The BC Harm Reduction Program administered a survey to harm reduction supply distribution site clients across BC from March 2021 to January 2022 to assess regional differences in drug use and inform harm reduction planning and service quality improvement. Key findings from the survey are presented here. The total number of respondents for each question may differ.

Who took part?
- 15 communities
- 17 sites
- 537 participants

Self-identified gender
- Man: 62%
- Woman: 35%
- Trans, gender non-conforming, and other genders: 2%

Substance use patterns

- Past 3-days self-reported drug use
  - Crystal Meth: 72%
  - Fentanyl: 54%
  - Heroin: 42%
  - Crack: 26%
  - Cocaine: 18%

  The median number of substances reported used in the past 3 days was 3.

Mode of substance use
- Among those that reported heroin use:
  - 34% injected, 82% smoked
- Among those that reported fentanyl use:
  - 36% injected, 78% smoked

Overall, 64% of respondents identified SMOKING or INHALATION as the preferred method of drug use, while 14% preferred injection, and 4% preferred snorting.

Overdose
- 24% experienced an OPIOID OVERDOSE in the past six months
- 10% experienced a STIMULANT OVERDOSE in the past six months

Potential harms
- Of 388 people that used glass pipes to smoke drugs in the past 6 months:
  - 20% used a second-hand pipe
  - 6% injected instead when they couldn’t find unused smoking equipment

- Of 213 people that injected drugs in the past 6 months:
  - 7% had trouble getting unused needles
  - 11% had fixed with a needle used by someone else

Keeping safe and harm reduction
- 74% of participants owned a Take Home Naloxone kit, but only half (51%) owned a cell phone.
- Of those that injected drugs, 45% had used drugs at an Overdose Prevention Services site in the past 6 months.
- Of 189 people that had accessed opioid agonist therapy (OAT) in the past six months, 46% since discontinued its use, reporting difficulties that include:
  - unable to access pharmacy during working hours
  - OAT treatment wasn’t effective
  - unable to make clinic appointment time
  - OAT dose was too low
  - had no pharmacies nearby

More than half of participants (53%) reported using drugs alone often or always.