Nevada State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System

Biannual Report - 2020

Overview: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) is a program that supports state, territorial, county, and city health departments in obtaining more comprehensive and timelier data on overdose morbidity and mortality. The program is meant to enhance opioid overdose surveillance, reporting, and dissemination efforts to better inform prevention and early intervention strategies.

The information contained in this biannual report highlights **overdose mortality** within the state of Nevada utilizing the State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System (SUDORS) for the period beginning *January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019*.

Data Source: SUDORS uses death certificates and coroner/medical examiner reports (including post-mortem toxicology testing results) to capture detailed information on toxicology, death scene investigations, route of drug administration, and other risk factors that may be associated with a fatal overdose.

Case Definitions: A death that occurred in Nevada and was assigned any of the following ICD-10 underlying cause-of-death codes on the death certificate: X40-44 (unintentional drug poisoning) or Y10-Y14 (drug poisoning of undetermined intent); or a death classified as a drug overdose death by the Medical Examiner/Coroner.

Limitations: Data is delayed due to the time required to abstract data from multiple sources. Data completeness is dependent on information documented at time of death and therefore leads to large amounts of missing data.

The report includes details on:

Section 1: Demographic Characteristics of Cases

Section 2: Breakdown of Top Substances Listed on the Cause of Death

Section 3: Mental Health, Substance Use, and Institutionalization Prior to Death

Section 4: Appendix (containing complete tables for sections 1-3)

Key Findings:

There were 328 total drug overdose deaths reported in SUDORS from January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019 in Nevada.
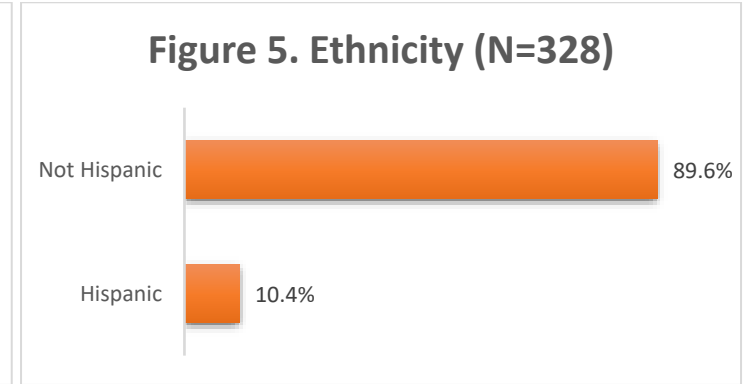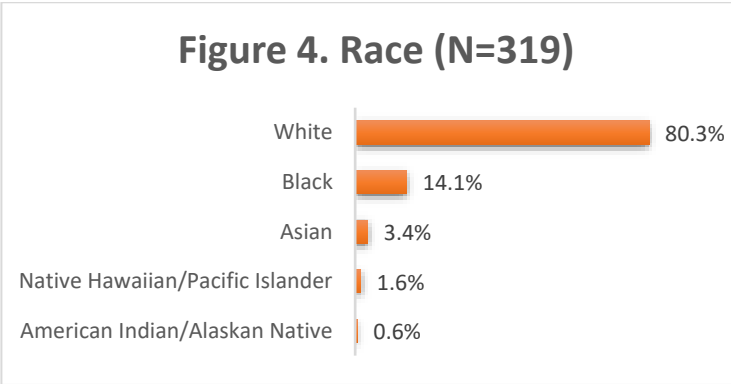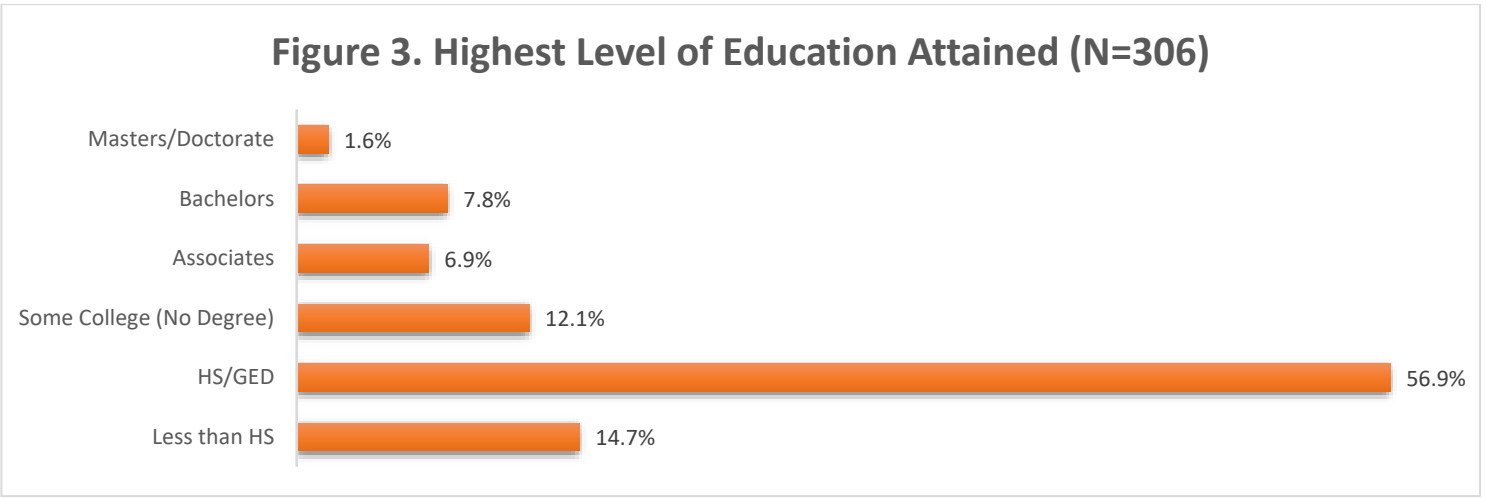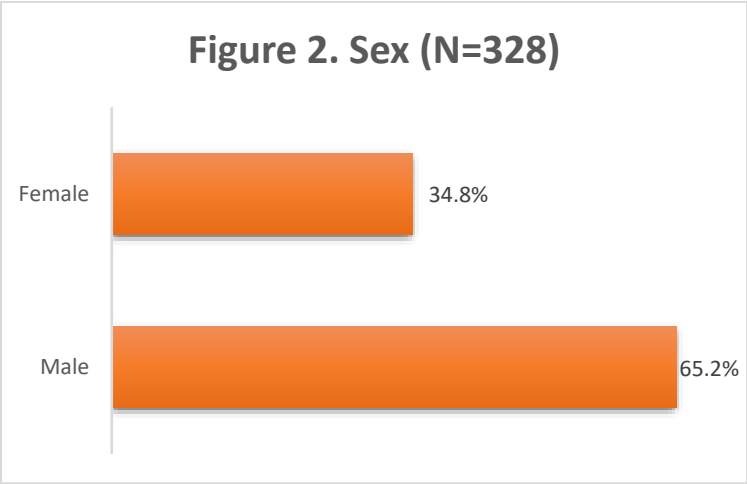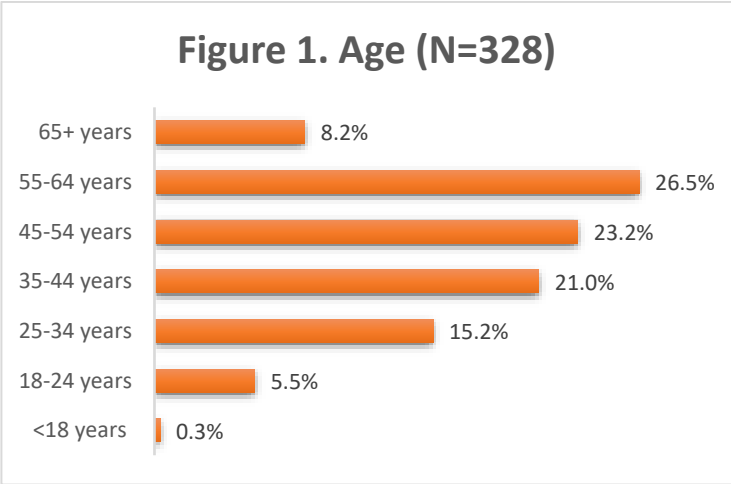
- Cases were mostly male, white, had a high school education or less and between the ages of 35-64 (Figures 1-4).
- Opioids were listed in the cause of death for over half of cases (Figure 6).
- Heroin was listed as one of the substances in the cause of death in about 23% of cases and fentanyl was listed in about 12% of cases (Figure 6).
- Over half of cases reported methamphetamine as one of the substances in the cause of death (Figure 7).
- Approximately 36% of cases had a mental health problem prior to death (Figure 8).
- About 7% of cases had a prior history of overdose (Figure 9).
- About 7% of cases were recently released from a hospital prior to death (Figure 10).

Questions or comments?

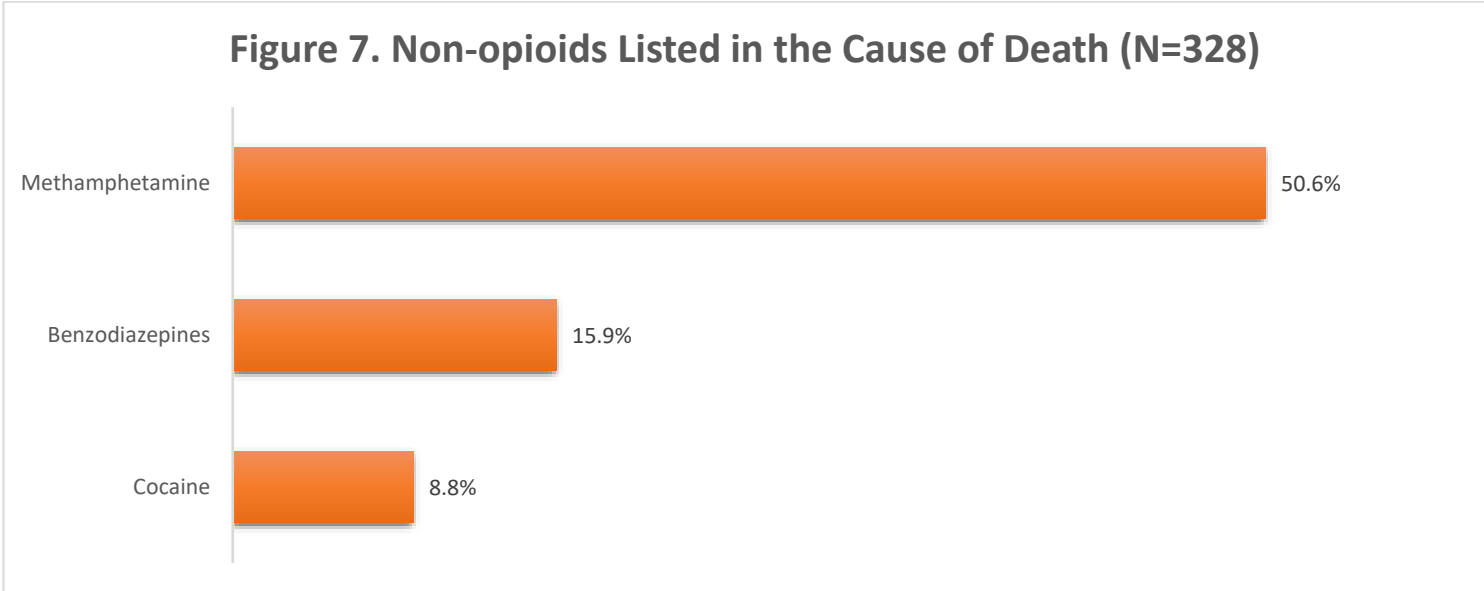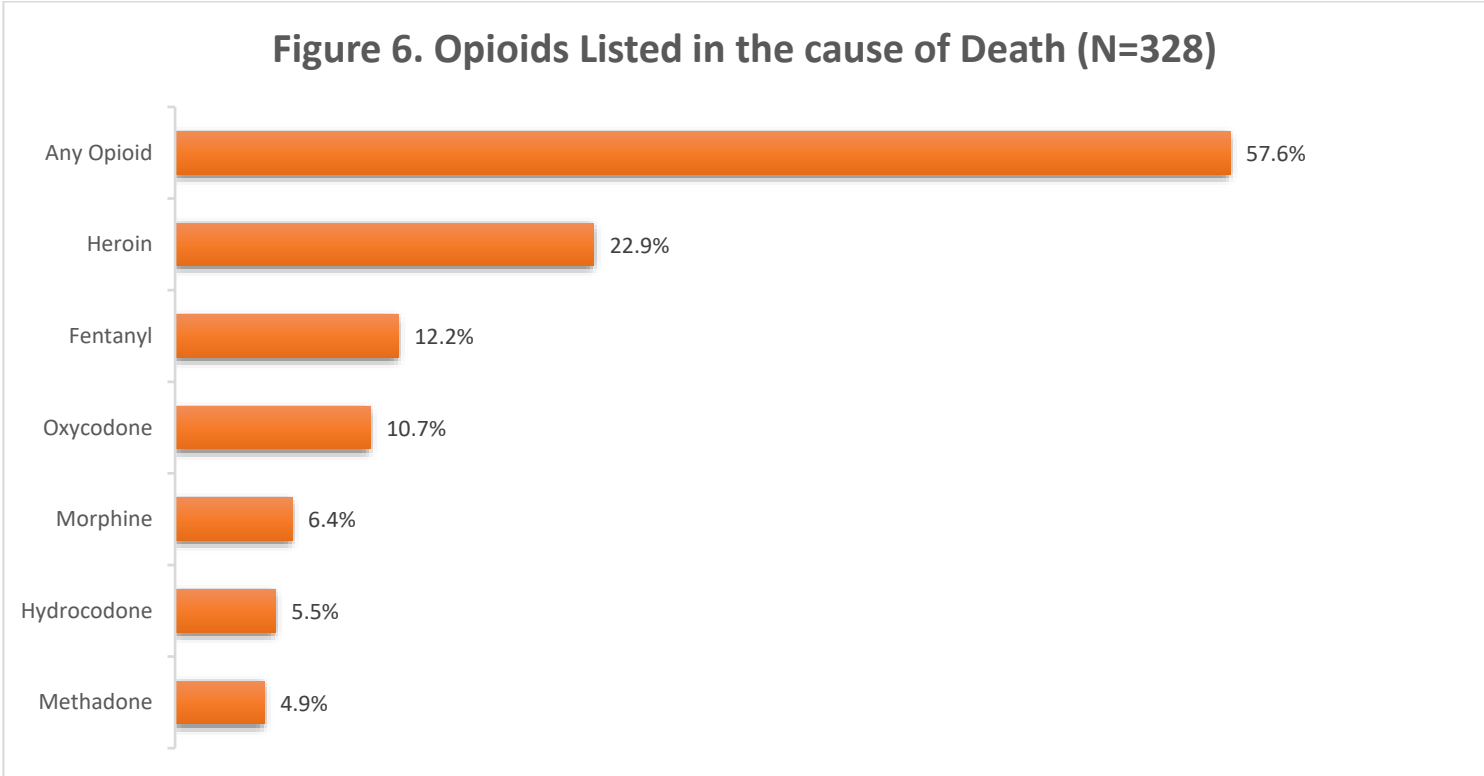Please contact Nevada OD2A's opioid epidemiologist, Shawn Thomas, MPH, at shawnt@unr.edu.

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Nevada Public Health Training Center
Training & Workforce Development for Nevada

Section 1: Demographics Characteristics of Cases

Figure 1. Age (N=328)

Age Group	Percentage
65+ years	8.2%
55-64 years	26.5%
45-54 years	23.2%
35-44 years	21.0%
25-34 years	15.2%
18-24 years	5.5%
<18 years	0.3%

Figure 2. Sex (N=328)

Sex	Percentage
Female	34.8%
Male	65.2%

Figure 3. Highest Level of Education Attained (N=306)

Education Level	Percentage
Masters/Doctorate	1.6%
Bachelors	7.8%
Associates	6.9%
Some College (No Degree)	12.1%
HS/GED	56.9%
Less than HS	14.7%

Figure 4. Race (N=319)

Race	Percentage
White	80.3%
Black	14.1%
Asian	3.4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1.6%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.6%

Figure 5. Ethnicity (N=328)

Ethnicity	Percentage
Not Hispanic	89.6%
Hispanic	10.4%

*Data not available for all cases in Figures 3-5. Percentages exclude missing data, so these statistics may not represent the true proportion of case characteristics.

Summary: There were 328 drug overdose deaths from January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019. Overdose deaths occurred most frequently among individuals who were 55-64 years old (26.5%), followed by 45-54 years (23.2%), and 35-44 years (21.0%) (**Figure 1**). Deaths were more common among males (65.2%) (**Figure 2**). Over 70% of decedents possessed either a high school diploma/GED (56.9%) or less than a high school education (14.7%) (**Figure 3**). Cases were mostly White (80.3%), Black (14.1%), and Asian (3.4%) (**Figure 4**). Approximately 10.4% of cases were Hispanic (**Figure 5**). In addition, 11.6% of cases were homeless and 10.0% ever served in the armed forces (**Appendix, Table 1**).
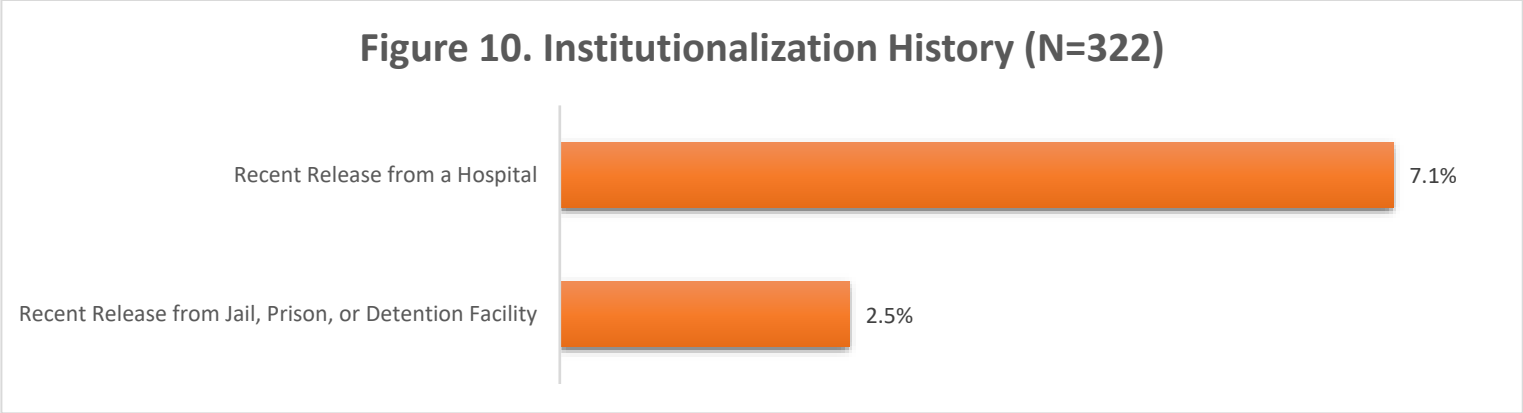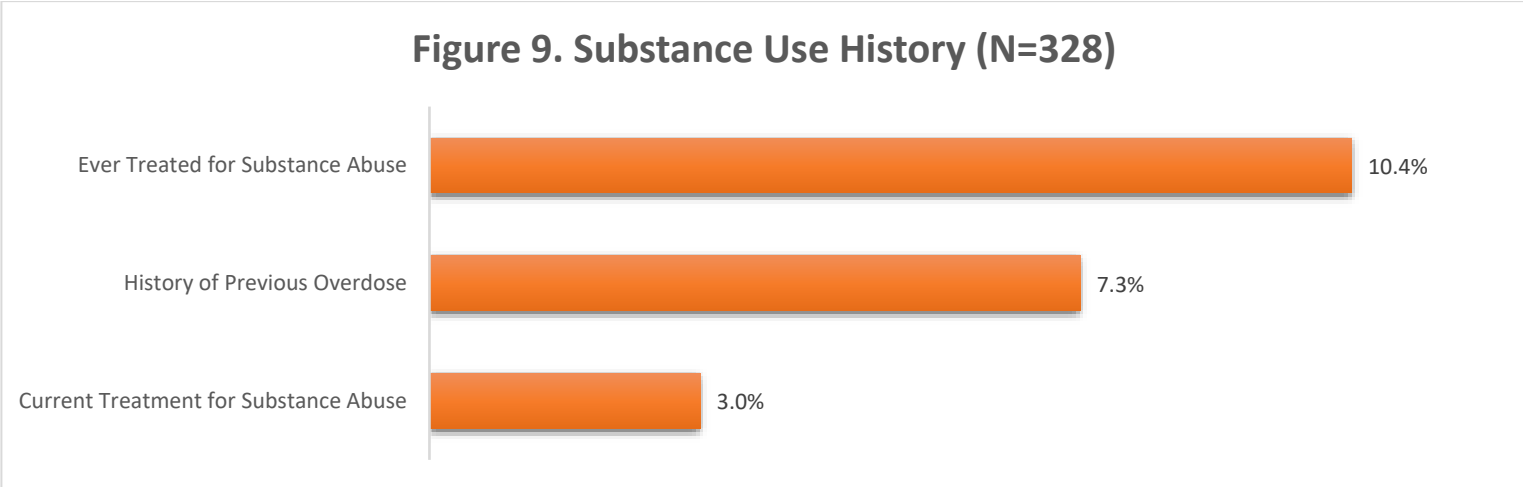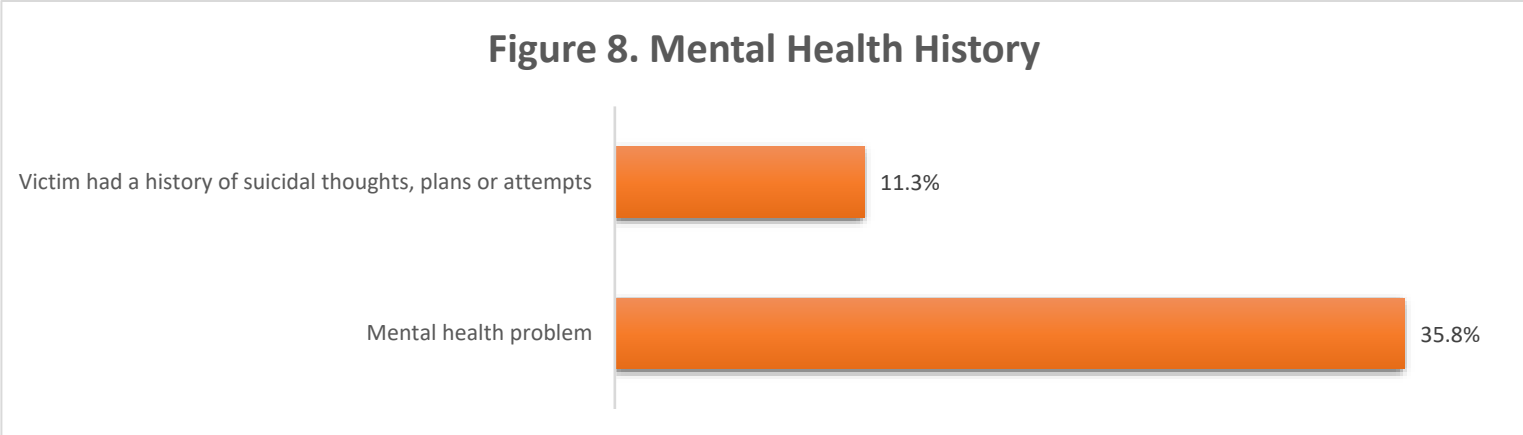
Section 2: Breakdown of Top Substances Listed on the Cause of Death:

Figure 6. Opioids Listed in the cause of Death (N=328)

Substance	Percentage
Any Opioid	57.6%
Heroin	22.9%
Fentanyl	12.2%
Oxycodone	10.7%
Morphine	6.4%
Hydrocodone	5.5%
Methadone	4.9%

Figure 7. Non-opioids Listed in the Cause of Death (N=328)

Substance	Percentage
Methamphetamine	50.6%
Benzodiazepines	15.9%
Cocaine	8.8%

Note: Substances listed in Figures 6 and 7 are not mutually exclusive, and decedents may have had multiple substances listed in the cause of death.

Summary: The top three opioids listed in the cause of death were heroin (22.9%), fentanyl (12.2%), and Oxycodone (10.7%) (**Figure 6**). The top three non-opioids listed in the cause of death were methamphetamine (50.6%), benzodiazepines (15.9%), and cocaine (8.8%) (**Figure 7**).

Section 3: Mental Health, Substance Use, and Institutionalization Prior to Death:

Figure 8. Mental Health History

Category	Percentage
Victim had a history of suicidal thoughts, plans or attempts	11.3%
Mental health problem	35.8%

Figure 9. Substance Use History (N=328)

Category	Percentage
Ever Treated for Substance Abuse	10.4%
History of Previous Overdose	7.3%
Current Treatment for Substance Abuse	3.0%

Figure 10. Institutionalization History (N=322)

Category	Percentage
Recent Release from a Hospital	7.1%
Recent Release from Jail, Prison, or Detention Facility	2.5%

*Circumstances prior to death were not available for all cases in Figure 8-10. Percentages exclude missing data and likely underestimate the true proportion of case characteristics.

Summary: Among those with known circumstances prior to death, over one-third of decedents had a mental health problem, and 11.3% had a history of thoughts, plans, or attempts of suicide (**Figure 8**). About 10.4% of decedents were ever treated for substance abuse, 3.0% were currently being treated for substance abuse prior to death, and 7.3% had a previous overdose (**Figure 9**). About 7.1% of decedents were recently released from the hospital and 2.5% were released from jail, prison, or other detention facility prior to death (**Figure 10**).

Section 4: Appendix

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of unintentional or undetermined overdose related deaths in Nevada from January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019.		
Characteristic	**N**	**%**
Age (N=328)		
<18 years	1	0.3%
18-24 years	18	5.5%
25-34 years	50	15.2%
35-44 years	69	21.0%
45-54 years	76	23.2%
55-64 years	87	26.5%
65+ years	27	8.2%
Sex (N=328)		
Male	214	65.2%
Female	114	34.8%
Education Level (N=306)*		
Less than HS	45	14.7%
HS/GED	174	56.9%
Some College	37	12.1%
Associates	21	6.9%
Bachelors	24	7.8%
Masters/Doctorate	5	1.6%
Race (N=319)*		
White	256	80.3%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2	0.6%
Black	45	14.1%
Asian	11	3.4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	5	1.6%
Ethnicity (N=328)		
Hispanic	34	10.4%
Not Hispanic	294	89.6%
Homeless (N=303)*		
Yes	35	11.6%
Military (N=310)*		
Yes	31	10.0%

*Missing data excluded.

Table 2. Top substances listed in the cause of death of unintentional or undetermined overdose related deaths in Nevada from January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019		
Type of Substance	**N=329**	**%**
Opioids		
Any Opioid	189	57.6%
Prescription		
Hydrocodone	18	5.5%
Morphine	21	6.4%
Oxycodone	35	10.7%
Heroin	75	22.9%
Fentanyl	40	12.2%
Methadone	16	4.9%
Non-opioids		
Methamphetamine	166	50.6%
Benzodiazepines	52	15.9%
Cocaine	28	8.8%

Note: Substances are not mutually exclusive.

Table 3. Mental health, substance use, and institutionalization history preceding death for unintentional or undetermined overdose related deaths in Nevada from January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019.		
Characteristic	**N**	**%**
Mental health		
Mental health problem (N=299)*	107	35.8%
Victim had a history of suicidal thoughts, plans or attempts (N=301)*	34	11.3%
Substance abuse (N=328)		
Ever treated for substance abuse	34	10.4%
Current treatment for substance abuse	10	3.0%
History of previous overdose	24	7.3%
Institutionalized (N=322)*		
Recent Release from Jail, Prison, or Detention Facility	8	2.5%
Recent Release from Hospital	23	7.1%

*Missing data excluded. Circumstances prior to death were not available for all cases. These findings likely underestimate the true proportion of case characteristics.