

Incorporating Fentanyl Test Strips in Community Substance Use Programming

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Overview

Fentanyl and the opioid overdose epidemic in the U.S.

What are fentanyl test strips (FTS), and how do they work?

What we know about FTS and drug use behavior from research so far.

Implementing FTS in community programming.

National Drug-Involved Overdose Deaths 1999-2019

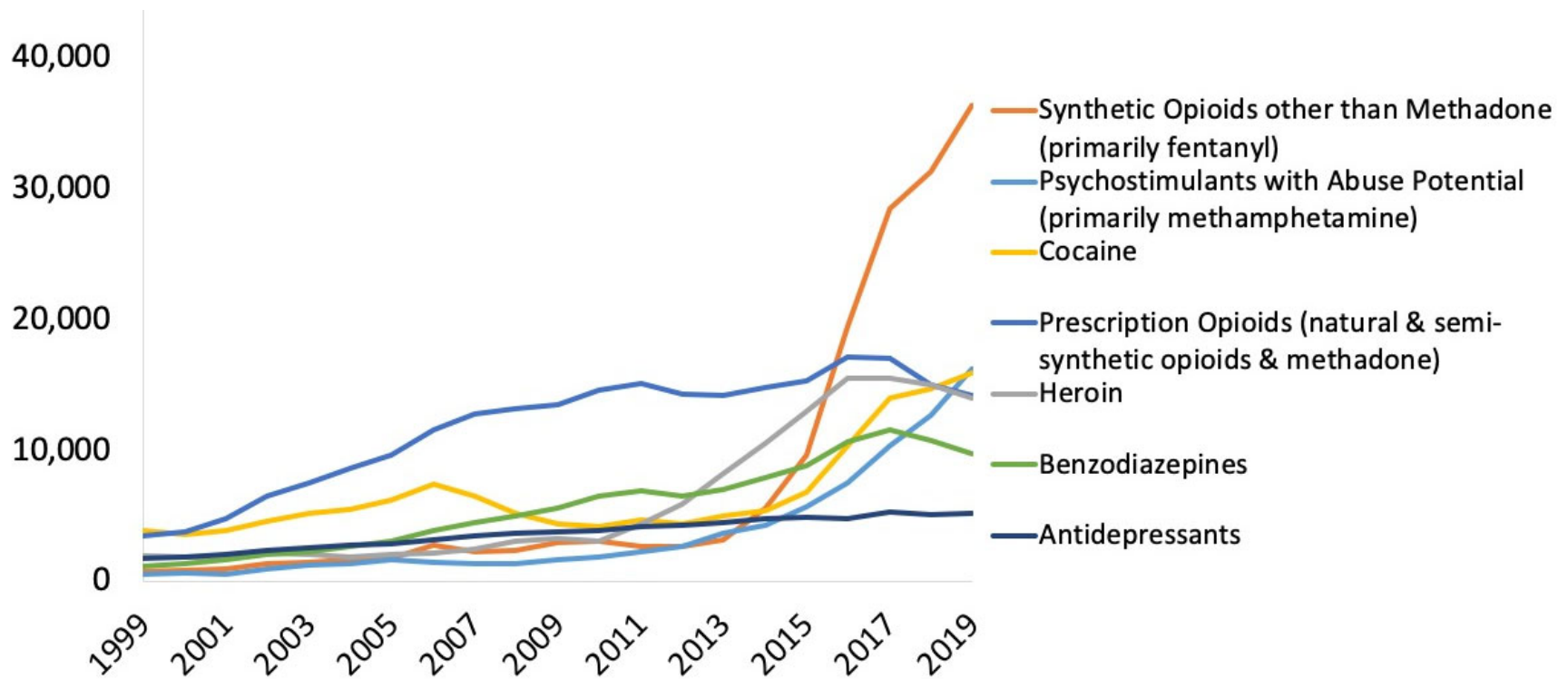


Figure source: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics

Fentanyl Reports to NFLIS-Drug 2014–2019

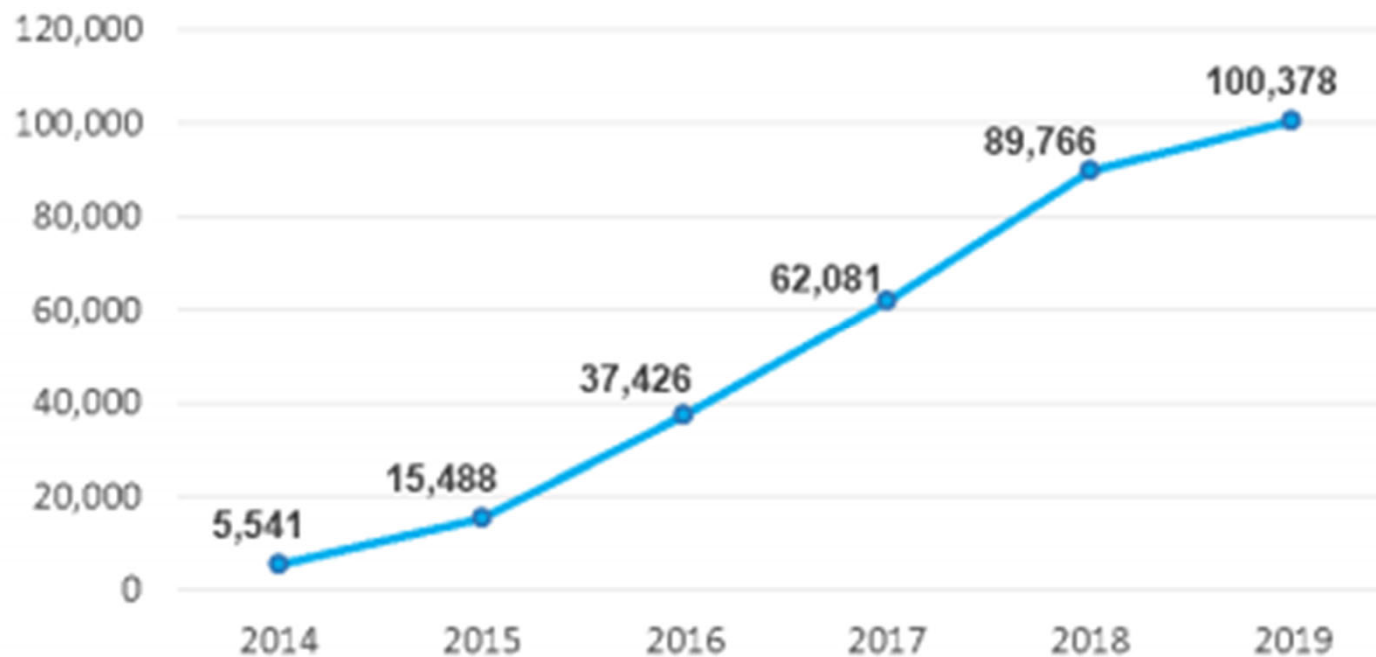


Figure source: DEA, 2020 National Drug Threat Assessment



Fentanyl Combination Reports to NFLIS-Drug 2014–2019

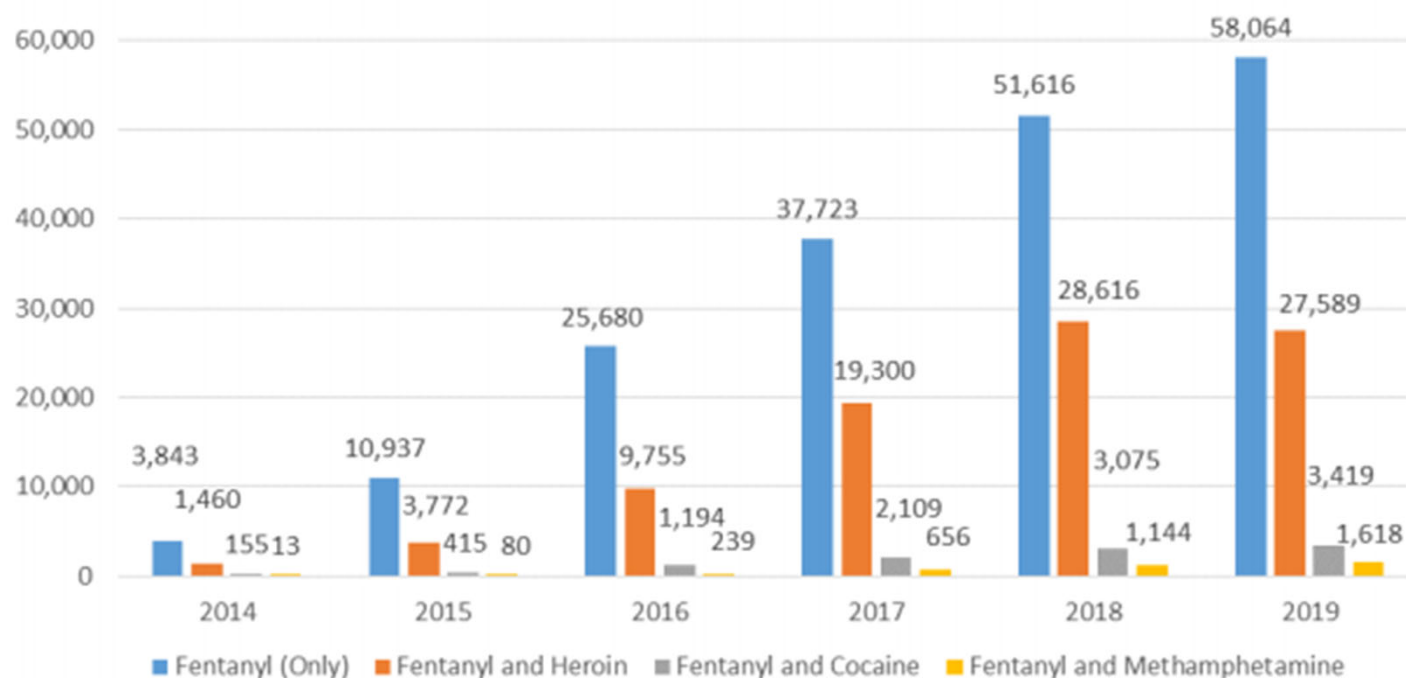


Figure source: DEA, 2020 National Drug Threat Assessment

Illicit fentanyl has led to
unpredictability in drug supplies

Quotes about dangerousness of uncertainty created by illicit fentanyl

“It [heroin] is very inconsistent; like you buy something from someone one day and the next [day] it’s changed: it can be stronger; it can be weaker...but never the same.” (man in his 20’s in NC)

“Dope in general is killing people, but the fentanyl is something different. It’s a different animal completely and it really is killing people . . . one little mistake and you’re f**kin’ dead.” (man in his 30’s in MA/NH)

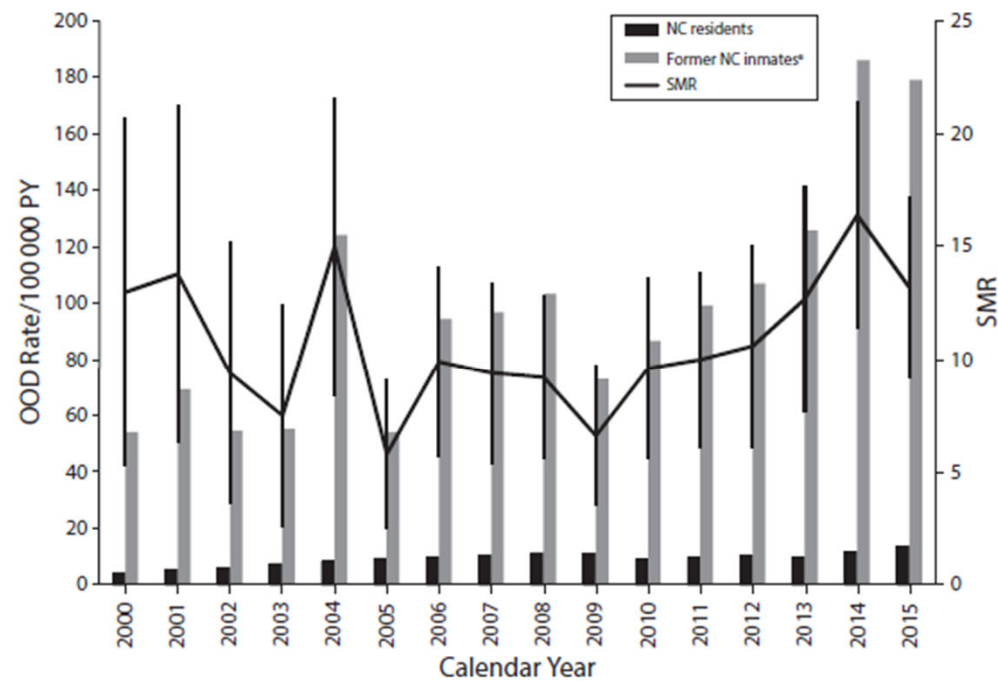
“We noticed that fentanyl was slowly being introduced . . . we just kept hearing that people were dying from it and that it was scary.” (woman in her 40’s in NC)

“When I went to my probation officer - this was like the last time before I turned myself in—it popped up that I had fentanyl, cocaine, and amphetamines. That’s the crystal, right? And mind you I didn’t do no crystal, and I didn’t do no dope.” (man in his 20’s in PA)

“Right now, it's like I'm nervous because fentanyl is not real heroin. You know what I mean? It's not dope. This s**t is killing people.” (man in his 20’s in MD)

People involved in the criminal justice system, particularly those who were recently incarcerated, have an increased risk of overdose

Annual Opioid Overdose Death Rates among North Carolina Residents and Former North Carolina Inmates 2000–2015



Note. CI = confidence interval; OOD = opioid overdose death; PY = person-years; SMR = standardized mortality ratio. Vertical lines represent 95% CIs for SMRs.
 *Standardized rate.

Figure source: Ranapurwala and colleagues, 2018



Why FTS?

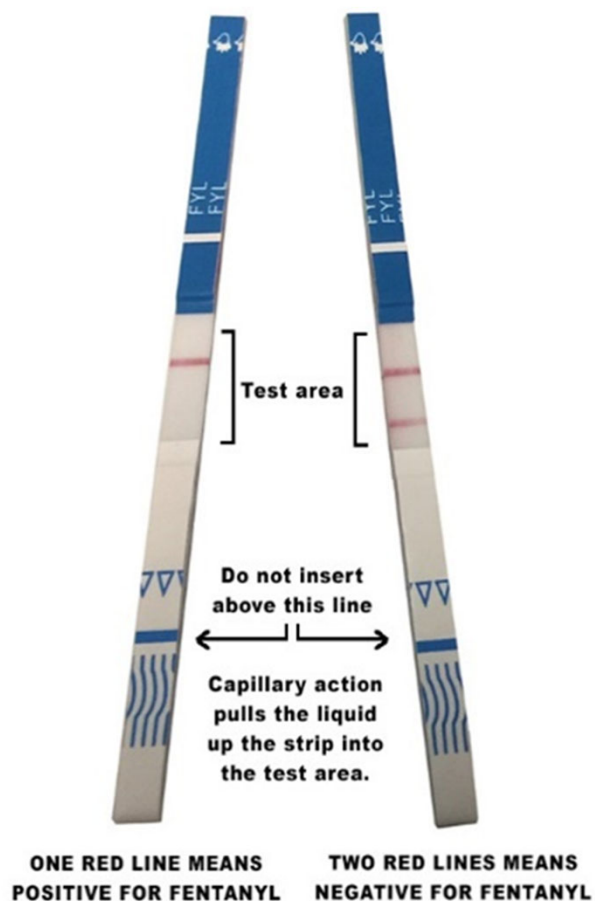
Fentanyl is driving the overdose epidemic

Many people who die from fentanyl-involved overdose are unaware of the presence of fentanyl in their drugs

People involved in the justice system are at increased risk of overdose, in part because of sudden and unpredictable increases in the potency of illicit drugs adulterated/contaminated with fentanyl

BTNX, Inc. FTS

- Detect presence or absence of fentanyl but not concentration levels
- Report at Johns Hopkins found high sensitivity and specificity compared to spectroscopy




How to use FTS

**USING URINE DRUG TEST STRIPS
AS A HARM REDUCTION TOOL**

How to use FTS


* for all tests *

1



prep shot & put
needle aside


2



leave residue in
cooker or baggie


only Meth & MDMA

3



drop cooker & residue
into ½ cup of water


4



hold test strip in cup
for 15 seconds


everything but
Meth & MDMA

3



add a ¼ inch
of water

4




do not go past
the blue line

insert strip for
15 seconds

* for all tests *

5

take out,
lay flat,
& wait 2 minutes



6

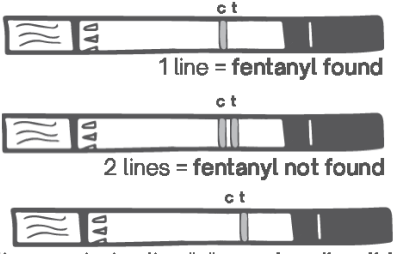
1 line
appear if fentanyl is found.

2 lines
appears if it is not found.

Use caution.
Fentanyl may still be present.

If invalid,
test with a new strip.

6



1 line = fentanyl found

2 lines = fentanyl not found

no line or missing line "c" = unclear/invalid

What do we know about FTS and how they influence drug use behavior?



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journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/drugpo



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Research Paper

Fentanyl test strips as an opioid overdose prevention strategy: Findings from a syringe services program in the Southeastern United States



Nicholas C. Peiper^a, Sarah Duhart Clarke^a, Louise B. Vincent^b, Dan Ciccarone^c, Alex H. Kral^a, Jon E. Zibbell^{a,*}

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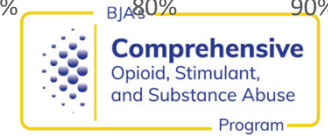
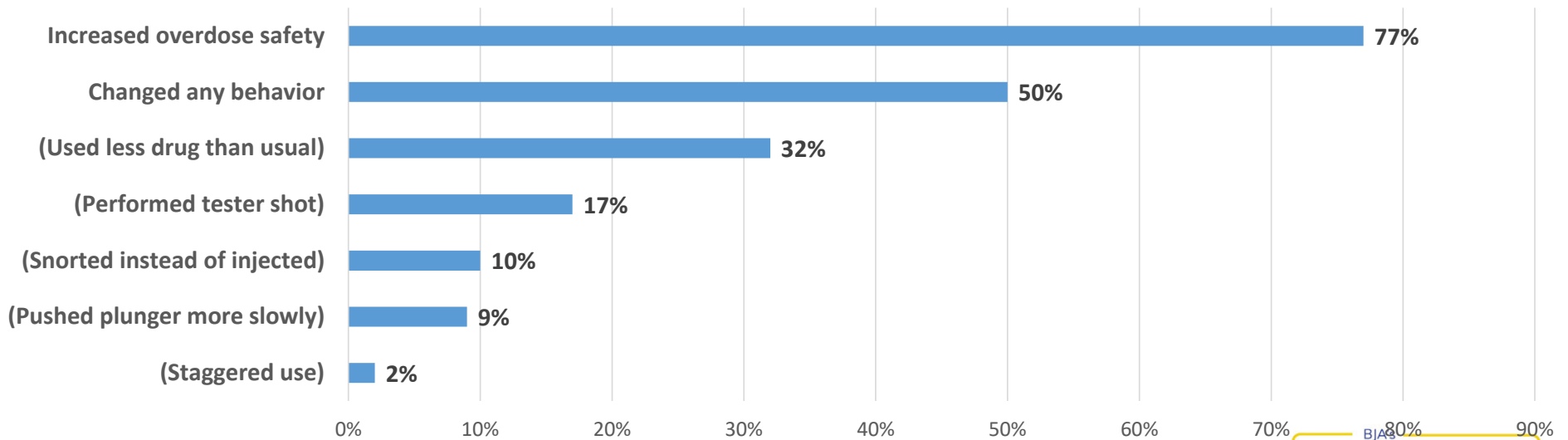
Research Paper

Consumer discernment of fentanyl in illicit opioids confirmed by fentanyl test strips: Lessons from a syringe services program in North Carolina



Jon E. Zibbell^{a,*}, Nicholas C. Peiper^b, Sarah E. Duhart Clarke^a, Zach R. Salazar^c, Louise B. Vincent^c, Alex H. Kral^a, Judith Feinberg^d

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International Journal of Drug Policy

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Agency in the fentanyl era: Exploring the utility of fentanyl test strips in an opaque drug market



Noelle P. Weicker^{a,*}, Jill Owczarzak^b, Glenna Urquhart^b, Ju Nyeong Park^b, Saba Rouhani^{b,c}, Rui Ling^b, Miles Morris^b, Susan G. Sherman^b

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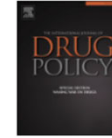
“Despite the limitations of the binary reporting and the desire for exhaustive drug checking, most respondents believed FTS had utility. A few older respondents planned to use FTS to avoid using fentanyl completely. Jim (age 55, Black) said he would resell or discard his drugs if they tested positive. Walter (age 46, Black) and Evelyn (age 49, Black) claimed they would avoid certain dealers or areas if their drugs tested positive for fentanyl. However, most respondents stated that they would use the drugs regardless of the FTS result, but they would use the information to inform their harm reduction practices.”



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Research Paper

Use of rapid fentanyl test strips among young adults who use drugs



Maxwell S. Krieger^a, William C. Goedel^a, Jane A. Buxton^{b,c}, Mark Lysyshyn^{b,d}, Edward Bernstein^{e,f}, Susan G. Sherman^g, Josiah D. Rich^{a,h}, Scott E. Hadland^{c,f}, Traci C. Green^{a,e,f,h}, Brandon D.L. Marshall^{a,*}

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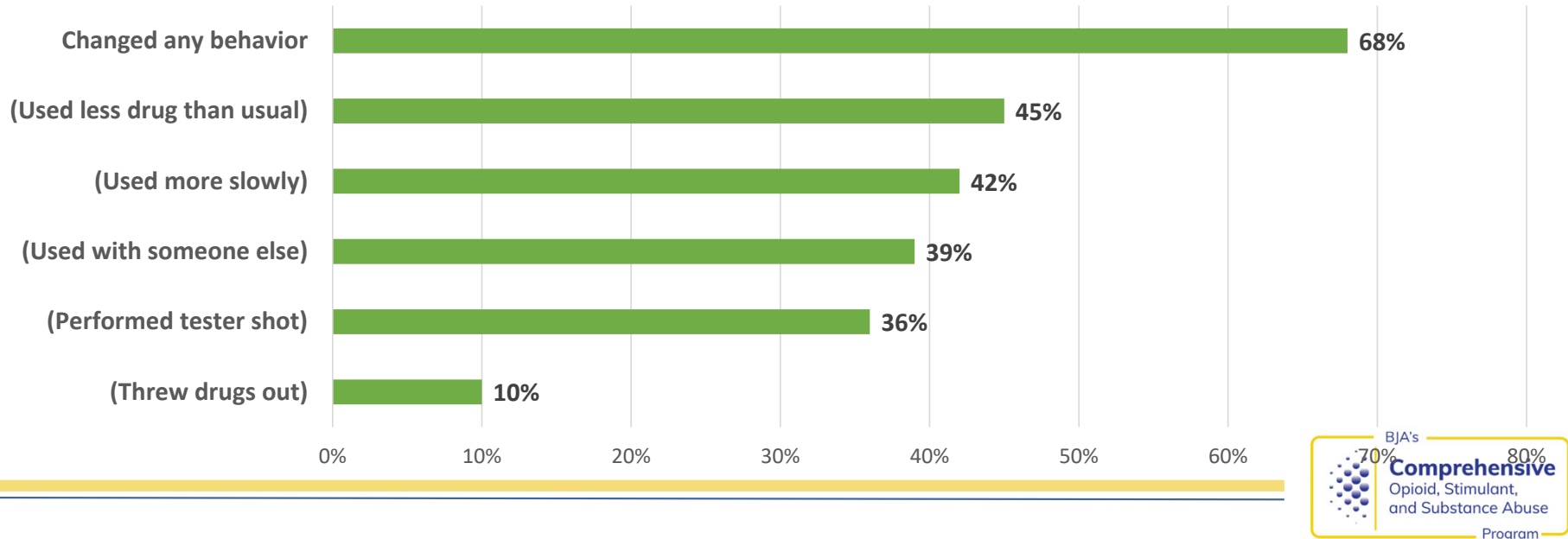
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Research Paper

“I probably got a minute”: Perceptions of fentanyl test strip use among people who use stimulants



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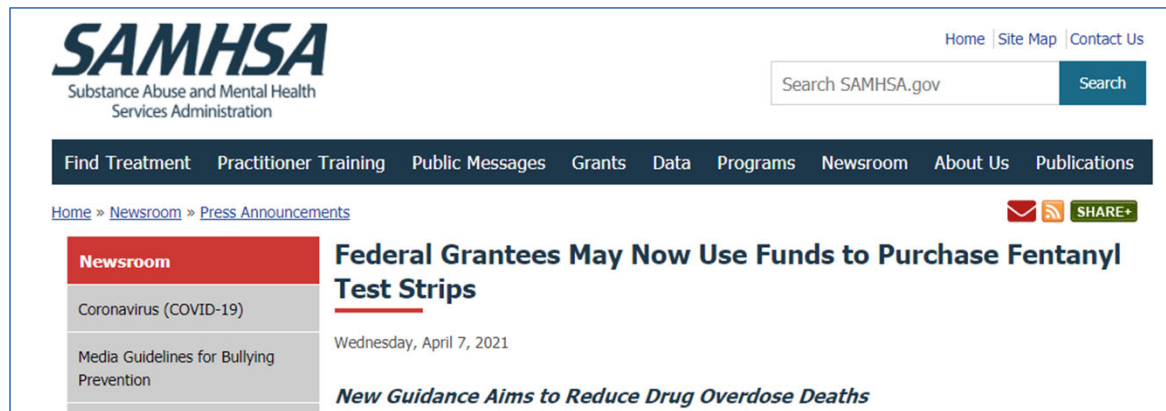
“Love it. Those strips are fantastic. . . . I’ll bet you a dollar to a donut, you get the strips, you can measure out the fentanyl, that drug dealer will be out of business. People will think “Dude’s s**t is garbage.” That will save lives. Bad enough I’m getting high, now you are going to try and kill me with this fentanyl? People, we talk.”

“I wouldn’t want that dependency. I don’t want to wake up in the morning and f**king need that. I for sure [would use test strips to test for fentanyl]”

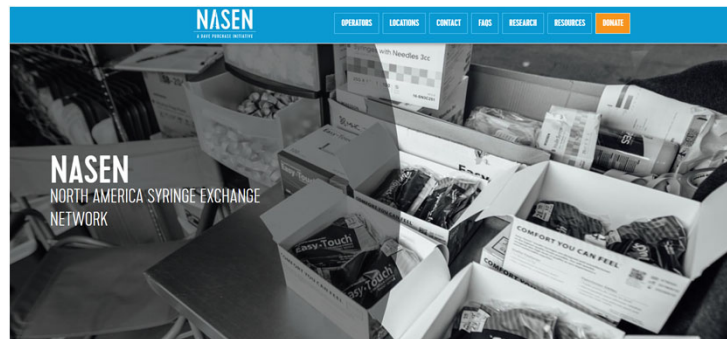
“I don’t want to do no fentanyl, I don’t want to touch it, I don’t want to smoke it, I don’t want to shoot it or anything like that. It’s something I would want to know if it is in my drugs because I don’t want to use it.”

Implementing FTS in Community Programming

Purchasing FTS

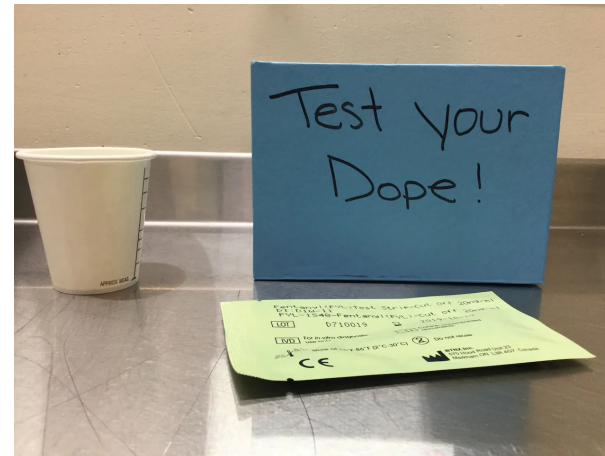


- \$1 per strip from BTNX
- North American Syringe Exchange Network (NASEN)
 - 80 cents per strip
- Include instructions for use



Partnering with Local Organizations

- Many harm reduction agencies are already distributing FTS



- Local organizations have already established trust with people who use drugs

Law Enforcement Buy-In

- Start with myth-busting and educating
 - Many LEO believe dermal exposure to fentanyl can be fatal – this is not true

“...Fentanyl and its analogs are potent opioid receptor agonists, receptor agonists, but **the risk of clinically significant exposure to emergency responders is extremely low**...Incidental dermal absorption is unlikely to cause opioid toxicity. For routine handling of drug, **nitrile gloves provide sufficient dermal protection**...” – American College of Medical Toxicology and American Academy of Clinical Toxicology Joint Position Statement, 2017



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Research paper

Perceived occupational risk of fentanyl exposure among law enforcement

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^c Community Health Research Division, RTI International, Berkeley, California, United States

Examples of Law Enforcement Agencies Already Distributing FTS

11 Massachusetts Police Departments Selected to Participate

BOSTON – The Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (P.A.A.R.I.) has partnered with 11 Massachusetts police departments to utilize fentanyl test strips as a new tool to engage people with opioid use disorder and help prevent overdose deaths.

The three-month pilot project, made possible by a \$150,000 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, launched this week and will continue through June. Through this project, police departments and their community partner agencies will distribute Fentanyl Test Strip Kits as an engagement tool for individuals at risk of opioid overdose.



Police departments get new tool to reduce overdose deaths: fentanyl test strips

pressherald.com/2021/03/09/police-departments-getting-new-tool-in-fight-against-overdoses-deaths-fentanyl-test-strips/

By Gillian Graham

March 9, 2021


Seven Maine police departments are getting a new tool they hope will reduce the number of fatal drug overdoses in the state.

Departments in Westbrook, South Portland, Biddeford, Kennebunk, Augusta, Bath and Brunswick are among 19 agencies in Maine and Massachusetts that will receive fentanyl test strips. They can be distributed to people to detect whether the drugs they are using are laced with the powerful synthetic opioid. Local and state officials say they are a harm reduction tool that can be used with other resources, including steering users to treatment programs, to prevent overdoses.

Contact Information

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<https://cossapresources.org/Program/TTA>

The screenshot displays the website's header with the logo and navigation menu. The main content area is titled "TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE" and features a yellow background with descriptive text and a "REQUEST TTA" button. Below this, a dark blue box lists the program's support for communities.

BJA's Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program

COSSAP GRANT PROGRAM LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AREAS OF FOCUS PUBLICATIONS & DIGITAL MEDIA **PDMP TTAC**

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The COSSAP training and technical assistance program offers a variety of learning opportunities and assistance to support BJA COSSAP grantees and other local, tribal, and state stakeholders to build and sustain multidisciplinary criminal justice responses to illicit substance use and misuse.

REQUEST TTA

Training and technical assistance is provided in a variety of formats, including virtual and in-person training events, workshop and meeting presentations, and online resources.

The COSSAP TTA Program supports communities by:

- Facilitating peer-to-peer learning opportunities in which communities can learn from experienced programs through virtual consultations and on-site visits.
- Providing speakers for conferences and workshops or skilled subject-matter experts for training events to educate stakeholders and build capacity.
- Facilitating strategic and cross-system planning to identify community resources, establish priorities, and develop a road map to achieving goals.
- Identifying materials such as policies and procedures, guidelines, and data sharing agreements that support program activities.
- Supporting PDMPs by increasing PDMP efficiencies and facilitating coordination between PDMPs and state and national stakeholders.

BJA's



Comprehensive

Opioid, Stimulant,
and Substance Abuse

Program