



Métis Nation of Alberta

A strong Métis Nation embracing Métis rights

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For Immediate Release

Métis Nation of Alberta Releases Opioid Data & Action Plan

Edmonton, AB - The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) is committed to positively affecting the health status of Métis citizens by providing supports and services to address the unique health outcomes among Métis Albertans. Utilizing our ongoing partnership and in response to the opioid crisis affecting all Albertans, the MNA is collaborating with Alberta Health, to determine the impact of opioids on Métis Albertans.

The MNA, recently developed data on opioid and substance misuse, comparing rates of use and other indicators, for Métis Albertans with non-Métis Albertans. Some highlights of the findings include:

- Between January 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017, the rate of apparent accidental opioid toxicity deaths was slightly higher among Métis Albertans.
- From 2013 to 2016, the rate of opioid dispensing has consistently been higher among Métis Albertans.
- From 2014 to 2017, the rates of emergency department (ED) visits and hospitalizations related to opioid use and other substances of misuse for Métis Albertans were consistently higher. Increases in the rates of ED visits and hospitalizations over this period were also greater for Métis Albertans.
- Among both populations, the majority of apparent accidental opioid toxicity deaths were related to fentanyl relative to non-fentanyl opioids from January 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017.
- Among both populations, males, particularly those males aged 30-44 years, represented a much higher proportion of apparent accidental opioid toxicity deaths compared to females.
- In 2016, among both populations, accidental fentanyl opioid toxicity deaths represented the highest proportion of all confirmed drug and alcohol toxicity deaths.

While these statistics are extremely concerning, the MNA is committed to providing supports and services with the intention of reducing the impact of opioid misuse on Métis Albertans. To this end, we have developed an Opioid Crisis Management Action Plan that will address this serious health concern. Starting June 2018, we will begin opioid awareness education and Take Home Naloxone Kit (THNK) training and distribution with Métis Albertans, in more than 70 Métis communities across Alberta.

The MNA has also hired a Research and Project Coordinator, specific to Opioids Navigation Services, to assist Metis Albertans who have experienced an overdose, help them navigate through the health care system, and connect them with culturally-relevant resources. By introducing the Opioid Crisis Management Action Plan and Opioid Navigation Services, we intend to decrease the number of overdoses seen in our Métis communities, lessen the amount of emergency department visits, encourage community champions through THINK training, and provide support for those navigating the health care system following an overdose.

The Métis Nation of Alberta will be releasing the full report to citizens in the coming weeks.

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