



UNINTENTIONAL DRUG POISONING IN SONOMA COUNTY: A FOCUS ON PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS



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The Health Policy, Planning & Evaluation Division of the Sonoma County Department of Health Services

2014 SUMMARY IMPACTS ON THE SONOMA COUNTY HEALTH SYSTEM:

ANNUAL UNINTENTIONAL DRUG POISONINGS

- 476** **Treat and release emergency department (ED) visits** for which unintentional (UI) drug poisoning was the principal cause of admission among Sonoma County residents. Of UI drug poisonings, 20% (n=88) were for opiates; of these, 72% were for pharmaceutical opioids, and 28% for heroin.
- 191** **Hospitalizations** for which UI drug poisoning was the principal cause of admission among Sonoma County residents. Of UI drug poisonings, 30% (n=57) were for opiates; of these, 93% were for pharmaceutical opioids.
- 44*** **Deaths (annual average)** from UI drug poisoning. (*2013-15 annual average).

SONOMA COUNTY RESIDENTS

- The Sonoma County rate of non-fatal, treat and release, ED visits for UI drug poisoning due to opiates increased 73% from 2009-11 to 2012-14 (10.0 vs. 17.3 per 100,000 population, respectively) (Figure 1). This was a significant increase (p-value <0.05) over the time period.
- The age-adjusted rate of non-fatal, treat and release ED visits for UI drug poisoning due to opiates in **Sonoma County was significantly higher (p-value <0.05) than California** in 2012-14 (15.8 vs. 9.8 per 100,000 population, respectively, data not shown).
- The Sonoma County rate of non-fatal hospitalization for UI drug poisoning due to opiates was 12.9 per 100,000 population in 2012-14. This rate did not change significantly from 2009-11 to 2012-14 (Figure 2).
- The rate of non-fatal hospitalization for UI drug poisoning due to opiates in **Sonoma County was significantly higher (p-value <0.05) than California** in 2012-14 (age-adjusted, 10.7 vs. 7.3 per 100,000 population, respectively; data not shown).

Figure 1. Rate of non-fatal, treat and release, ED visits for unintentional drug poisoning due to opiates by principal external cause, 3-year rolling average, Sonoma County, 2009-11 to 2012-14

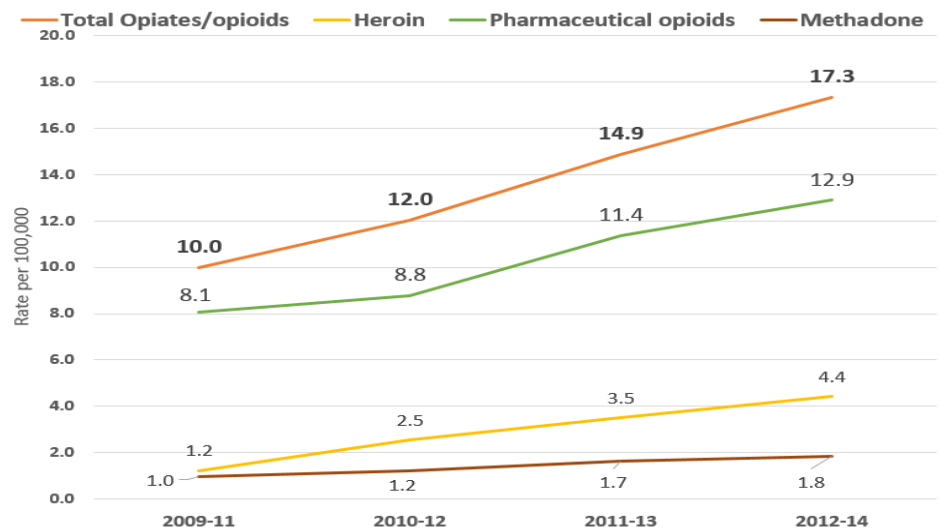
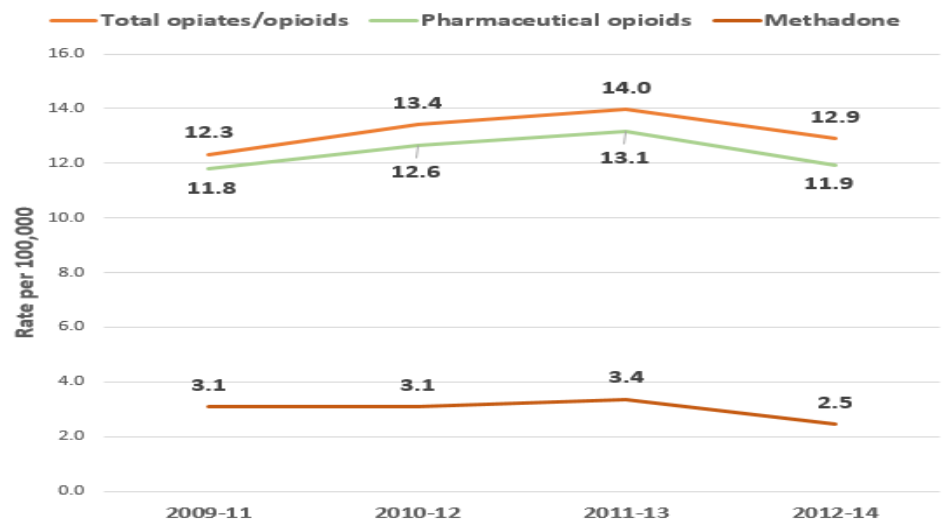


Figure 2. Rate of non-fatal hospitalizations for unintentional drug poisoning due to opiates by principal external cause, 3-year rolling average, Sonoma County, 2009-11 to 2012-14



OPIOID PRESCRIBING PRACTICES

SONOMA COUNTY RESIDENTS, 2014

DATA SOURCE: CALIFORNIA'S PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAM,
CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES UTILIZATION REVIEW AND EVALUATION SYSTEM (CURES)



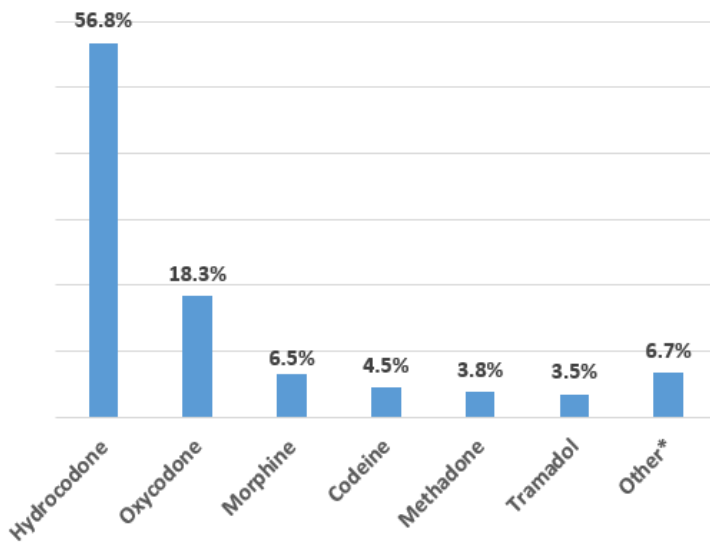
1 in 4

Sonoma County residents had an opioid prescription during the year.



459,000 opioid prescriptions filled at a pharmacy

Figure 3. Percentage of dispensed opioid prescriptions to Sonoma County residents, by type of opioid, CURES 2014 (N=459,000 opioid prescriptions)



*includes buprenorphine, hydromorphone, fentanyl, oxymorphone, and other drug classes.

2014 Findings— Sonoma County residents with an opioid prescription

# of unique patients with an opioid rx	126,000 people
Age	Median age: 53 years. People over 65 year of age (41%) were more likely to have an opioid prescription.
Gender	58% of patients were female.
Patients and opioid rx	53% of patients with an opioid prescription only had one opioid prescription; 25% had four or more opioid prescriptions.
Patients and prescribers	71% of patients received their prescription from only one prescriber; 5% of patients had opioid prescriptions from four or more prescribers.
Doctor shopper	524 (or 0.4%) of all patients were identified as doctor shoppers.**

Note: These data include Sonoma County residents who had an opioid prescription filled in the United States in 2014, regardless of where it was prescribed or filled. "Rx" = prescription.
**Doctor shoppers were defined as patients who obtained opioid prescriptions from 4 or more prescribers and 4 or more pharmacies in 2014.

BACKGROUND— THE NATION AND CALIFORNIA

Prescription drug abuse is at epidemic levels according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In 2013, there were 43,983 drug overdose deaths in the United States, making drug overdose the number one cause of injury-related death in the United States [1]. In 2013, 58% (22,767 deaths) of drug overdose deaths were related to pharmaceuticals; 71% (16,235 deaths) of these involved opioid analgesics and 31% involved benzodiazepines (some deaths included more than one drug type) [2]. The rate for drug poisoning deaths involving opioid analgesics nearly quadrupled from 1.4 to 5.1 per 100,000 from 1999 to 2013, whereas the drug poisoning death rate doubled during this time period (6.1 to 13.8 per 100,000) [1].

In California, deaths involving opioid prescription medications have increased 17% since 2006. In 2012, there were more than 1,800 deaths from all types of opioids, of which 72% involved prescription opioids [3].

References: [1] Chen, L., H. Hedegaard, and M. Warner, *QuickStat: Rates of death from drug poisoning and drug poisoning involving opioid analgesics--United States, 1999-2013*. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 2015. 64(01): p. 32. [2] *Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [online]*. 2014, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [3] *Prescription Opioid Misuse and Overdose*. January 9, 2015 [cited 2015 April 8].

For more information on the **Opioid Prescribing Workgroup of the Sonoma County Committee for Health care Improvement (CHI)**, please visit <http://www.sonomahealthaction.org/opioid-prescribing-workgroup>, or contact Jay Macedo at Jay.Macedo@sonoma-county.org or 707-565-6680.

