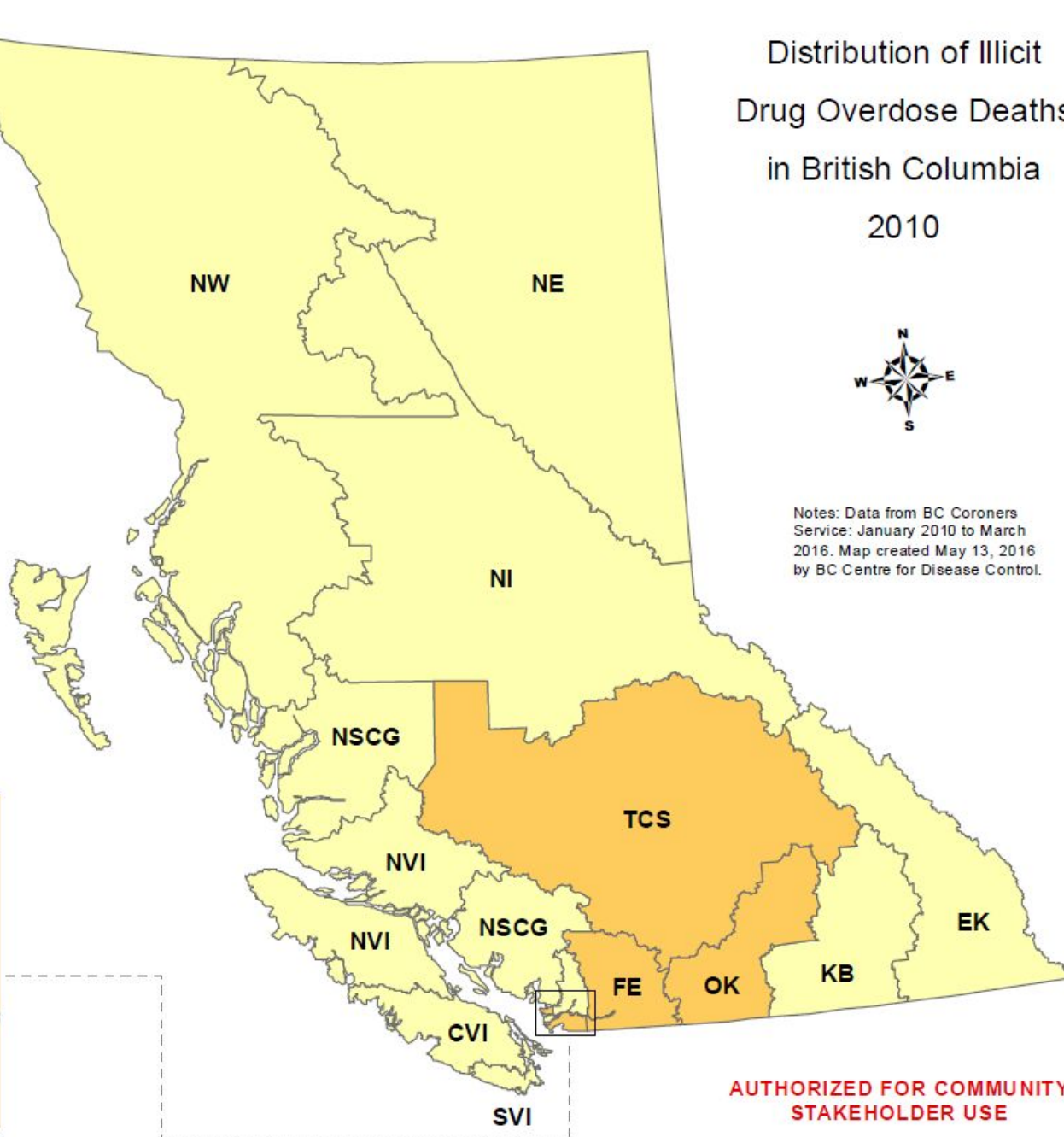
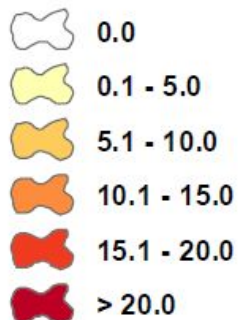
BC Centre for Disease Control
AN AGENCY OF THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY

Distribution of Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths in British Columbia 2010

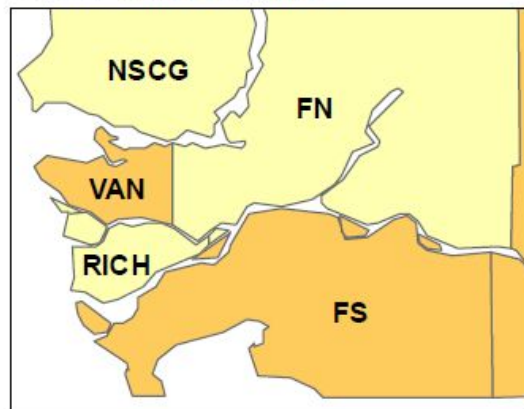


Notes: Data from BC Coroners
Service: January 2010 to March
2016. Map created May 13, 2016
by BC Centre for Disease Control.

Rate per 100,000
population by HSDA



Greater Vancouver Inset



**AUTHORIZED FOR COMMUNITY
STAKEHOLDER USE**



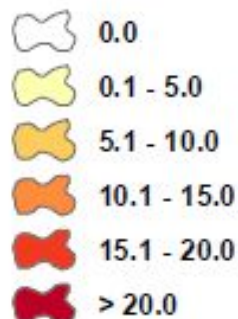
BC Centre for Disease Control
AN AGENCY OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH SERVICES

Distribution of Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths in British Columbia 2014

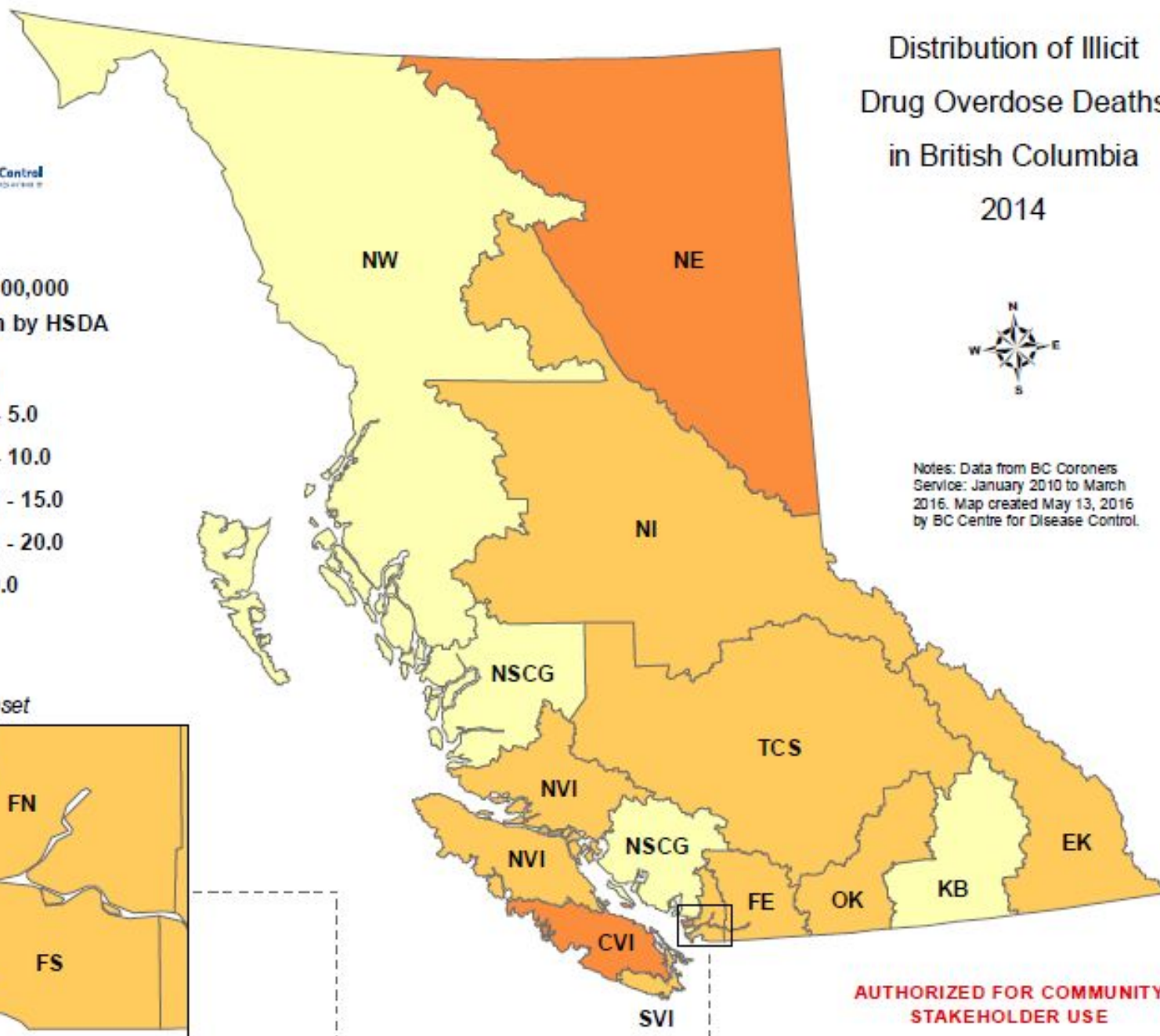
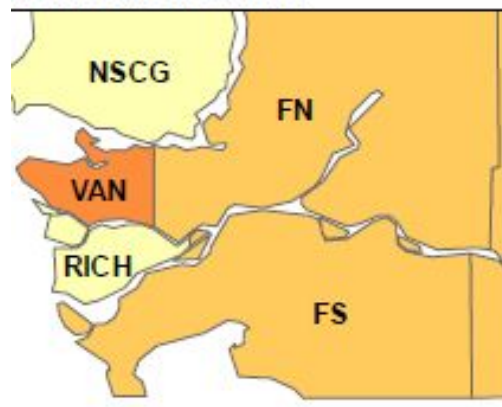


Notes: Data from BC Coroners
Service: January 2010 to March
2016. Map created May 13, 2016
by BC Centre for Disease Control.

Rate per 100,000
population by HSDA



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**AUTHORIZED FOR COMMUNITY
STAKEHOLDER USE**



BC Centre for Disease Control
AN AGENCY OF THE PROTECTIVE HEALTH SERVICES ACTIVITY

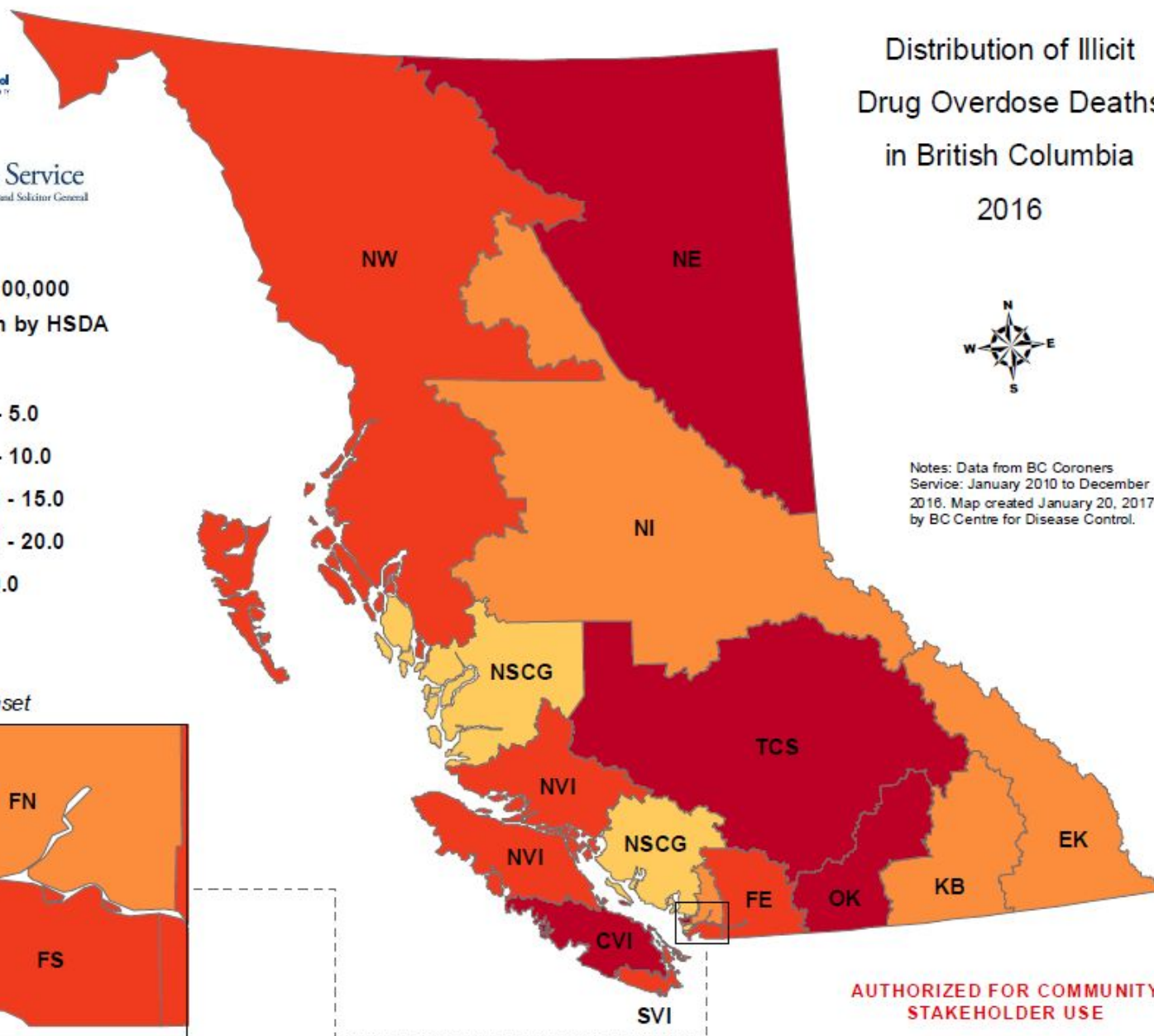
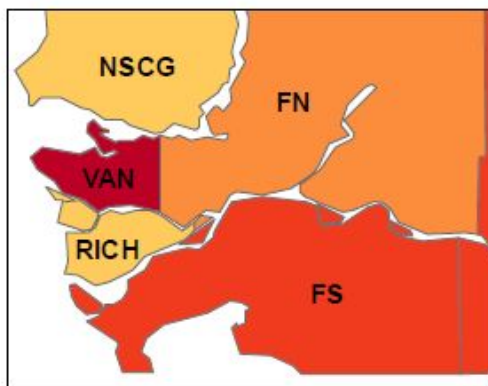


Coroners Service
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Rate per 100,000
population by HSDA



Greater Vancouver Inset

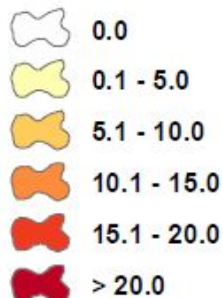


Notes: Data from BC Coroners Service: January 2010 to December 2016. Map created January 20, 2017 by BC Centre for Disease Control.

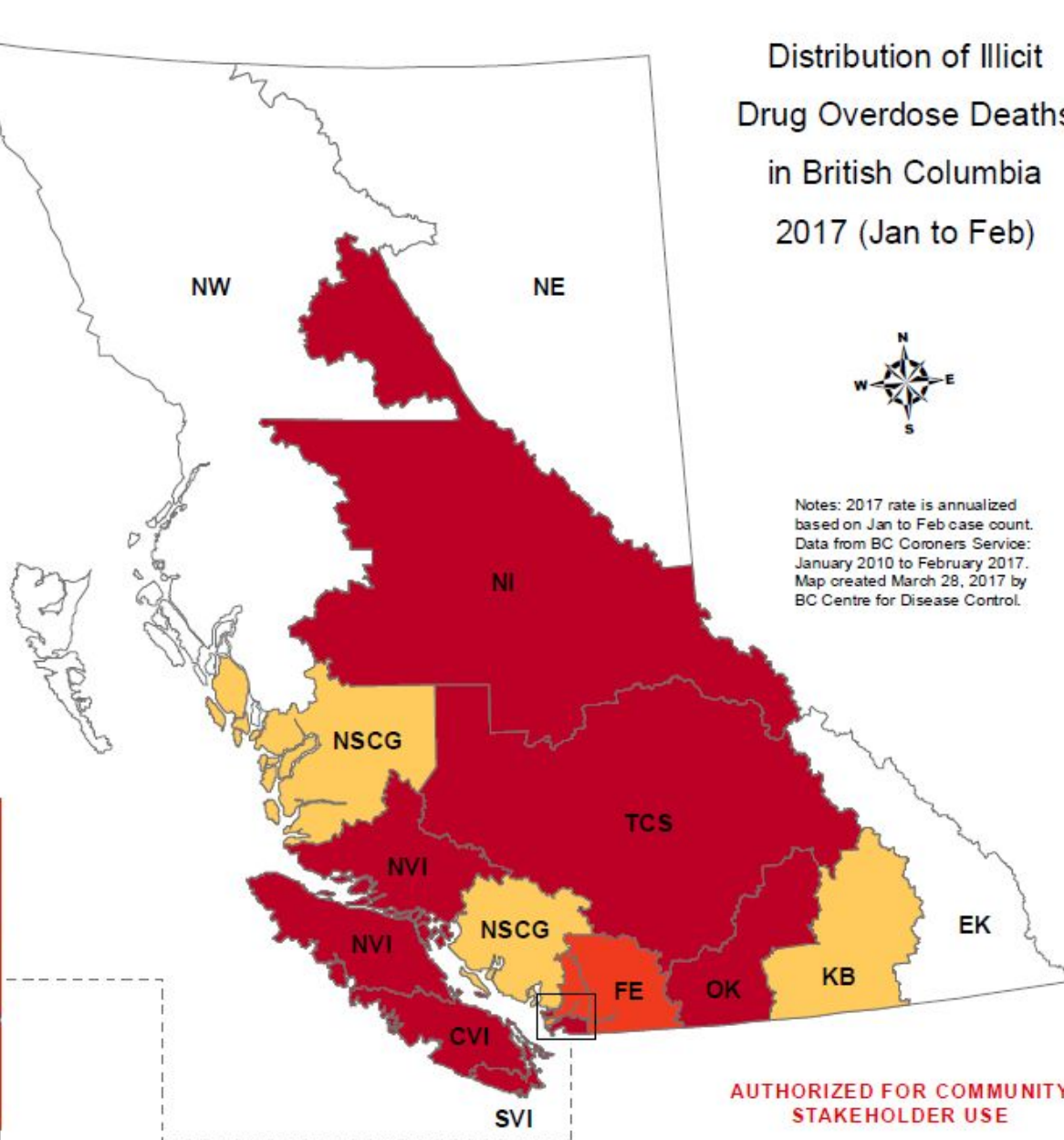
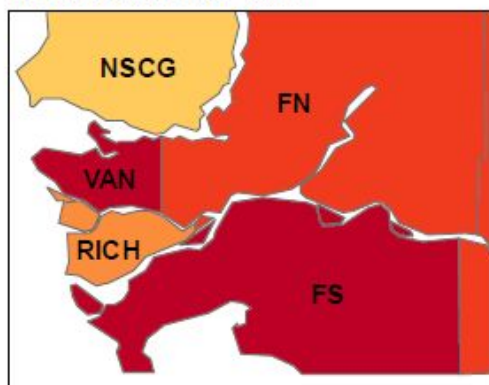
AUTHORIZED FOR COMMUNITY
STAKEHOLDER USE

Distribution of Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths in British Columbia 2017 (Jan to Feb)

Rate per 100,000 population by HSDA

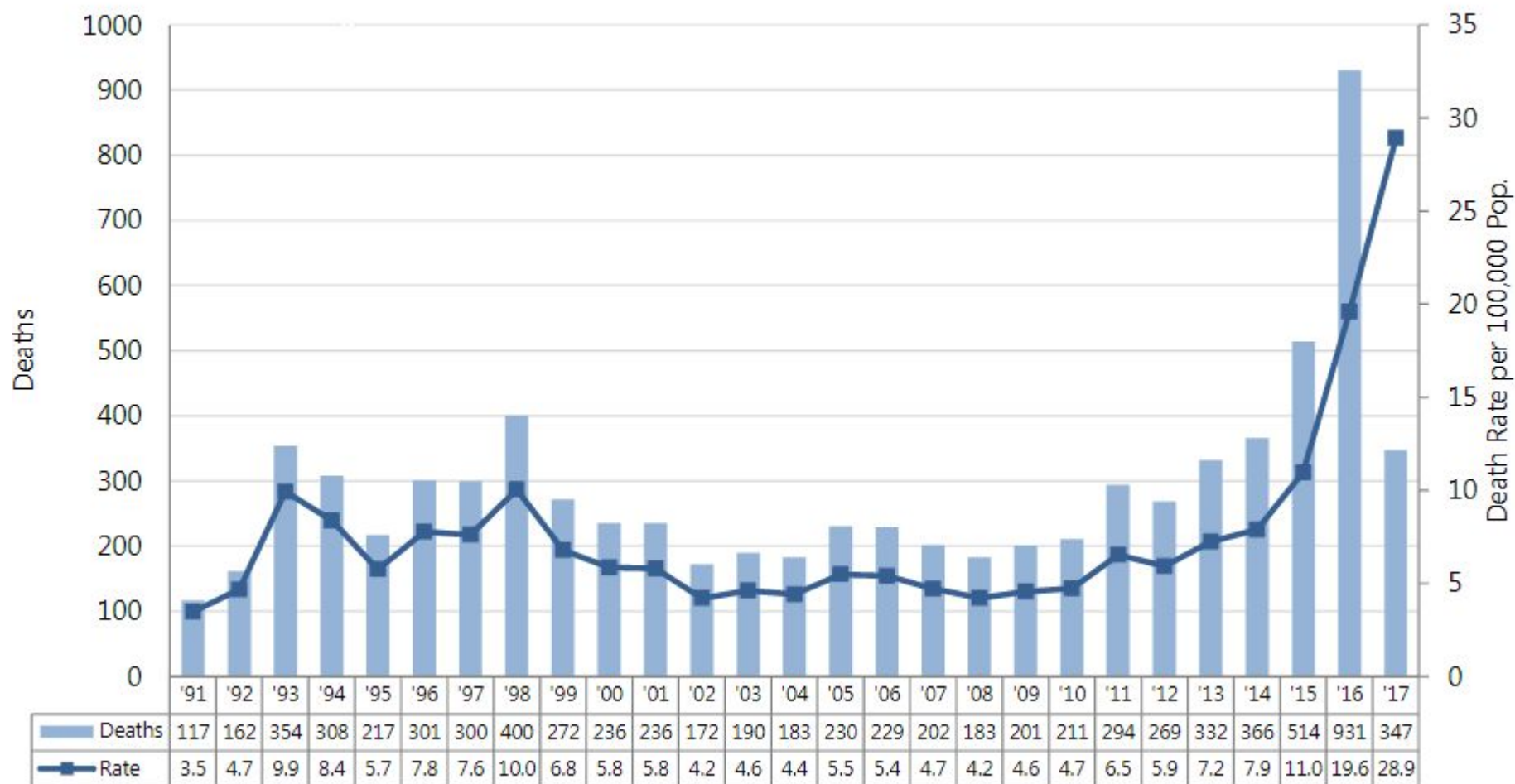


Greater Vancouver Inset

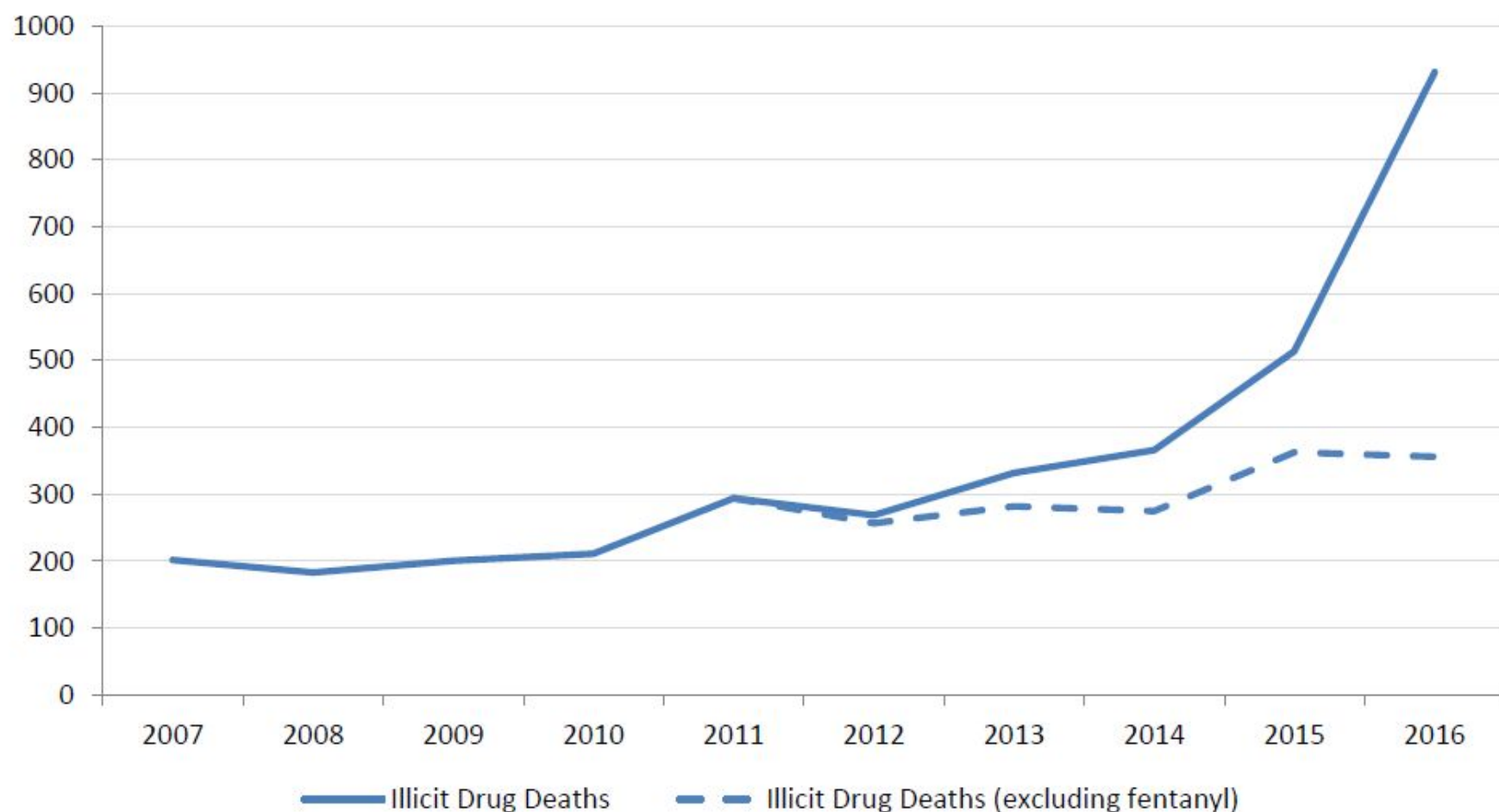


Notes: 2017 rate is annualized based on Jan to Feb case count. Data from BC Coroners Service: January 2010 to February 2017. Map created March 28, 2017 by BC Centre for Disease Control.

AUTHORIZED FOR COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER USE

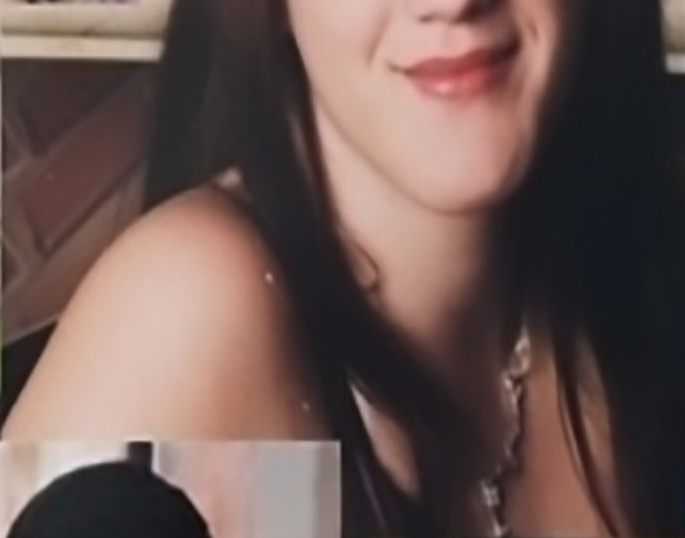
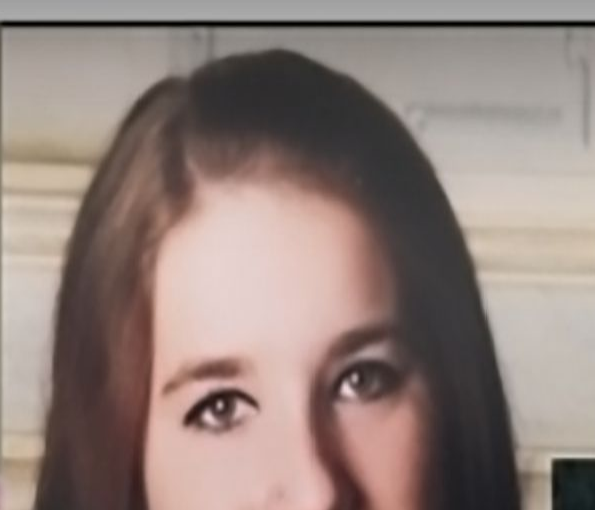


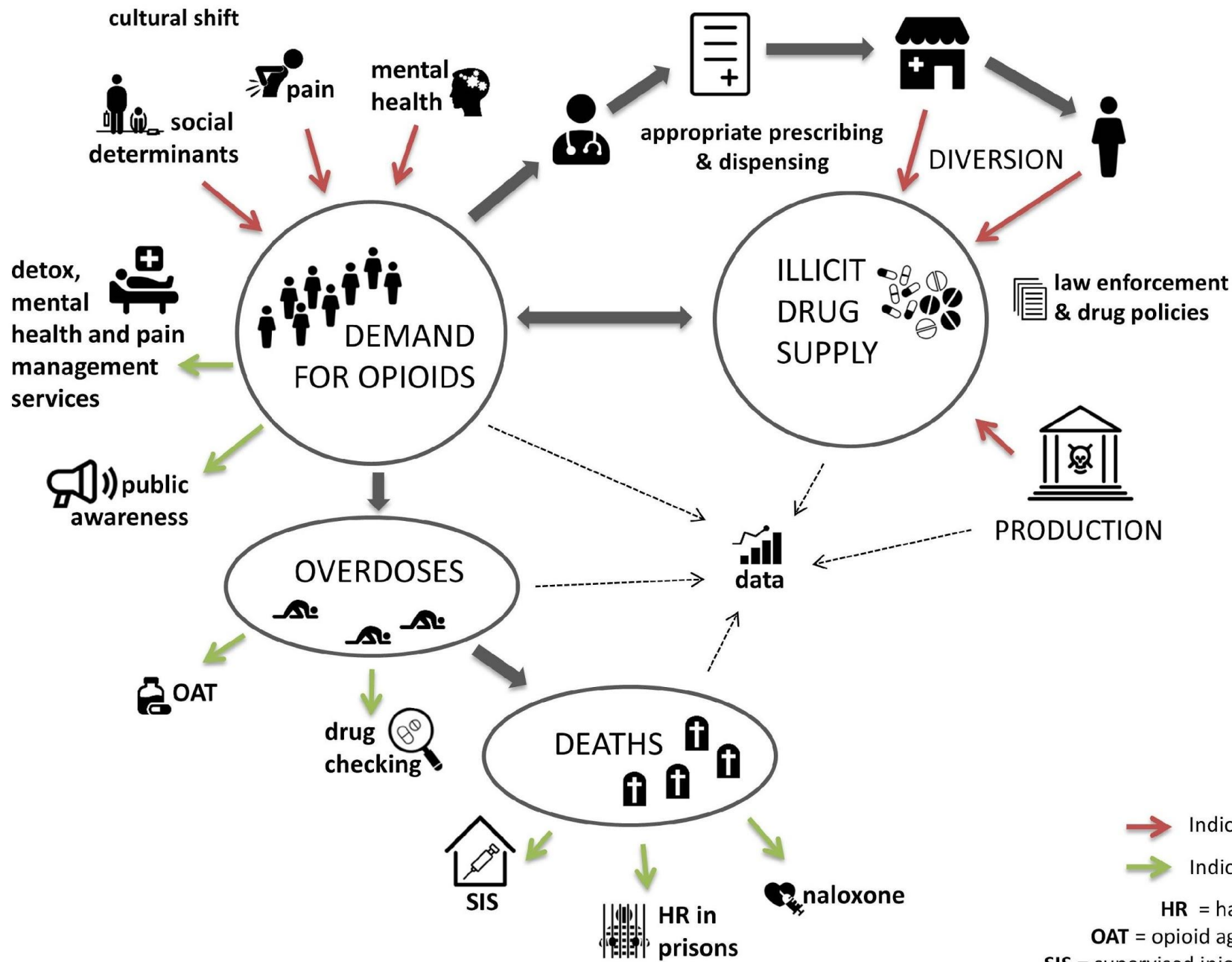
Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths including and excluding Fentanyl, 2007-2016



Increase in Opioid Overdoses

- Significant regional variations
- Multiple groups at risk:
 - Illegal opioid users
 - Street involved
 - Employed/housed and otherwise invisible to the health system
 - Individuals discharged from corrections
 - Individuals discharged from abstinence-based opioid addiction treatment
 - Experimenters
 - People who use occasionally, people who use stimulants
 - Chronic pain patients



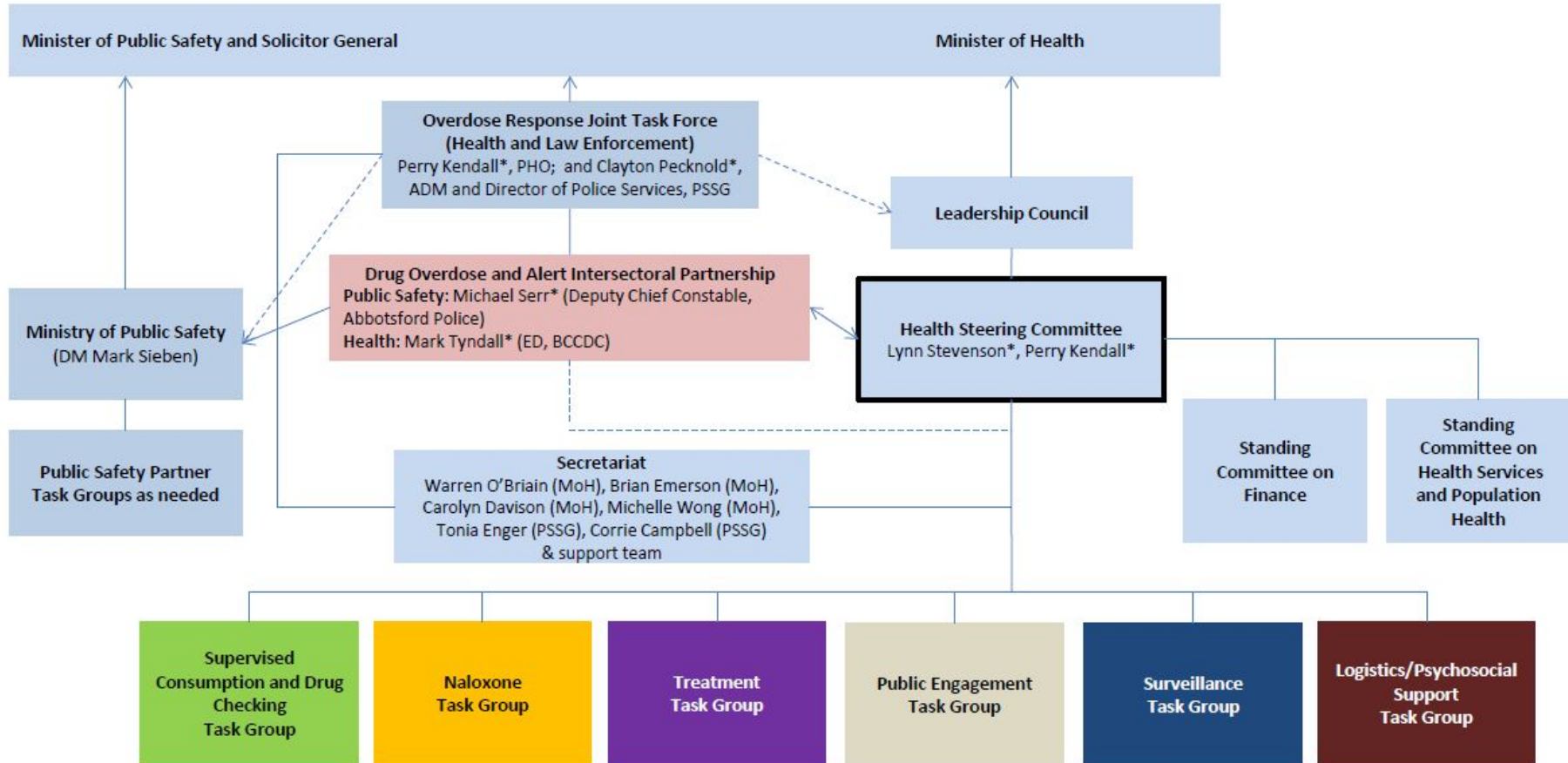


B.C.'s Response

- Provincial Health Officer declared a public health emergency in April 2016
- Premier Clark established a Joint Task Force on Overdose Prevention and Response in July 2016
 - *co-chairs: Perry Kendall and Clayton Pecknold*
- Leadership Council established a Health System Steering Committee on Overdose Prevention and Response
 - *co-chairs: Lynn Stevenson and Perry Kendall*
- Six task groups struck to immediately scale up action

Governance Structure - Overdose Response

Last updated: April 21, 2017



BC's Plan: Seven Key Areas of Focus

1. Immediate response to an overdose
2. Preventing overdoses before they happen
3. Public education and awareness about overdose prevention and response
4. Monitoring, surveillance, and applied research

Key Areas of Focus - Continued

5. Improvements to federal legislation, notably the federal *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* and *Precursor Control Regulations*
6. Improving federal enforcement and interdiction strategies
7. Enhancing the capacity of police to support harm reduction efforts related to street drugs

1. Immediate Response to Overdoses

- Supervised consumption service applications
- Naloxone expansion
- Mobile Medical Unit deployment
- Overdose Prevention Services
- Psychosocial supports for front line workers
- BC Housing guidelines
- Federal Bill C-37



TAKE HOME NALOXONE PROGRAM IN BC

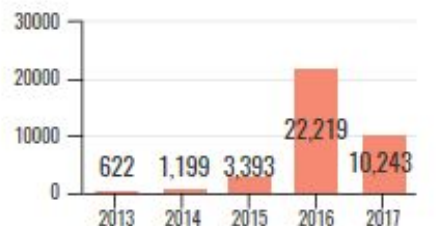
SAVING LIVES SINCE AUGUST 2012



Naloxone is a medication that reverses the effects of an overdose from opioids (e.g. heroin, methadone, fentanyl, morphine)

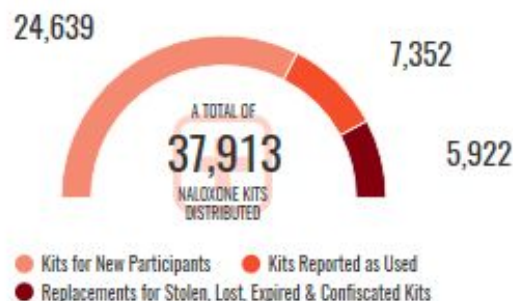
Take Home Naloxone (THN) kits are now available, at no cost, for people at risk of an opioid overdose and those most likely to witness and respond to an overdose

SO FAR...



NUMBER OF KITS DISTRIBUTED BY YEAR

DISTRIBUTION OF KITS



INCLUDING

505
THN DISTRIBUTION
LOCATIONS IN BC

58 EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS
71 FIRST NATION SITES SERVING 97 COMMUNITIES

13 CORRECTIONS FACILITIES
7 FORENSIC PSYCHIATRIC FACILITIES

1,543
OVERDOSE RESPONSE
FORMS RECEIVED

7,352
KITS REPORTED AS USED
TO REVERSE AN
OVERDOSE

2. Preventing Overdoses Before They Happen


- Increased access to Suboxone
- Incorporation of methadone and Suboxone under PharmaCare Plan G
- Establishment of BC Centre on Substance Use; opioid use disorder treatment guidelines released
- Patient to patient handbook to navigate opioid substitution treatment system
- Additional substance use spaces to open this year

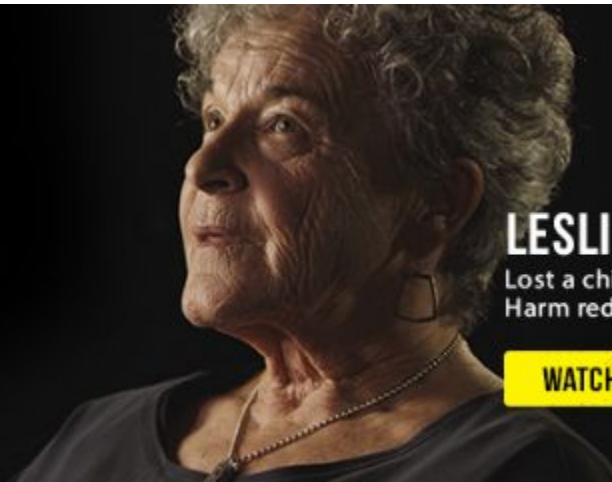


3. Public and Professional Awareness

- Third wave of the public awareness campaign underway
- Reports that recreational user deaths are declining as a result of the campaign work

**FIND OUT HOW YOU
CAN SAVE A LIFE**

 CARRY A NALOXONE KIT  CALL 911  #STOPOVERDOSE



LESLIE MCBAIN

Lost a child to overdose
Harm reduction advocate

[WATCH HER STORY >](#)

4. Surveillance, Prescription Monitoring and Applied Research

- Weekly enhanced reporting by the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) on overdose data
- BCCDC publicly facing reports
- Three applied research projects underway (OPTIMA, TASA, Emergency Department Opioid Overdose Treatment Study)
- Coroners Service Drug Death Investigation team launched to enhance investigations into illicit drug overdoses
- Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research leading evaluation of the response

4. Surveillance, Prescription Monitoring and Applied Research

- Investment in technological improvements at BCCDC to improve real-time information sharing across the province
- Increase capacity of provincial toxicology labs to test blood samples for opioids and other new substances by procuring testing equipment (e.g., mass spectrometer)
- Health Canada has approved importation of a carfentanil sample to BC to enable BC labs to establish testing for carfentanil.

5. Improvements to federal legislation

- Bill C-37 and the new Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy
- Health Canada has restricted six chemicals used in the production of fentanyl to render the unauthorized importation and exportation of these chemicals illegal
- The RCMP and Chinese Ministry of Public Security announced joint efforts to curb importation of fentanyl into Canada

6. Improving federal enforcement and interdiction strategies

- The Joint Task Force continues to work with police and law enforcement to support expansion of interdiction efforts including the co-ordination of efforts to intercept, detect, and investigate illegally imported fentanyl and precursors
- The Canada Border Services Agency has reported success intercepting fentanyl entering Canada, and the RCMP and some municipal police departments have reported multiple seizures of fentanyl and detection of other substances

7. Enhancing the capacity of police to support harm reduction efforts

- Enhanced and ongoing communication among law enforcement agencies to ensure that appropriate information is available to police services to formulate local operational policy and ensure that they have the supports to work with community partners to decrease opioid overdose deaths

Questions or comments?

Looking for resources?

- www.gov.bc.ca/overdose
- www.towardtheheart.com/naloxone
- HealthLinkBC, 8-1-1
- Health Authority websites
- Progress updates on PHO website

