



Reports of 57 Opioid Overdoses Within Seven Days in Snohomish County

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First-ever coordinated data gathering yields important insights

Author: [Lynn Ljungquist](#)/Wednesday, July 25, 2018/Categories: [Media Releases](#), [2018](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 25, 2018

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SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash. – The Snohomish Health District—in partnership with the Snohomish County Opioid Response Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) Group—completed a second 7-day point-in-time data collection for opioid overdoses from July 9-15, 2018. The result: 57 overdoses in one week, 2 of which were fatal.

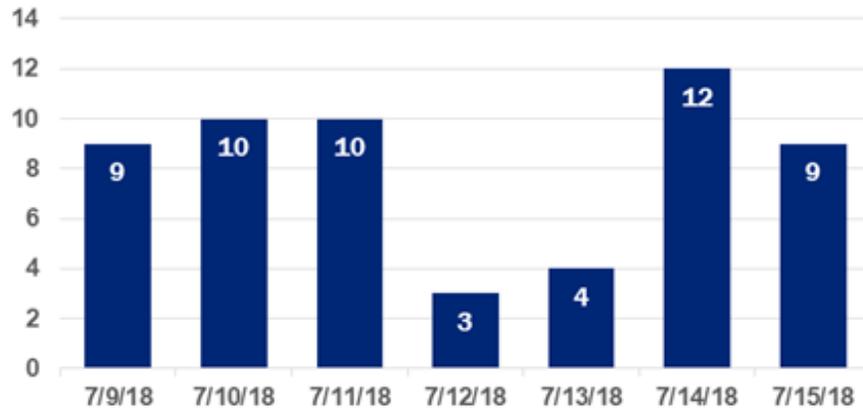
RESOURCE – [Opioids in Snohomish County: The 2018 Point-in-Time Survey of Overdoses](#)

As the chief health strategist, public health's role is to identify, analyze and act on new sources of community health data as close to real time as possible. Up until a year ago, the only primary data to go on about opioids in Snohomish County was the total number of deaths. An even then, it could take 12-18 months to get those preliminary numbers.

Last summer, the Snohomish Health District embarked on a [first of its kind data collection](#) with local partners to capture a snapshot of information. Since that time, a number of efforts have been underway to continue building a more robust data pipeline. While that work is still continuing, there was a desire to repeat the 7-day point-in-time collection in 2018 to reassess the opioid crisis in Snohomish County.

Through [coordinated MAC efforts](#), hospitals, law enforcement, fire, EMS, the syringe exchange and other partners have been engaged in ongoing discussions and data collection. Moving beyond the gathering of historical data, this effort convenes these representatives from across the county to voluntarily collect real-time data on overdoses for one week.

Overdose Count by Date



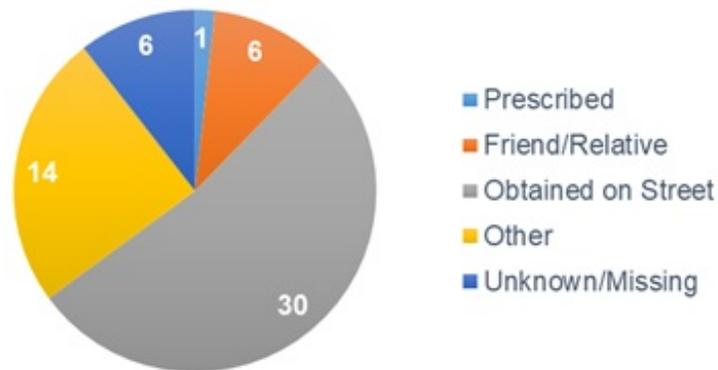
Source: Snohomish Health District

The 7-day data shows the total number of opioid overdoses nearly doubling compared to last year. This can be attributed to a few possibilities. First, there have been more partnerships and data collection processes developed over the last year that now make it easier to gather this information.

Secondly, a lot of effort has been focused on reducing the number of opioid prescriptions being given. The medical community and the general public have been responding, which is a good step in the right direction.

However, for those struggling with opioid dependence and substance use disorder, tighter guidelines on opioid prescriptions has pushed them to try to heroin. The 7-day data revealed at least 61% of the individuals overdosed on heroin and the bulk of the opioids were obtained on the street.

Source of Drug(s) Used



Source: Snohomish Health District

Finally, there's the increasing prevalence of fentanyl in the area. Fentanyl is up to 100 times more lethal than prescription opioids and heroin. This 7-day survey saw a continued spike in counterfeit "Perc-30" pills being sold on the streets that are being laced with fentanyl. At least

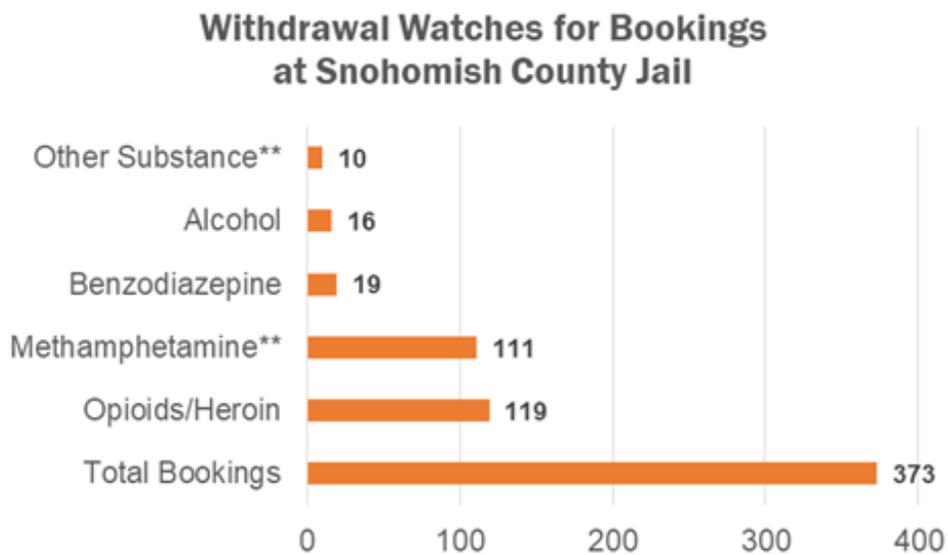
one of the overdoses reported was the result of one of those dangerous counterfeit pills.

It is important to note that the information collected was voluntary, so the data provided should not be construed as exhaustive or lab-confirmed. Forms were completed with information on the place and type of overdose location, as well as the place of residence for the patient. However, since physical addresses were not collected, a differentiation between jurisdictional boundaries is not possible. For instance, while the data shows 21 overdoses happening in Everett, it is unclear how many are within city limits versus unincorporated Snohomish County. When taking population into account, the burden among all cities reported is relatively the same.

Other key takeaways from the data analysis:

- Overdoses were mostly men, with 34 males and 20 females and 3 cases where gender was not recorded.
- The youngest reported was 17 and the oldest was 73, with 21 of the overdoses being 21-30 years old.
- When looking at race and ethnicity, 77% were identified as White.
- Naloxone was administered in 72% of the reports, saving 40 lives.
- Nearly one-third of the overdoses occurred between noon and 6 p.m.
- Of the 57 overdoses, 13% did not have 911 called in response to their medical emergency.

In addition to overdose data received from local partners, information was collected by the Corrections Bureau within the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office. Just under 32% of new bookings during the 7-day period were inmates under opioid withdrawal watches.



Source: Snohomish County Sheriff's Office

**Note: Methamphetamine and "Other Substances" are reported in addition to other drugs where withdrawal watch protocols are initiated. Withdrawal watch protocols are not used with these substances alone.

For more information on efforts being done through the Opioid Response MAC Group, please go to www.snohomishoverdoseprevention.com. This website and accompanying social media accounts were developed to be a one-stop shop for resources. Whether trying to understand the problem, prevent addiction, or save a life, this is a place to find information for that first next step.

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