



EMPOWER HENRICO

Preventing, Treating and
Combating Substance Use

**March 2026 Overdose Response Strategy (ORS)
Trends, Analysis & Threats (TAT) Webinar Summary**

**Empower Task Force Meeting
March 19, 2026**

ABOUT THE OVERDOSE RESPONSE STRATEGY (ORS)*

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.*

March 2026 ORS-TAT Presenters:

Colombo Plan

Thom Browne | CEO

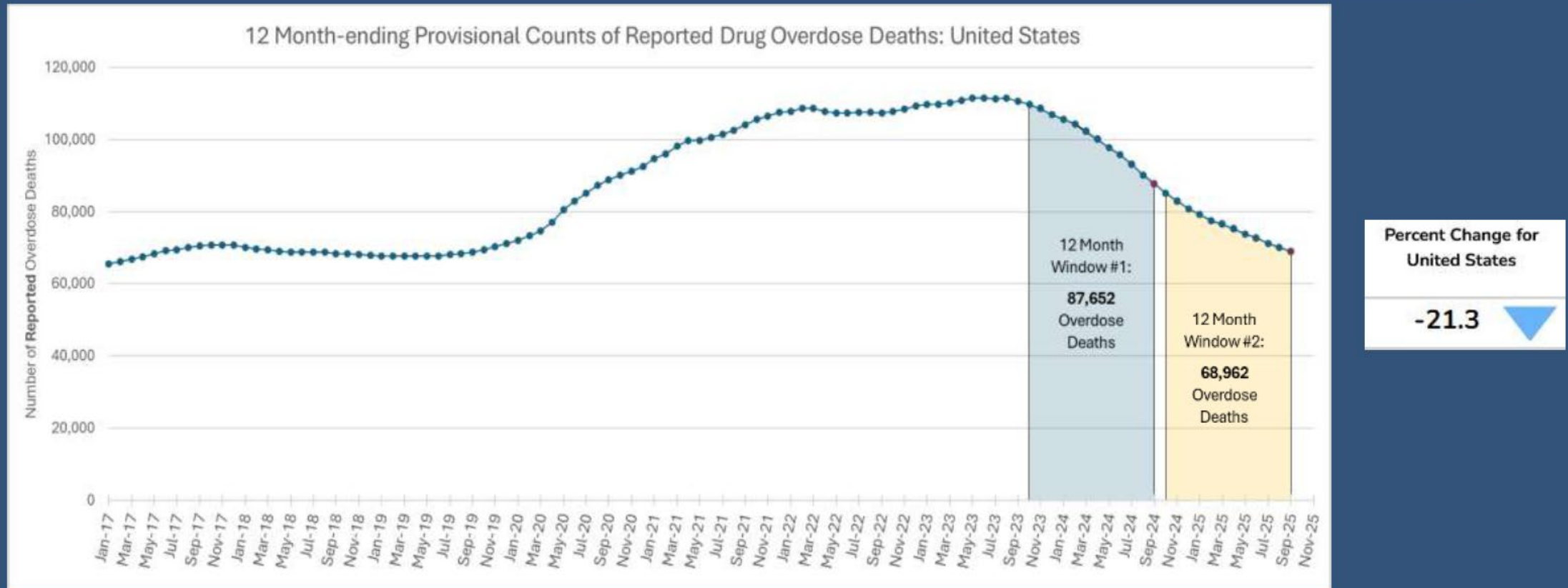
Dr. Browne provided an overview of the Colombo Plan's work on tracking the international drug supply and its impacts and correlates those findings to the evolving domestic drug supply.

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Special Testing Laboratory

Dr. Agnes Winkour | Laboratory Director

Dr. Winkour presented the DEA's latest findings on the illicit drug supply and novel substances, providing insights from a regional perspective from across the US.

National Picture - Overdose Mortality



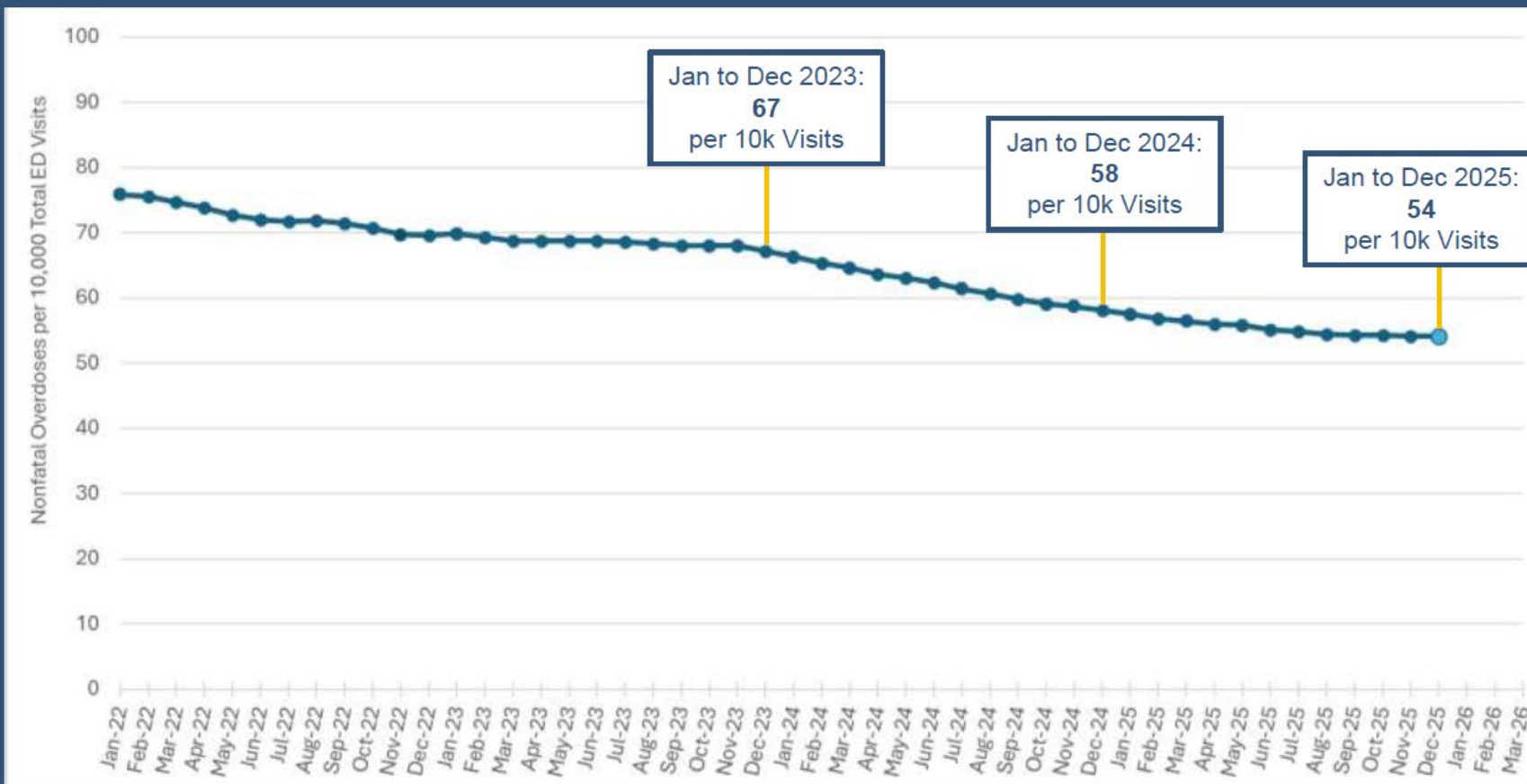
Based on data available for analysis on: February 1st, 2026

National Center for Health Statistics, Provisional Drug Overdose Death Counts

Based on national numbers extracted on 2/1/2026, from November 2023 to October 2024, there were 87,652 fatal overdoses. From November 2024 to October 2025, the number of overdose deaths decreased to 68,962; a 21.3% decrease nationwide.

Non-fatal Overdose Trends

Suspected Nonfatal Overdoses ED Visits, All Drugs, per 10,000 visits, 12-month rolling average



[CDC Drug Overdose Surveillance and Epidemiology \(DOSE\) System: Nonfatal Overdose Syndromic Surveillance](#)

You can see the ongoing downward trend in non-fatal overdose ED visits. The rate of suspected nonfatal overdose ED visits from Jan.-Dec. 2023 was 67 per 10k visits, from Jan.-Dec. 2024 it was 58 per 10k visits, and from Jan.-Dec. 2025, it's slightly lower at 54 per 10k visits.

Orphines are an emerging class of synthetic opioids, including compounds such as N-propionitrile chlorphine (cychlorphine). Reports indicate detections in approximately 20 U.S. states, with **toxicology linked to fatal overdoses in at least nine states, including clusters reported in Tennessee**. N-propionitrile chlorphine was identified as the top novel drug detected in DEA laboratory data in the past 90 days, reflecting the ongoing evolution of synthetic opioid analogs entering the illicit market.

Novel Synthetic Opioids

Phenylpiperidines (fentanyl, fluorofentanyl)

Benzimidazoles/Nitazenes (isotonitazene, etonitazene)

Orphines (brorphine, chlorphine)

Benzamides (U-47700, U-51754, AH-7921, U-49900)

Acetamides (U-50488, U-51754)

Piperazines (MT-45)

Cinnamylpiperazines (AP-238, 2-methyl AP 237)

Orphine Analogs Detection in United States

Seized Drug Samples (20 States)

Maine	New York	Pennsylvania	Michigan
Tennessee (33 cases)	Ohio	Indiana	Illinois (94 cases)
Wisconsin (10 cases)	Minnesota	Iowa	South Dakota
Idaho	Colorado	Nevada	Arizona
California	Texas	Lousiana	Florida

Fatal OD Blood Specimens (9 States)

- New York
- Pennsylvania
- **Illinois (3 deaths)**
- **Tennessee (7 deaths)**
- **Texas (3 deaths)**
- Louisiana
- Washington
- **California (3 deaths)**
- Nevada

Vape products continue to diversify as drug delivery devices. DEA laboratories are detecting a range of substances in vape liquids, including synthetic cannabinoids, THC variants, and psychedelic compounds, illustrating the expanding range of substances delivered through vaping devices. **The anesthetic etomidate has been proliferating rapidly in illicit vape products in Southeast Asia. Given the popularity of vaping in the U.S., this is a trend worth monitoring. While etomidate is not an opioid, naloxone should be given** in response to any suspected drug overdose to reverse any possible opioid effects.

Etomidate - Literature

- **Etomidate:**
- Fast-acting intravenous anesthetic for quickly inducing unconsciousness and sedation.
- Reported as an adulterant or drug product in vapes in Singapore, Philippines, New Zealand, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia
- Etomidate is typically sold in liquid form inside refillable vape pods
- **Etomidate in vapes internationally:**
 - <https://www.1news.co.nz/2025/11/04/illicit-anaesthetic-laced-vapes-linked-to-drug-harm-nationwide/>
 - <https://thediplomat.com/2025/09/zombie-vapes-are-sweeping-across-southeast-asia-sparking-a-new-public-health-crisis/>
 - <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/aug/30/singapore-is-worried-about-a-rise-in-drug-laced-vaping-what-is-happening-and-what-is-the-drug-etomidate>

**Etomidate is a non-opioid
intravenous sedative-hypnotic
agent**

Naloxone will not work

ETOMIDATE continued

- Observed for the first time 6/24/2024 in sample collected on 6/20/2024 in Philadelphia, PA
- Associated with fatal overdose



Etomidate Mixtures in SE Asia

- **Singapore:** Etomidate, Ketamine, Meth, and Cannabinoids
- **Thailand:** Etomidate and Ketamine
- **Indonesia:** Etomidate and Ketamine
- **Malaysia:** Etomidate, Medetomidine, and Cannabinoids
- **Malaysia:** Propoxate (analog of Etomidate)

Pink Cocaine/"Tuci" is designed to mimic the powerful stimulant/hallucinogenic 2C-B.

Synthetic analog of mescaline synthesized in 1974 by Alexander Shulgin, a biochemist and pharmacologist. A powerful stimulant and hallucinogenic drug whose effects are a cross between ecstasy and LSD. **Ketamine is the common ingredient in many emerging international multi-drug mixtures designed to mimic the stimulant–hallucinogenic effects of 2C-B.** These mixtures (often referred to as "pink cocaine") combine ketamine with a stimulant and appear in the U.S. primarily as methamphetamine–ketamine powder mixtures that carry increased risk of elevated cardiovascular stress.

LATIN AMERICA:

Colombia: Cocaine, Ketamine, and MDMA or Meth, Ketamine, and MDMA

Uruguay: Cocaine, Meth, and LSD

Venezuela: LSD and MDMA

El Salvador: Cocaine, MDMA, and Ketamine

Panama: Tramadol and Ketamine

SE ASIA

"Happy Water", Malaysia: Meth, Ketamine, and MDMA (dissolved in pink colored water)

"Labubu", Thailand: Meth, Ketamine, and MDMA (2 recent deaths)



Dangers of Mixing Ketamine with Other Drugs

Stimulants

- Mixing ketamine with stimulants, like cocaine, methamphetamine, and MDMA (ecstasy), is risky. Stimulants speed up the nervous system, while ketamine slows it down. This creates a conflicting effect on the body, putting immense stress on the heart and other organs.
- The combination of ketamine with stimulants leads to an increased risk of heart attack, stroke, and other cardiovascular problems.

Opioids

- Ketamine and opioids pose a high risk when combined. Both substances have strong sedative effects, leading to extreme drowsiness and respiratory depression. The risk of overdose gets higher when these drugs are used together.
- Opioids can enhance the effects of ketamine, making users more prone to losing consciousness and experiencing life-threatening breathing problems.

As **kratom and 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH)** become more widely available, DEA laboratories are working to address analytical challenges and sharing validated testing methods and partnering with forensic laboratories through trainings and webinars to improve detection across product types (e.g., tablets, capsules, and plant material).

*****Additional insight on kratom from Henrico Police*****

It is still legal to sell and possess Kratom. At a national level, DEA has conducted sample purchases of Kratom from major cities and has submitted these products for analysis to confirm they are legitimately Kratom. There is talk of Kratom becoming a scheduled substance (like heroin, morphine, cocaine, marijuana, etc.) which would prevent stores from selling it and make possession and distribution of it illegal. Currently, there is no timeframe for scheduling it and we do not know if it will be scheduled; however, there is chatter about it.

Other common drugs seen locally remain cocaine, methamphetamine, and fentanyl variants.

QUESTIONS?

**Link to register for future
ORS TAT Webinars:**
[ORS TAT Webinar Series Registration Link](#)

APPENDIX



Mar2026 ORSTAT
Slides



Mar2026 ORSTAT
Summary