

UNDERSTANDING OPIOID TOXICITY AMONG INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN CUSTODY

WHAT WE DID

We looked at **all opioid toxicity (overdose) deaths** in Ontario from 2015-2020.

We identified who had been in provincial custody and **who was Indigenous.**

We studied opioid toxicity deaths and the **characteristics of those who died.**

We **gathered insights** from service providers and people with lived/living experience.

KEY FINDINGS

242

242 Indigenous people who experienced incarceration died from opioid toxicity while in custody or after release.

10x

For Indigenous people, the risk of death from opioid toxicity increased by **10 times** from the time in custody to the month after release. Over this six-year period, **37** Indigenous people died within 1 month of release.

81x
WOMEN

Indigenous women who experienced incarceration were **81 times** more likely to die from opioid toxicity than women with no incarceration experience.

24x
MEN

Indigenous men who experienced incarceration were **24 times** more likely to die from opioid toxicity than men with no incarceration experience.

WHAT CAN HELP KEEP YOU AND OTHERS SAFE?



Find Your Team

You deserve supports while in custody.

Health care staff and Native Inmate Liaison Officers (NILOs) can provide health care, access to cultural supports, and help with navigating services.

Feeling unheard?

You can contact the Ombudsman of Ontario: 1-800-263-1830.

You deserve support that respects your choices, your culture, and your safety.



Harm Reduction and Treatment Save Lives

Health care staff can provide information on safer ways to use substances and provide access to treatment.

Naloxone reverses opioid overdoses.

Ask how to use naloxone and get a naloxone kit when you leave custody.

If you use opioids in custody or on release:

↳ *Even a short break from using opioids lowers your tolerance and can increase your overdose risk. If you use opioids, start low and go slow if you can.*

↳ *Try to not use drugs alone if possible. If using alone, have someone check on you if you can. Others could give you naloxone or get you help (like calling 911) if you need it.*



Get Set Up on Release

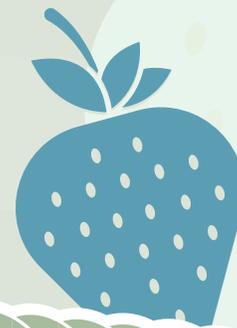
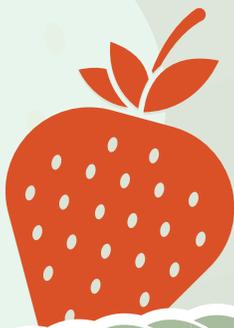
Plan where you'll go, how you'll get there, and what you'll need.

Reach out

to correctional staff and community supports for information and help.

Ask for help

if you need ID, housing, or income supports, and to arrange for ongoing access to health care and treatments in the community.



For any inquiries about the project, please contact health@nwac.ca or kouyouf@mcmaster.ca