



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	March 20, 2017
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Opioid Response Summit (BOH17006)(City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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Council Direction: Not applicable

Information:

This report will update the Board of Health on the outcomes of the recent Opioid Response Summit and next steps in addressing the misuse of opioids in Hamilton.

Background

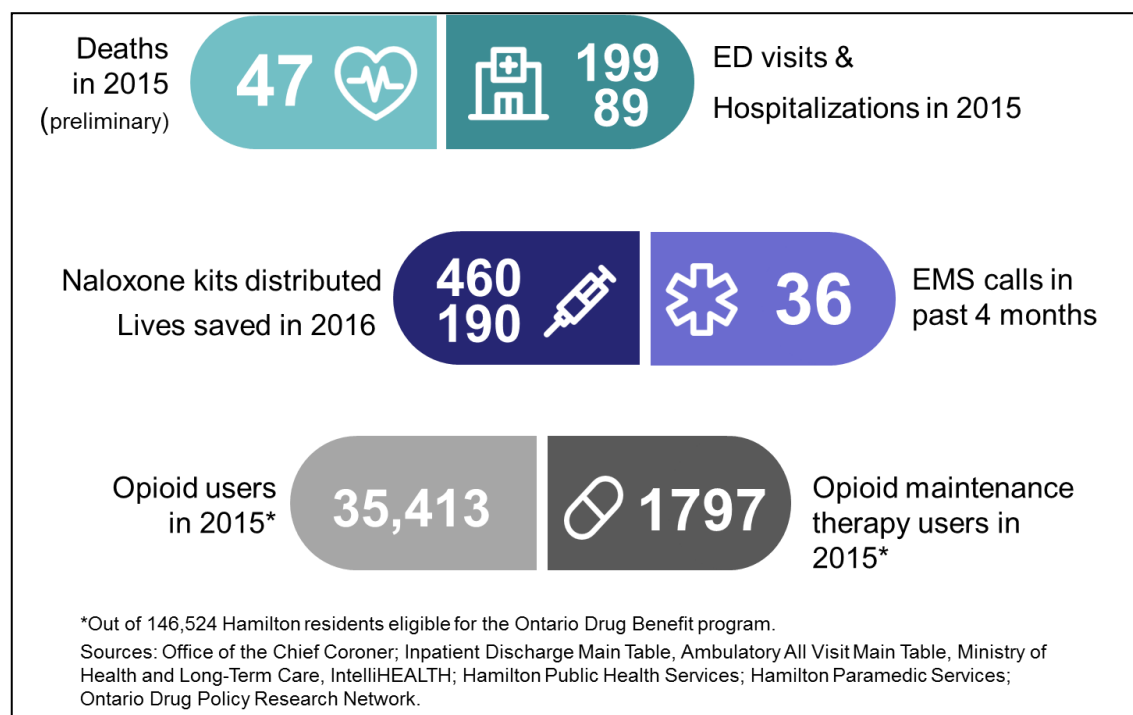
On January 26, 2017, Mayor Fred Eisenberger and Public Health Services (PHS) convened an Opioid Response Summit in response to growing concerns about opioid misuse, rising overdose deaths and the presence of high potency opioids, like carfentanil, in Hamilton. Participants included a broad representation of community partner organizations from acute care, primary care, first responders, community mental health, addictions treatment, harm reduction services, housing and those with lived experience. Refer to Appendix A for a list of participating partner organizations.

Major areas of discussion at the meeting included: 1) surveillance and monitoring; 2) naloxone; 3) a community awareness campaign; and 4) an opioid response plan.

1. Surveillance and Monitoring

Currently in Ontario, a comprehensive surveillance and monitoring system for opioid misuse, overdoses and deaths does not exist. Pieces of data are available from different organizations, but challenges around the timely availability of data makes responding to an evolving situation challenging. Figure 1 is a snapshot of what is currently known.

Figure 1: Snapshot of Data Related to Opioid Misuse in Hamilton



EMS calls were for October 2017 through January 2017.

Opioid related deaths have increased in Hamilton, along with emergency department visits and hospitalizations due to opioid toxicity (Figure 2). Those most impacted were between the ages of 25 and 44 years with more men than women seeking care due to opioid poisoning (Figure 3).

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Figure 2: Opioid-Related Deaths in Hamilton from 2005-2015

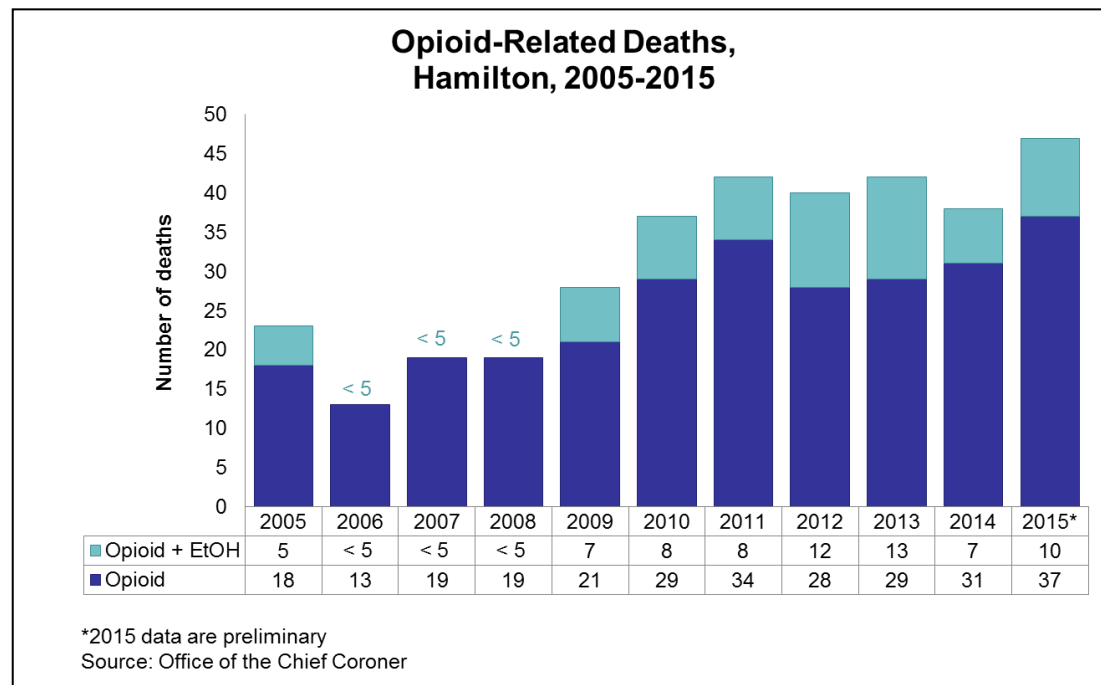
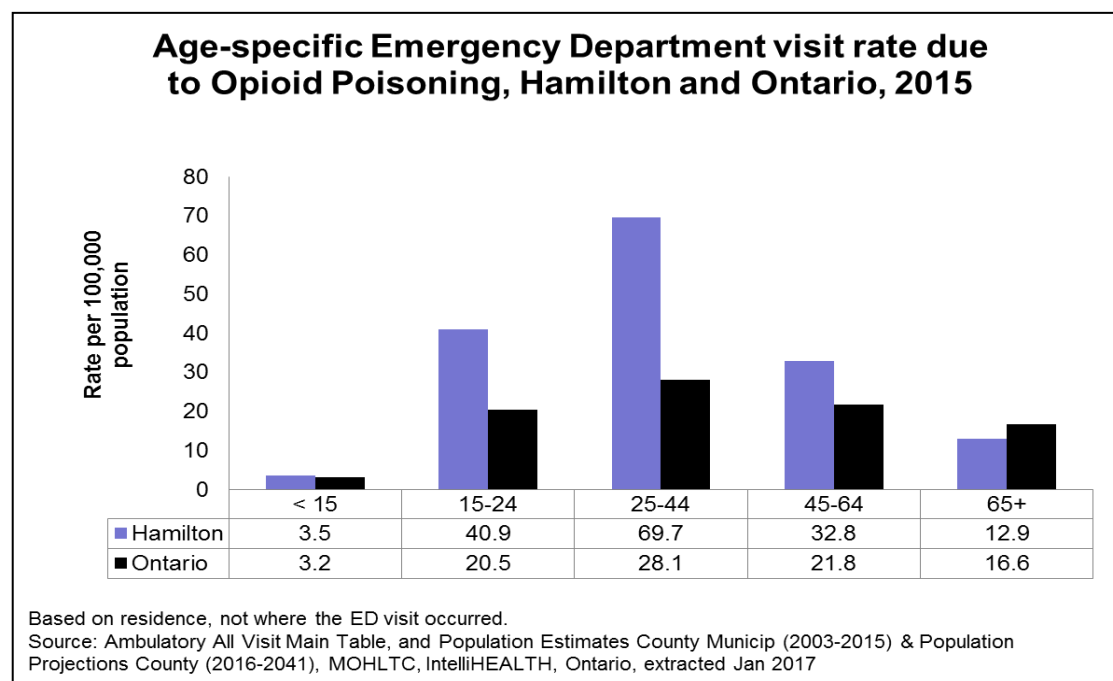


Figure 3: Age-Specific Emergency Department Visit Rate Due to Opioid Poisoning in Hamilton in 2015



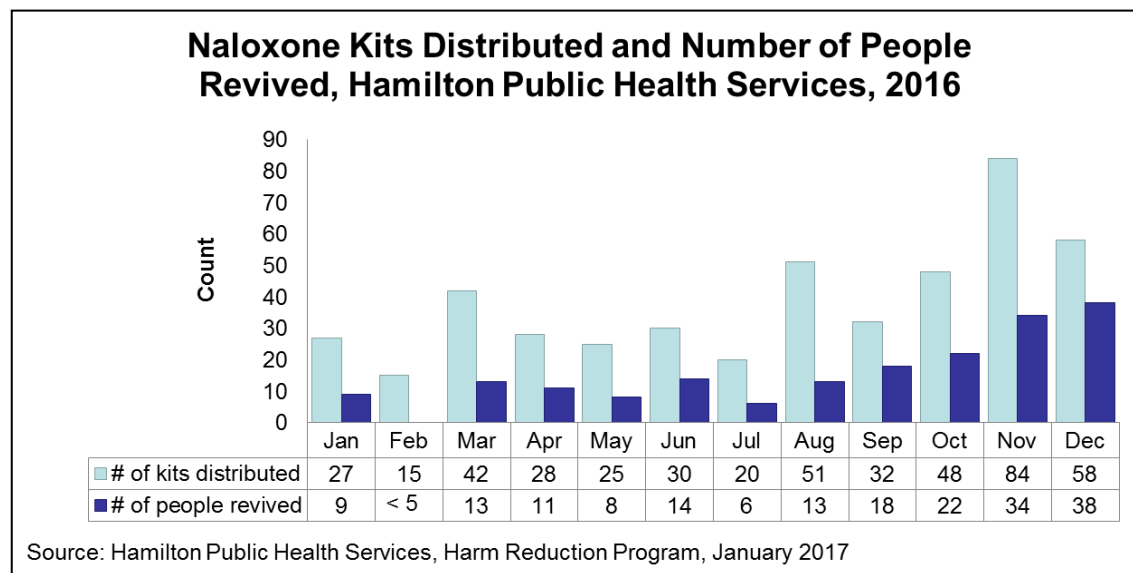
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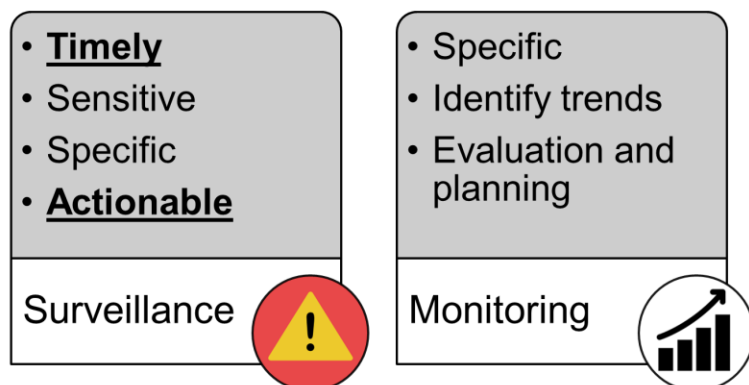
In 2016, PHS distributed 460 naloxone kits and 190 people were reported as being revived by the kits (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Naloxone Kits Distributed and the Number of People Reported Revived to PHS in 2016



In order to better put the data pieces together to form a more comprehensive picture of the opioid situation in Hamilton, PHS has partnered with Hamilton Paramedic Service, Hamilton Health Sciences, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, and other community partners in order to develop a surveillance and monitoring strategy. The figure below describes the differences between surveillance and monitoring (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Differences Between Surveillance and Monitoring



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Beginning in mid-February 2017, PHS will publish weekly surveillance reports related to opioid overdose. These will be publicly-available on the City of Hamilton website so that the public and organizations working with people misusing opioids can be better informed of the current situation. PHS will continue to monitor long-term trends for planning, evaluation and continuous quality improvement purposes.

2. Naloxone

Naloxone is an antidote to opioid overdose. Currently, PHS distributes naloxone to people who use opioids or former users at risk of relapse and their friends and family. Naloxone is also available through local pharmacies, Hepatitis C team and the Hamilton Wentworth Detention Centre.

There was significant interest from attendees in expanding naloxone availability in Hamilton to other organizations that provide services to people who misuse opioids. The group agreed to continue advocating for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to expand access. This was an issue that the Board of Health previously identified with a letter being written to the Minister of Health on this matter in 2016. The group will continue to discuss potential ways naloxone might be promoted and access expanded in Hamilton.

3. Public Awareness Campaign

PHS and interested Summit participant organizations will begin promoting a public awareness campaign in February 2017 giving facts related to the significance of opioid overdose and information on how to prevent and respond to opioid overdoses. An example of public messaging is included below:

Opioid misuse is the third leading cause of accidental death in Ontario.

Prevent Drug Overdose, Save Lives

Remember the 4 C's

1. **Careful Use** - Do not use alone, go slow by testing effect with small amounts first
2. **Carry Naloxone** - Get a FREE naloxone kit, and training at the following locations:
 - Hamilton Public Health's Overdose Prevention Education program: 905-546-4276
 - Participating local pharmacies by calling the Drug and Alcohol Helpline: 1-800-565-8603
3. **Call 9-1-1** for every overdose. You, your friend or family member needs hospital care to survive.
4. **CPR** Push hard, push fast

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A comprehensive list of addiction program and service providers is being compiled and sector-specific information will accompany the campaign in the future (e.g., targeted to youth).

4. Opioid Response Plan

The health and social system is complex and people misusing opioids may have many touch points across the system. PHS is coordinating the development of an opioid response plan that collates the plans of partner organizations to differing levels of risk related to new opioids in the community. By documenting plans in a single location, organizations can be aware of the plans of others, coordination of services can be better managed and gaps identified.

Additionally, this work can also support a collective response should other (non-opioid) drugs become an increasing issue in Hamilton in the future.

Figure 6 describes the risk level and criteria/triggers related to new opioids being identified. Appendix B contains the response plan, which should be considered a living and evolving document.

Figure 6: Opioid Response Plan Risk Levels and Criteria/Triggers

Level	Risk Level	Criteria/ Triggers
1	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New opioid analog (e.g. Carfentanil) found in other areas of the country/ province causing a spike in overdose rates
2	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opioid analog (Carfentanil) found in City of Hamilton
3	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large spike in Overdoses occurring in the City <p><i>** Exact triggers to be developed</i></p>

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Next Steps

It is obvious that a single meeting is not adequate to resolve opioid misuse issues in Hamilton. Summit participants committed to ongoing meetings with working groups formed as needed in order to further the conversation and collective action. Updates on the actions of the group will be shared with the Board of Health as further progress is made.

The group also recognized that opioids are just one drug of misuse. Currently, Hamilton does not have a drug strategy. There was interest from many participating organizations to continue a more broad discussion beyond opioids. PHS will continue to promote the use of a comprehensive public health approach to drug and substance misuse, including the pillars of prevention, treatment, harm reduction and enforcement, while also recognizing the importance of the social determinants of health and stable housing.

Summary

PHS considers the Opioid Response Summit to have been a successful step in preparing for a potential increase in opioid overdoses in Hamilton.

Key achievements include:

- Timely and publicly-available surveillance data;
- Advocacy for increased access to naloxone;
- Development of an opioid response plan;
- Public education campaign to promote safer drug use practices; and
- Ongoing discussion related to development of a drug strategy in Hamilton.

Appendices

Appendix A to Report BOH17006	Partner organizations who participated in the Opioid Response Summit
Appendix B to Report BOH17006	Opioid Response Plan