

The Realities of Drugs and Addiction: Cutting Through the Polarization

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Background

- Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission
- Measure 110 Oversight and Accountability Council
- Multnomah County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council



SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

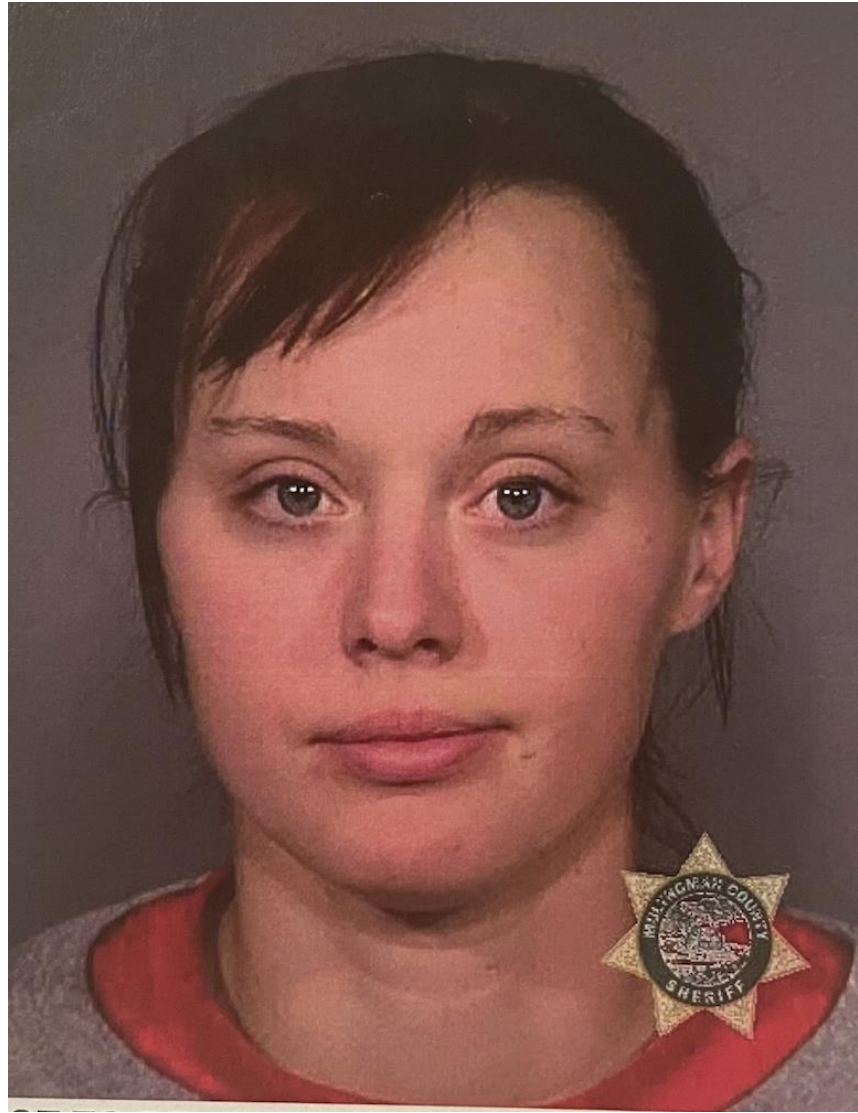


*National Drug Abuse Treatment
Clinical Trials Network*



WHERE NEWS MEETS ITS SCHOLARLY MATCH





Booking Date 6/13/2013

Booking Time 16:33



NOT TO BE USED FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES

Drugs permeate our jails and prisons

- Medications for opioid use disorder remain broadly unavailable
- No jail has methadone which is more efficacious for fentanyl
- Overdose is leading cause of death after release
- Oregonians are 13X more likely to OD upon release from incarceration than baseline OD risk



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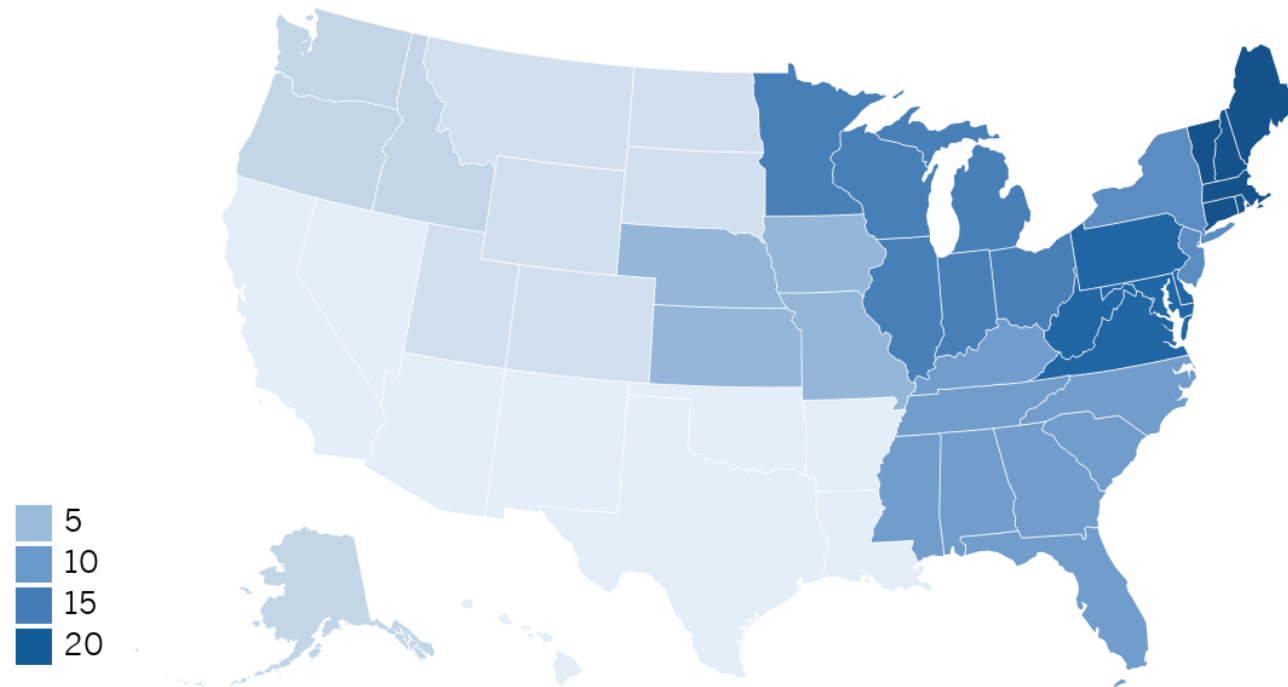
SHERIFF
WASHINGTON COUNTY



2017: “It Won’t Happen to Me.”

Fentanyl overdose deaths

In 2017, fatal overdoses involving fentanyl were most common in the northeast.



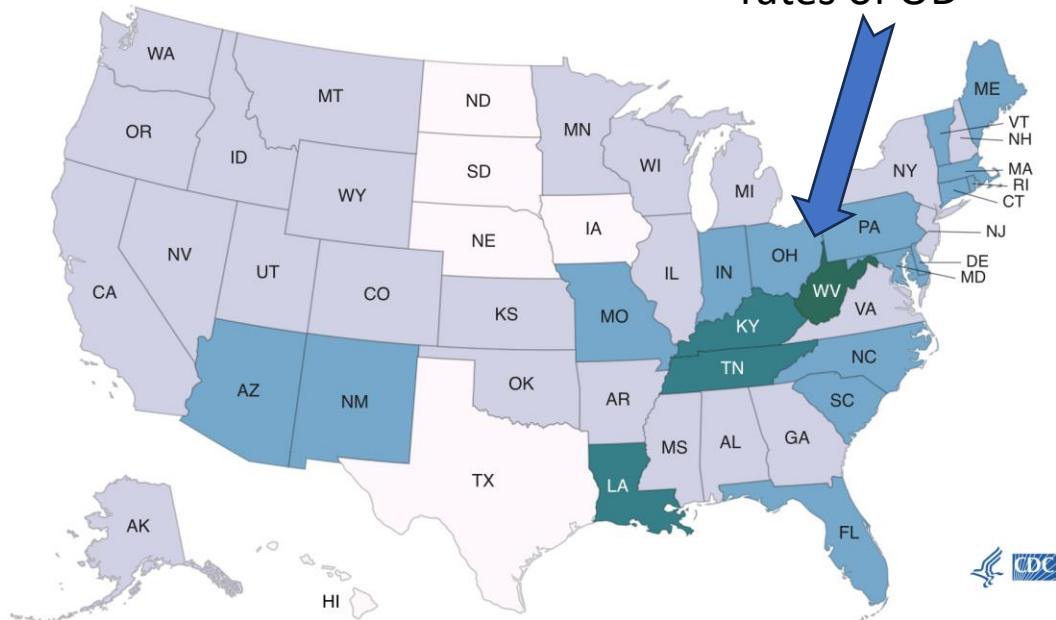
Age-adjusted death rates are reported per 100,000 people
CDC National Center for Health Statistics

2021

Make a selection from the filters to change the visualization information.

Year

2021



Much higher rates of OD

Fentanyl Arrives to the West Coast

- Today, Oregon ranks #26 nationwide for fatal overdoses (using rolling averages through Spring 2023) despite higher rates of SUD
- Fewer of our overdoses become *fatal*, with a high reversal rate
- Lower rates of using alone (most overdoses happen when home alone)
- Harm reduction coverage
- Youth overdose reflecting *lethality*, not more drug use
- Price: declining nationwide

2023 Overdose Data: Rolling Averages

States with Highest Rates of Overdose vs. Incarceration Rate

1. West Virginia - 328
2. Tennessee - 314
3. Louisiana - 564
4. Maine - 107
5. Kentucky - 411
6. Delaware - 276
7. New Mexico - 240

US Average Incarceration
Rate per 100k Residents:
350

Pew Analysis Finds No Relationship Between Drug Imprisonment and Drug Problems

Letter provides new 50-state data to the federal opioid commission

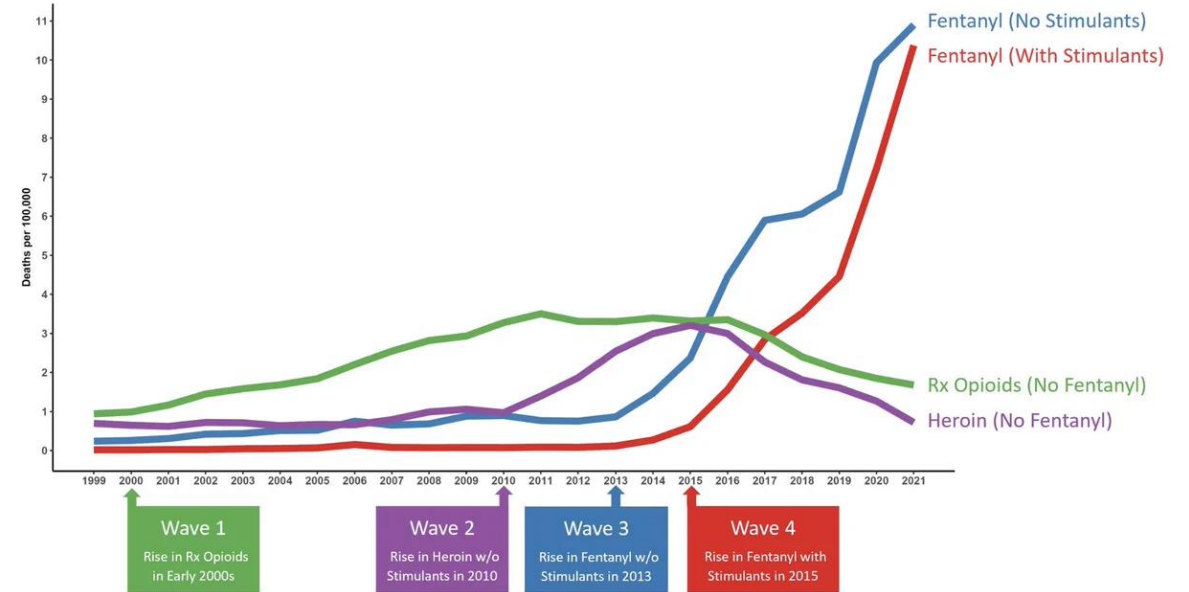
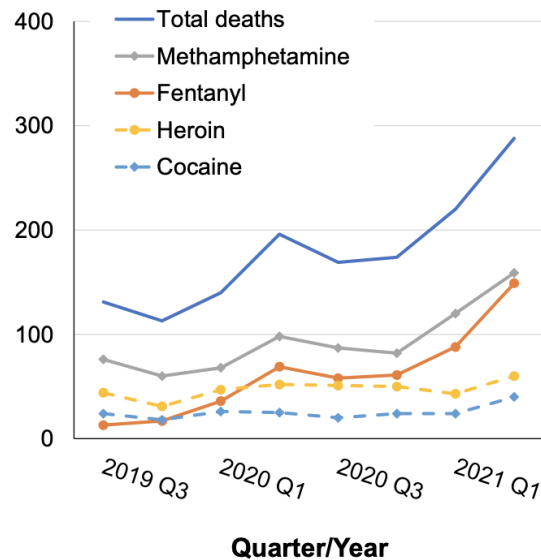
SPEECHES AND TESTIMONY | June 19, 2017 | Read time: 1 min

Projects: [Public Safety Performance](#)

Fourth Wave: Polysubstance Crisis in Oregon

- An increasing share of deaths include both fentanyl and meth
- Meth-related deaths increase in the state
- In 2022, opioids surpass meth for the first time

Figure 1. Unintentional drug overdose deaths by drug and quarter, Oregon, July 2019–June 2021



Is there
more
addiction
on our
streets?

- More visible (more homelessness)
- More severe (higher acuity)
- Similar amount of people than ever (~5% increase of SUD within the Medicaid population, on par nationally after COVID-19 bump)
- More psychosis

Is it a housing crisis or an addiction crisis?

- The single strongest predictor of homelessness in a region is how rent burdened people are
- Detroit and Baltimore both have high rates of poverty, higher rates of substance use and overdose, lower rates of homelessness
- West Virginia: extremely high rates of overdose, low homelessness, cheap housing
- Poor people can pay their rent when it's cheap enough, drug users or not
- Unless drug treatment comes with housing, no amount of "treatment" is going to get people out of tents



What Truly Works is Settled Science

- Fentanyl isn't new, just a little bit worse
- We know what works to treat addiction, ESPECIALLY opioids
- Decades of research
- Treatment works, housing is treatment
- Arrest produces harm + racial disparities
- With better options, people make better choices
- We're tied up in discussions around "coercion" without having treatment for those who want it, today, right now
- Moral + ethical obligation to offer treatment for those who want it, voluntary treatment more effective



END