

Risk Mitigation Guidance (RMG) evaluation findings



BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

March 27 2020 - December 31 2021

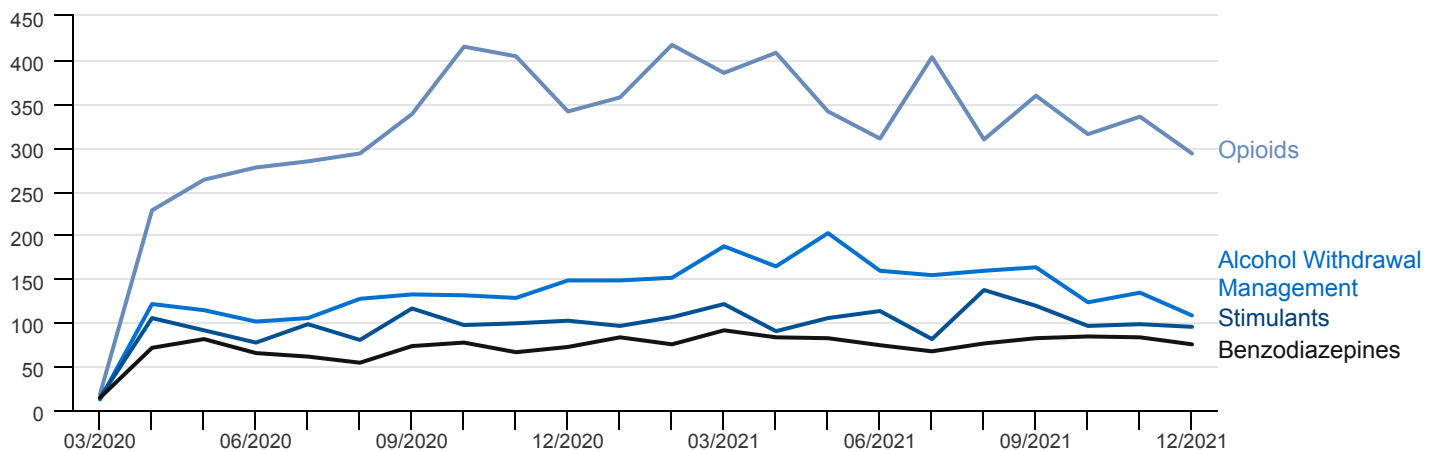
The Province of BC and the BC Centre on Substance Use introduced Risk Mitigation Guidance (RMG) on March 26, 2020 in response to the dual public health emergencies of COVID-19 and drug poisoning deaths. The RMG provides clinical guidance on how to prescribe pharmaceutical alternatives and alcohol withdrawal medications to people who are likely to experience a drug poisoning and withdrawal symptoms related to opioid, stimulant, benzodiazepine, and alcohol use.

The contaminated illicit drug supply is the primary contributor to illicit drug toxicity deaths in BC.

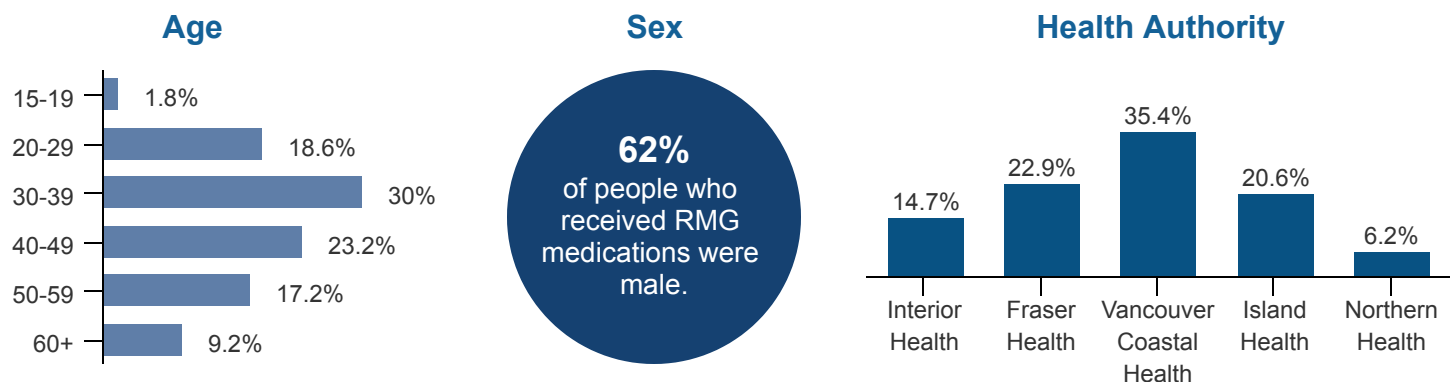
Of the 12,207 people dispensed RMG

- 58% received opioids,
 - 17% received stimulants,
 - 13% received benzodiazepines,
 - 24% received alcohol withdrawal management medications.
- 94% of RMG medications were dispensed daily.
 - 91% receiving RMG opioid medications were dispensed opioid agonist therapy (OAT) in the 30 days prior to or within 7 days after receiving first RMG dispensation.
 - In 1.9% of illicit drug toxicity deaths hydromorphone was detected with no fentanyl or fentanyl analogues.
 - There were no illicit drug toxicity deaths where hydromorphone was the only substance detected in post-mortem toxicology.*

Number of New RMG Clients by Month



Demographics of People Receiving RMG Medications



* Hydromorphone was detected with an average of seven other substances, often including cocaine, alcohol, morphine, etizolam, and flualprazolam. BC Coroner Service data from March 27, 2020 - May 31, 2021.

Last updated: February 22, 2022

All inferences, opinions, and conclusions drawn in this infographic are those of the authors, and do not reflect the opinions or policies of the Data Stewards. Citation: PharmaNet (Pharma) (prescription drugs dispensed from community pharmacies, includes medications covered by public and private insurance plans)