



EMPOWER HENRICO

Preventing, Treating and
Combating Substance Use

**July 2025 Overdose Response Strategy (ORS)
Trends, Analysis & Threats Webinar Summary**

**Empower Task Force Meeting
July 17, 2025**

ABOUT THE OVERDOSE RESPONSE STRATEGY*

<http://www.orsprogram.org/>

The ORS is a nationally coordinated, cross-sector collaboration between public health and public safety. The mission of the ORS is to help communities reduce fatal and non-fatal drug overdoses by connecting public health and public safety agencies, sharing information and supporting evidence-based interventions.

ORS Program Goals:

1. Share data systems to inform rapid and effective community overdose prevention efforts
2. Support immediate, evidence-based response efforts that can directly reduce overdose deaths
3. Design and use promising strategies at the intersection of public health and public safety
4. Support the implementation of evidence-informed prevention strategies that can reduce substance use and overdose

**ORS acknowledges that all data is shared voluntarily by data owners in advance of public release and can be preliminary and incomplete. ORS does not own or manage any of the data presented.*

Presenters in July webinar included:

➤ Thom Browne, Chief Executive Officer

The Colombo Plan – Drug Advisory Program (DAP)

➤ Ed Sisco, Research Chemist

National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

➤ Doctor Nabarun Dasgupta, Senior Scientist

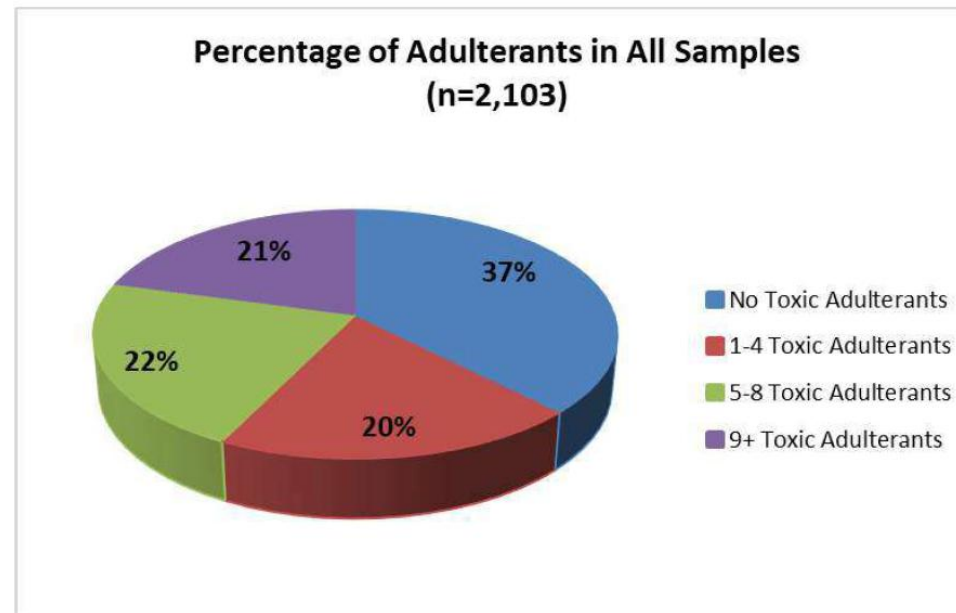
University of North Carolina Drug Analysis Lab

5 Items of Interest

(Links to full PowerPoint presentation & Summary documents on Appendix, Slide 9)

Topic	What to Know
1. Impurities & Adulterants	1 in 5 samples now contain ≥ 9 adulterants; $\blacktriangle 133\%$ in the latest testing, vastly complicating toxicity and intervention.

- Current round
 - 21% had 9+ adulterants
- During previous round
 - 9% had 9+ adulterants
- Increase of 133% in samples containing 9 or more adulterants



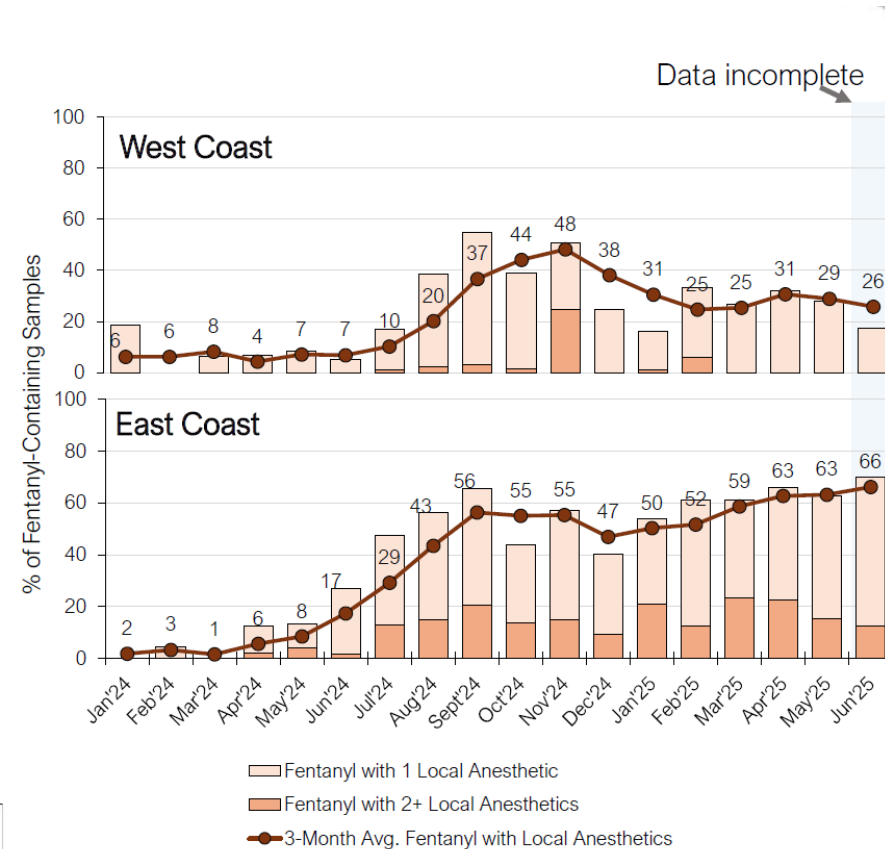
5 Items of Interest, continued

(Links to full PowerPoint presentation & Summary documents on Appendix, Slide 9)

Topic	What to Know
2. Local Anesthetics	Substantial increase in presence of local anesthetics (Examples: lidocaine, tetracaine, benzocaine) in fentanyl samples. It is common to observe multiple anesthetics in a single East Coast sample.

Local Anesthetics

- Substantial increase in the presence of local anesthetics in fentanyl samples.
- Commonly observe multiple anesthetics in a single East Coast sample.



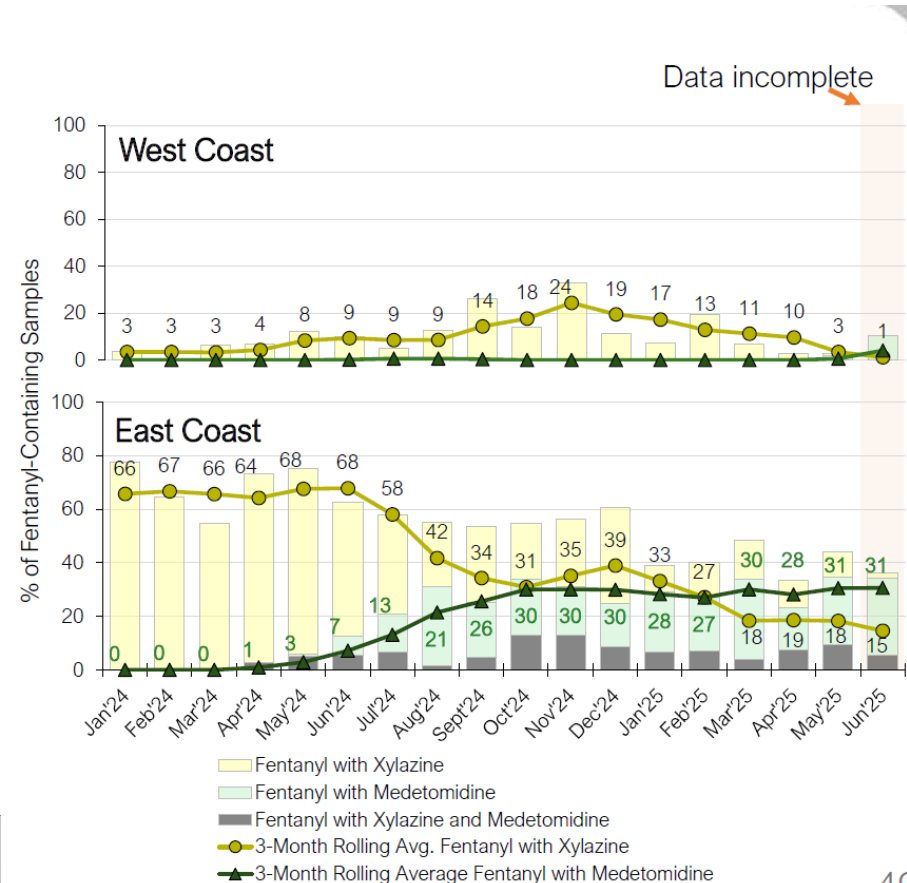
5 Items of Interest, continued

(Links to full PowerPoint presentation & Summary documents on Appendix, Slide 9)

Topic	What to Know
3. Medetomidine Withdrawal Medetomidine is a mixture of 2 isomers: Dexmedetomidine: used in pharmaceutical preparations and; Levomedetomidine: considered pharmaceutically inactive.	Continued prevalence of medetomidine on East Coast. Medetomidine withdrawal can be life-threatening and can require a substantial escalation in care compared to typical opioid and xylazine withdrawal symptoms. Positive responses are seen on medetomidine test strips.

α_2 -Agonists

- Steady decline in xylazine prevalence across sites.
- Continued prevalence of medetomidine on East Coast.
- First sustained detections of medetomidine on West Coast appear to be beginning.



5 Items of Interest, continued

(Links to full PowerPoint presentation & Summary documents on Appendix, Slide 9)

Topic	What to Know
4. Better Tools on the Way	<p>NIST is working on new national standards for multi-drug test strips, should be ready by end of 2025. Standards are being created with input from Public Health, Public Safety, Forensics and Customs. <i>Additional info starts on slide 56 of PowerPoint.</i></p> <p>NIST will soon have a mobile RaDAR (Rapid Drug Analysis and Research) Program Van to help local teams test drugs on site. The RaDAR program was established to provide near real-time street drug composition information to public health and public safety entities. <i>Additional info starts on slide 45 of PowerPoint. Any interest in bringing this van to our area?</i></p>

Rapid Drug Analysis and Research (RaDAR) Program

The RaDAR program was established to provide near real-time street drug composition information to public health and public safety entities.



<48 Hour Turnaround.
(Qualitative Testing)



No Cost Supplies & Testing.
(Excluding Shipping)



Near-Complete Chemical
Information.



Multiple Sample Collection
Modalities.



45.

How It Works

Partners



Public Health &
Harm Reduction



Law Enforcement
(Informational Use Only)



Emergency Department



Medical Examiner /
Coroner



Sample Types



Drug Product
(≈5 mg to 10 mg of material)



Drug Paraphernalia
Residue
(Collected using swabs)



Used Test Strip
(Eliminates need for
second sampling)

Partner organizations collect
samples using provided
sample collection kits and
ship materials to NIST for
analysis.

*Note: Many samples are convenience samples that may have
been co-used. Data may not be representative.*

Mobile Testing Laboratory

- Completing mobile testing laboratory for on-site RaDAR analyses and technology acceleration.

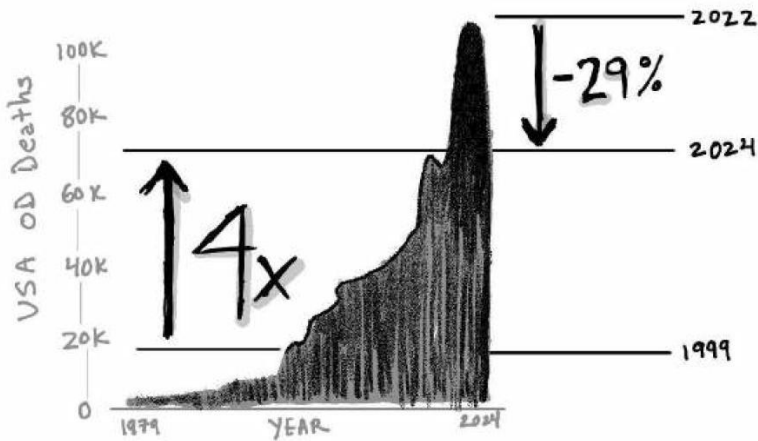


57.

5 Items of Interest, continued

(Links to full PowerPoint presentation & Summary documents on Appendix, Slide 9)

Topic	What to Know
5. Don't Rely on National Data	National data can hide important local trends and patterns. (Examples: death surges in Arizona every summer, likely due to extreme heat, not drug supply changes). Looking at local data is important to identify real time, time-sensitive overdose patterns.

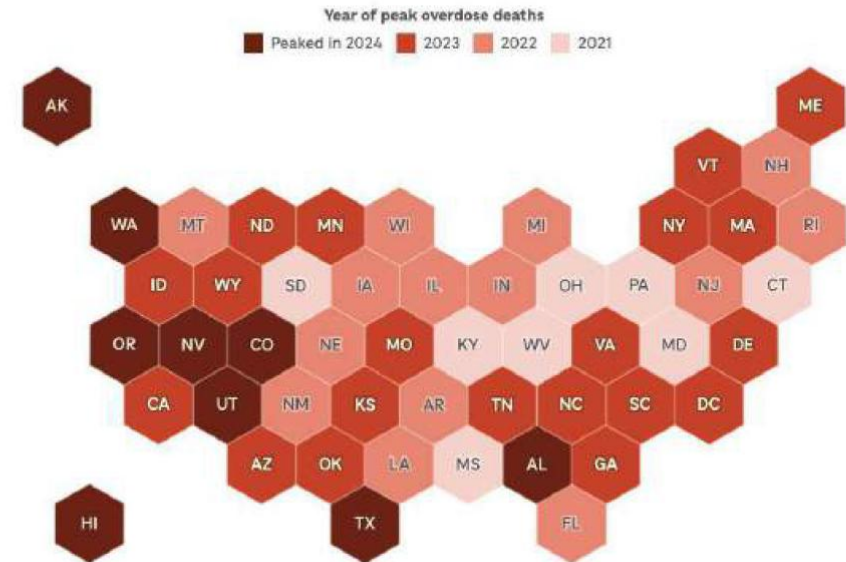


*We are
still losing
too many
people we
love.*

84

Drug overdose deaths peaked at different times across the U.S. They're now down everywhere

A band of states across Appalachia — Kentucky, West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Maryland — all saw overdose deaths peak in 2021. West Coast states peaked more recently, but deaths are falling there too.



Source: Nabarun Dasgupta, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, based on provisional overdose data compiled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Credit: Brent Jones/NPR

APPENDIX

[July 2025 ORS TAT Webinar Slides](#)

[July 2025 ORS TAT Webinar Summary](#)

**Link to register for future ORS TAT Webinars
is included in this flyer, or click here:
[ORS TAT registration link](#)**