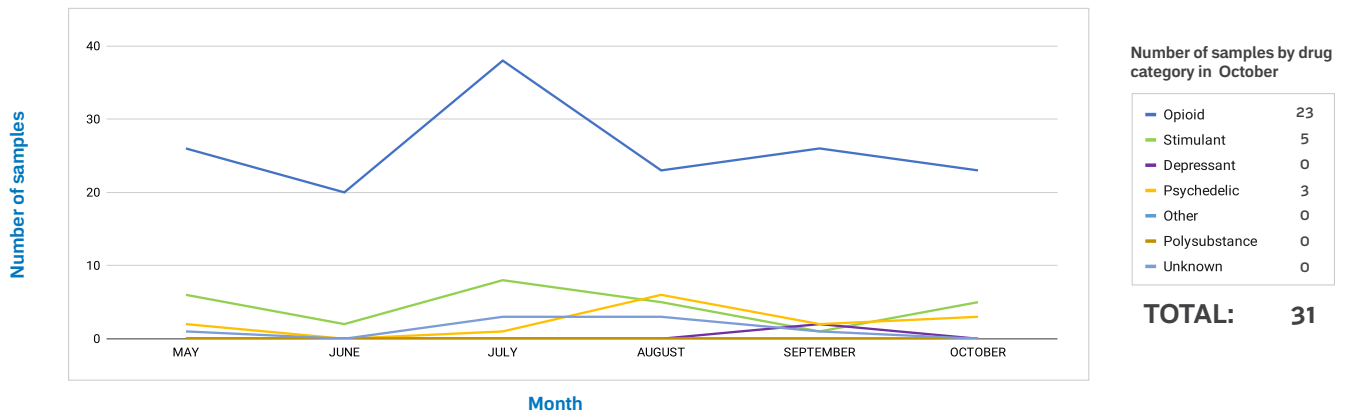


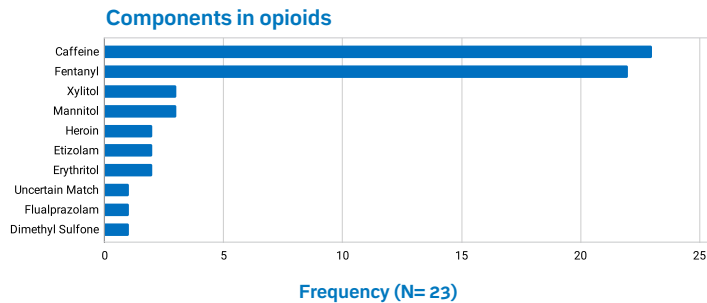
Key Findings

- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines rose to 57% (13 of 23 samples checked). Trends may be hard to infer due to the small number of samples. Etizolam, the predominant benzodiazepine in expected opioids, may be missed by drug checking technologies. This means that the true rate may be higher than reported here.
- Drug checking services are available Thursdays and Fridays from 11:30am–3:30pm at 437 Wesley Street. Samples can also be dropped off any day of the week and results can be picked up during drug checking hours.
- The Vancouver Island Drug Checking Project offers drug checking in Victoria. For information about their project and more drug checking sample results, please visit substance.uvic.ca.

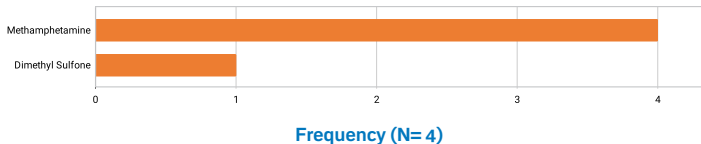
Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Components found in drug samples in October

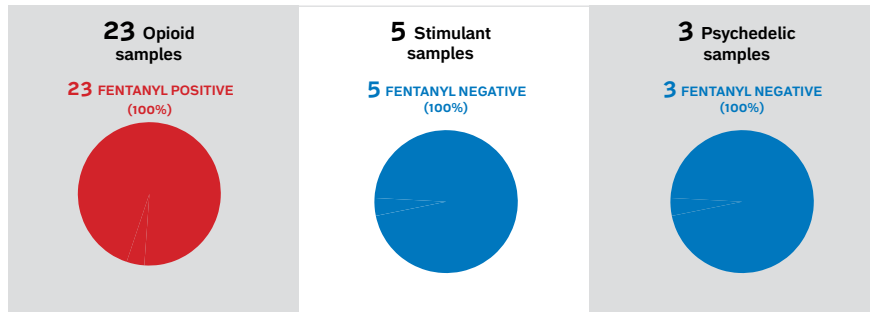


Components in methamphetamine



1 sample of cocaine contained only cocaine

Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

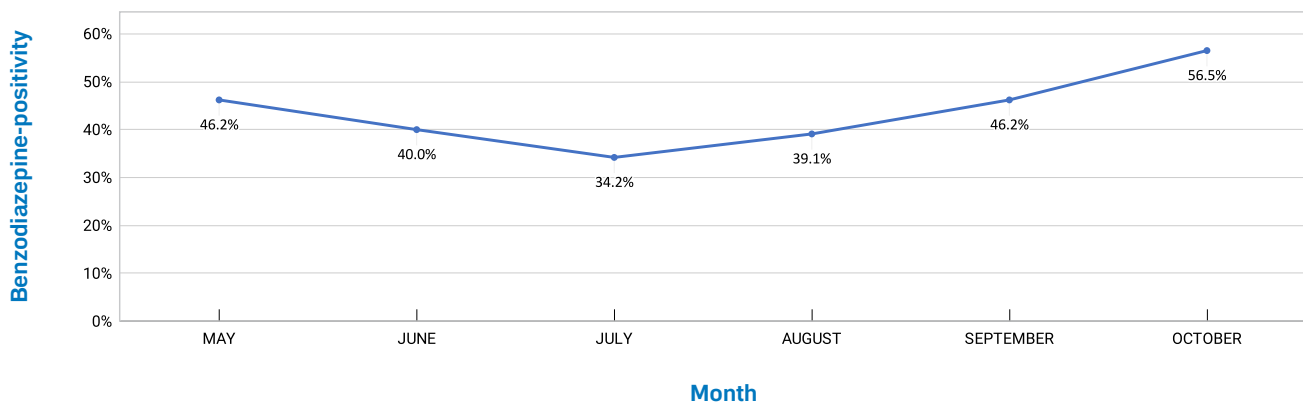


PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
No alerts for Island Health this month					

For information about current substances in the Island Health region: <https://substance.uvic.ca/>

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the past 6 months



During the month of October, **56.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner site in Island Health (**13 samples of 23 checked**). Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The results presented here are derived from both of these technologies and are presumptive until confirmed by a laboratory.

Number of drugs checks at each site:

Location	# of Drug Checks
Wesley Street OPS (CMHA)	31

Number of samples that matched client expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

Opioid

23 Samples Tested



Matched: 23

EXPECTED DRUG:

Stimulant

5 Samples Tested



Matched: 5

EXPECTED DRUG:

Psychedelic

3 Samples Tested



Matched: 3

Total

31 Samples Tested



Matched: 31

Number of opioid samples that matched client expectation

*using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

Down

22 Samples Tested



Matched: 22

EXPECTED DRUG:

Fentanyl

1 Sample Tested



Matched: 1

Total

23 Samples Tested



Matched: 23

Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents

Depressant may include:
benzodiazepines, etizolam,
GHB, hypnotics

Opioid may include:
"down," heroin, fentanyl,
pharmaceutical opioids

Polysubstance includes:
cross-category mixtures

Psychedelic may include:
MDMA and related,
2C-family, tryptamines,
ketamine, LSD

Stimulant may include:
methamphetamine,
"speed," cocaine and crack
cocaine, cathinones

Unknown includes:
samples where the individual
was unable to identify an
expected substance - this
includes found samples.

Data represented here are collected from our partner sites across the province. Drug samples are tested using the Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectrometer in combination with fentanyl test strips and benzodiazepine test strips.

There is 5% fentanyl detection limit on the FTIR spectrometer (McCrae, 2019), and a drug check on any given sample consists of both the FTIR and BTNX fentanyl immunoassay test strip testing done in combination. When applicable, BTNX benzodiazepine immunoassay test strips are also used.

BCCSU gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following partners: