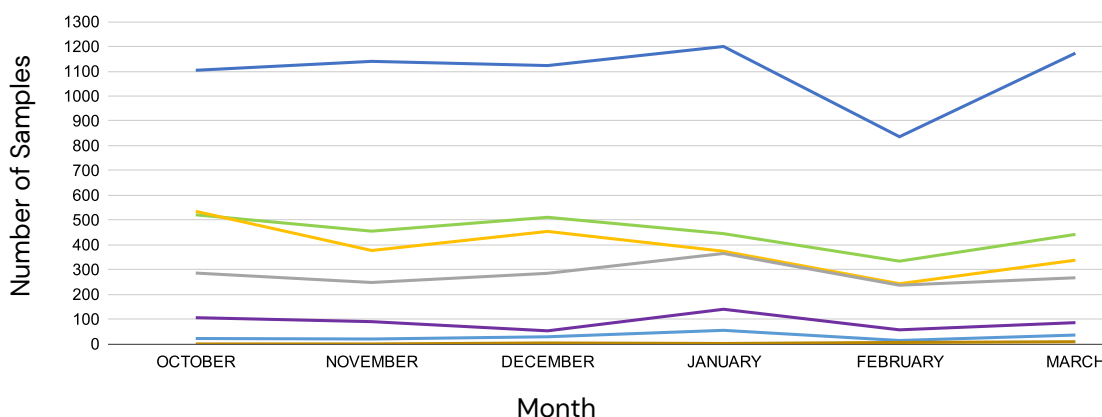




Key Findings

- In March, 2,351 drug checks were performed by community drug checking sites in BC (47 access points).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip decreased from the previous month to 46.4% (544 of 1173).
- The number of unregulated opioids containing benzodiazepines in concentrations high enough to be detectable by FTIR reached a record of 21.3% (227 of 1068), with desalkylgizapam most frequently identified.
- Fluorofentanyl surpassed fentanyl as the most common opioid detected by FTIR (35.8%; 382 of 1068). Notably, carfentanil was detected by FTIR in 7 samples, and in 10 samples sent for secondary testing via PSMS at UVic/Substance.
- Veterinary tranquilizers were detected by FTIR in 3.0% of unregulated opioids (32 of 1068). Of these, xylazine was most common.
- The median fentanyl concentration of unregulated opioids was 16.5%. See page 3 for more detailed results.
- 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 Mar.

Opioid	1173
Stimulant	442
Depressant	86
Psychedelic	338
Other	36
Polysubstance	9
Unknown	267

Total: 2,351

Number of samples tested by region:

Vancouver Coastal Health region: 1382 (59%)

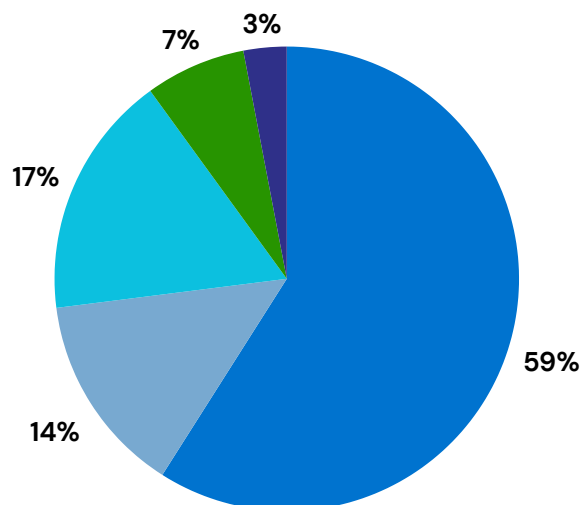
Fraser Health region: 326 (14%)

Interior Health region: 410 (17%)

Vancouver Island Health region: 155 (7%)

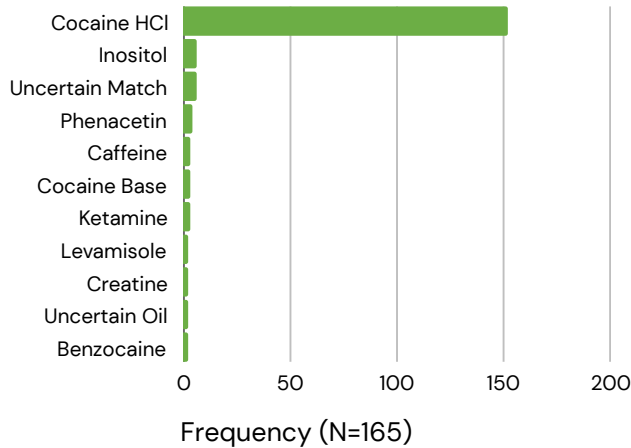
Northern Health region: 78 (3%)

Total: 2,351

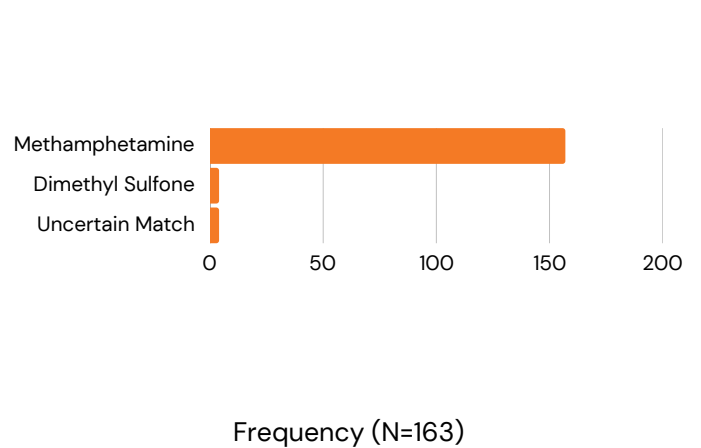


Components found in drug samples in March

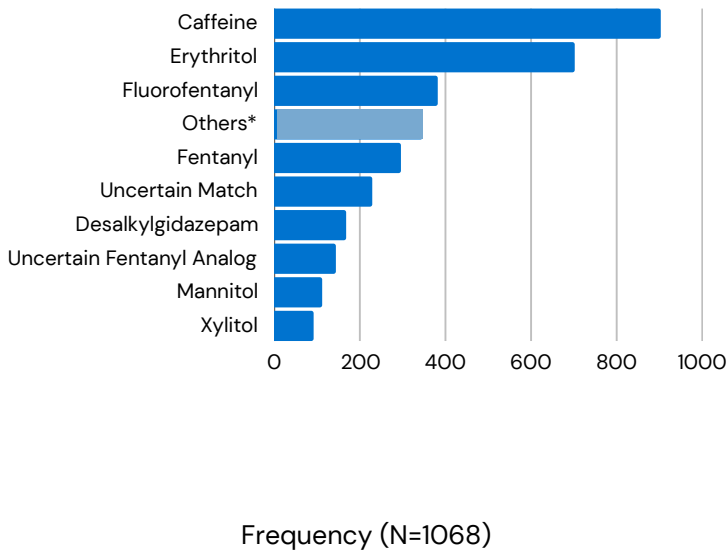
Components in cocaine



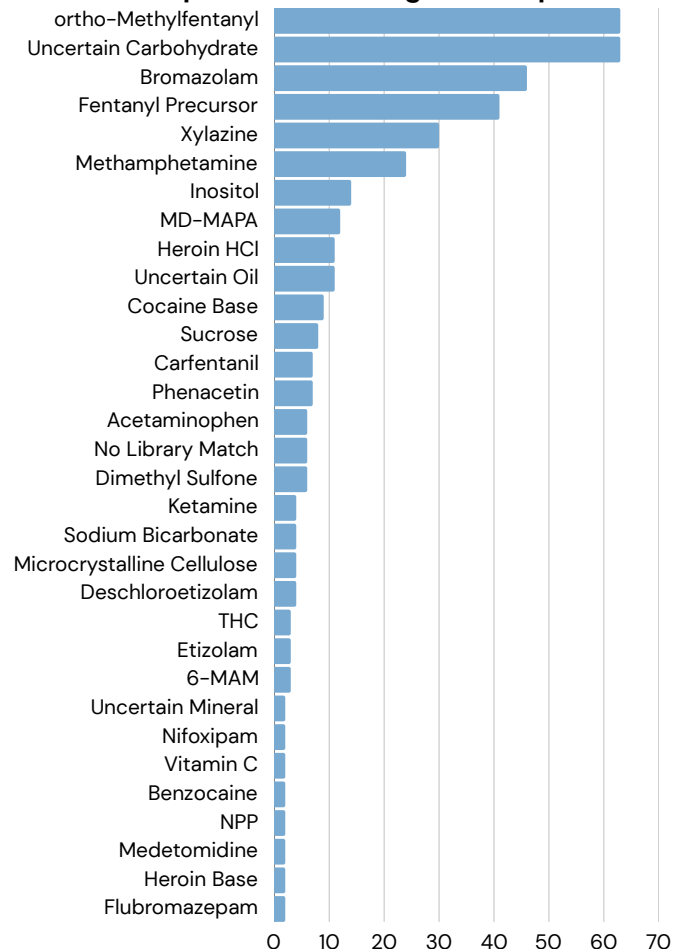
Components in methamphetamine



Components in unregulated opioids

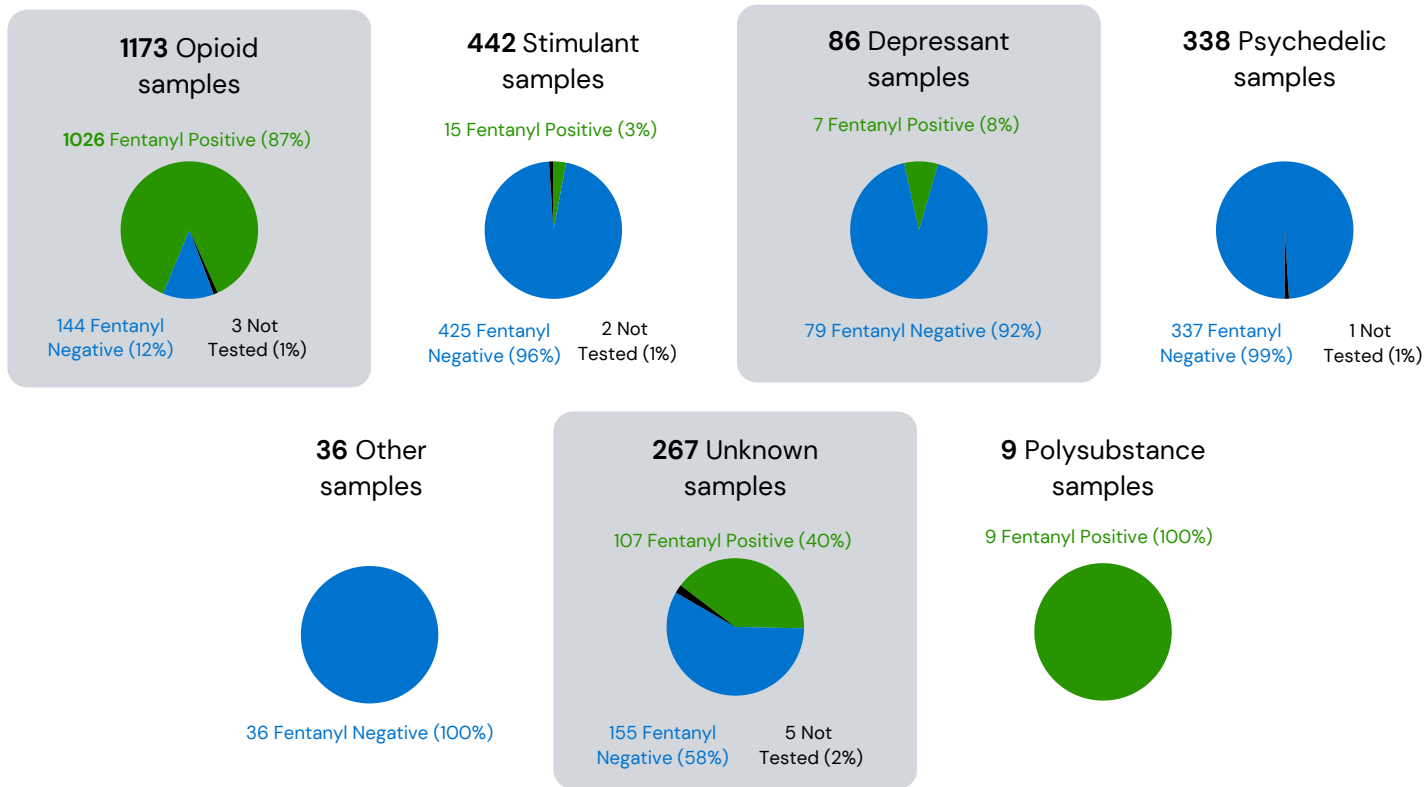


*Other components in unregulated opioids

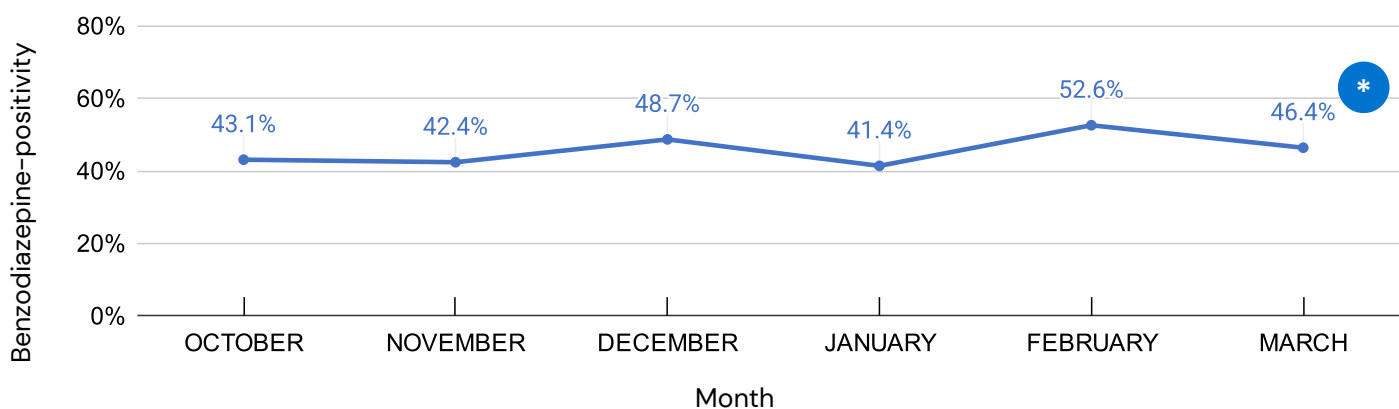


There were additional compounds detected a single time each. To save space, they have been omitted from these charts. For the full list of compounds detected, visit our data dashboard at www.drugcheckingbc.ca/dashboard/

Number of samples tested with **fentanyl present**



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

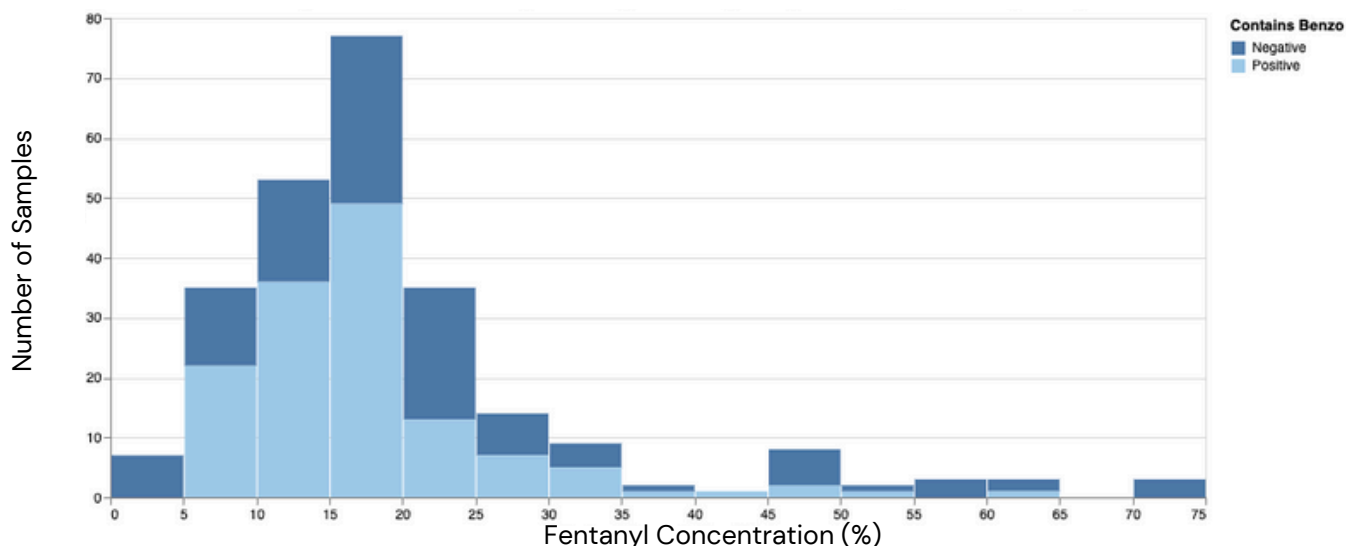


*During the month of March, **46.4%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines in our partner sites around BC (**544 samples of 1173 checked**). Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The results presented here are derived from both of these technologies and are presumptive until confirmed by a laboratory.

Fentanyl Concentration

The charts below summarize fentanyl concentrations of unregulated opioid samples brought for drug checking in British Columbia. Technicians at point-of-care may provide an estimated fentanyl quantification, but these results were calculated separately (post hoc) using a validated quantification model for the purpose of this report. To learn more about the model visit [here](#).

Fentanyl Concentration of Opioid Drug Checking Samples in BC, March 2025

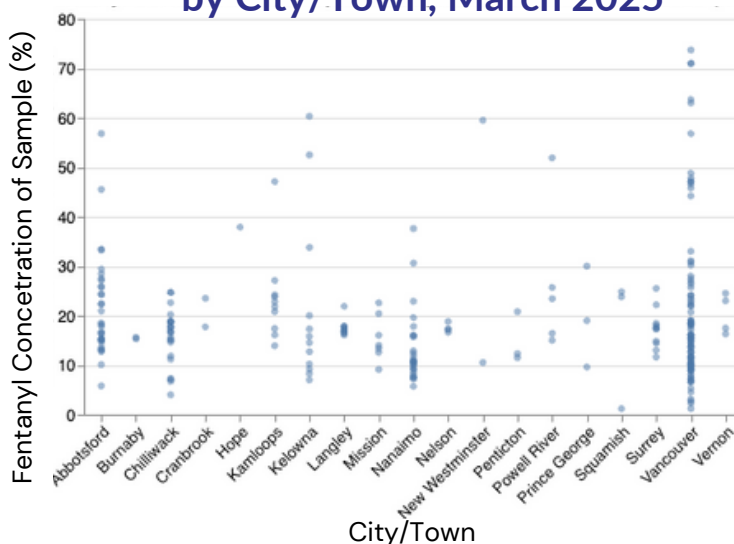


Median fentanyl concentration in all unregulated opioid samples in March: 16.5%. Most unregulated opioid samples contain fentanyl at concentrations between 10% and 20%, but can range from trace amounts to above 75% of the mixture. As of August 2024, we have revised the model to exclude samples that contain any other fentanyl analogues, with or without fentanyl present.

Drug supplies vary by location in the province. Denser points on this chart indicate a greater number of samples containing fentanyl at the concentration displayed. We note that the locations pictured here include only drug checking services partnered with the BCCSU Drug Checking Program, and may not represent the broader drug supply or the supply in other settings.

If you have any questions about the results, please email us at drugchecking@bccsu.ubc.ca.

Fentanyl Concentration of Opioid Samples by City/Town, March 2025



Number of samples with expected drug present

Expected Drug		Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Opioid		1071	78	24	1173
Stimulant		403	33	6	442
Psychedelic		317	17	4	338
Unknown		0	0	267	267
Depressant		51	31	4	86
Other		29	3	4	36
Polysubstance		5	4	0	9
TOTAL		1876	166	309	2351

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		857	22	0	879
Fentanyl		144	22	0	166
Pharmaceutical		35	23	23	81
Heroin		12	11	0	23
Opium		20	0	0	20
Other Opioid		3	0	1	4
TOTAL		1071	78	24	1173

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
March 4, 2025 Vancouver	Down	Caffeine, Desalkylgizepam, Erythritol, Ortho-Methylfentanyl, Para-Fluorofentanyl	Positive	Positive	Blue granules sold as down in Vancouver tested positive for ortho-methylfentanyl, para-fluorofentanyl, and desalkylgizepam, a benzo analog.
March 6, 2025 Fraser Health region	Fentanyl	Carfentanil*	N/A	N/A	Several samples sold as Fentanyl in the Fraser Health region tested positive for Carfentanil, a synthetic opioid 50-100 times more potent than fentanyl. These samples varies in colour and texture.
March 10, 2025 Vancouver	Unknown	Xylitol, Carfentanil	Positive	Negative	Brown granules sold in Vancouver tested positive for carfentanil.
March 10, 2025 Vancouver	Alprazolam (Xanax)	Microcrystalline Cellulose, Uncertain Oil	Positive	Negative	Counterfeit white Xanax tablet sold in Vancouver and expected to contain the benzo alprazolam tested positive for fentanyl and negative for benzos.
March 10, 2025 Vancouver	Unknown	Desalkylgizepam, Bromazolam, Fentanyl, Medetomidine	Positive	Positive	Yellow granules sold in Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl, benzo analogs desalkylgizepam and bromazolam, and the tranquilizer medetomidine.
March 17, 2025 Powell River	Down	Erythritol, Caffeine, Fentanyl, Bromazolam, Flubromazepam, Medetomidine*	N/A	N/A	Light pink granules sold in Powell River as down tested positive for fentanyl, benzos, and medetomidine, a tranquilizer more toxic than xylazine.
March 19, 2025 Powell River	Down	Caffeine, Erythritol, Carfentanil*	N/A	N/A	Multiple samples (blue chunks, pink chunks, pink granules) sold as down in Powell River tested positive for carfentanil.
March 21, 2025 Vancouver	Oxycodone	Microcrystalline Cellulose, Calcium Stearate, Uncertain Fentanyl Analog, Uncertain Oil	Positive	Positive	White pressed tablet with imprint "SS/20" sold as oxycodone in Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl and benzos and negative for oxycodone.
March 27, 2025 Vancouver	Unknown	Primidone, Medetomidine, Erythritol**	N/A	N/A	White powder in Vancouver tested positive for primidone (desoxyphenobarbital), a barbiturate sedative, and medetomidine, a tranquilizer more toxic than xylazine. This combination could result in decreased consciousness and/or prolonged sedation that will not respond to naloxone.

Public Health Notifications Cont.

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
March 28, 2025 Powell River	Crack Cocaine	Erythritol, Caffeine, Fentanyl	Positive	Positive	Brown substance sold as crack cocaine in Powell River tested positive for fentanyl and negative for cocaine. Substance has caused overdose.

All spectrometry results are determined by FTIR, with the exception of the following:

* Results provided by complementary testing partner [Substance](#) using Paper Spray Mass Spectrometry

**Results provided by complementary testing partner [Health Canada Drug Analysis Service](#) using quantitative nuclear magnetic resonance and/or gas chromatography-mass spectrometry

Health authorities and community organizations issue further toxic drug alerts from sources other than drug checking. See their respective websites or social media accounts for more alerts.

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:

