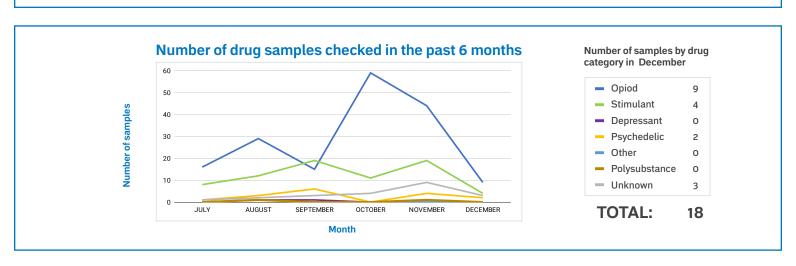
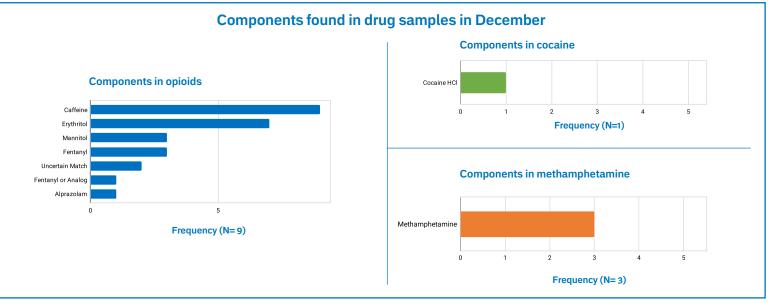
Drug Checking in Northern Health

Key Findings

- In December, a total of 18 drug checks were performed in Northern Health. This decline was attributed in part to community resources being diverted to assist in response to extreme cold weather conditions in the region.
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the region increased from 56.8% to 77.8% in December (7 of 9 samples). Trends may be hard to infer due to the small number of samples over a large region.
- Drug checking services with FTIR and test strips are now available in the Northern Health Region. Services are available at POUNDS in Prince George and the Northwest Intensive Case Management Team (ICMT) location in Terrace. For updated times and locations, please visit the Northern Health website.

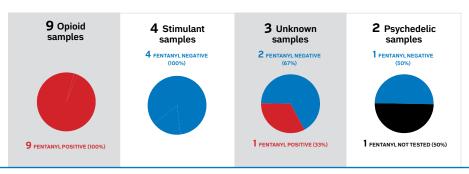






Drug Checking in Northern Health

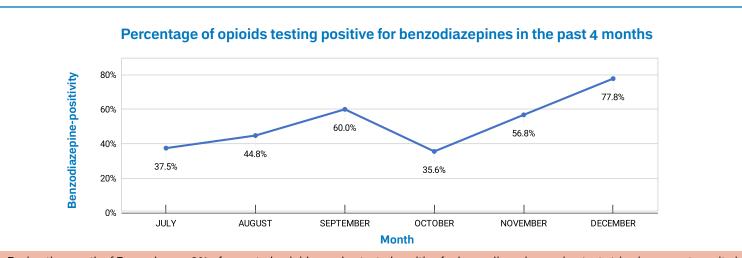
Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS Date & Location | Expected | Drugs Detected | Fentanyl | Benzo | Strip | Alert Message | No alerts for Northern Health this month

Number of drugs checks at each site

Location	# of drug checks
POUNDS (Prince George)	11
Northwest ICMT (Terrace)	7
TOTAL	18



During the month of December, **77.8**% of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner site in Northern Health **(7 samples of 9 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.

December

Drug Checking in Northern Health

of samples that matched client expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

Dioid

9 Samples Tested



Matched: 9

EXPECTED DRUG: Stimulant

4 Samples Tested



Matched: 4

EXPECTED DRUG:

Psychedelic

2 Samples Tested



Matched: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Unknown

3 Samples Tested



Match not determined: 3

Total

18 Samples Tested



Matched: 15

Match not determined: 3

Number of opioid samples that matched client expectation

EXPECTED DRUG:

Down

9 Samples Tested



Matched: 9

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

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,

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 benzodiazapine 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:





