



HARM REDUCTION BRIEF: CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF AIDS, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

SUPPORT

CDPH/OA HARM REDUCTION UNIT

- Authorization Power
- Harm Reduction Supplies
- Syringe Disposal
- Direct Funding
- Technical Assistance
- Capacity Building



CALIFORNIA POLICY

POSSESSION

It is lawful to possess syringes and other drug using supplies obtained from any source.

SYRINGE DISTRIBUTION

Syringes may be dispensed by staff and volunteers of SSPs authorized by CDPH or a city or county government.

PHYSICIANS & PHARMACISTS

Physicians and pharmacists may dispense/prescribe syringes for disease prevention purposes to anyone age 18 or older.

OTHER DRUG USING SUPPLIES

CDPH designated materials for distribution by SSPs.

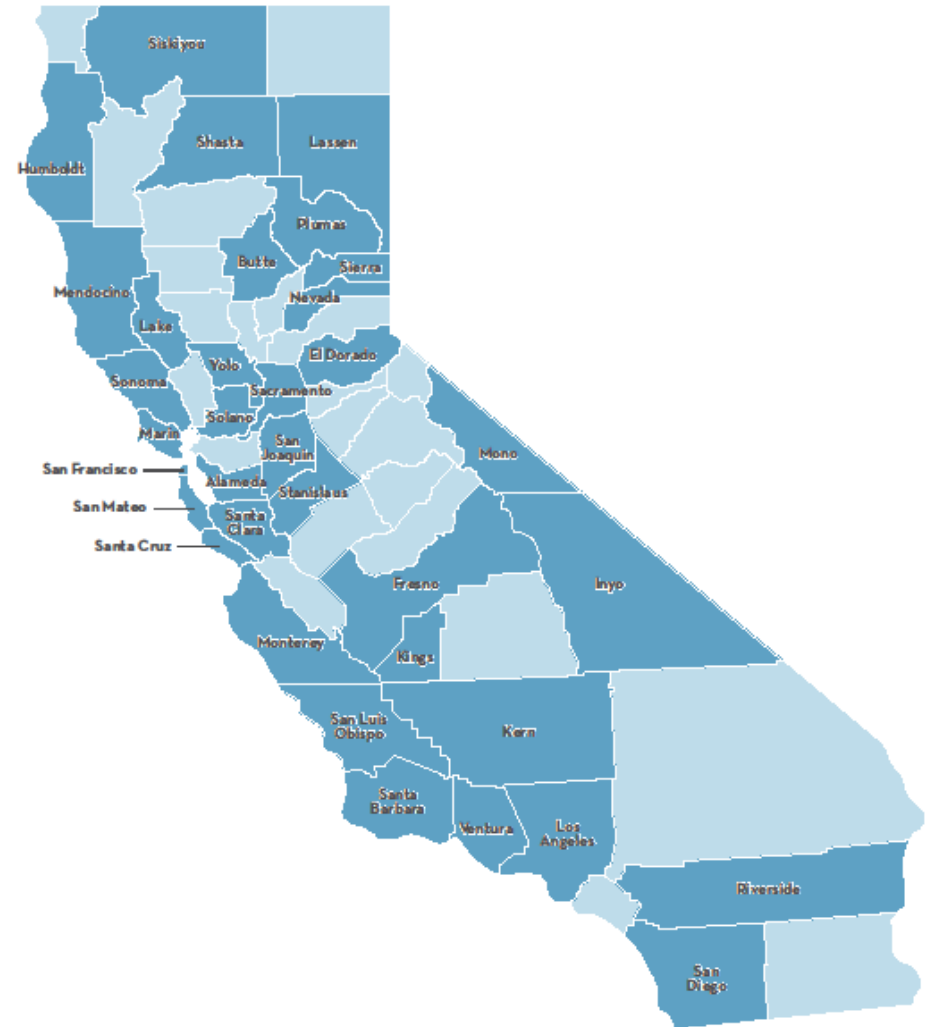
NALOXONE DISTRIBUTION

A statewide standing order allows any entity to distribute naloxone through the CA Naloxone Distribution Project.

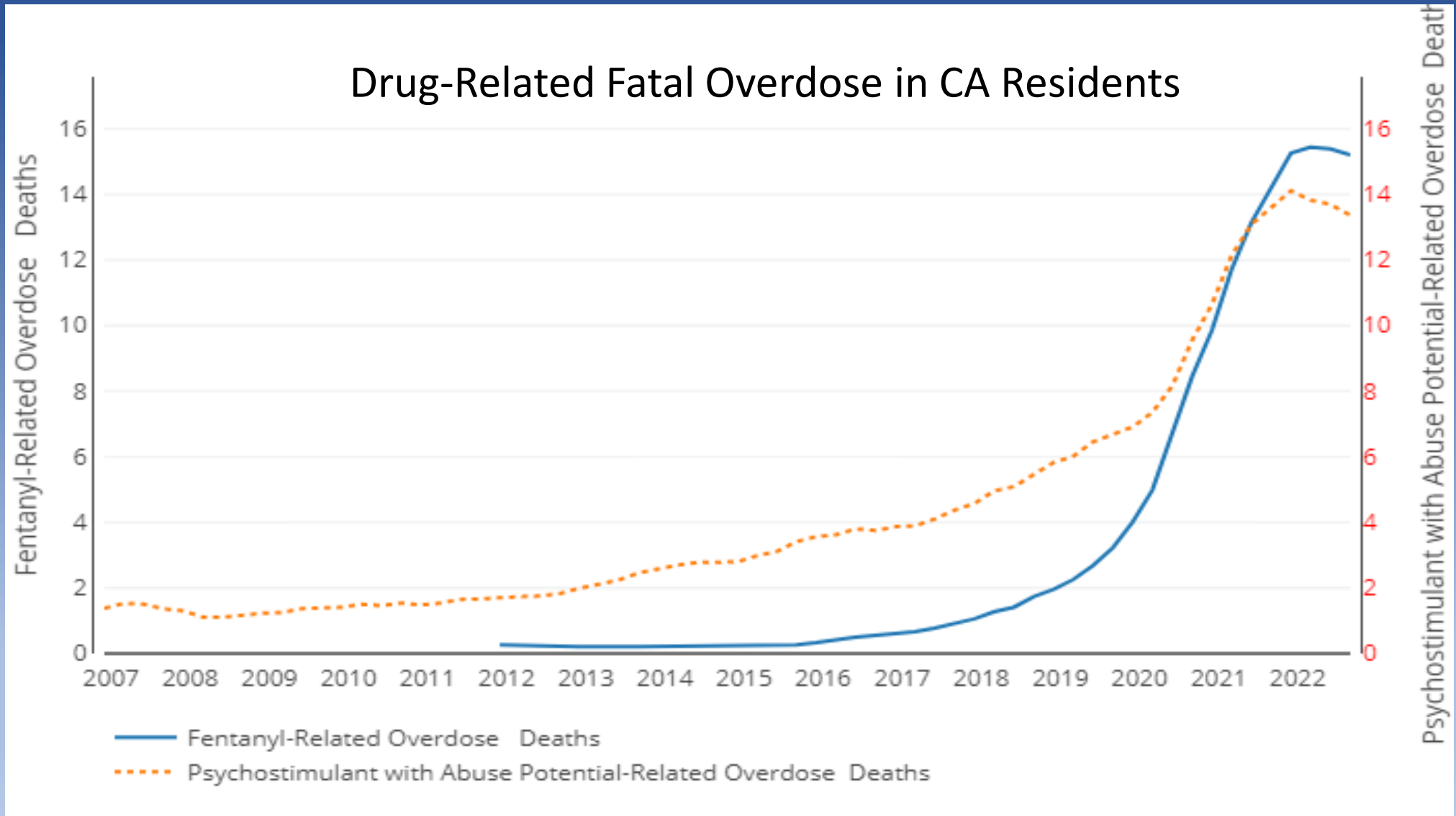
CALIFORNIA SSPs

There are
currently
75 SSPs
in California

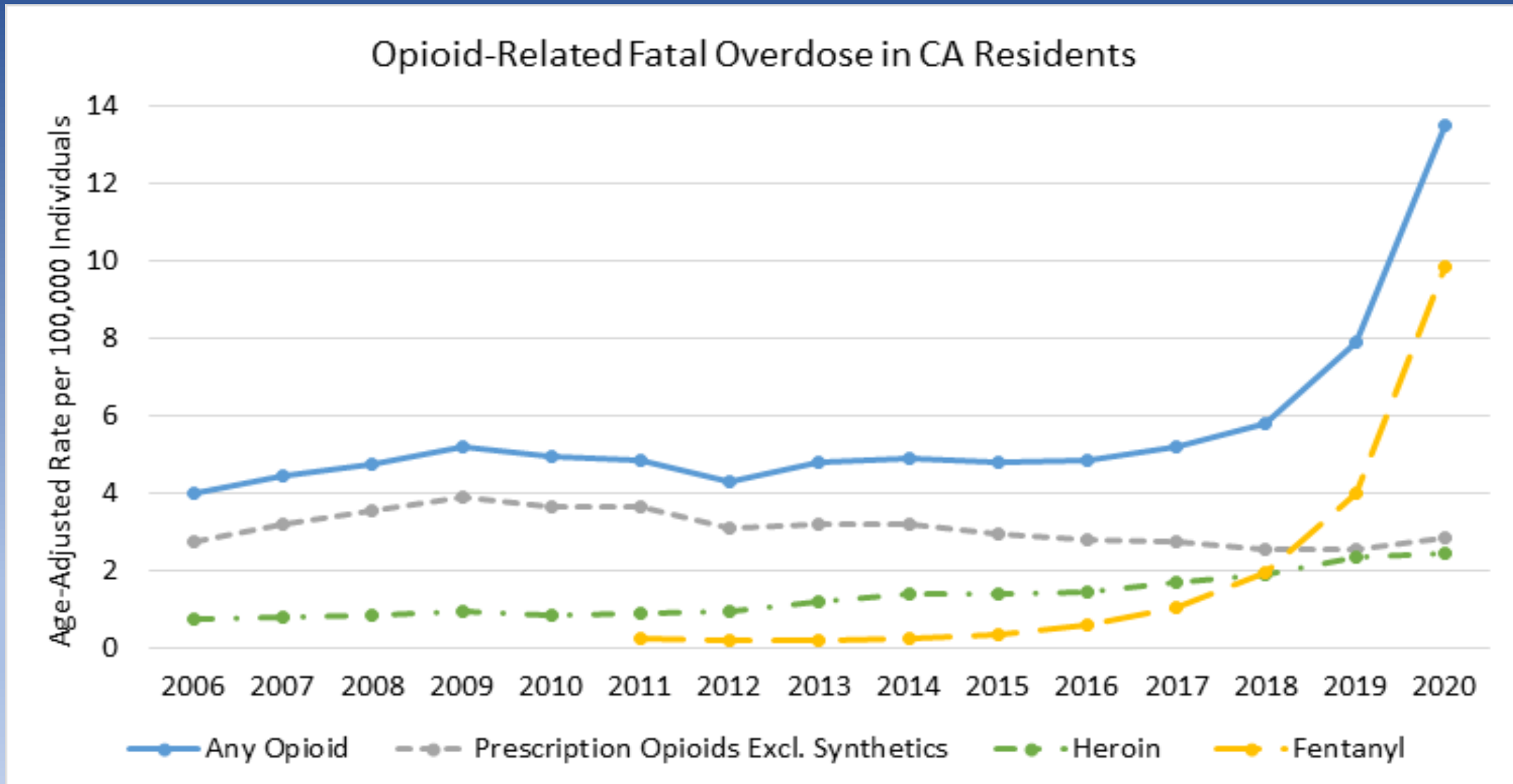
- Alameda
- Butte
- El Dorado
- Fresno
- Humboldt
- Inyo
- Kern
- Kings
- Lake
- Lassen
- Los Angeles
- Marin
- Mendocino
- Mono
- Monterey
- Nevada
- Plumas
- Riverside
- Sacramento
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- San Joaquin
- San Luis Obispo
- San Mateo
- Santa Barbara
- Santa Clara
- Santa Cruz
- Shasta
- Sierra
- Siskiyou
- Solano
- Sonoma
- Stanislaus
- Ventura
- Yolo



Fatal Overdoses are at record numbers



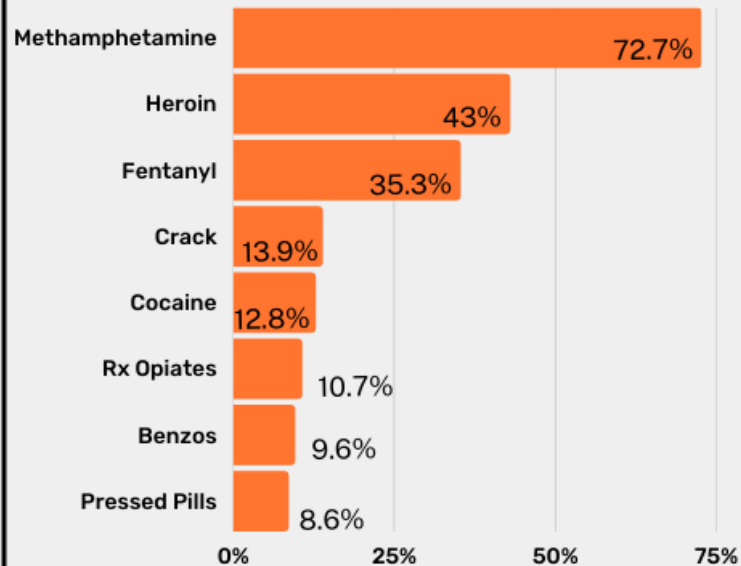
One key driver of fatal overdose: increased fentanyl in the street drug supply



CALIFORNIA SSP TRENDS

DRUG USE DATA

Participants were asked which drugs they use regularly (at least once a week)



80% Regularly use a **stimulant**

58.6% Regularly use **more than one drug** (polysubstance use)

45.6% Regularly use both **opiates & stimulants**

HOUSING HIGHLIGHTS

70.6% Identified as unhoused* in the past six months

39% Of unsheltered individuals indicated living in either tents, encampments or on the street

4 out of the 5 counties with the highest percentage of unhoused respondents were rural, including Butte, Monterey & Humboldt

Southern California had significantly higher rates of homelessness for Latinx respondents

*Consistent with the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) federal definition of homelessness

CALIFORNIA SSP TRENDS

OVERDOSE HIGHLIGHTS

65%

Reported exposure to overdose (self-reported overdose and/or Narcan use)

851

Individual opiate overdose events reported

227

Methamphetamine overdose events reported

The average number of estimated overdoses generally rose in proportion to the number of drugs a respondent regularly used, indicating that polysubstance use may be an important factor in overdose risk

58.1%

Indicated that overdoses were occurring more frequently to their friends/community

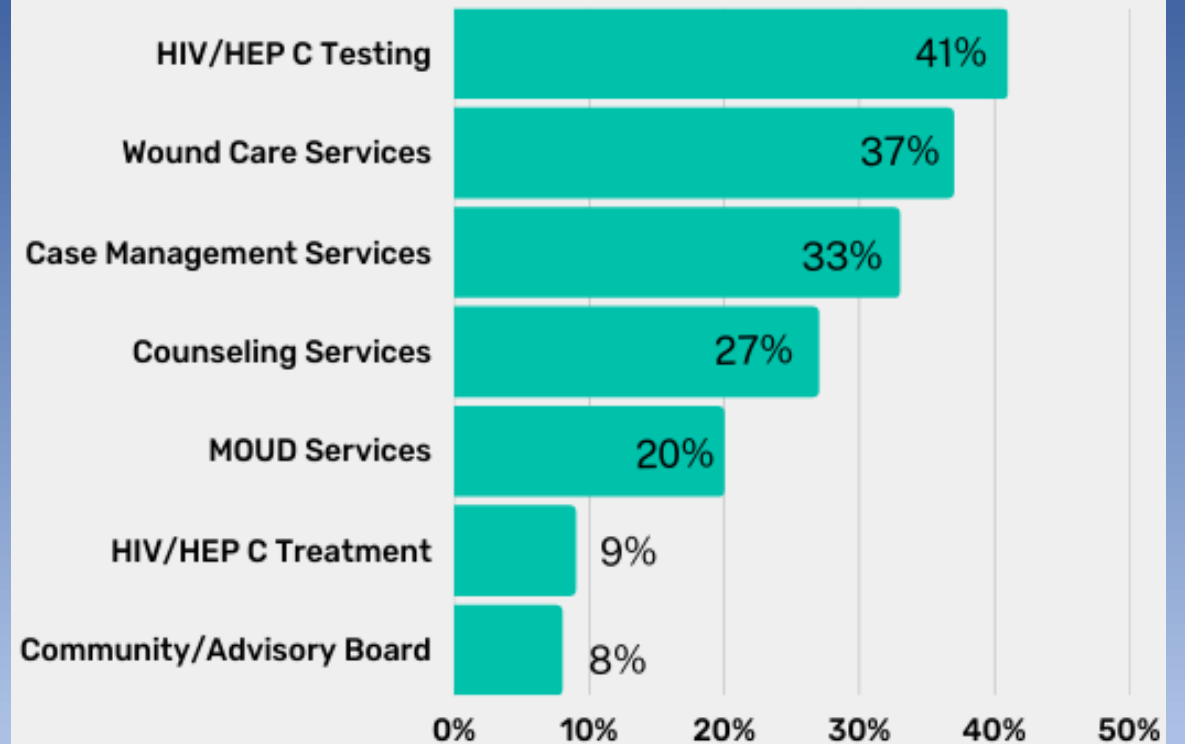
36.8%

Indicated that **hard-to-reverse** overdoses were occurring more frequently

Respondents' assessment of local overdose conditions were highly accurate. Respondents from areas with higher average numbers of overdoses tended to also report that overdoses were occurring more often in their communities. In areas where respondents indicated hard-to-reverse overdoses were occurring more often, higher-than-average estimates for Narcan uses were also found.

These responses highlight the importance of listening to the experiences and knowledge of people who use drugs as the foremost experts on drug use and overdose trends

ON-SITE SERVICES ACCESSED AT SSPs



Participants at SSPs are getting more than overdose prevention and safer drug use supplies! Thanks to CHRI, many programs are able to offer additional services like wound care, HIV/HCV testing, and case management.

CA Harm Reduction Services Forecast:

Grim-ish



Lawsuits

Increased Participant Harassment

Financially Backed Opposition

Local Ordinances Banning SSPs

Increased SSP Staff Harassment

24/7 Substance use treatment to anyone who needs it

*Launched in 2018 to expand access to MOUD
through Emergency Departments*

242 participating emergency departments in 52 counties

Harm Reduction Supplies Distribution!

CA DRUG USER HEALTH RESOURCES

2022 IMPACT

45% of **harm reduction supplies** were ordered and delivered to counties with no harm reduction services.

36% of **naloxone doses** were ordered and delivered to counties with no harm reduction services.



WHAT IS **NEXT Distro?**

An online and mail-based **harm reduction service** designed to reduce opioid overdose death, prevent injection-related disease transmission, and improve the lives of people who use drugs.

<https://nextdistro.org/>

Thank You

Loris.Mattox@cdph.ca.gov

