

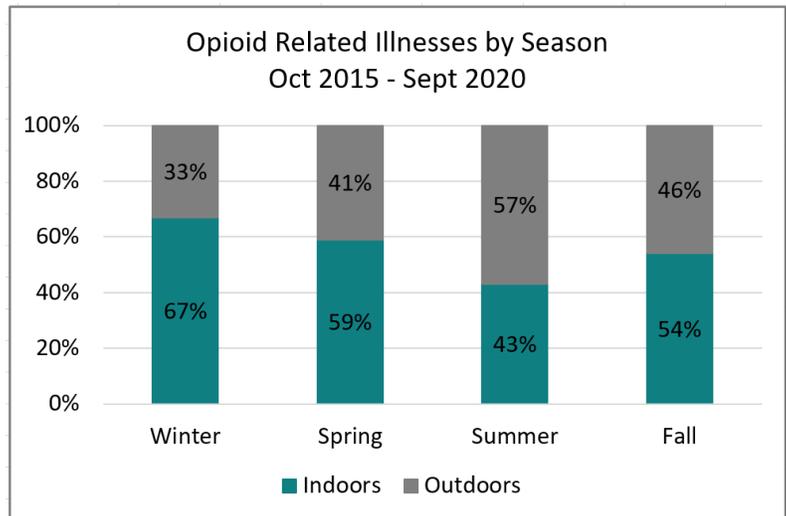
Mayor's Opioid Task Force - Data Subcommittee

Opioid Trends in Lowell, MA

The Mayor's Opioid Task Force Data Subcommittee analyzed various data sets relevant to the opioid epidemic in Lowell. The following observations and recommendations are tailored for community providers to inform their work.

Key Observations

- ◇ 67% of the Opioid Related Illness calls responded to by Trinity EMS occurred inside during the winter months (Dec, Jan, and Feb), compared to 43% during the summer months (June, July, and Aug)
- ◇ Low temperatures, opioid use, COVID-19, and the flu can all impact breathing.
- ◇ Outpatient treatment programs have begun to prepare clients that they will not be allowed to spend extra time inside their lobbies this winter due to COVID-19.
- ◇ Anecdotally, inpatient treatment programs see an increase in referrals during colder weather months. This is even more true now during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ◇ Lowell CO-OP is encountering more clients that are requesting inpatient and residential treatment referrals.



Winter Readiness: Narcan

The effects of Narcan wear off after 30-90 minutes. Call 9-1-1 before administering to prevent additional health risks.



Narcan freezes at 32°. Do not leave it in your car unattended.

Keep Narcan close, like in the pocket of your jacket or pants.

Narcan becomes less effective after it expires. Check the expiration date.

Easy and immediate access to Narcan during an emergency can prevent a fatal overdose.

Recommendations for Community

Providers

- ◇ Educate clients about the impact of temperature on the effectiveness of Narcan. Encourage clients to carry Narcan as close to the body as possible.
- ◇ Encourage clients who use opioids to not use alone.
- ◇ Encourage clients to inform someone they trust when they are using if they prefer to use alone.
- ◇ Talk with clients about how colder weather can impact overall health and exacerbate current health concerns.
- ◇ Talk with clients about the respiratory risk factors associated with opioid use, COVID-19, and the flu.

Family and Loved Ones

- ◇ Check on your loved ones who use opioids more frequently when they are spending time alone.
- ◇ Be trained on how to use Narcan, obtain at least one Narcan kit. Store Narcan in an easily accessible spot. Inform others in the home and/or network where the Narcan kit is stored.
- ◇ Encourage your loved one to get a flu shot to reduce risk for respiratory risk factors.

Have a suggestion for a topic to be reviewed? Want to share your agency's HIPAA compliant data with the Data Subcommittee? Email Lainnie Emond at LEmond@lowellma.gov.