



# The Virtual Opioid Dependency Program (VODP)

Safe, Immediate Access to Opioid Agonist  
Treatment Using Technology

Presented by Nathaniel Day MD CCFP ABAM FASAM

VODP

# If It Was My Loved One, What Barriers Would I Accept?

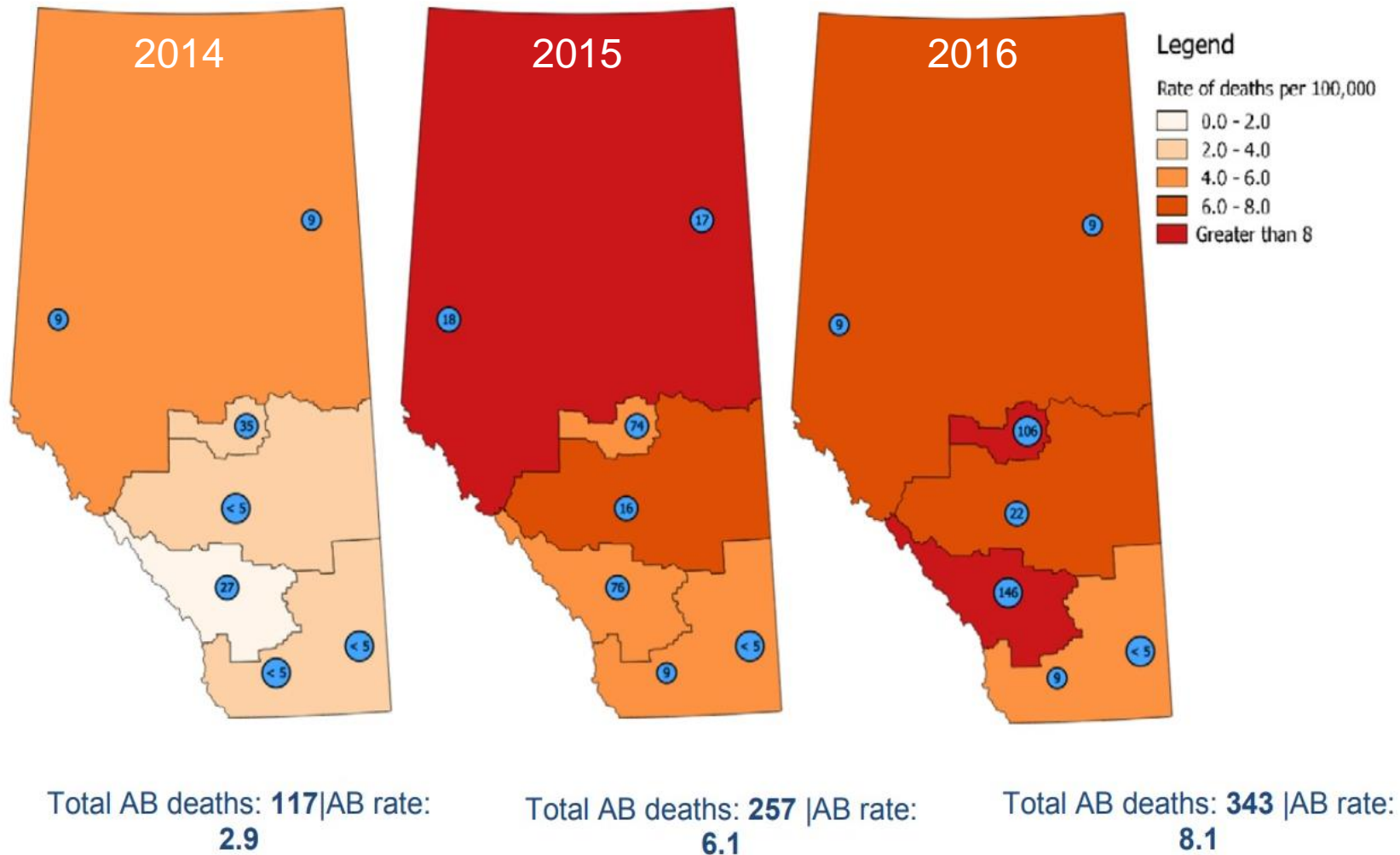


April 7, 2021



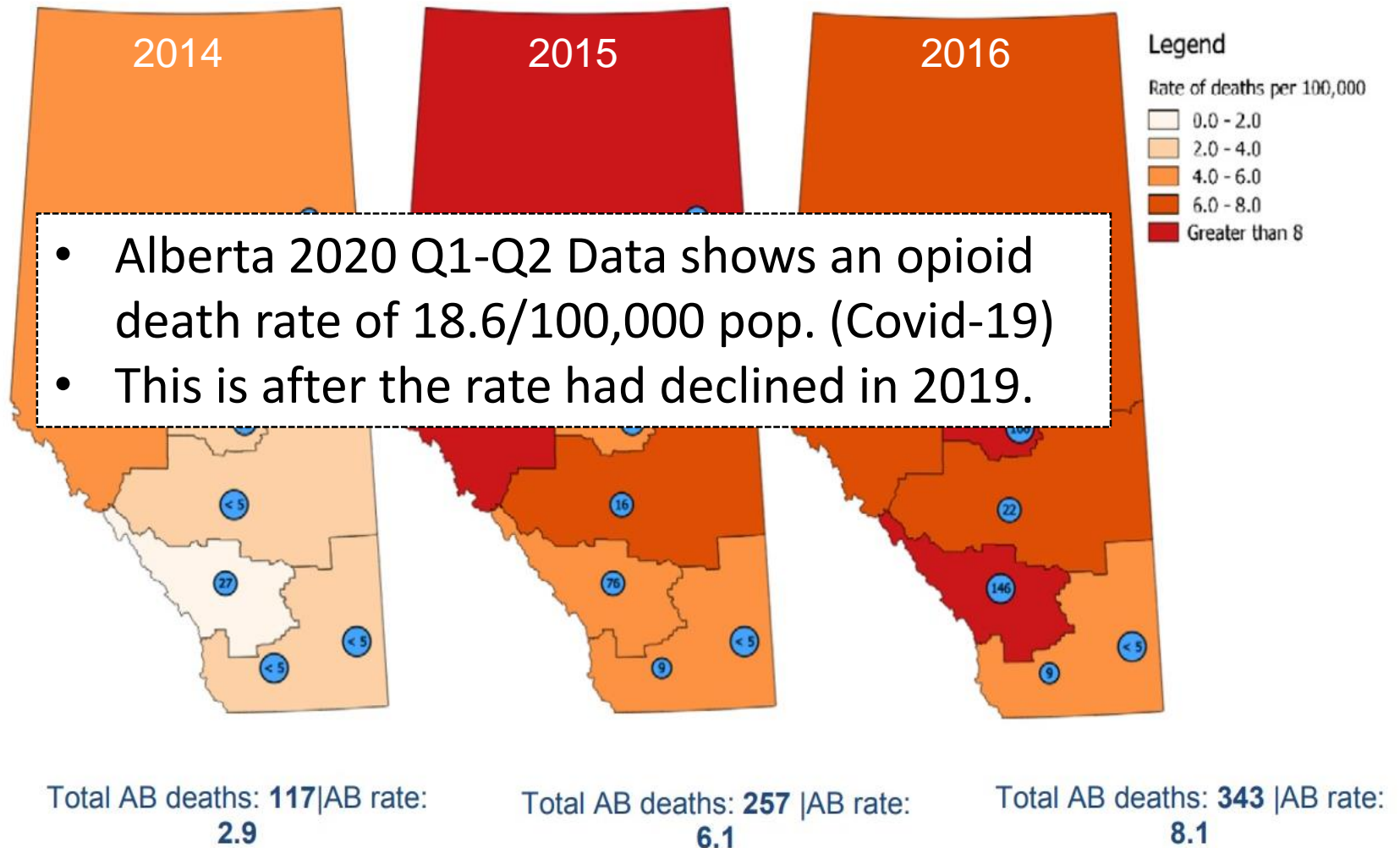


# VODP



Delivering Medication Assisted Treatment for Addictions via Telehealth:  
The DigitAS project, University of St. Andrews, School of Medicine

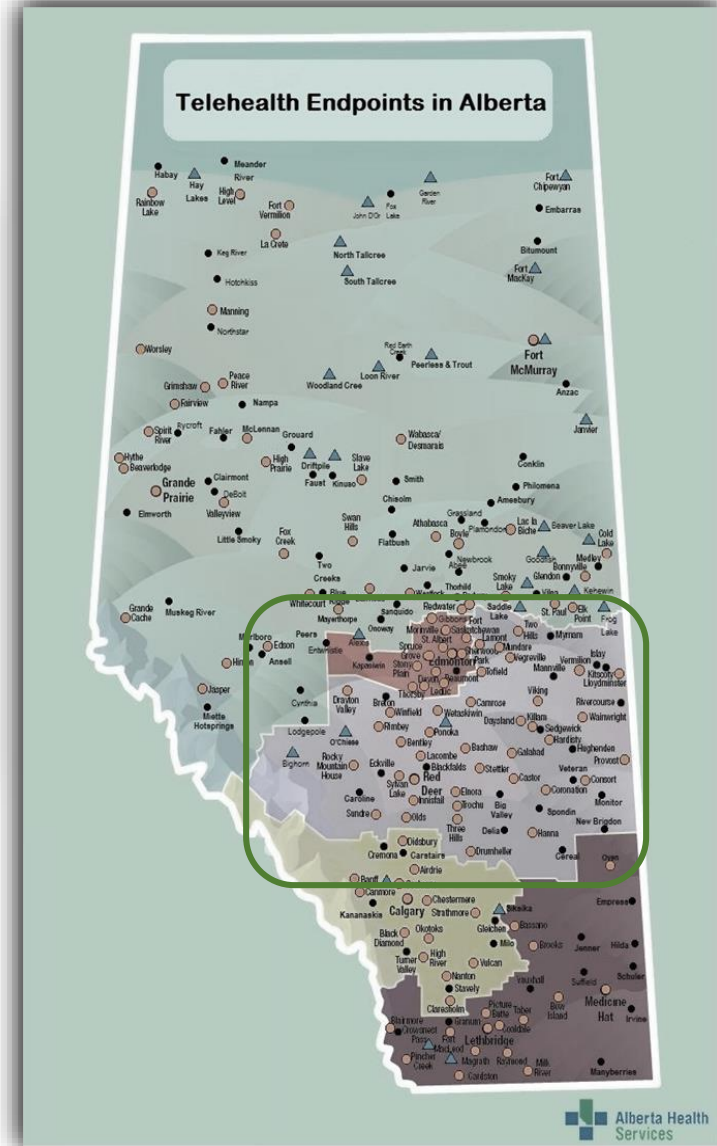
# VODP



## Where Are We?



Centennial Centre for Mental Health & Brain Injury  
Ponoka, Alberta



## VODP

### **VODP: a public and entirely virtual OAT provider in Alberta.**

- Leverage existing technologies such as telehealth, videoconference (ZOOM), telephone and text to connect providers to clients;
- Rapid access to treatment medications anywhere in Alberta.

### **Key Elements:**

- All encounters are virtual;
- Clients **do not need a referral**, but often come from corrections, emergency departments, detox or other settings. Self referred most common;
- Once stabilized, transition clients to services in own community (if they exist);
- Provide ongoing care when local services absent.

### **Methodology: Service Model of Care:**

- Every door the right door “How can we help you today”;
- Start treatment now! Sort out where we are going later (anything is safer than fentanyl);
- Same Day Starts / Transition Services / Ongoing Care.

## Multidisciplinary Teams

---

Same Day (emergency) Start Team

---

**VODP**

Transition Service Team

---

Ongoing Care/Case Management Team

---

Physicians

Social  
Workers

Nurses

Counselors



# Technologies

## Site-based Videoconference



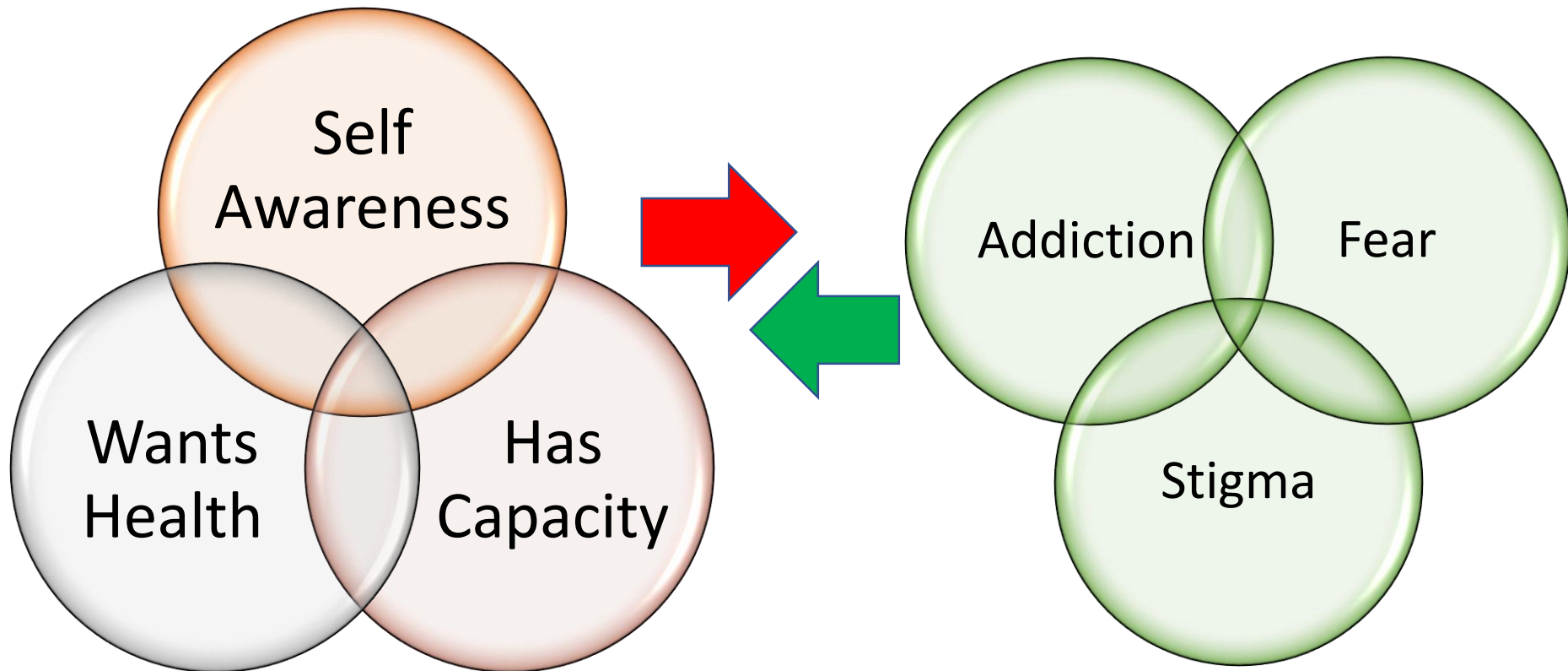
## Telephone & Text



## Software-based Videoconference (Zoom)

*Images from pixabay.com*

# How Much Contact Is Enough?



# Assume Ability



# Harm Reduction

- OAT doesn't have to be binary. We can use it to reduce harm when a client has ongoing use.







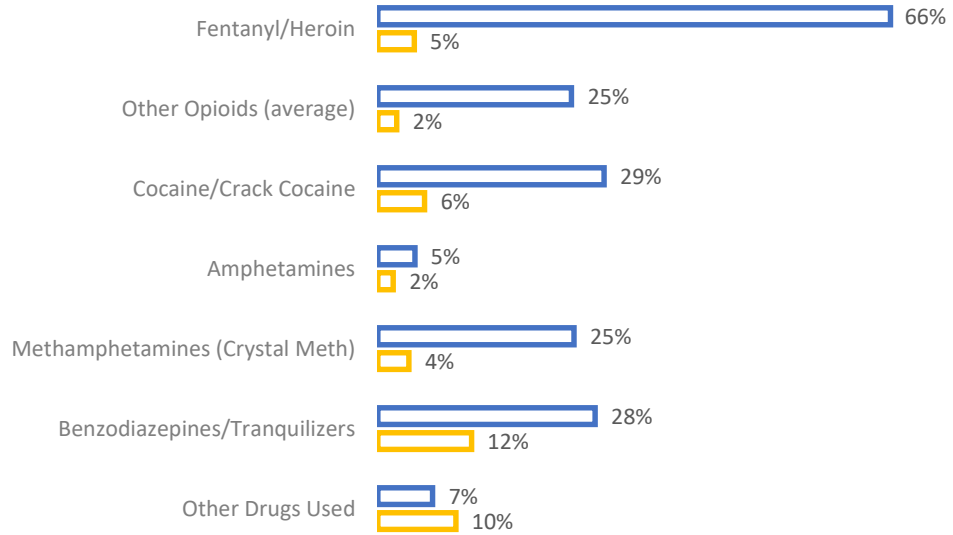
## Utilization & Growth



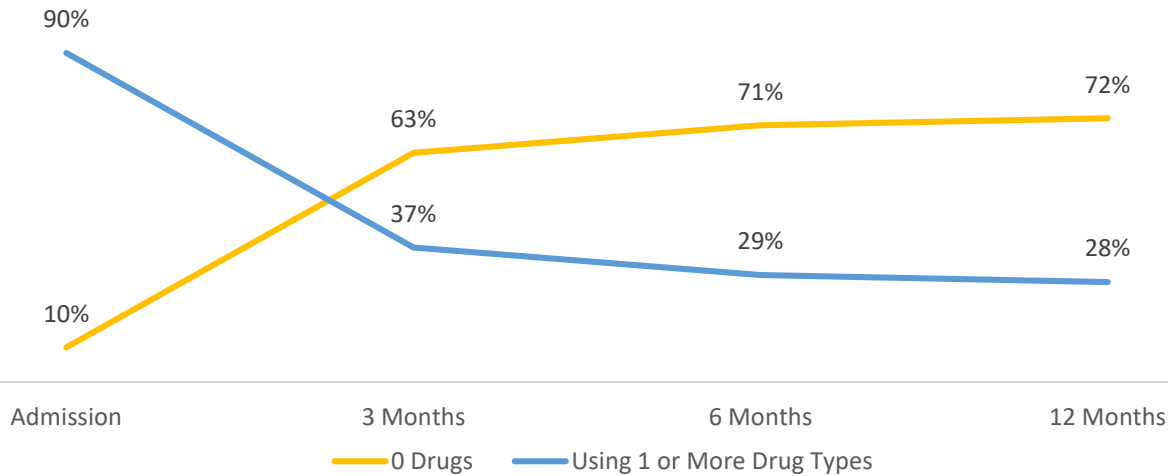
<b>Program Characteristics</b>	<b>2017/2018</b>	<b>2018/2019</b>	<b>2019/2020</b>
Unique Active Clients	201	528	1225
Admissions	213	482	1247
Discharges	79	256	1025
No. of Communities	43	109	176
Median Wait Time	6 Days	4 Days	0 Days
Median Length of Stay	138 Days	233 Days	154 Days

# Drug Use & Poly-Drug Use

## Admission vs 12 Months



## Poly-drug Use

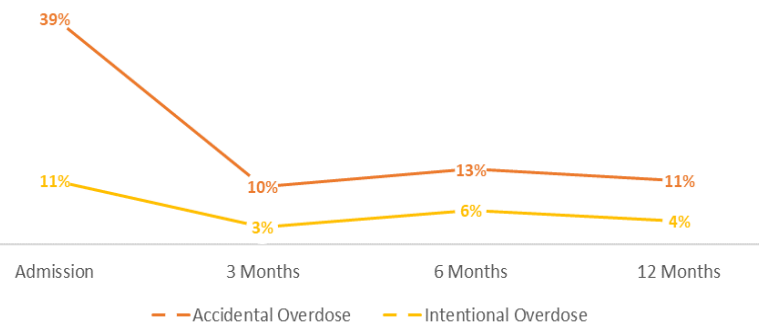


## Clinical & Functional Outcomes

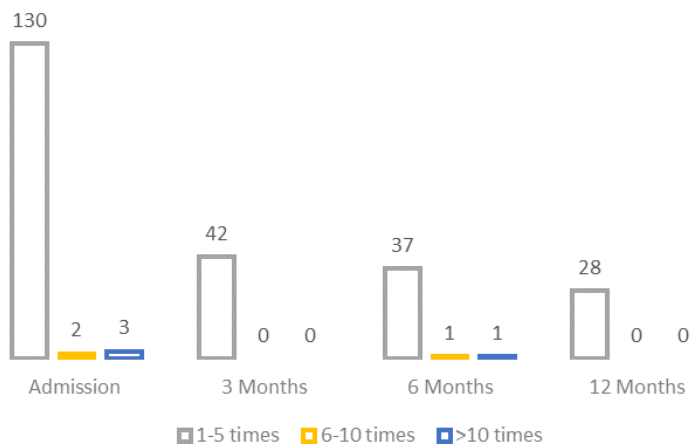
### Social Functioning (BTOM scores)



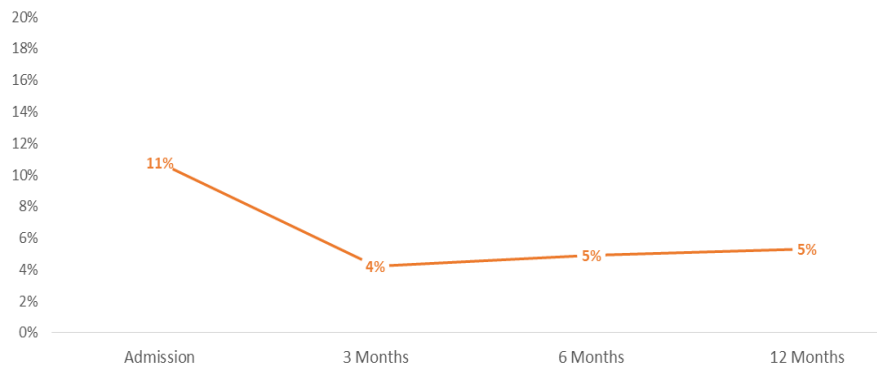
### Overdose (Accidental & Intentional)



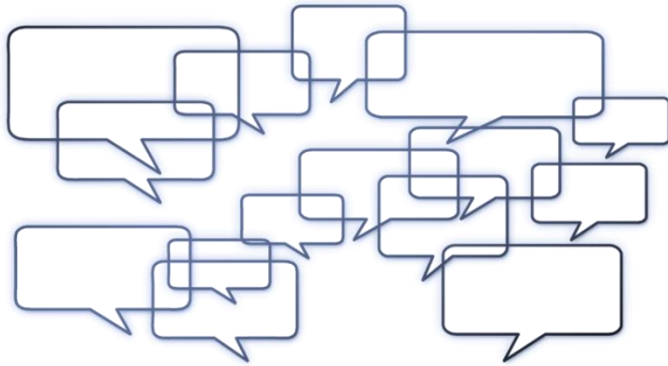
### Emergency Department Visits



### Reduction in Needle Sharing



## Client Experience



*“Most life changing program I have ever been involved with. The support from the staff and the knowledge of the doctor has been most helpful.”*

What has been most helpful	%
Staff Support and Communication	38.6%
Program Accessibility (flexibility)	28.7%
Access to Medication for Symptom/Pain Control	25.3%
Lifestyle Improvements and Recovery	20.6%
Other	4.0%
Everything	3.3%

What has been least helpful	%
No Concerns or Recommendations	61.5%
Pharmacy Issues (pick-up/schedule/witness)	10.6%
Telehealth Issues (site or session)	7.6%
Physician/Case Manager Availability/Communication	6.9%
Medication Issues (bad taste or side effects)	3.6%
Other	3.6%
Issues with Lab Tests	1.8%
Medication Coverage Issues	1.8%
Pain Management Concerns	1.4%
Assessments	0.5%
Access to Counseling and Psychosocial Support	0.4%

## Conclusions

A completely Virtual Opioid Dependency Program is feasible, acceptable and demonstrates positive clinical and functional outcomes for clients;

How can I access VODP?

Call 1-844-383-7688

Or go to VODP.ca

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Ncfa7c4Bc8&t=23s>

