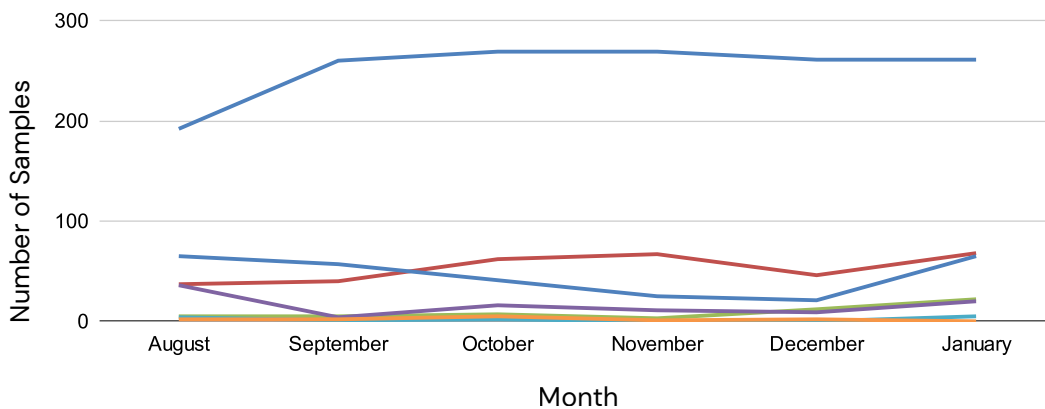




Key findings

- In January, **441** drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Fraser Health region (**16 access points**).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip decreased to **49.4%**. Of these, desalkylgizapam was the most common detected by FTIR.
- Novel benzodiazepines continue to be detected in unregulated opioids, which included nifoxipam, clobromazolam, and ethylbromazolam in January.
- There has been an increase in medetomidine in the unregulated drug supply, coinciding with an uptick in drug alerts issued in January. Out of the total **12 alerts**, **4** were related to medetomidine, including a province-wide alert issued by the BCCDC, and **1** issued within the FH region.
- Among opioid samples sent for secondary testing in January (**n=103**), medetomidine was detected in **65 samples**, carfentanil in **3 samples**, and xylazine in **1 sample**.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in Jan.

● Opioid	261
● Stimulant	68
● Depressant	22
● Psychedelic	20
● Other	5
● Polysubstance	0
● Unknown	65

Total: 441

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Foxglove Housing (Surrey)	87
SafePoint (Surrey)	44
Mountainside (Abbotsford)	74
Mountainside (Chilliwack)	89
Mountainside (Hope)	5
Mountainside (Langley)	20
Mountainside (Maple Ridge)	31
Mountainside (Mission)	24
Purpose Society (New Westminster)	28
SOURCES (White Rock)	37
Total	441

Less than 5 samples were tested at the following location, which has been included in the total: Progressive Housing (Burnaby), Purpose Society (Burnaby)

Number of samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Opioid	250	8	3	261
Stimulant	68	0	0	68
Depressant	4	18	0	22
Psychedelic	19	1	0	20
Other	3	2	0	5
Polysubstance	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	65	65
Total	344	29	68	441

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

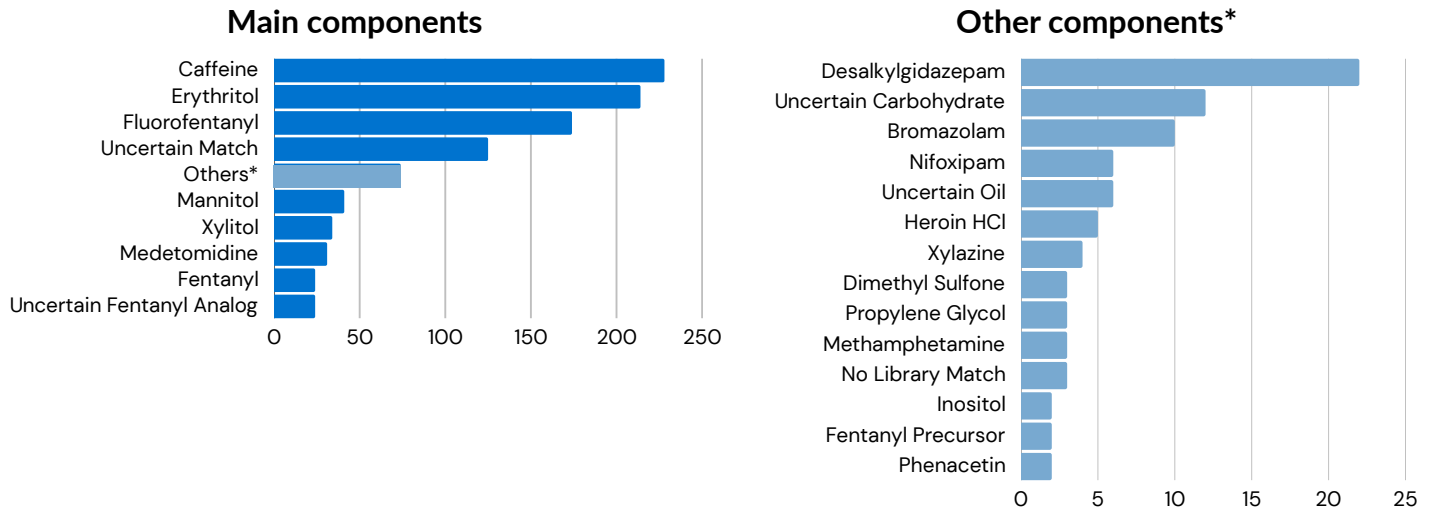
Opioids

Number of opioid samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	3	2	1	6
Heroin	5	2	0	7
Other Opioid	1	0	1	2
Down	237	1	1	239
Pharmaceutical	2	3	0	5
Opium	2	0	0	2
Total	250	8	3	261

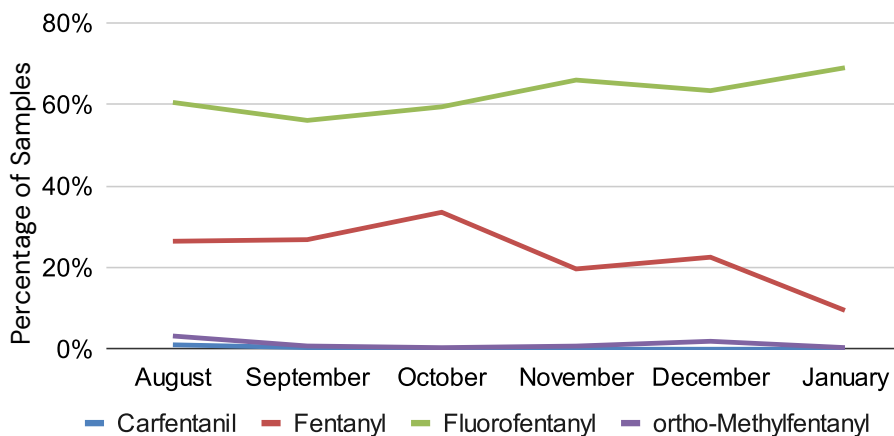
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents. 'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=252)



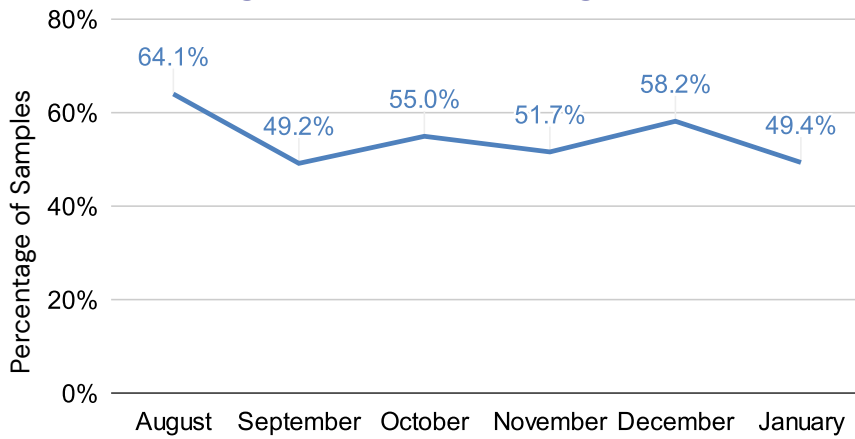
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



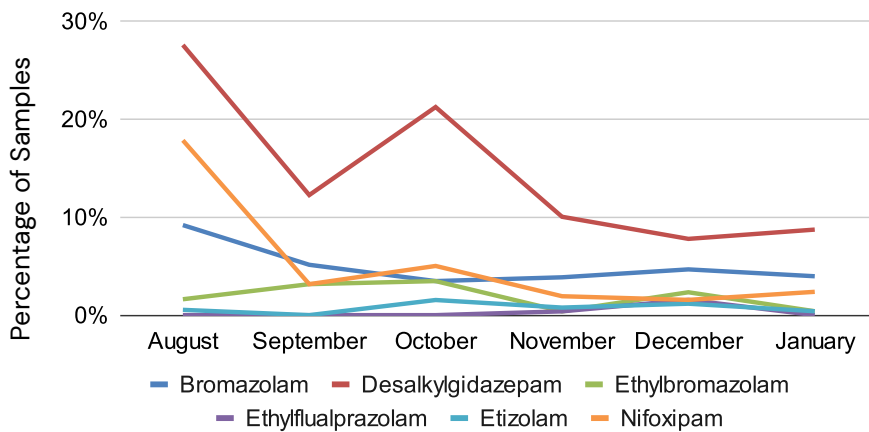
- In January, fluorofentanyl detection by FTIR increased to **69.0%** of unregulated opioids (**174 of 252 samples**), while fentanyl detection by FTIR decreased to **9.5%** (24 samples).
- We note that the true number of samples containing carfentanil is expected to be higher than what is observed by FTIR, as it is usually contained in concentrations below the detection limit (<5%). Please see the **Secondary Testing** section of this report for more information.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines, past 6 months



- During the month of January, **49.4%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines in the Fraser Health region (**129 samples of 261 checked**).
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The true number may be higher, as some benzodiazepines may be missed by test strip.

Types of benzodiazepines detected by FTIR, past 6 months

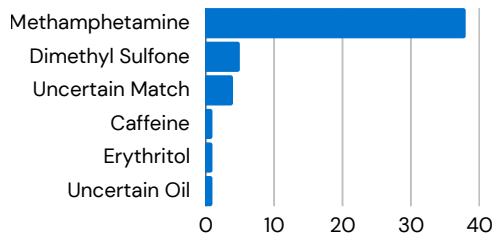


- In January, **16.3%** of unregulated opioids (**41 of 252 samples**) contained benzodiazepines in concentrations high enough to be detectable by FTIR (>5%).
- Of these, desalkylgidazepam remained the most common, detected in **8.7%** of unregulated opioids tested (**22 samples**).
- We are continuing to monitor the emergence of novel benzodiazepines. In January, this included nifoxipam (**6 samples**), clobromazolam (**1 sample**), and ethylbromazolam (**1 sample**).

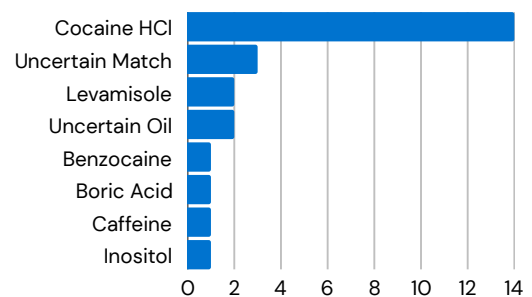
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

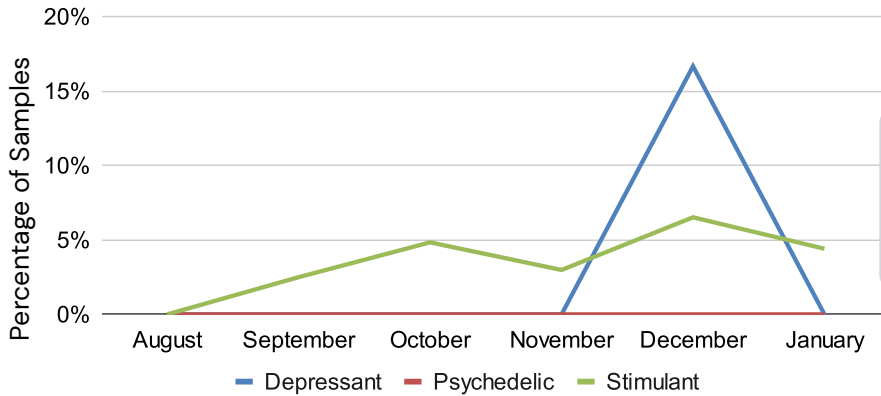
Components in methamphetamine (N=38)



Components in cocaine (N=14)



Fentanyl detected in non-opioids, past 6 months

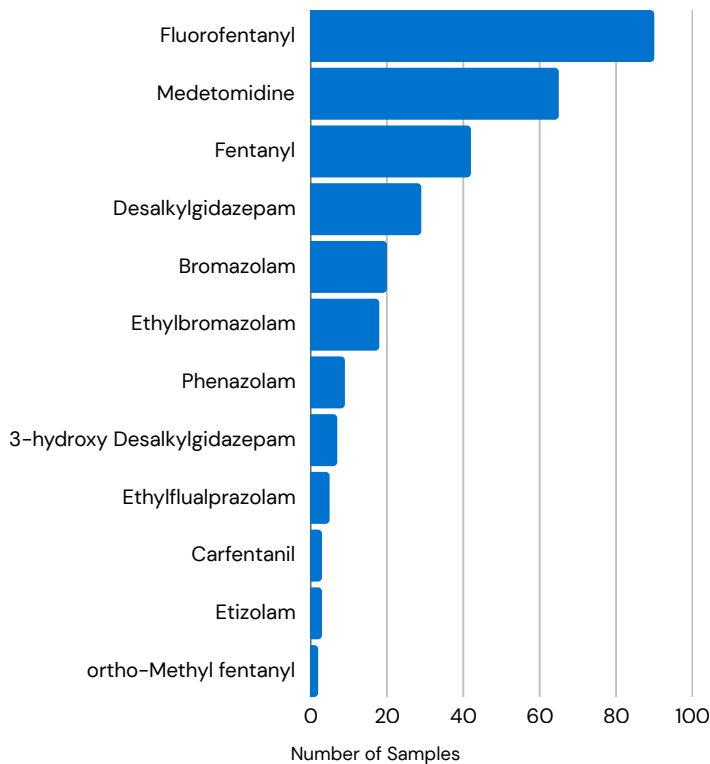


- In January, a total of **3 stimulant samples (2 methamphetamine, 1 crack cocaine)** tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR and/or test strip.

PSMS Secondary Testing Results Summary

A subset of samples were sent for secondary testing provided by Substance at the University of Victoria, using Paper-Spray Mass Spectrometry (PSMS). PSMS is a highly sensitive technology, and can detect components in samples below the detection limit of the FTIR (<5%). Below is a summary of all active components detected in opioid samples sent in confirmatory testing. For more information about Substance please visit their [website](#).

Active components in opioids submitted (N=103)



To save space, additional components detected a single time have been omitted from this chart: Fentanyl analogue (unknown type), Flualprazolam, Methamphetamine, Phenacetin, Xylazine.

Public Health Notifications

There has been an increase in medetomidine in the unregulated drug supply, coinciding with an uptick in alerts issued in January. Out of the total 12 alerts, 4 were related to medetomidine, including a province-wide alert issued by the BCCDC, and 1 issued within the FH region.

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
<p>In January, there were no alerts issued within the Fraser Health region pertaining to samples submitted for drug checking.</p>					

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

About this data

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

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.

We gratefully acknowledge the contribution of [our partners](#) to collect this data.

To find drug checking services in your area please visit our [site locator](#).