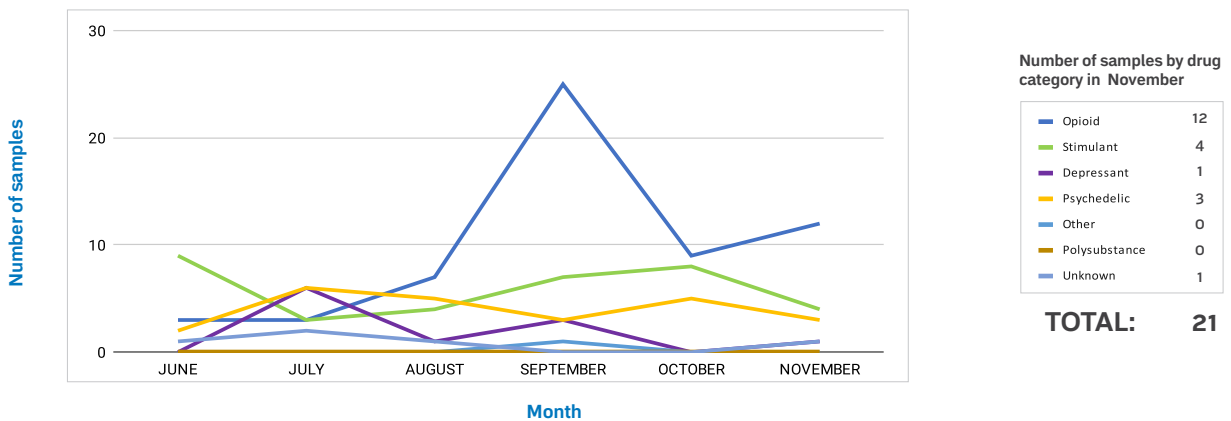


Key Findings

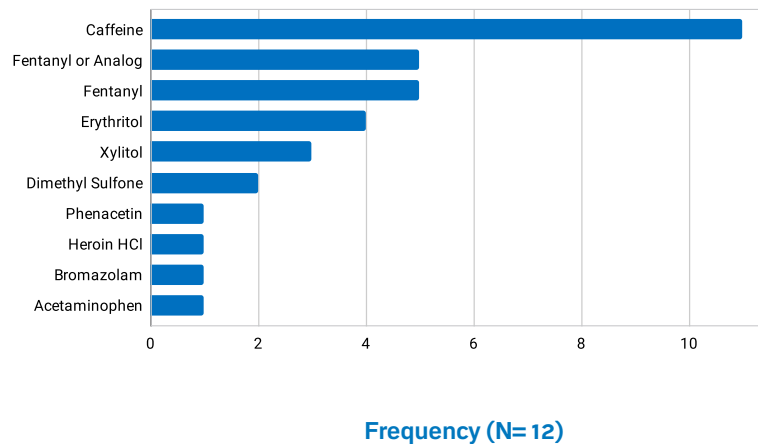
- November saw a small uptick in the number of drug checks performed at the Wesley Street site compared to the previous month, occurring particularly in the opioid category.
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines increased from 55.6% to 75.0% in November (9 of 12 samples). Trends may be hard to infer due to the small number of samples overall, and the true rate may be higher than reported here because benzodiazepines, and benzodiazepine-like substances like etizolam, may be missed by drug checking technologies.
- 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.
- Substance (The Vancouver Island Drug Checking Project), offers drug checking in Victoria and communities across the Island, as well as mail in services. For more information about drug checking sample results in the Island health region, please visit substance.uvic.ca.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months

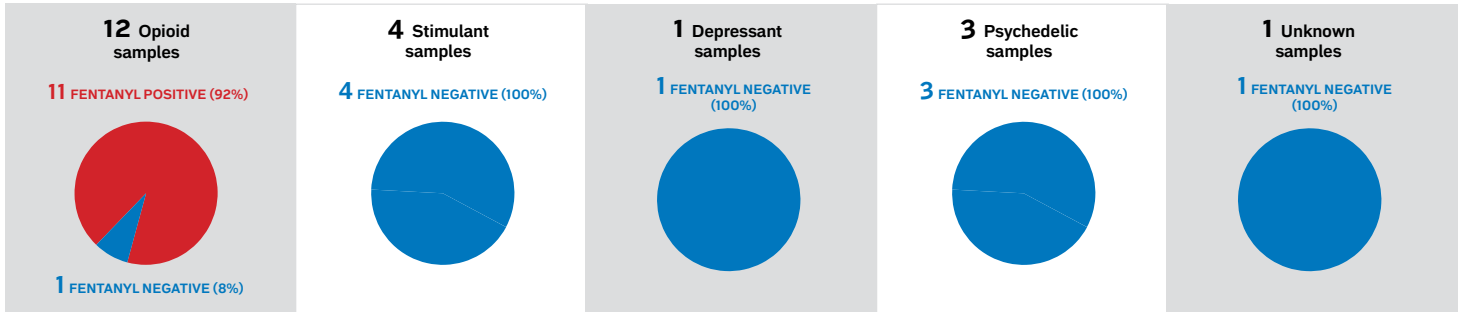


Components found in drug samples in November

Components in opioids



Number of samples tested with **fentanyl** present

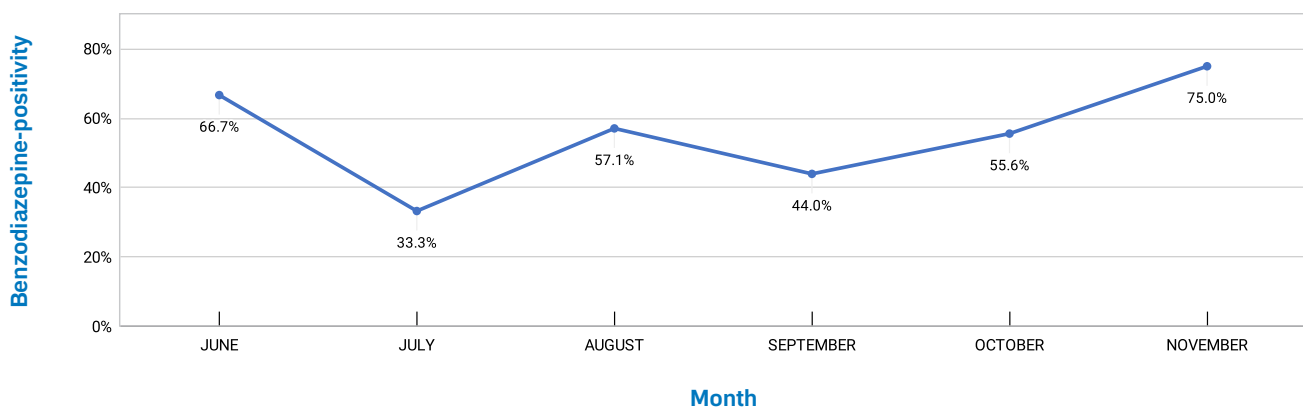


PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
No alerts from drugs checked at Wesley St Drug Checking service 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 November, **75.0%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner site in Island Health (**9 samples of 12 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)	21





Number of samples that matched client expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:	EXPECTED DRUG:	EXPECTED DRUG:	EXPECTED DRUG:	EXPECTED DRUG:
Opioid 12 Samples Tested 	Stimulant 4 Samples Tested 	Depressant 1 Samples Tested 	Psychedelic 3 Samples Tested 	Unknown 1 Samples Tested 
Matched: 11 Did Not Match: 1	Matched: 4	Matched: 1	Matched: 3	Match Not Determined: 1
Total 21 Samples Tested  Matched: 19 Did Not Match: 1 Match Not Determined: 1				

Number of opioid samples that matched client expectation

*using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:	EXPECTED DRUG:	EXPECTED DRUG:
Fentanyl 1 Samples Tested 	Heroin 1 Samples Tested 	Down 10 Samples Tested 
Matched: 1	Matched: 1	Matched: 9 Did Not Match: 1
Total 12 Samples Tested  Matched: 11 Did Not Match: 1		

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

Depressant include:
benzodiazepines, etizolam,
GHB, hypnotics

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

Polysubstance includes:
cross-category mixtures

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

Stimulant 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:

