

Preliminary 2018 Drug Overdose Deaths

CHANGES AND SIGNS OF PROGRESS

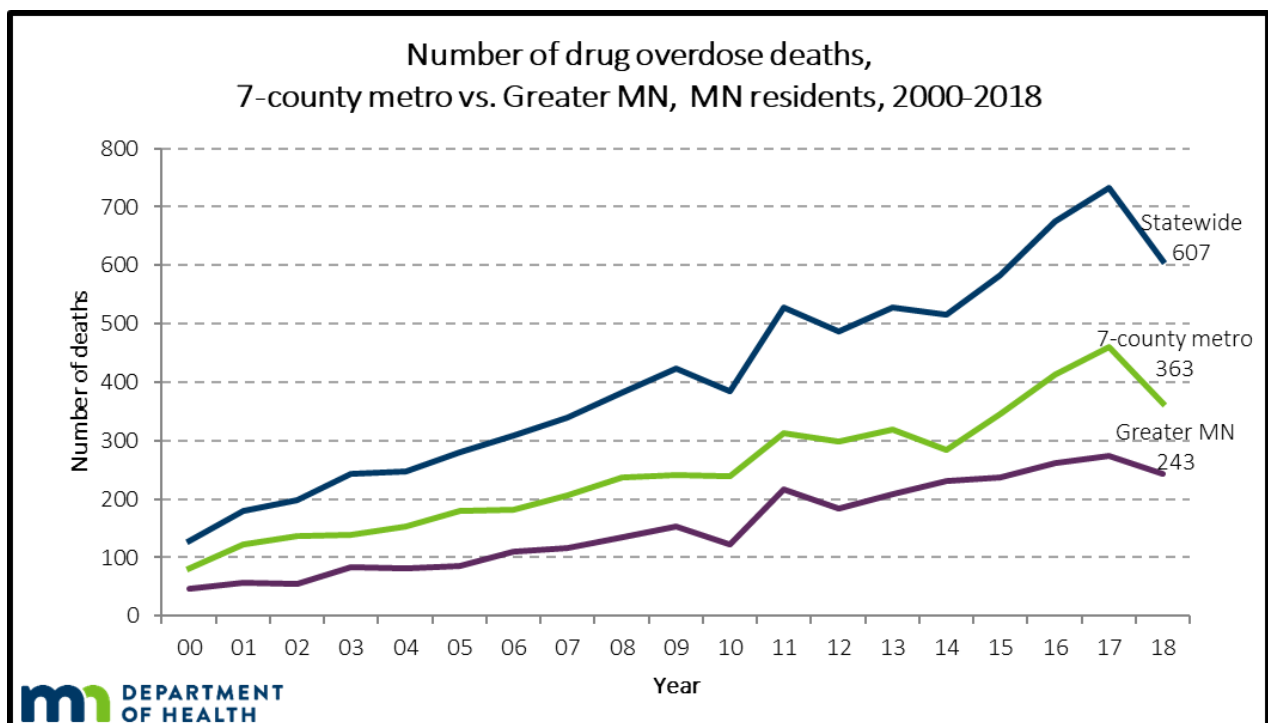
Key Findings

- Preliminary statewide data shows drug overdose deaths and opioid-involved deaths decreased from 2017 to 2018.
- Synthetic opioids are now involved in the greatest number of deaths, surpassing commonly-prescribed opioids.
- From 2017 to 2018, psychostimulant-involved (e.g., methamphetamine) deaths remained level, while benzodiazepine- and cocaine-involved deaths decreased.

Statewide Drug Overdose Deaths

Preliminary statewide data for 2018 show that drug overdose deaths decreased 17% from 2017 to 2018 (733 deaths to 607 deaths) (figure 1). A greater number of deaths (363) occurred in the 7-county Metro compared with Greater Minnesota (243). Although this continues a long trend of a greater number of deaths in the 7-county Metro, the gap between the two has narrowed over the past year.

Figure 1: The number of drug overdose deaths decreased in 2018

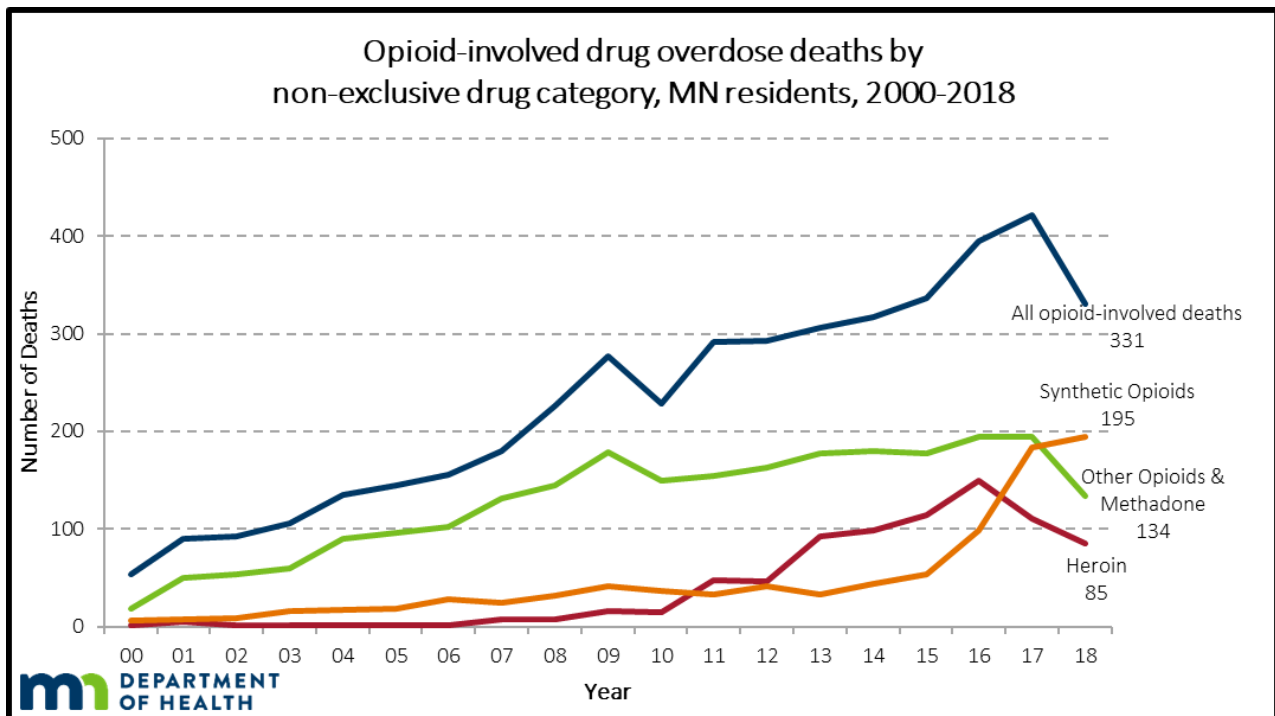


NOTE: Data are preliminary and likely to change when finalized.

Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths

In 2018, opioid-involved deaths decreased for Minnesota residents, marking a change in the long term trend since 2000. Through 2017, commonly prescribed opioids (i.e. other opioids and methadone) had been involved in the greatest number of deaths, but the numbers of these deaths decreased in 2018. Synthetic opioids are now involved in the greatest number of deaths. In 2018, the trend in the dramatic increase in synthetic opioid-involved deaths levelled off (6% increase) compared with previous years. A vast majority of the synthetic opioid deaths involved fentanyl; of the 195 deaths, 184 (94%) had fentanyl listed as contributing to the death on the death certificate. In 2018, heroin deaths continued a steady decrease from 2016 (23% decrease).

Figure 2: Opioid-involved overdose deaths decreased, with synthetic opioid-involved deaths now the leading drug category



NOTE: Data are preliminary and likely to change when finalized.

Trends in Non-Opioid Overdose Deaths

Psychostimulant-involved (e.g., methamphetamine) deaths remained level from 2017 to 2018 (161 deaths). Benzodiazepine-involved deaths substantially decreased 29% from 2017 (92 deaths) to 2018 (65 deaths), continuing the downward trend. Cocaine-involved deaths also decreased 25% from 2017 (68 deaths) to 2018 (51 deaths) (data not shown on graphs).

NOTE: Data contained within this report are preliminary and likely to change when finalized. The results throughout this report are indicative, not definitive, of the final 2018 drug overdose deaths. A final report is anticipated by September 2019. For more information contact Nate Wright (nate.wright@state.mn.us).