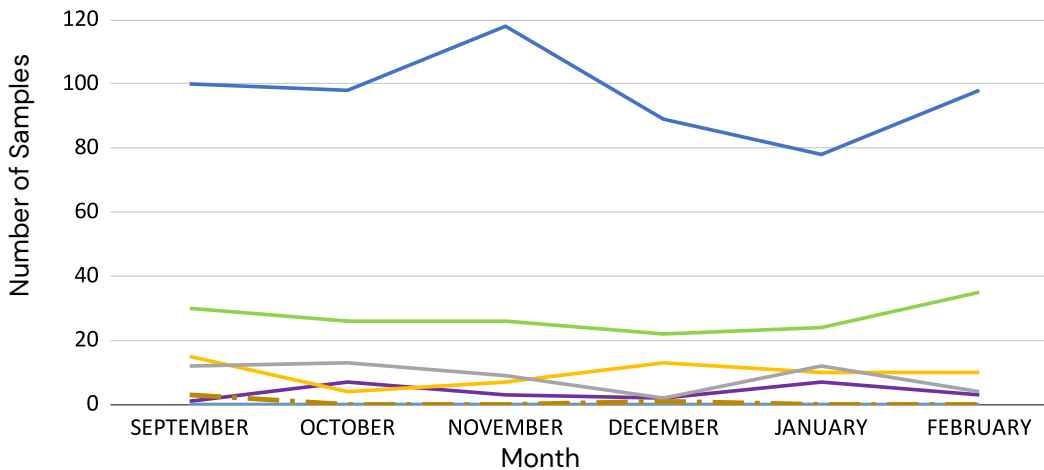




Key Findings

- In February, a total of 150 drug checks were performed by the CMHA Mid-Island Albert Street site in Nanaimo.
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip increased from the previous month to 79.6% (78 of 98 samples).
- Desalkylgidazepam, a benzodiazepine, was detected by FTIR in 10.3% of opioids (10 of 97 samples), indicating its presence in higher concentrations.
- Fentanyl was detected by FTIR in 32.0% of unregulated opioids (31 of 97 samples). Fluorofentanyl was detected in 29.9% (29 samples), followed by ortho-methylfentanyl (3.1%; 3 samples).
- Xylazine was detected by FTIR in 4.1% of unregulated opioids (4 samples).
- Substance (The Vancouver Island Drug Checking Project), offers drug checking in Victoria and communities across the Island. For more information, please visit www.substance.uvic.ca.
- To find drug checking services near you, please see our [site locator](#).

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in Feb.

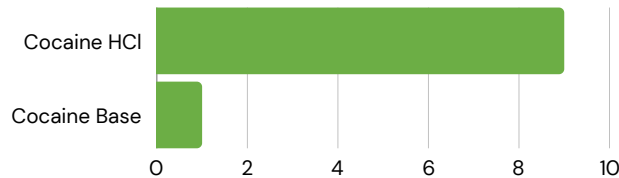
Opioid	98
Stimulant	35
Depressant	3
Psychedelic	10
Other	0
Polysubstance	0
Unknown	4
Total:	150

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Albert St. OPS (CMHA Nanaimo)	150
Total:	150

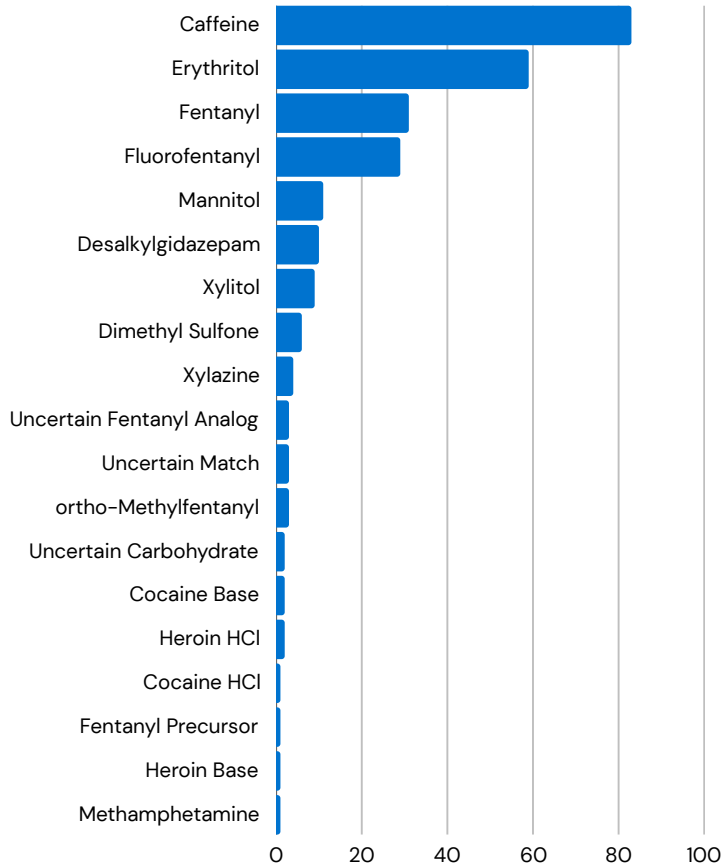
Components found in drug samples in February

Components in cocaine



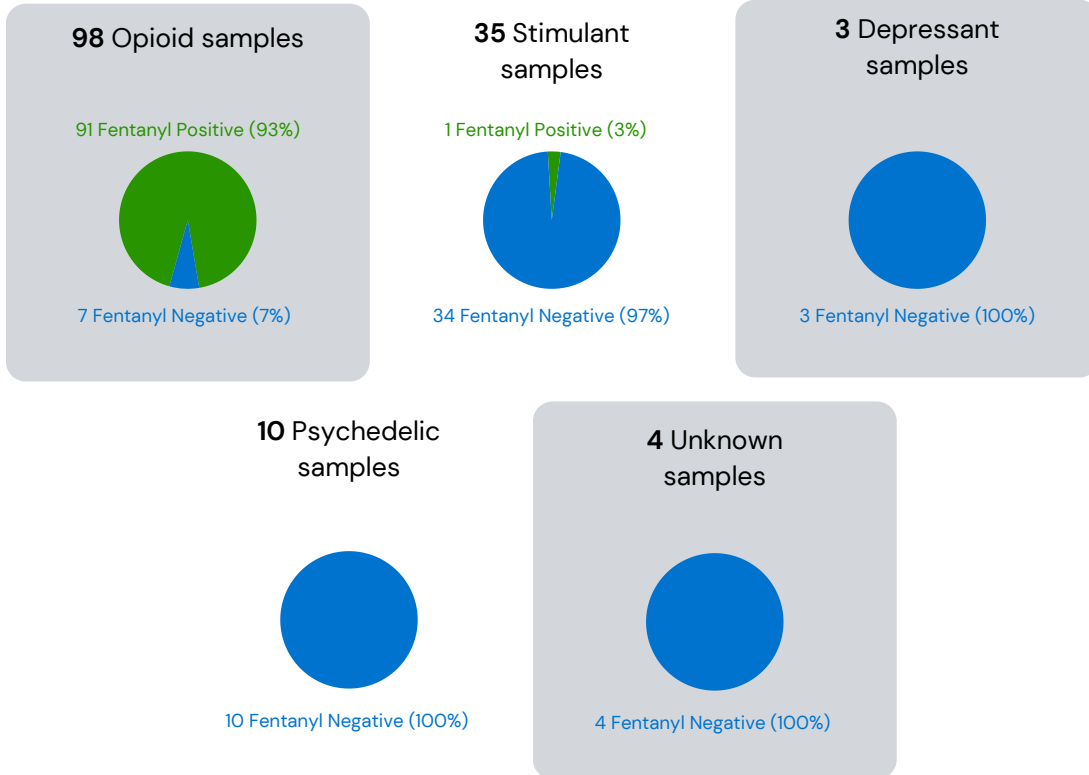
Frequency (N=10)

Components in unregulated opioids

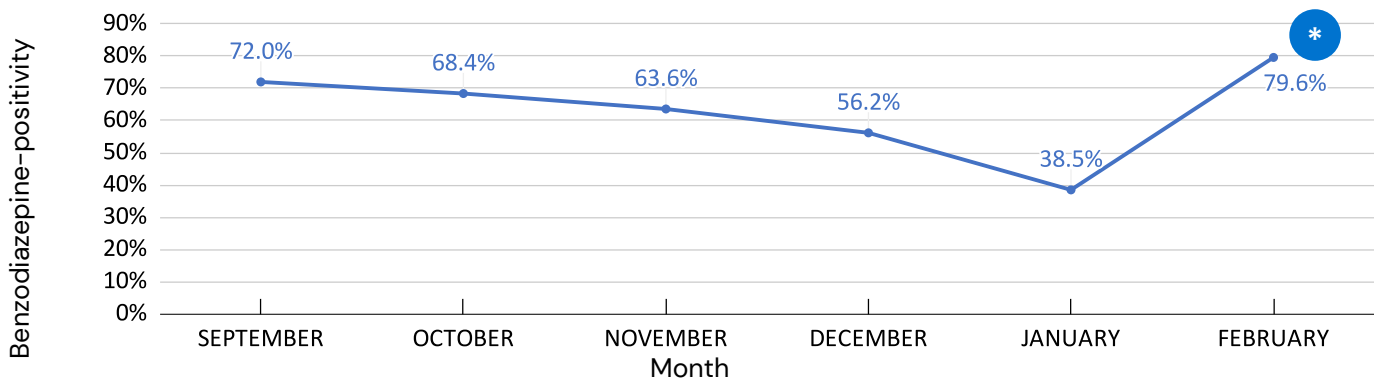


Frequency (N=97)

Number of samples tested with **fentanyl present**









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








*During the month of February, **79.6%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner site in Island Health (**78 samples of 98 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 samples with expected drug present

Expected Drug		Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Opioid		90	7	1	98
Stimulant		32	3	0	35
Psychedelic		10	0	0	10
Unknown		0	0	4	4
Depressant		2	1	0	3
TOTAL		134	11	5	150

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

Number of opioid samples with expected drug present

Expected Drug		Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Down		60	2	0	62
Fentanyl		29	2	0	31
Heroin		1	3	0	4
Pharmaceutical		0	0	1	1
TOTAL		90	7	1	98

Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.
 'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Depressant includes:
 benzodiazepines,
 etizolam, GHB, hypnotics

Opioid includes:
 "down", heroin, fentanyl
 (unregulated opioids), and
 pharmaceutical opioids

Polysubstance includes:
 cross-category mixtures

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

Stimulant includes:
 methamphetamine,
 "speed," cocaine and
 crack cocaine,
 cathinones

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

Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
No alerts for Island Health this month.					

To subscribe to the provincial drug alert and response system, text the word JOIN to 253787 (ALERTS).

Data represented in this report is collected from our partner sites across the province utilizing Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectrometry in combination with BTNX fentanyl test strips, as well as benzodiazepine test strips when applicable. We note the FTIR spectrometer has a detection limit of approximately 5% concentration (McCrae, 2019).

BCCSU gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following partners:



Canadian Mental Health Association