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## MEMORANDUM

CWCD 330-2018

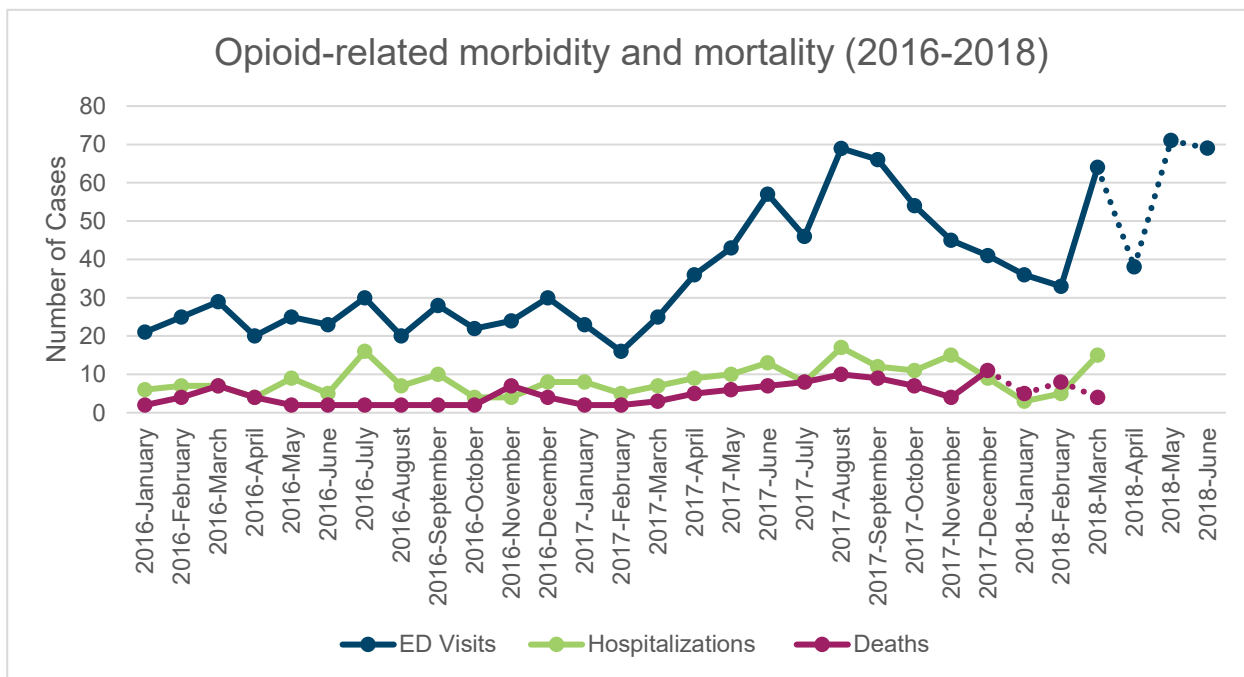
**Subject:** Opioid Work Update  
**Date:** October 5, 2018  
**To:** Board of Health  
**From:** Dr. Andrea Feller, Associate Medical Officer of Health

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In our goal to continue to keep you updated around opioids, please see the following.

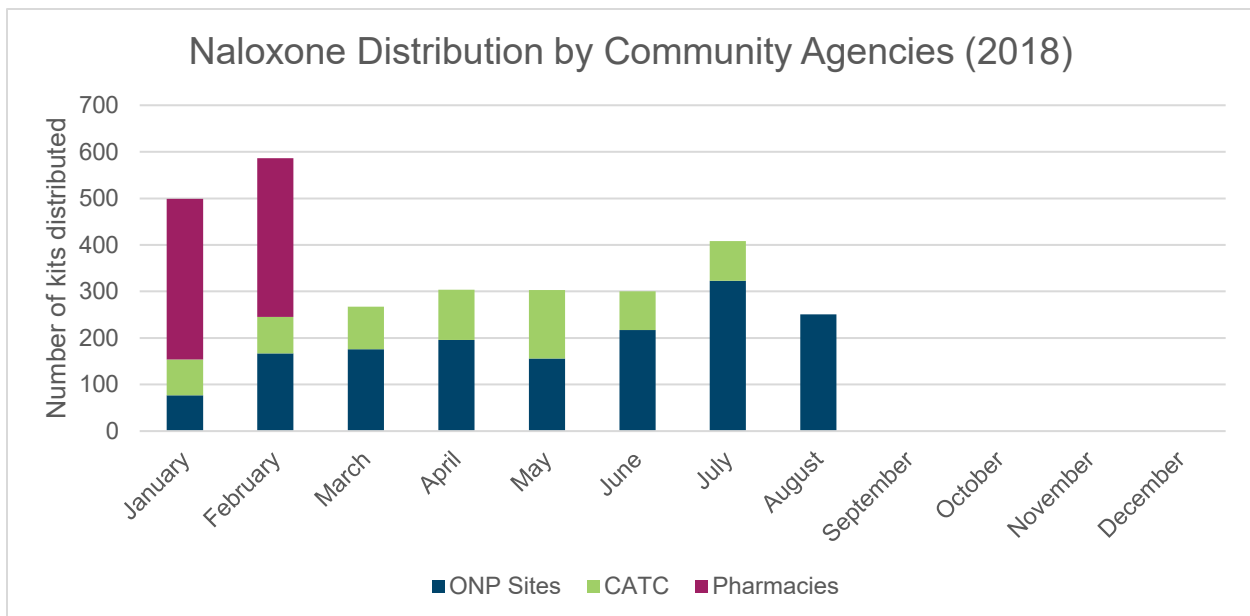
1. Positive Living Niagara (PLN) and the Overdose Prevention and Education Network of Niagara (OPENN) have learned that the Overdose Prevention Site (OPS) review by the province has been extended, we think until the end of October. The federal exemptions required for these sites have been extended another six months. A research approach that re-analyzed data and called into question the effectiveness of these sites has been retracted (in other words, the validity of the findings are questionable according to science).  
[https://www.ijdp.org/article/S0955-3959\(18\)30180-4/fulltext](https://www.ijdp.org/article/S0955-3959(18)30180-4/fulltext)
2. Naloxone has been distributed to 19 key agencies who are actively distributing within the critical social and close peer network, as well as appropriate patient provisions through St. John Ambulances, Niagara Health, and EMS. Nine other agencies are in the process of receiving naloxone (unchanged since last update). All agencies that have chosen to be a public access point are listed at:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/where-get-free-naloxone-kit>
3. In coordination with CASON, community presentations have been booked with libraries across the region focusing on opioids, naloxone, and promoting health and social services available.
4. The website is updated as data becomes available. These updates are available through NRPH&ES site (in addition to elsewhere on the Region's site).  
[https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health\\_wellness/alc-sub-abuse/drugs/overdose-prevention.aspx](https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/alc-sub-abuse/drugs/overdose-prevention.aspx)
5. For this report, we have included some **preliminary** data (in broken lines) in addition to the data found on the website. A summary of opioid-related population health outcome and naloxone distribution data available to date follows. Death data have been received through March. It is possible that the increase in availability of naloxone and education have made an impact. Reports from partners indicate that deaths have unfortunately risen over the summer, similar to last year.

As of January 2018, a new data extraction process (i.e. First Watch) has been made available to track EMS responses to suspected opioid overdoses. This process is automated, faster and applies standardized inclusion and exclusion criteria to detect suspected overdoses. Currently, we are working on revising this process to align better with other health units across the province.

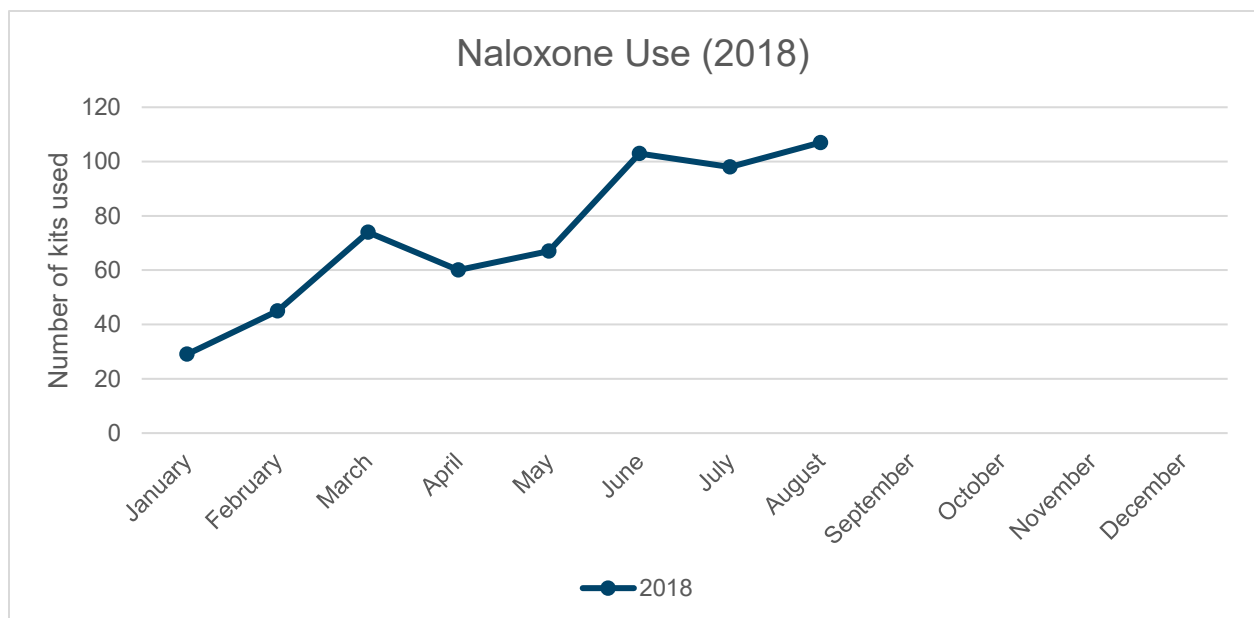


Data source: National Ambulatory Care Reporting System, 2018; Discharge Abstract Database, 2018; Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario, 2017.

- In 2016 there were a total of 297 opioid poisoning emergency department (ED) visits, and 82 hospitalizations
- In 2017 there was a total of 521 opioid poisoning ED visits (a 75% increase from 2016) and 124 hospitalizations (a 50% increase from 2016)
- In the first quarter of 2018, there have been 133 opioid poisoning ED visits and 23 hospitalizations
- In 2017 there were 74 opioid overdose deaths, which is an 85% increase from 2016, where there were 40 deaths. In 2017, fentanyl was the most common type of opioid present at the time of death (present in 58% of deaths), followed by hydromorphone (present in 20% of deaths).



Data source: Niagara Region Naloxone Distribution and Use [2018].



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- Currently, naloxone can be obtained from participating Ontario pharmacies, community health centres, methadone clinics, detention centres, and addiction treatment facilities. NRPH is ordering, coordinating, and supervising naloxone inventory, distributing it to community agencies to in turn distribute to their clients, and reporting on its distribution and use to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC).
- As of January 2018, a new data collection system has been implemented for naloxone distribution and use in the community

- Data on naloxone use may change over time as more individuals have their kits replaced
- The graph on naloxone distribution in the community now contains data from Ontario Naloxone Program (ONP) sites, Canadian Addiction Treatment Centres (CATC), and pharmacies in an effort to show a more holistic picture of distribution within the community
  - Data from pharmacies is currently unavailable
- Public Health Units are working with the MOHLTC to obtain a more fulsome picture of data related to naloxone distribution and use

We will continue to keep you updated. Other pertinent correspondence is listed below:

CWCD 08-2018  
CWCD 19-2018  
CWCD 39-2018  
CWCD 44-2018  
CWCD 83-2018  
CWCD 109-2018  
CWCD 140-2018  
CWCD 174-2018  
CWCD 205-2018  
CWCD 218-2018  
CWCD 283-2018  
CWCD 300-2018

Respectfully submitted and signed by

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Andrea Feller, MD, MS, FAAP, FACPM  
Associate Medical Officer of Health