2018 BC Harm Reduction Client Survey

Urine Toxicology Screening

The B.C. Harm Reduction Program administered a survey to harm reduction supply distribution site clients across BC in 2018 to assess regional differences in drug use and inform harm reduction planning and quality improvement. A subset of the participants also participated in urine toxicology screening to observe discrepancies in what drugs people think they are taking and what may actually be in their drugs.

Who took part?

- 18 communities
- 22 sites
- 309 participants

Self-identified gender

- Female
- Male
- Trans, gender non-conforming, or other

Substances reported used in the past 3 days:

- Crystal Meth
- Heroin
- Fentanyl
- Cocaine (powder/crack)
- Methadone/Methadose
- Morphine

- Median number of substances reported used by participants: 4

Substances detected in urine toxicology screen:

- Crystal Meth/Amphetamine: 72%
- Fentanyl: 59%
- Morphine*: 55%
- Cocaine (powder/crack): 42%
- Codeine: 34%
- Methadone: 31%
- Heroin**: 26%
- Hydromorphone: 20%

Substances reported used/detected in less than 15% of participants, as well as cannabis and alcohol are not listed here.

- Morphine may be present in urine following morphine use or as a metabolite following heroin use.
- Detection of heroin may be underestimated as 6-monooacetyl morphine (heroin) is unstable in biological fluids and can degrade during storage.

Presence of fentanyl and unknowingly taking fentanyl

- 177 individuals had fentanyl detected in their urine.
- 66% of individuals that had fentanyl detected in their urine also reported using it in the past 3 days.
- 34% of individuals that had fentanyl detected in their urine did not report using it in the past 3 days.

Updated on October 1, 2019