

The Health Impacts of COVID-19 on Alberta First Nations

September 2021



Pre-COVID-19 Opioid Mortality Rates

Figure 1: Rate of apparent accidental opioid poisoning deaths per 100,000 population by First Nations status and year. January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018.

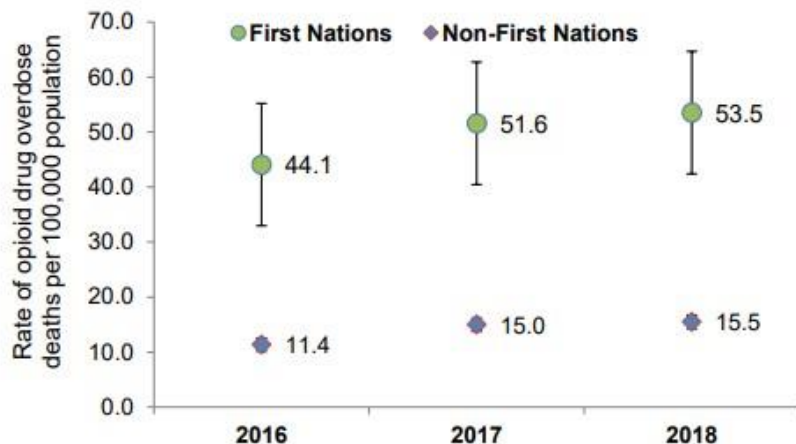
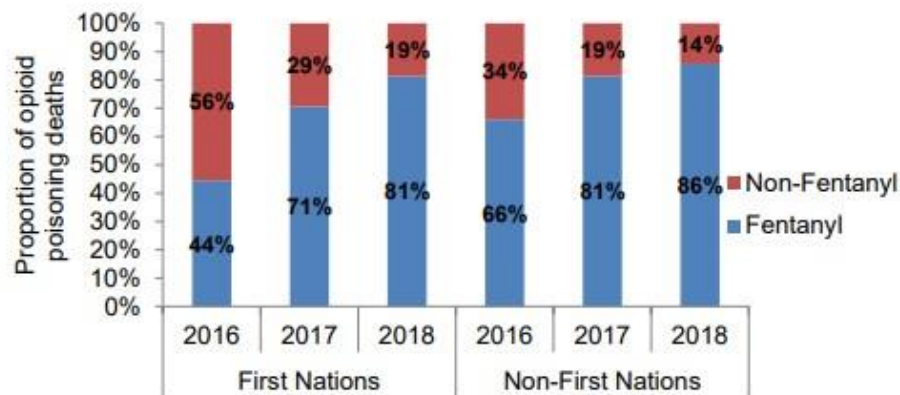


Figure 2: Proportion of fentanyl vs. non-fentanyl opioid apparent accidental poisoning deaths, by First Nations status and year. January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018.



- From 2016 to 2018, Rates of apparent accidental opioid drug poisoning deaths per 100,000 were on average approximately three to four times higher among First Nations people compared to Non-First Nations.
- First Nations people represented 13 per cent of all apparent accidental opioid poisoning deaths in Alberta from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018.
- First Nations opioid poisonings related to fentanyl have now increased to 95%, higher than non-First Nations rate of 92%.
- The largest increase in substances causing drug poisoning deaths from 2016 to 2018 include carfentanil, methamphetamines and fentanyl.
- From 2016 to 2018, the rate of emergency department visits related to opioids and other drugs was higher among First Nations than the rate of non-First Nations.

Table and Data source: Alberta Health Services, December 2019

Opioid Mortality Rates 2020

Apparent accidental opioid poisoning deaths (fentanyl & non-fentanyl opioids)

Figure 1: Rate of apparent accidental opioid poisoning deaths per 100,000 by First Nations status and year. January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2020.

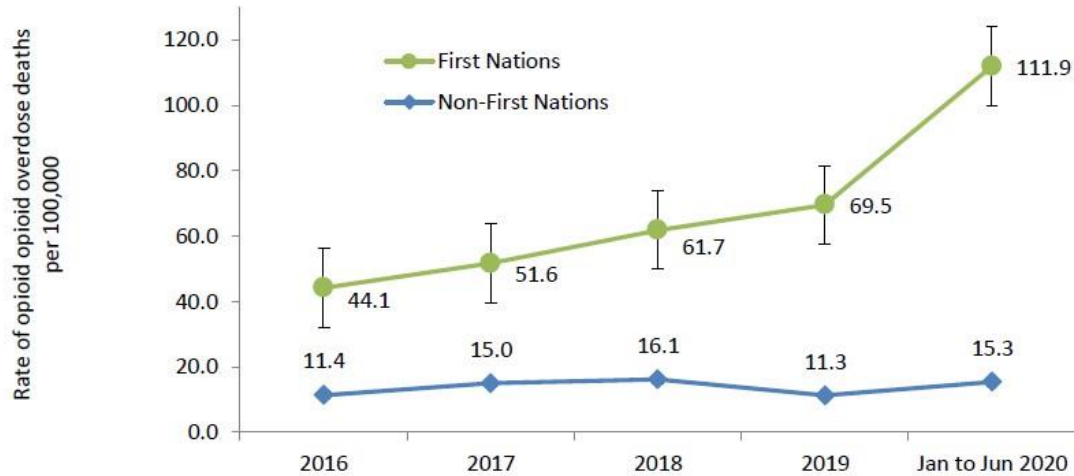
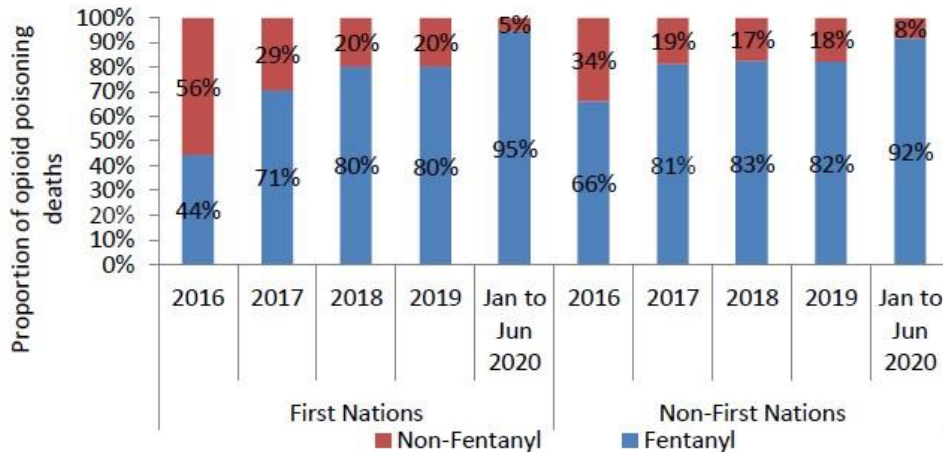


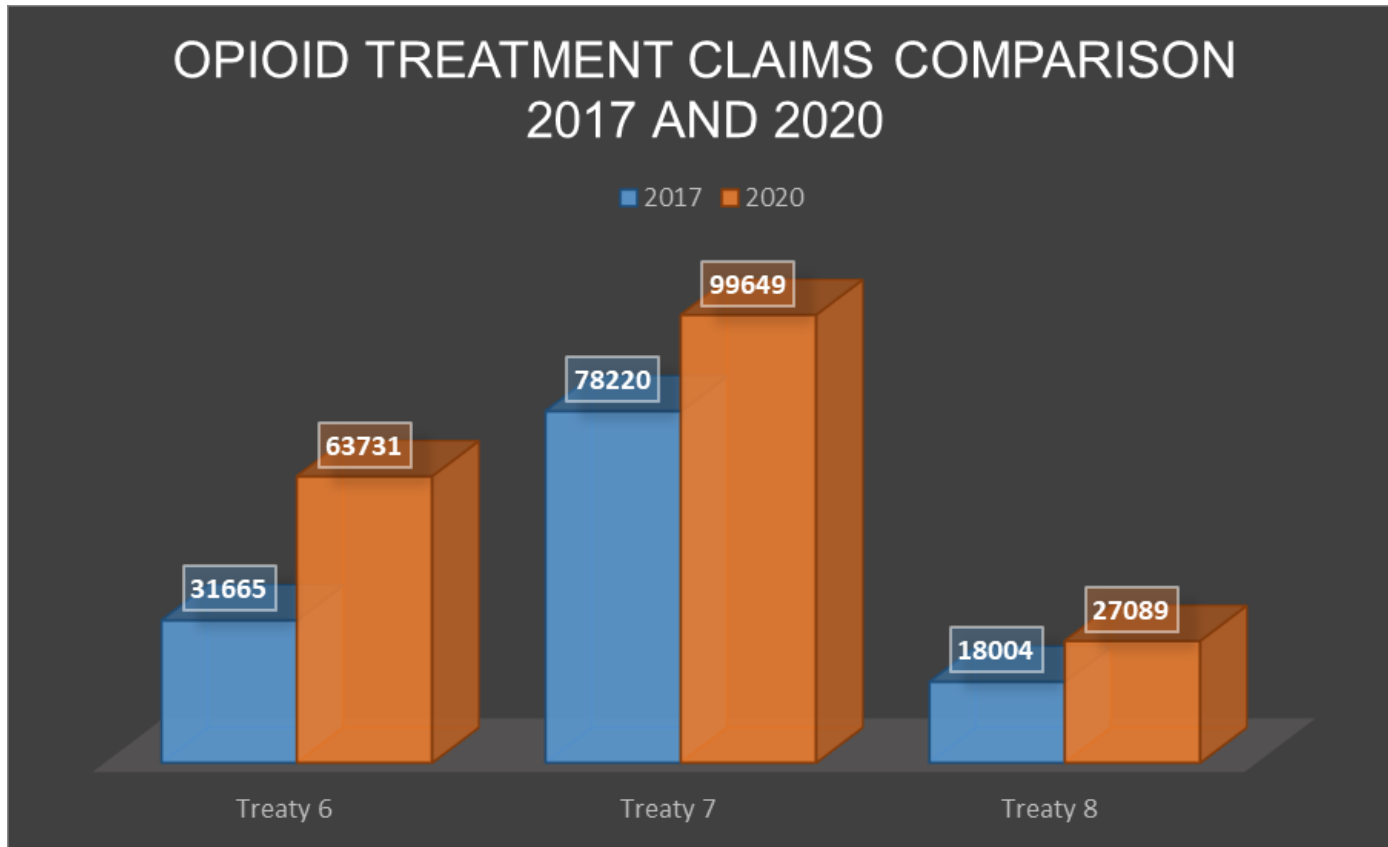
Figure 2: Proportion of fentanyl vs. non-fentanyl opioid apparent accidental poisoning deaths, by First Nations status and year. January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2020.



- In the first six months of 2020, Rates of apparent accidental opioid drug poisoning deaths per 100,000 were on average approximately seven times higher among First Nations people compared to Non-First Nations.
- First Nations people represented 22 per cent of all apparent accidental opioid poisoning deaths in Alberta from January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020.
- First Nations opioid poisonings related to fentanyl have now increased to 95%, higher than non-First Nations rate of 92%.
- The largest increase in substances causing drug poisoning deaths in 2020 include carfentanil, methamphetamines and fentanyl.
- In 2016 and 2017, the rate of emergency department visits related to opioids and other drugs among First Nations was six times higher than the rate of non-First Nations. In the first six months of 2020, the rate was nine times higher.

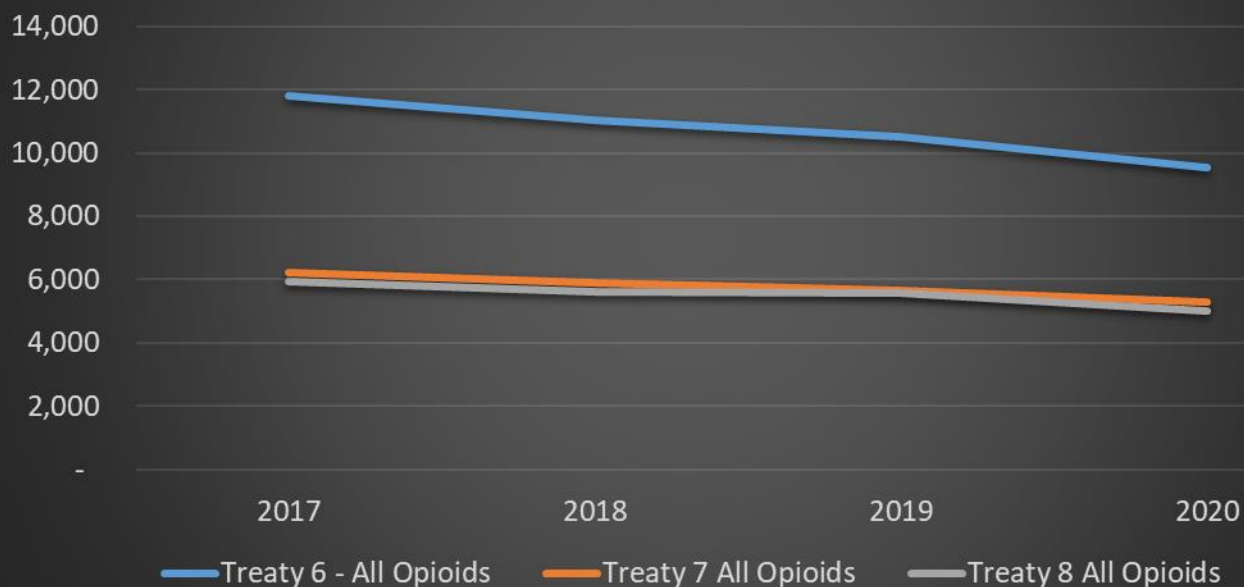
Table and Data source: Alberta Health Services, June 2021

Opioid Agonist Claims 2017 - 2020

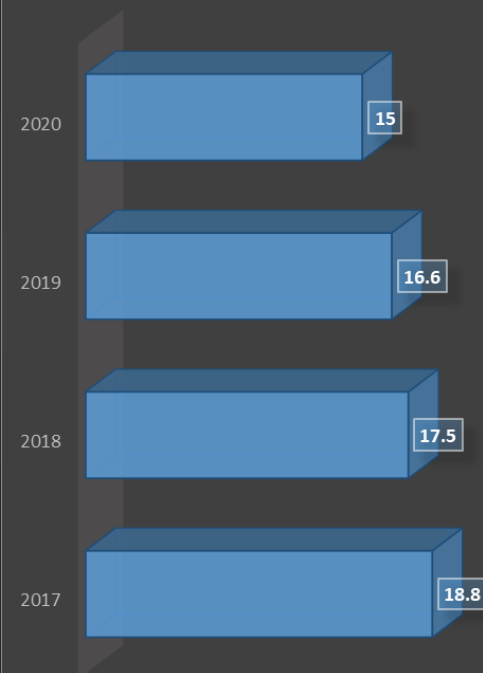


All Opioid and Opioid Agonist Claims 2017 - 2020

Total Number of Opioid Claimants by Treaty area

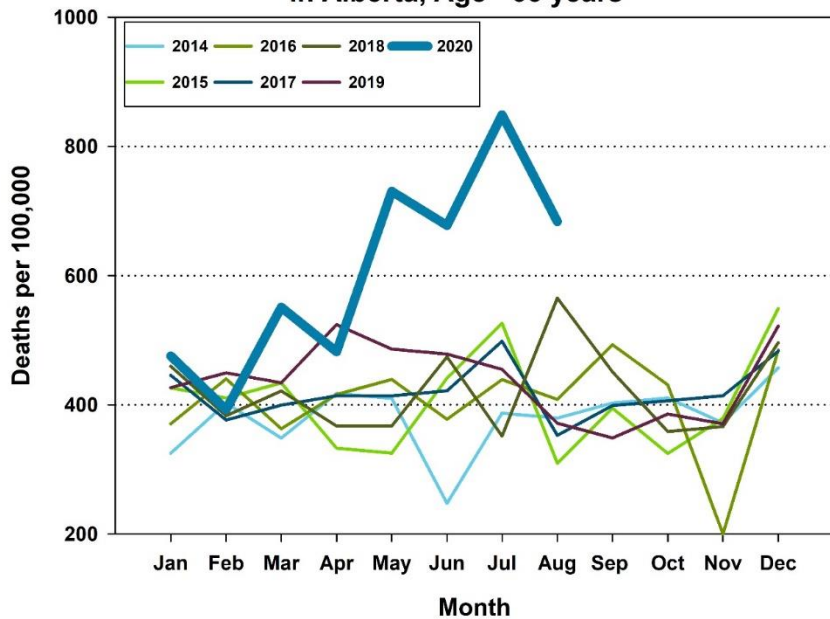


% of First Nations Opioid Claimants in Alberta

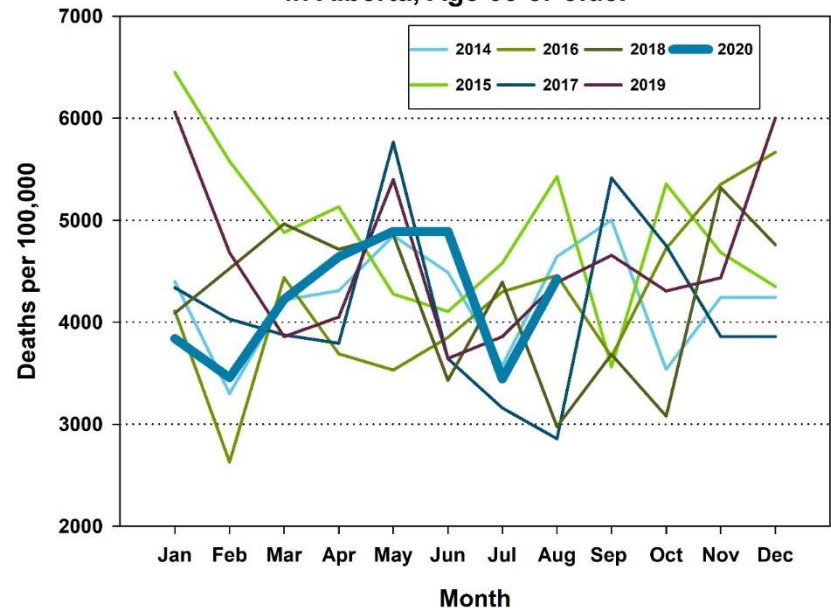


First Nations: Mortality Rates, Ages <65 vs 65+

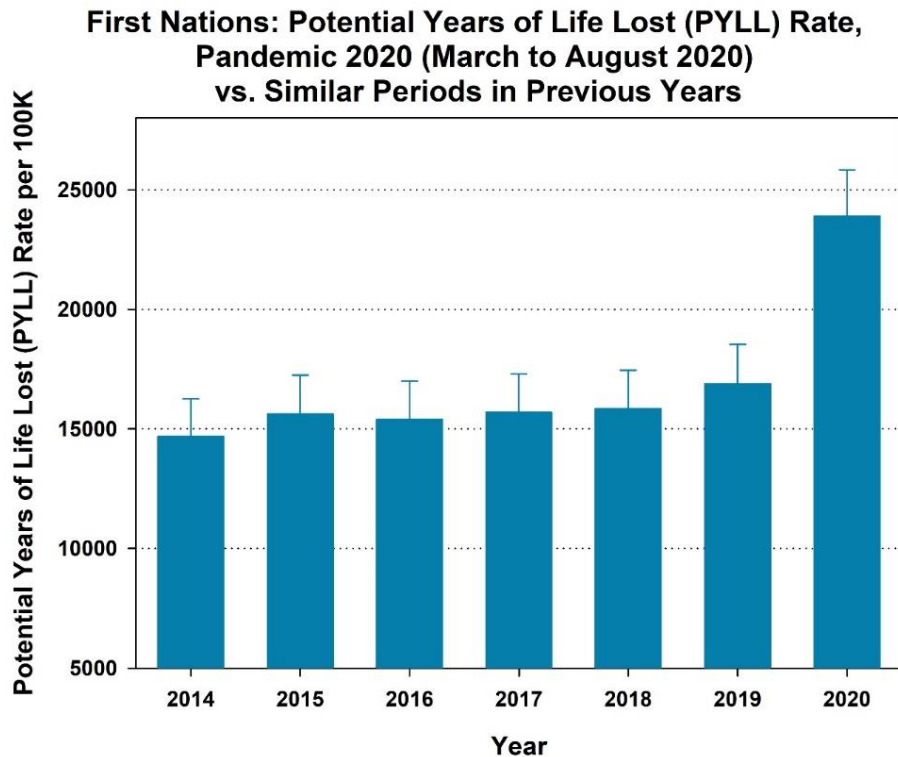
First Nations: Mortality Rates by Month in Alberta, Age <65 years



First Nations: Mortality Rates by Month in Alberta, Age 65 or older



First Nations : Potential Years of Life Lost (PYLL)



- PYLL Rate increased 42 percent in Pandemic Period 2020 from 2019
- Potential Years of Life Lost in Pandemic Period 2020 was 17,968 years, compared to 12,375 in the same period in 2019
- These trends imply a likely drop in First Nations Life expectancy in 2020 that will exceed the drop in the general population