Health & Criminal Justice
Data Committee

Report to the Governor’s Task Force on Prescription Drug and Heroin Abuse
Includes preliminary 2015 data

May 4, 2016

Presenting data from the Department of Forensic Science, and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and Office of Family Health Services at the Virginia Department of Health
Fatal Overdose in Virginia: Prescription Opioids and Heroin

2015 data are incomplete. Presented here are predicted totals, subject to change.

Data Source: OCME Fata Drug Overdose Quarterly Report [link](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/medExam/ForensicEpidemiology.htm)

*2015 data are incomplete.
Virginia Prescription Opioid Data

Hospitalizations & Fatal Overdoses (Left Axis) and Cases Submitted to DFS (Right Axis)

Data Sources: OFHS response to data request; OCME Fatal Drug Overdose Quarterly Report (2015 data are projected, preliminary figures); DFS monthly submission to NFLIS
Virginia Heroin Data
Hospital Discharges & Fatal Overdoses (Left Axis) and Cases Submitted to DFS (Right Axis)

Data Sources: OFHS response to data request; OCME Fatal Drug Overdose Quarterly Report (2015 data are projected, preliminary figures); DFS monthly submission to NFLIS
Fatal “Prescription Opioid” Overdoses

2015 data are incomplete. Presented here are predicted totals, subject to change.


*2015 data are incomplete.
“Prescription Opioid” Fatalities

2015 data are incomplete. Presented here are predicted totals, subject to change. Not directly comparable with total combined fatalities. Some fatalities involve more than one prescription opioid.


*2015 data are incomplete.
Growth is in Fentanyl Overdose Fatalities

Prescription Opioid Fatalities 2007-2015*

2015 data are incomplete. Presented here are predicted totals, subject to change.


*2015 data are incomplete.
How Should We Count Fentanyl?

- Fentanyl is categorized as a prescription opioid because it is mass produced by pharmaceutical companies.

- Recent surge is due to illicitly-produced fentanyl, *not* the prescription drug.

- Illicit fentanyl appears to be produced in labs in Central and South America. Fentanyl derivatives (e.g., acetyl fentanyl) are produced in China.

- Both the illicit fentanyl and derivatives are smuggled into the U.S. by Mexican drug cartels, sometimes mixed with heroin.

- In prior analyses, fentanyl has been categorized with prescription drugs. Newer information indicates it would be more appropriate to look at it separately.
Overdose Fatalities

Heroin vs Prescription Opioids vs Fentanyl & Derivatives

2015 data are incomplete. Presented here are predicted totals, subject to change.

Forms of Fentanyl – DFS Cases

Prior to 2013, most Fentanyl samples were in the form of a transdermal patch.
Forms of Fentanyl – DFS Cases

Beginning in late 2013, other forms of Fentanyl became much more common.

Data Source: DFS monthly submission to NFLIS.
*2015 data are incomplete.
Prescription Opioid DFS Cases
2015 Data Are Preliminary and Expected to Rise

Cases Submitted to DFS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fentanyl(NotPatch)</th>
<th>Oxycodone</th>
<th>Hydrocodone</th>
<th>Buprenorphine</th>
<th>RxOpOther</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>125%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-11%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15*</td>
<td>155%</td>
<td>-16%</td>
<td>-23%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: DFS monthly submission to NFLIS.
*2015 data are incomplete.
DFS Case Distribution Across Virginia
Fentanyl(Patch) Compares with Rx Opioid; Fentanyl(Other) Compares with Heroin
2015 Cases submitted to DFS, Rate per 100,000, By Health District

Data Source: DFS monthly submission to NFLIS.
*2015 data are incomplete.
DFS Prescription Opioid Cases, By Health District
Cases submitted to DFS, Rate per 100,000, By Health District
2015 Data Are Preliminary and Expected to Rise
Includes Fentanyl (Patch), excludes other forms of Fentanyl

Statewide: 82.2
2012

Statewide: 78.0
2013

Statewide: 75.4
2014

Statewide: 67.2
2015*

Legend
- Up to 50
- 50.1 to 100
- 100.1 to 200
- 200.1 to 300
- Over 300

Data Source: DFS monthly submission to NFLIS.
*2015 data are incomplete.
DFS Heroin Cases, By Health District
Cases submitted to DFS, Rate per 100,000, By Health District
2015 Data Are Preliminary and Expected to Rise

Statewide: 33.0

Legend
- Up to 15
- 15.1 to 30
- 30.1 to 60
- 60.1 to 90
- Over 90

Statewide: 47.1

Statewide: 54.0

Statewide: 61.3

Data Source: DFS monthly submission to NFLIS.
*2015 data are incomplete.
DFS Fentanyl & Derivatives Cases, By Health District
Cases submitted to DFS, Rate per 100,000, By Health District
2015 Data Are Preliminary and Expected to Rise

2012
Statewide: 0.1

2013
Statewide: 1.0

2014
Statewide: 2.3

2015
Statewide: 5.8

Legend
- Up to 1
- 1.1 to 3
- 3.1 to 5
- 5.1 to 15
- Over 15

Data Source: DFS monthly submission to NFLIS.
*2015 data are incomplete.
Cases Submitted to DFS
Heroin vs Prescription Opioids (Left Axis) vs Fentanyl & Derivatives (Right Axis)
2015 data are incomplete.

Data Source: OCME Fata Drug Overdose Quarterly Report [http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/medExam/ForensicEpidemiology.htm](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/medExam/ForensicEpidemiology.htm); DFS monthly submission to NFLIS.

*2015 data are incomplete.
Fatalities: Fentanyl and/or Heroin

2015 data are incomplete. Presented here are predicted totals, subject to change.


*2015 data are incomplete.
Conclusions

- Unlike cases prior to 2013, the majority of fentanyl overdoses are the result of illicitly produced fentanyl, rather than prescription fentanyl.

- When fentanyl cases are excluded, preliminary 2015 data indicate a drop in fatal overdoses due to prescription opioids.

- Fatal overdoses due to heroin and fentanyl have risen sharply, exceeding fatalities due to prescription opioids.

- Although there are signs that actions taken to reduce prescription opioid overdoses are having an impact, there is no reason to believe that those actions would have a similar impact on illicitly produced fentanyl or heroin.
Acknowledgments

Special thanks to:

– Rosie Hobron, OCME
– John Przybylski, DFS
– Anne Zehner, OFHS