



# New Hampshire Drug Monitoring Initiative

New Hampshire Information & Analysis Center

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NHIAC Product #: 2023-05990

September 2023 Report

31 October 2023

**Purpose:** The NH Drug Monitoring Initiative (DMI) is a holistic strategy to provide awareness and combat drug distribution and misuse. In line with this approach, the DMI will obtain data from various sources (to include, but not limited to, Public Health, Law Enforcement, and EMS) and provide monthly products for stakeholders as well as situational awareness releases as needed.

## Drug Environment Report—UNCLASSIFIED

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Overdose Death Data						
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Total Overdose Deaths	471	415	417	436	486	297
Deaths Involving Opioids	420	372	357	404	427	271
Deaths Involving Cocaine	65	79	58	36	56	43
Deaths Involving Meth	22	52	59	63	97	42
Deaths Pending Toxicology	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	61

\*The data for this year is not finalized and is current as of 10/18/2023.

- ⇒ Population data source: [2022 Census | State Data Center | NH Office of Strategic Initiatives](#)
  - Year/month overview charts are based on annual estimates from the above website. County charts are based on a 2022 estimated population of each county.
- ⇒ If your agency is looking for further breakdowns than what is in this document please contact the NHIAC.

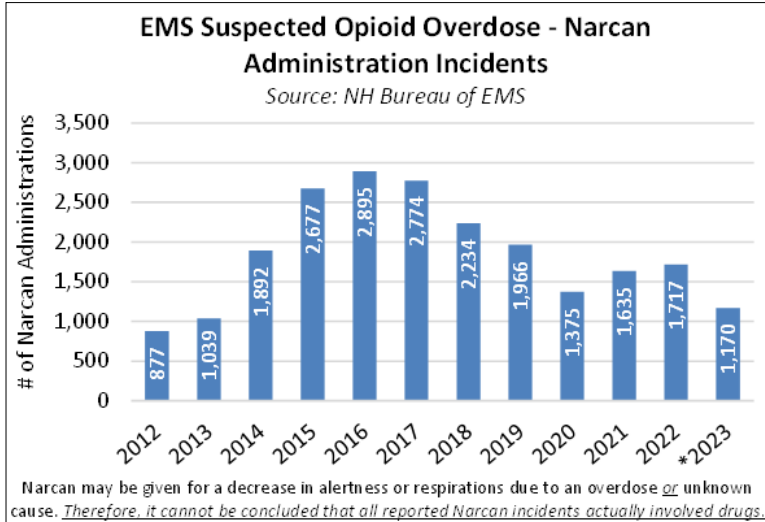
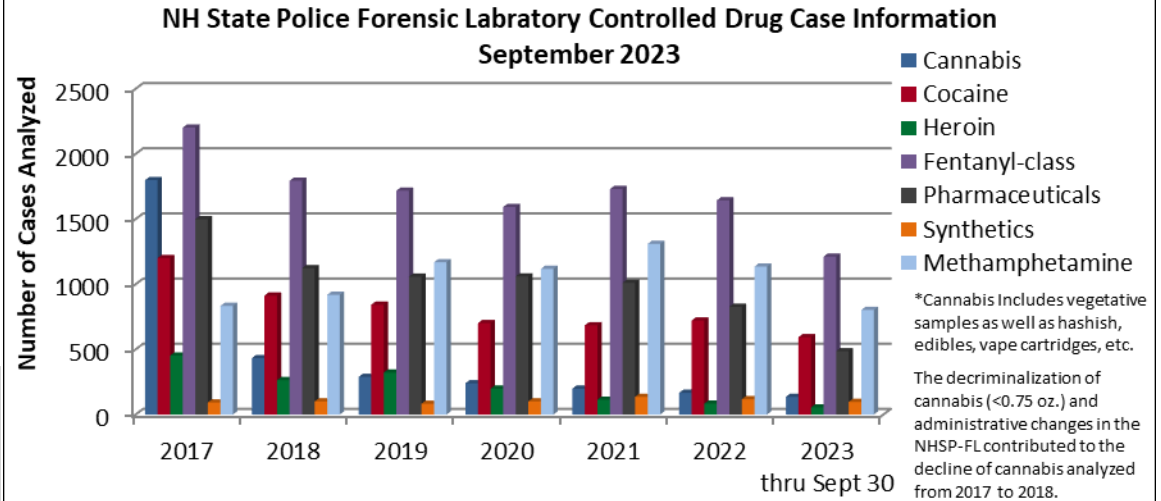
Previous versions of the Drug Environment Report can be found at: <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov>

The monthly online DMI viewer can be found at: <https://nhvieww.maps.arcgis.com>

New Hampshire's Drug Environment Summary:

- Drug overdose deaths in New Hampshire are rising. 2022 deaths show an 11.5% increase from calendar year 2021. This is the third consecutive yearly increase in NH and returns us to levels not witnessed since 2016-2018, when drug overdose deaths in NH were at their highest.

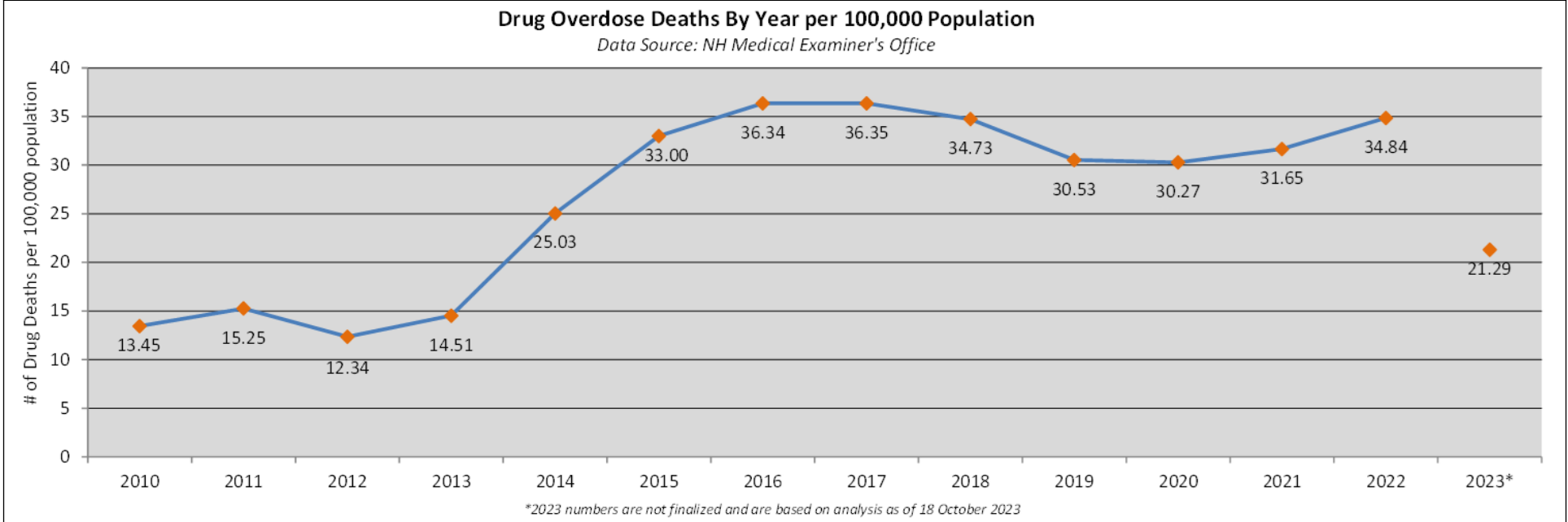
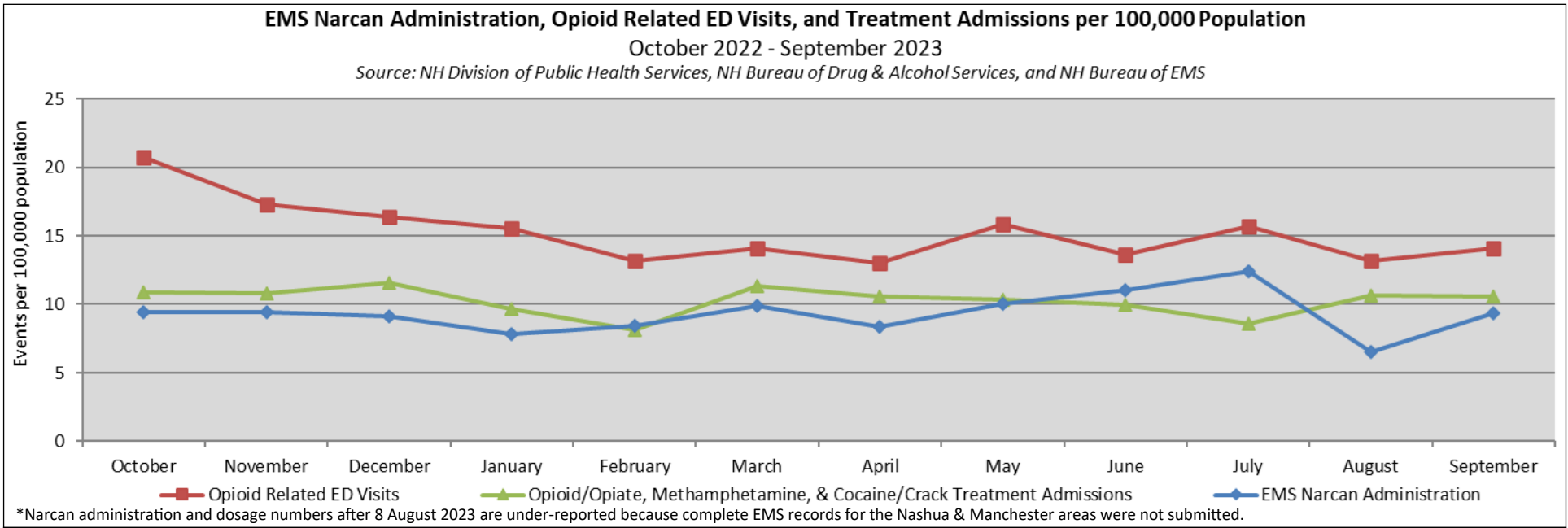
September 2023 Data Summary			
	EMS Narcan Administration Incidents	Treatment Admissions	Opioid Related Emergency Department Visits
Percent Change from August to September	↑ 43%	↓ 1%	↑ 7%
County w/ Highest Incidence	Hillsborough	Hillsborough	Hillsborough
Age Group w/ Highest Incidence	30-39	>26	30-39
* Narcan administrations after 8 August 2023 are under-reported because complete EMS records for the Nashua & Manchester areas were not submitted.			



Year	Cannabis*	Cocaine	Heroin	Fentanyl-class	Pharmaceuticals	Synthetics	Methamphetamine
2017	1,799	1,201	453	2,202	1,499	93	834
2018	433	913	264	1,794	1,123	101	919
2019	289	843	322	1,718	1,058	83	1,169
2020	240	702	199	1,593	1,060	101	1,118
2021	199	685	114	1,731	1,011	136	1,310
2022	167	722	84	1,644	827	118	1,136
2023 thru Sep 30	136	594	55	1212	486	97	803
Sep 2023	8	40	1	85	21	5	61

2022 Overdose Deaths (Finalized as of 7/11/2023)					
Percent Change: All Overdose Deaths (2021 to 2022)	Percent Change: Opioid Deaths (2021 to 2022)	Percent Change: Meth Deaths (2021 to 2022)	Percent Change: Cocaine Deaths (2021 to 2022)	County w/ Most Deaths Per Capita	Age Group w/ Most Deaths
↑ 11.5%	↑ 6%	↑ 54%	↑ 56%	Coos	30-39 Year Olds

**Overview: Trends for Narcan, ED Visits, Treatment Admissions, and Overdose Deaths:**



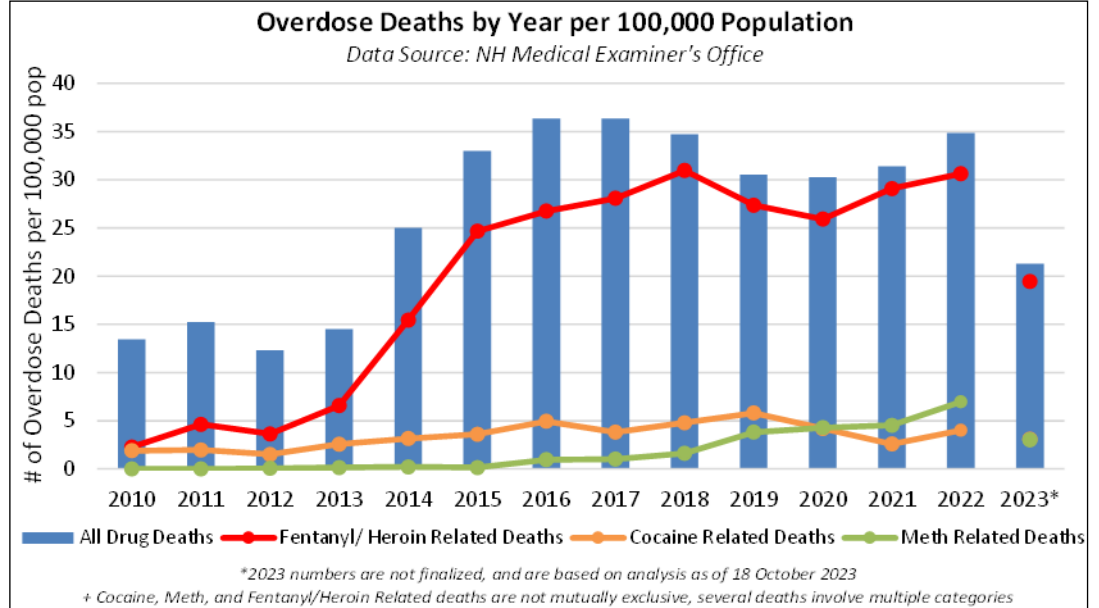
**Drug Overdose Deaths:**

Data Source: NH Medical Examiner's Office

Right click on the paperclip and select "Open File" to view additional data.

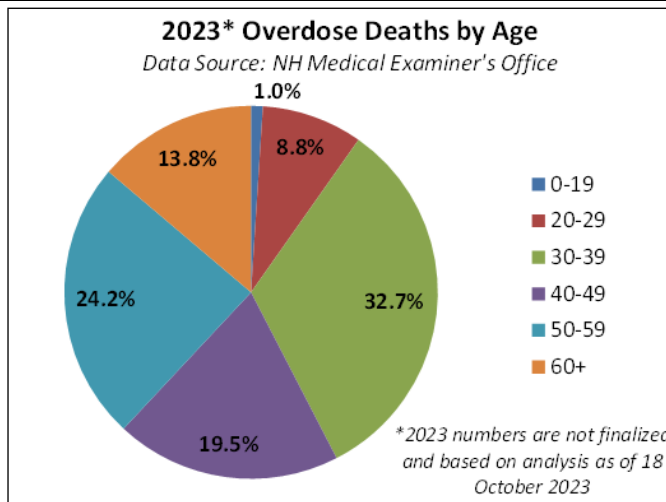
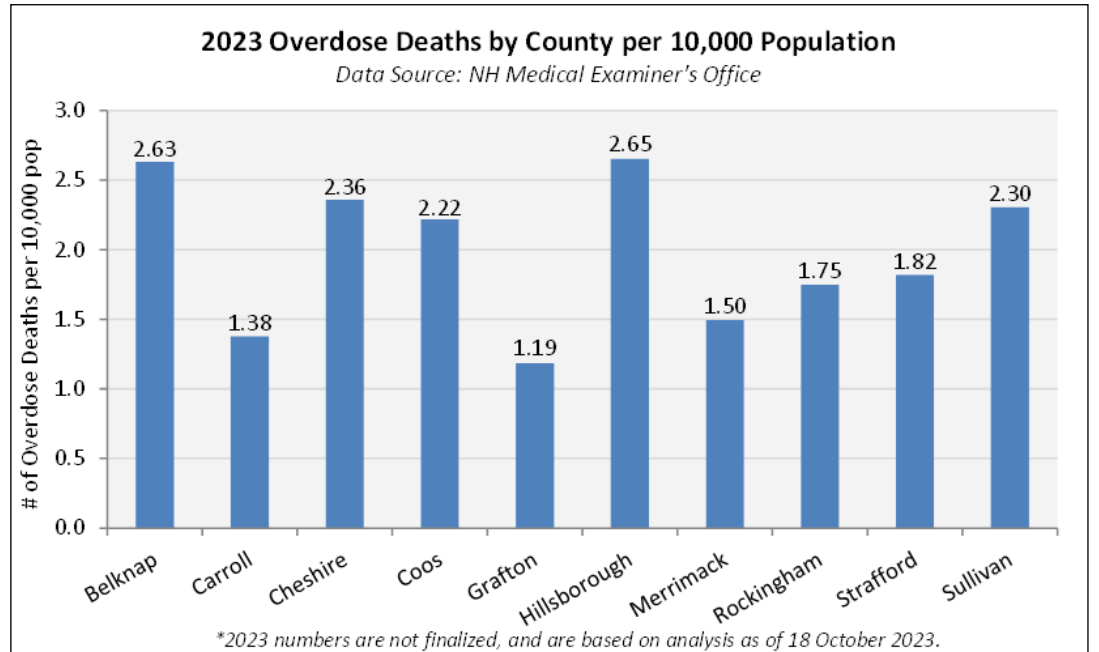
**Trends:**

- For 2023, as of 18 October 2023, there are 297 confirmed drug overdose deaths and 61 cases pending toxicology.
- So far for 2023, Hillsborough County has the highest suspected drug use resulting in overdose deaths per capita, at 2.65 deaths per 10,000 population. Belknap County follows closely with 2.63 overdose deaths per 10,000 population.
- The age group with the largest number of drug overdose deaths is 30-39 years, which represents almost 33% of all overdose deaths for 2023.



**\*\*\*IMPORTANT DATA NOTES\*\*\***

- Analysis is based on county where the drug (s) is suspected to have been used.

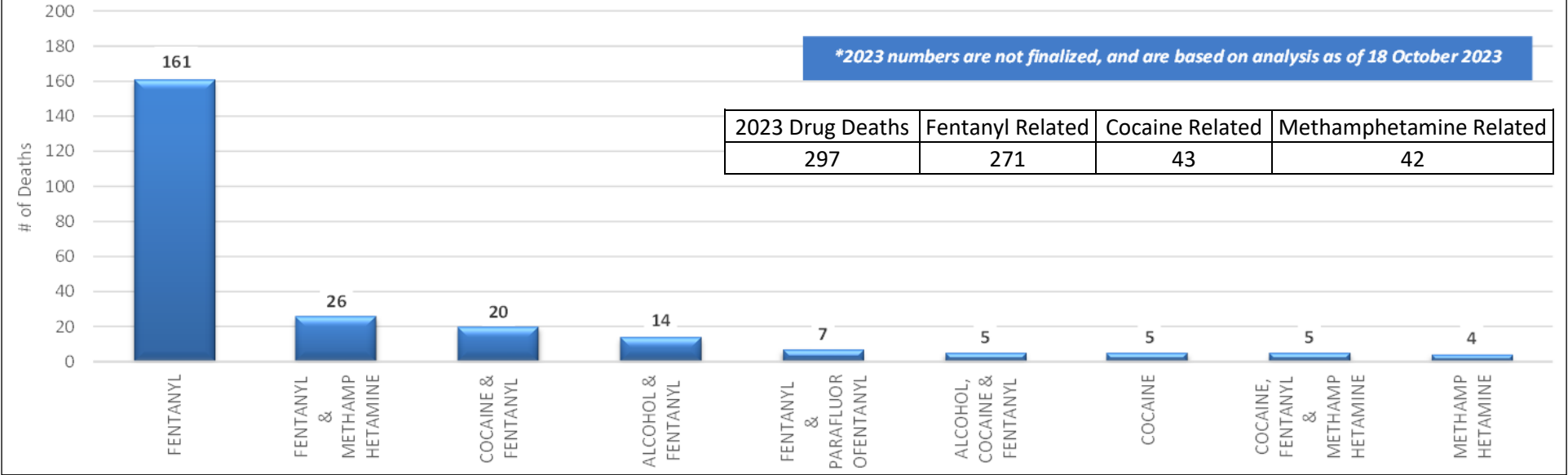


**Drug Overdose Deaths:**

Data Source: NH Medical Examiner's Office

Cocaine, Fentanyl Class and/or Methamphetamine Combination Related Drug Deaths 2023

Source: NH Medical Examiner's Office



**2023 Cocaine, Fentanyl Class and/or Methamphetamine Combination Related Drug Deaths that were noted once or twice\***

ACETYLFENTANYL & FENTANYL	ALCOHOL, FENTANYL & OXYCODONE	ALCOHOL, FENTANYL & METHAMPHETAMINE	CLONAZEPAM, FENTANYL & METHAMPHETAMINE	AMPHETAMINE, COCAINE, FENTANYL & GABAPENTIN
ALCOHOL & COCAINE	DONEPEZIL, DULOXETINE, FENTANYL, LEVETIRACETAM, METHAMPHETAMINE & METOPROLOL	ALCOHOL, BROMAZOLAM, BUPRENORPHINE, DIPHENHYDRAMINE, FENTANYL, METHAMPHETAMINE & VALERYLFENTANYL	BROMAZOLAM, FENTANYL, FLUBROMAZEPAM, ISOTONITAZENE & XYLAZINE	ACETYLFENTANYL, ALCOHOL, EPHEDRINE, FENTANYL, GABAPENTIN & METHAMPHETAMINE
ALCOHOL, COCAINE, FENTANYL & METHAMPHETAMINE	ACETYLFENTANYL, COCAINE & FENTANYL	CLONAZEPAM, COCAINE, FENTANYL & HYDROXYZINE	BROMAZOLAM & FENTANYL	CLONAZEPAM, FENTANYL, GABAPENTIN & METHADONE
FENTANYL & METHYLENEDIOXYMETHAMPHETAMINE	ACETAMINOPHEN, CYCLOBENZAPRINE, FENTANYL, OXYCODONE & XYLAZINE	FENTANYL & METHADONE	DIPHENHYDRAMINE, FENTANYL & OXYCODONE	COCAINE, FENTANYL, LORAZEPAM, METHYLPHENIDATE, RITALINIC ACID, SERTRALINE

\*Cells filled with gray indicate combinations noted twice

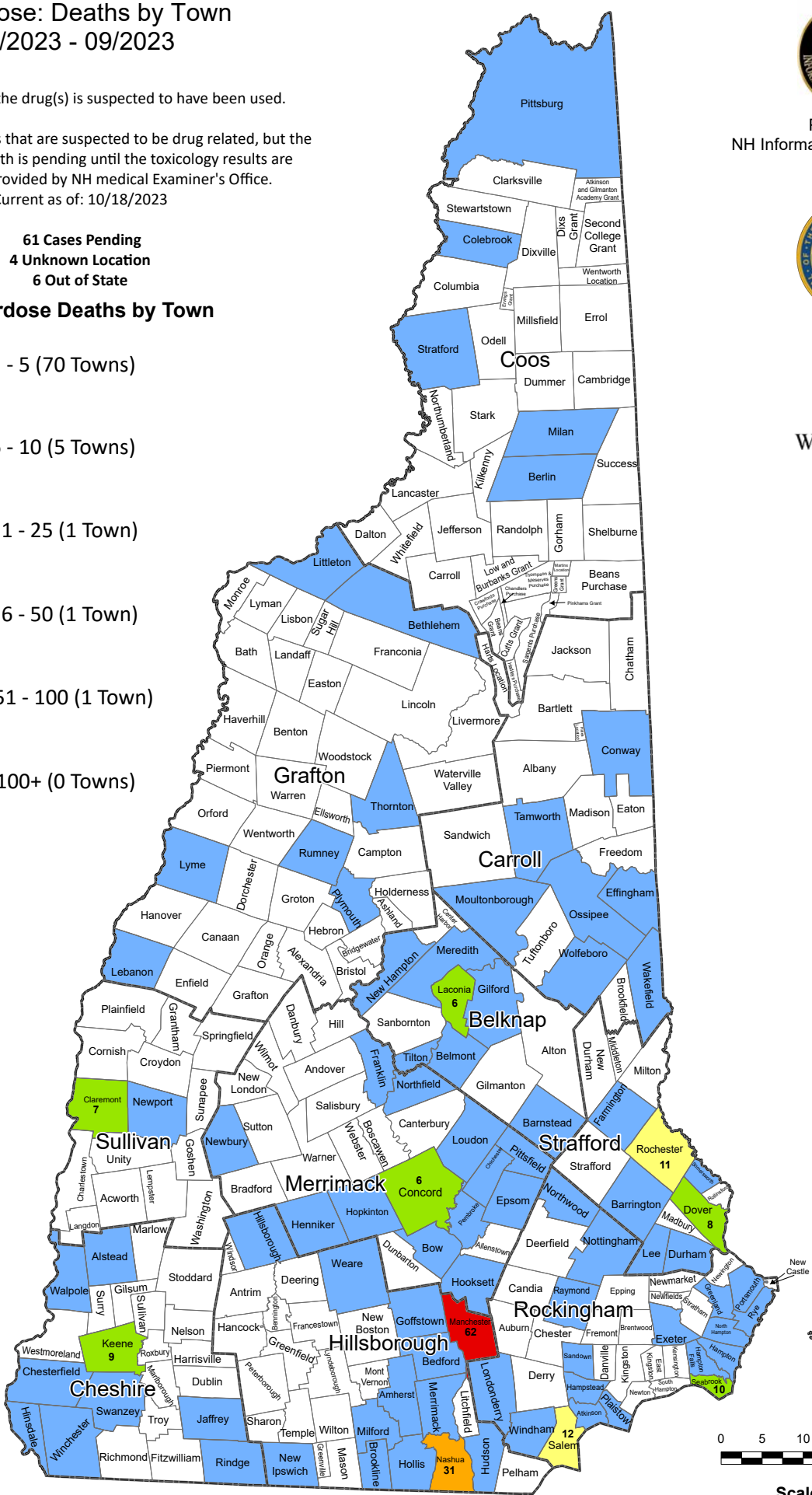
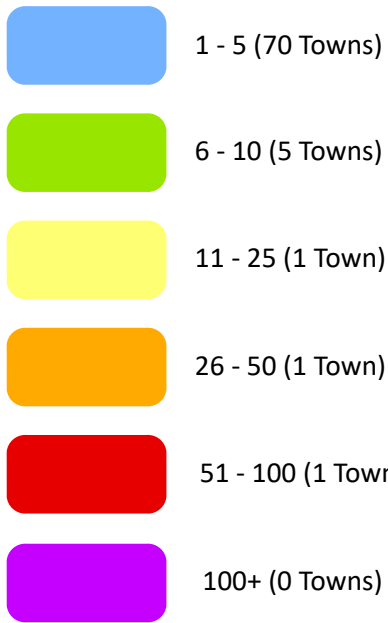
# Overdose: Deaths by Town 1/2023 - 09/2023

Location is where the drug(s) is suspected to have been used.

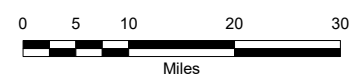
There are more deaths that are suspected to be drug related, but the official cause of death is pending until the toxicology results are received. Data provided by NH medical Examiner's Office.  
Current as of: 10/18/2023

61 Cases Pending  
4 Unknown Location  
6 Out of State

## Number of Overdose Deaths by Town



Prepared by:  
NH Information & Analysis Center



Scale: 1:1,150,000

### EMS Drug Overdose/Abuse Incidents:

Data Source: NH Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

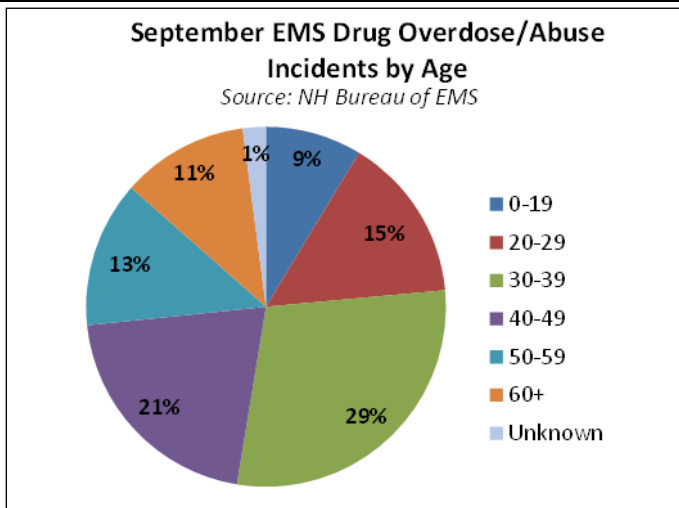
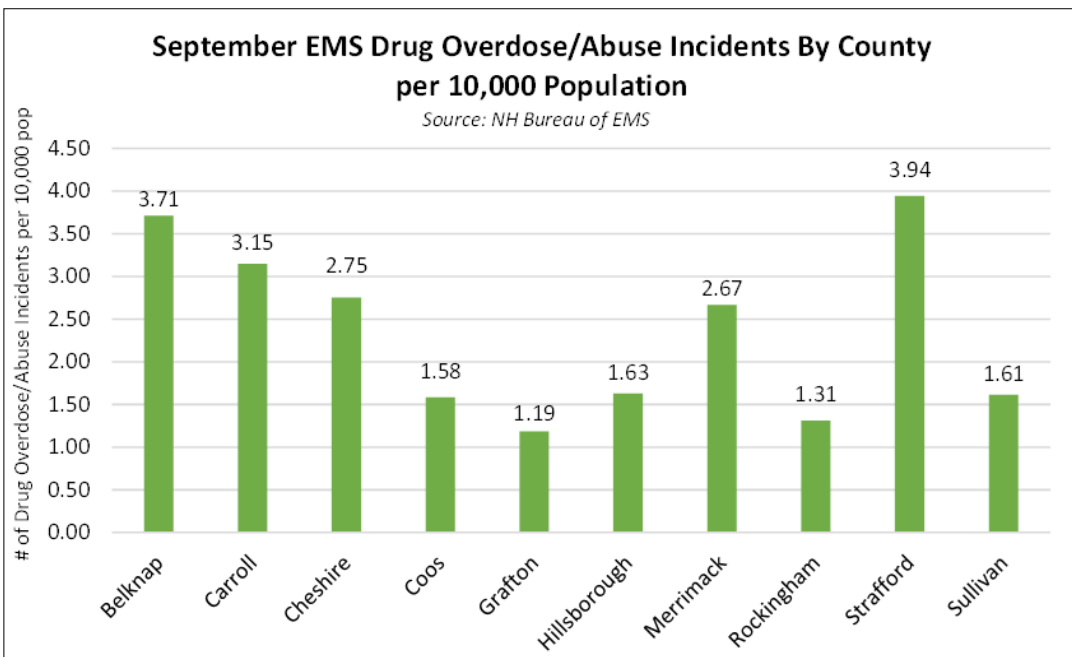
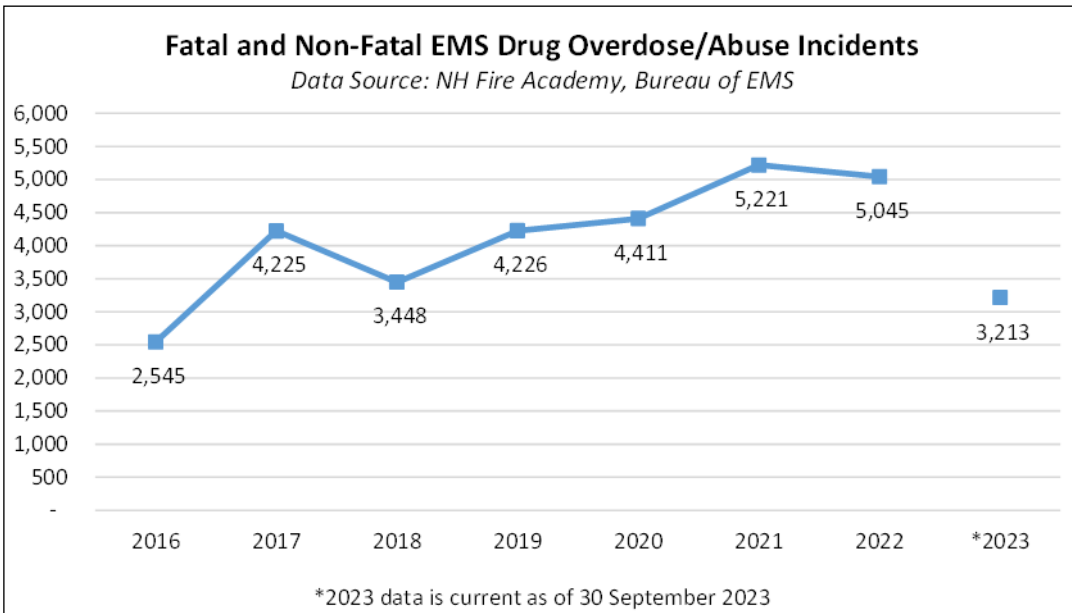
Right click on the paperclip and select "Open File" to view additional data.

**Trends:**

- **\*Overdose numbers after 8 August 2023 are under-reported because complete EMS records for the Nashua & Manchester areas were not submitted.**
- Based on reported numbers EMS Drug Overdose/Abuse incidents increased 5% from August to September.
- In September, Strafford County saw the highest Drug Overdose/Abuse incidents per capita with 3.94 incidents per 10,000 population. Belknap County followed with 3.71 per 10,000 population.
- The 30-39 age group had the largest number of Drug Overdose/Abuse incidents with 84, representing 29% of all Drug Overdose/Abuse incidents in September.
- 64% of those who experienced a Drug Overdose/Abuse incident in September were male.

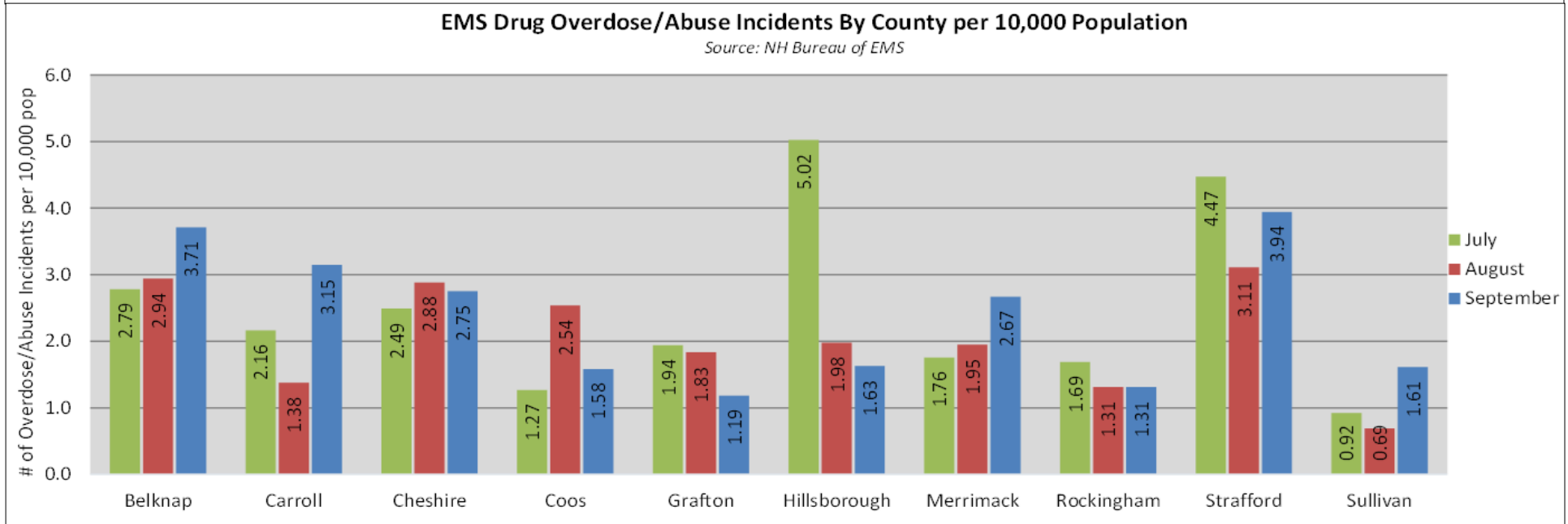
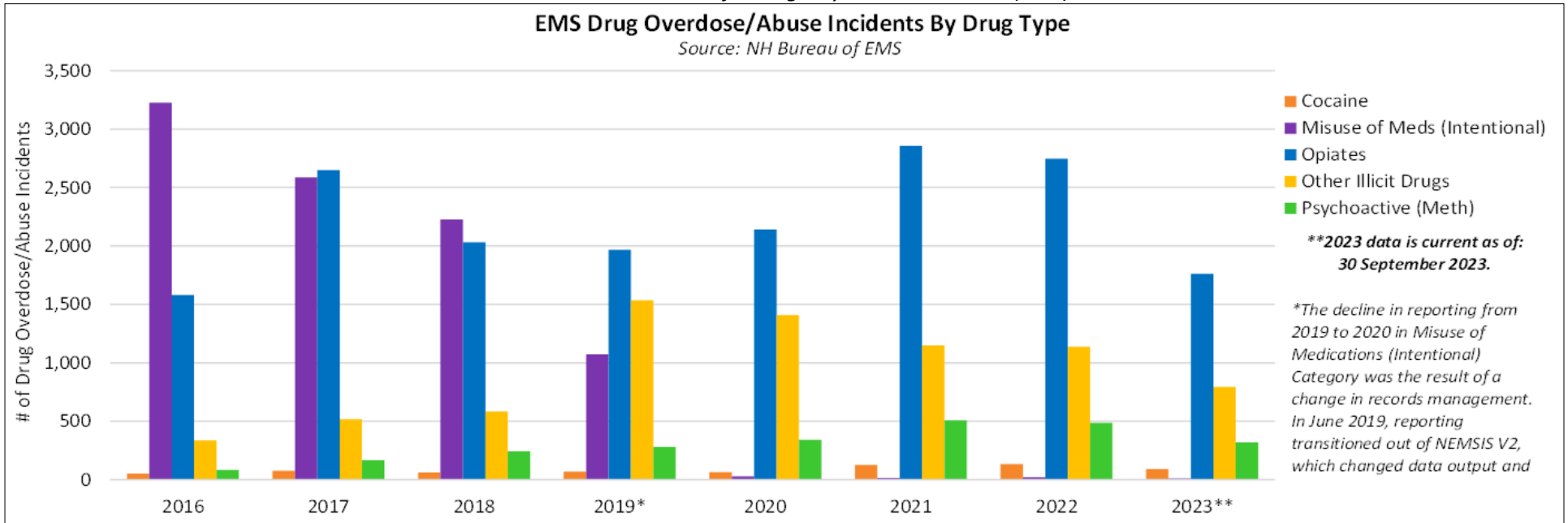
**\*\*\*IMPORTANT DATA NOTES\*\*\***

- Data represents cases where EMS providers indicated one or more diagnoses of medication abuse/overdose. **Incidents reflect both non-fatal and fatal drug overdose/abuse.**
- The continued decrease in the number of EMS Drug Overdose/Abuse Incidents by Year for 2019 and 2020 is attributable to a records management system upgrades and early stages of the COVID-19 Pandemic.



**EMS Drug Overdose/Abuse Incidents (Continued):**

Data Source: NH Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS)





# EMS Drug Overdose/Abuse Incidents

## 10/2022 - 9/2023

\*Data represents cases where EMS providers indicated one or more diagnoses of medication abuse/overdose.

\*Incidents reflect both **non-fatal and fatal** drug overdose/abuse.

Data Source: New Hampshire Bureau of EMS



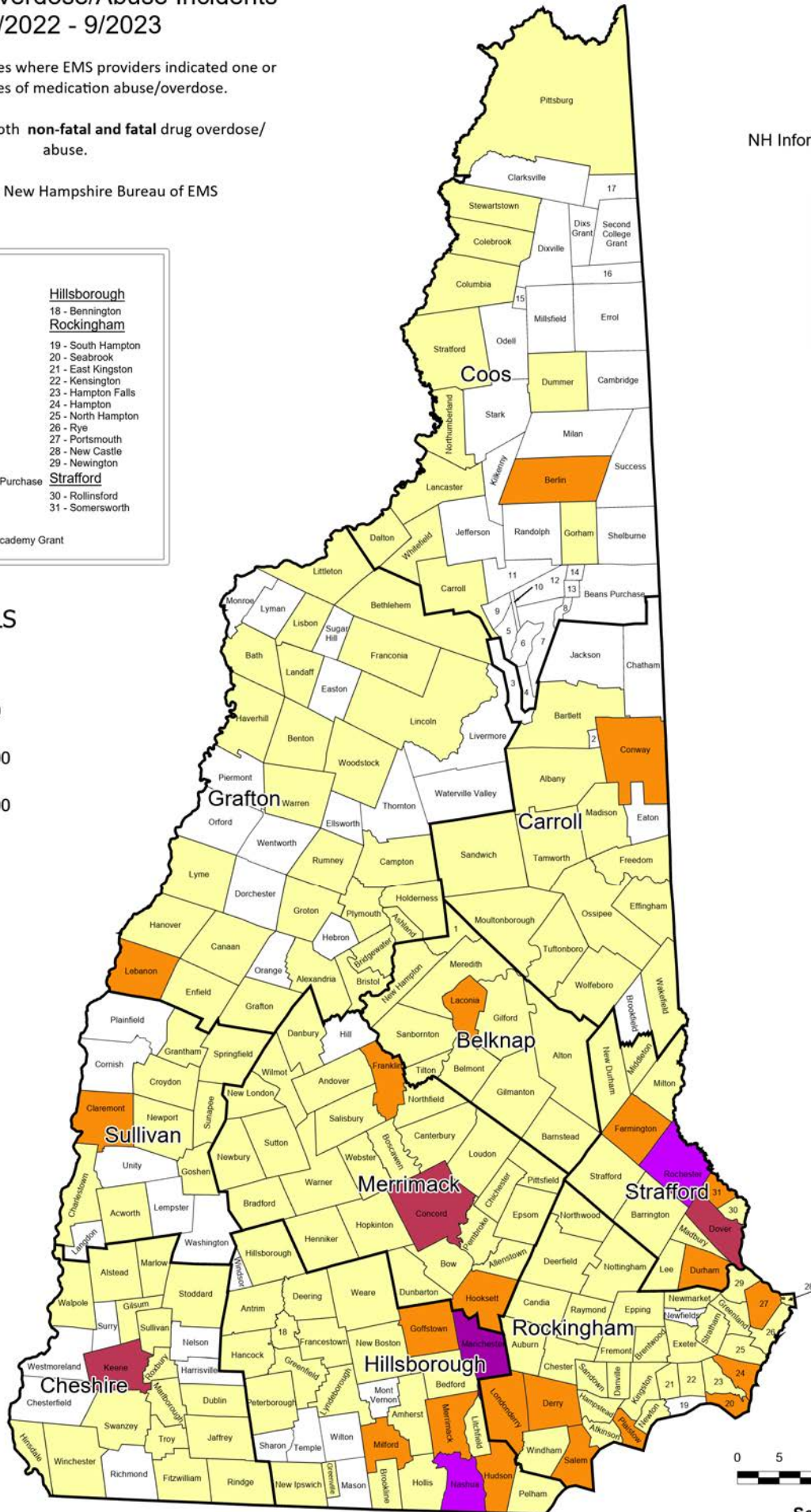
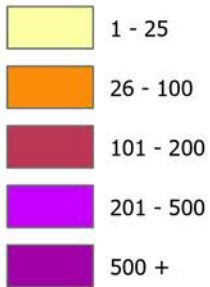
Prepared by:  
NH Information & Analysis Center



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### TOWN TOTALS



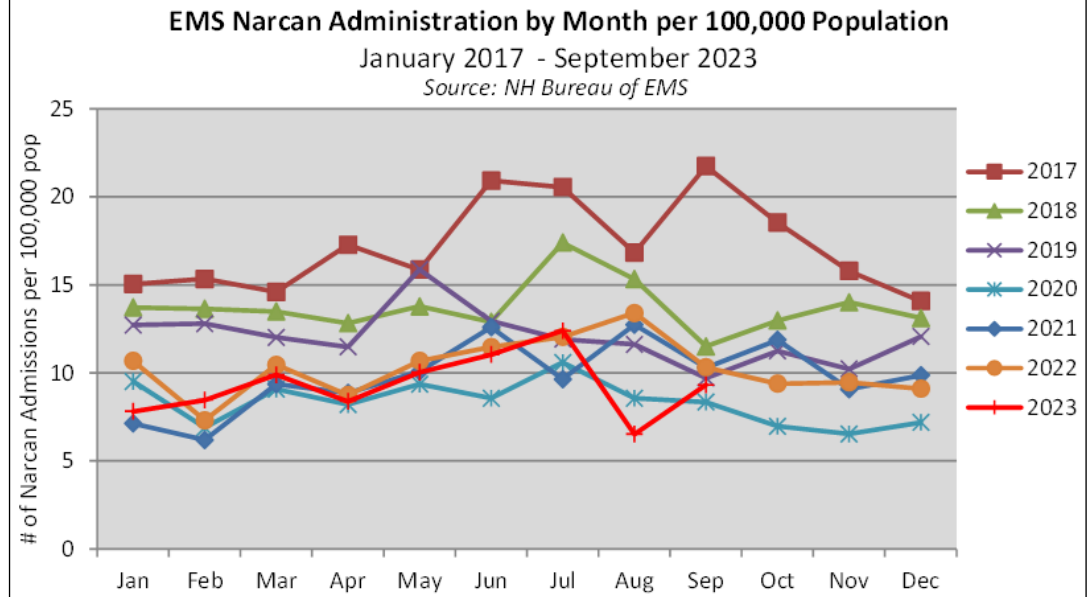
**EMS Narcan Administration Incidents:**

Data Source: NH Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Right click on the paperclip and select "Open File" to view additional data.

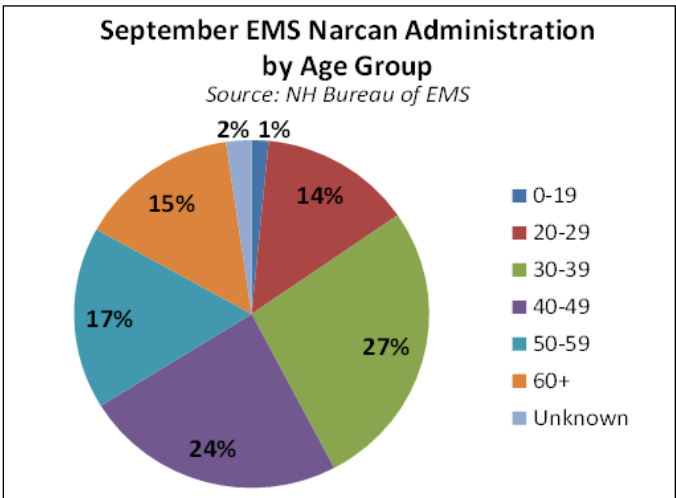
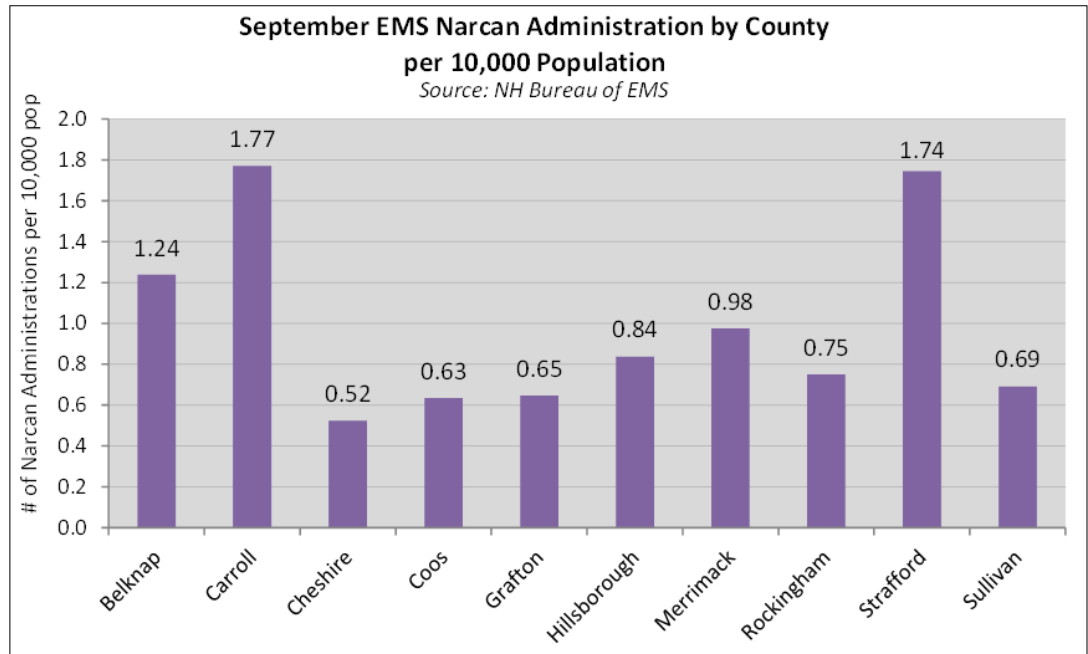
**Trends:**

- \*Narcan administration and dosage numbers after 8 August 2023 are under-reported because complete EMS records for the Nashua & Manchester areas were not submitted.
- Based on reported numbers EMS Narcan administration incidents increased by 43% from August to September.
- In September, Carroll County had the highest EMS Narcan administration incidents per capita with 1.77 incidents per 10,000 population. Strafford County followed with 1.74 administrations per 10,000 population.
- The age group with the largest number of EMS Narcan administration incidents was 30-39, representing 27% of all EMS Narcan administrations in September.



**\*\*\*IMPORTANT DATA NOTES\*\*\***

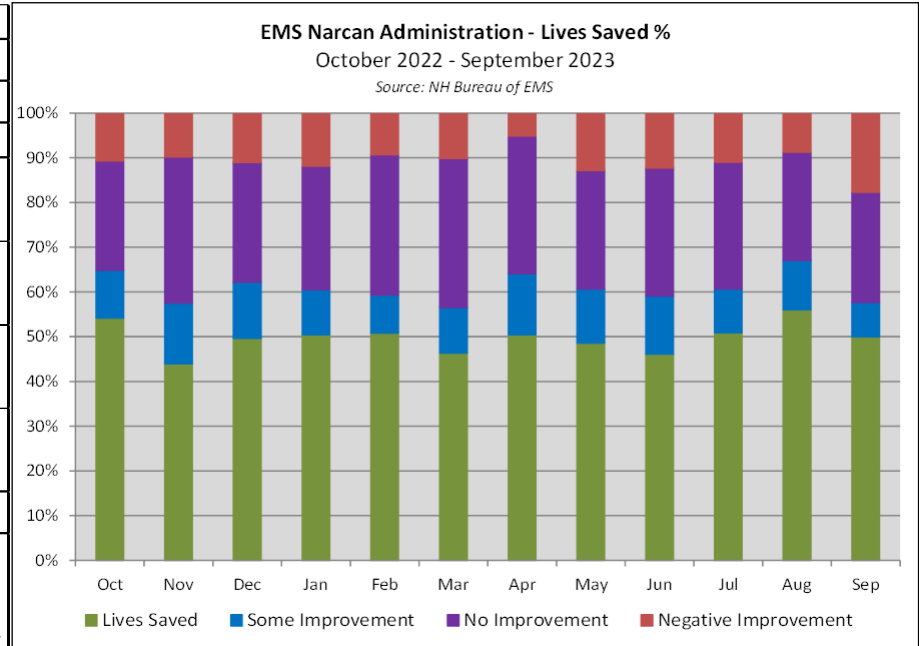
- Narcan data in this report involves the number of incidents where Narcan was administered, NOT the number of doses of Narcan during a certain time period. Multiple doses may be administered during an incident.
- Narcan may be given for a decrease in alertness or respirations due to an overdose or unknown cause. *Therefore, it cannot be concluded that all reported Narcan incidents actually involved drugs.*



**EMS Narcan Administration Incidents (Continued):**

Data Source: NH Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

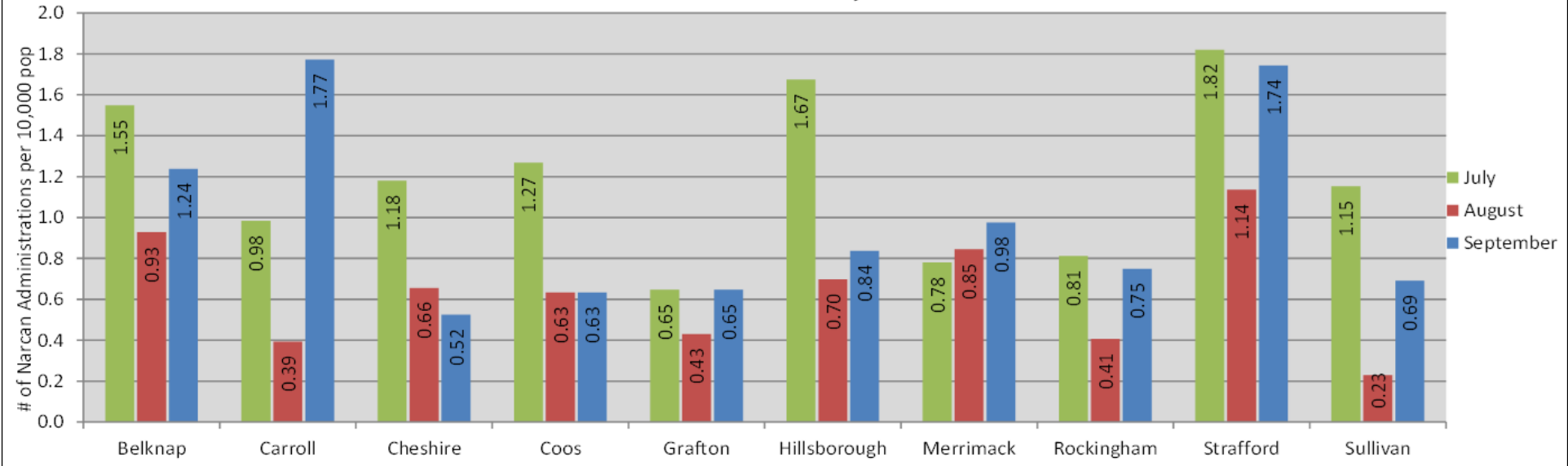
EMS Narcan Administration - Lives Saved												
	2022			2023								
<i>Source: NH Bureau of EMS</i>	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
RODS Outcome												
<b>Lives Saved</b> <i>RODS Score of 8+</i>	71	58	63	55	60	64	59	68	71	88	51	65
<b>Some Improvement</b> <i>RODS Score of 1-7</i>	14	18	16	11	10	14	16	17	20	17	10	10
<b>No Improvement</b> <i>RODS Score of 0</i>	32	43	34	30	37	46	36	37	44	49	22	32
<b>Negative Improvement</b> <i>Negative RODS Score</i>	14	13	14	13	11	14	6	18	19	19	8	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>130</b>



RODS, or Revised Over Dose Score is based on the combined delta of documented respiratory rate (RR) and Glasgow Coma Score (GCS - measure of alertness) before and after Narcan administration. For example, RR improved from 6/min to 12/min (delta of 6) and GCS improved from 10-13 (delta of 3), the RODS score would be 9. The delta of the vital signs is calculated per incident, so the patient may have received more than one dose of Narcan to achieve the effect in the RODS.

**EMS Narcan Administration by County per 10,000 Population**

*Source: NH Bureau of EMS*



# EMS/Narcan Administration by Town

10/2022 - 9/2023

Data Source: New Hampshire Bureau of EMS



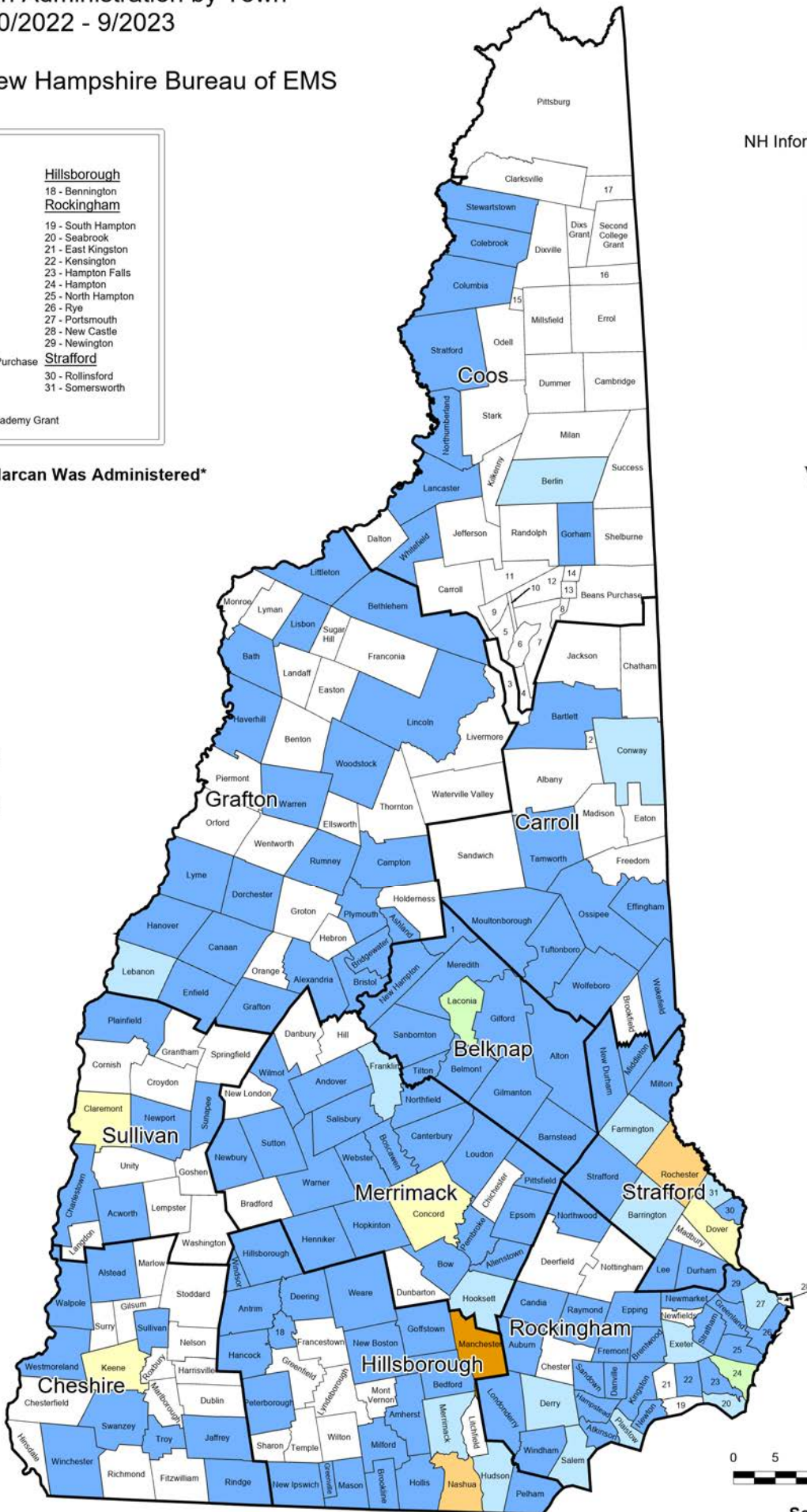
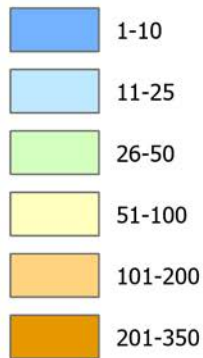
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### \*Incidents Where Narcan Was Administered\*

#### Range



**Opioid Related Emergency Department Visits:**

Data Source: NH Division of Public Health Services

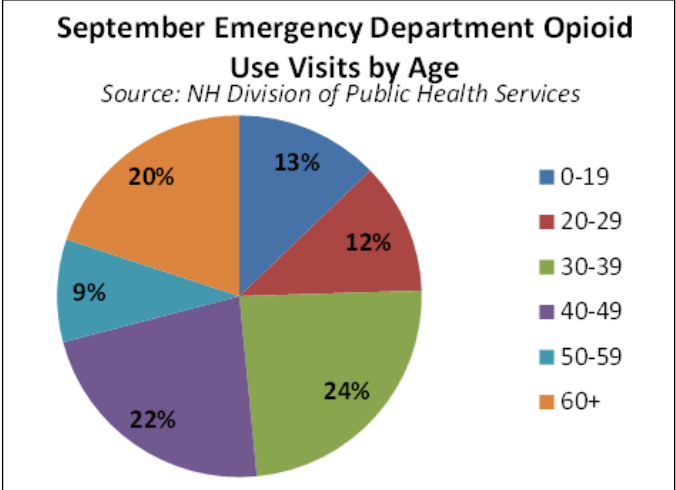
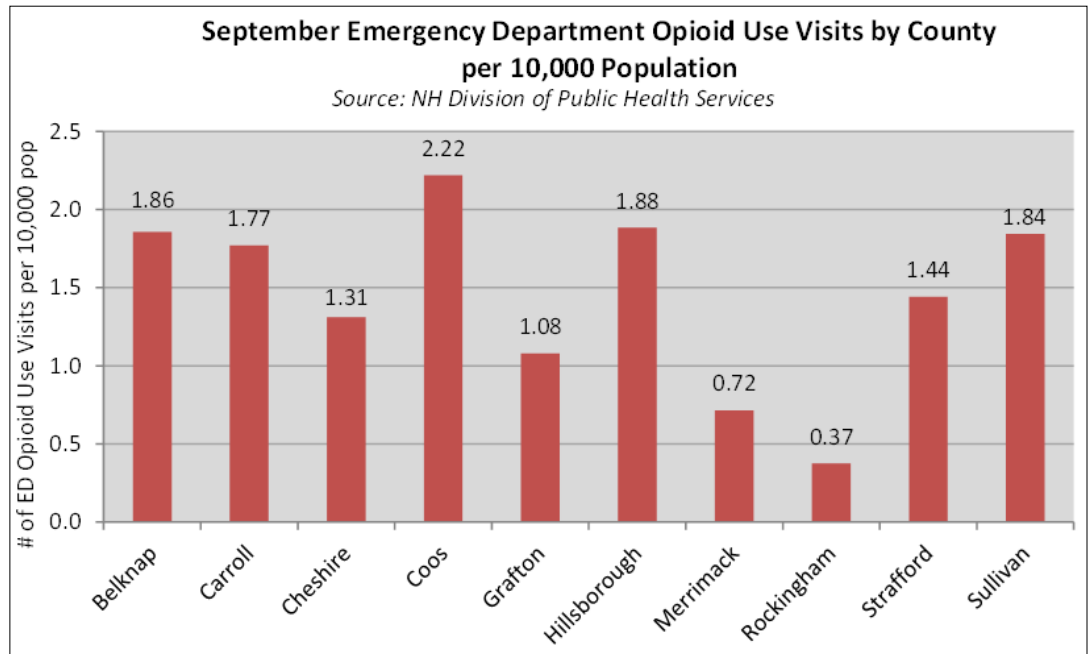
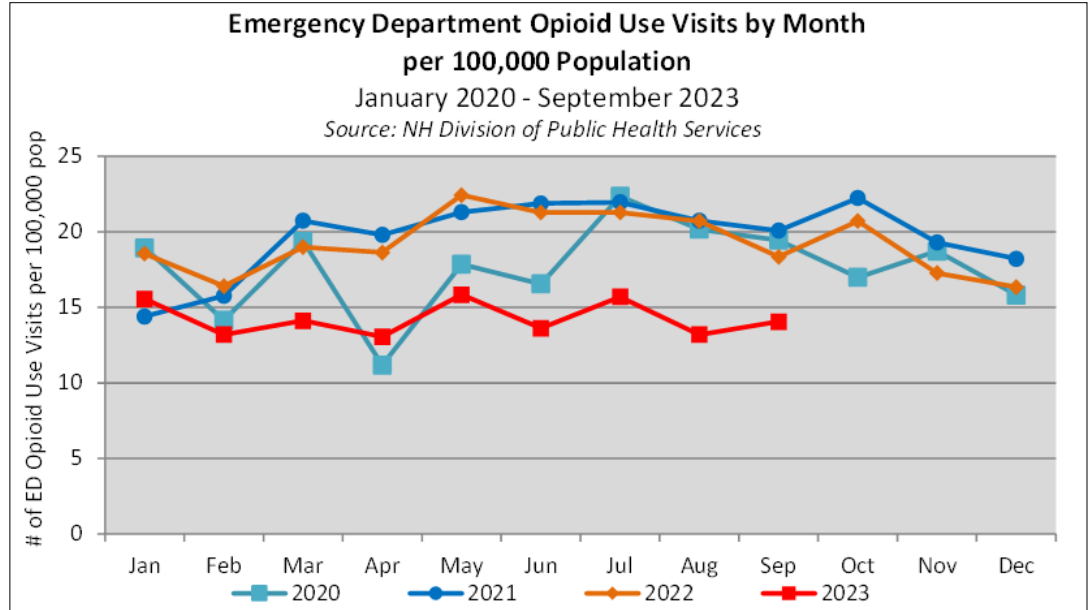
Right click on the paperclip and select "Open File" to view additional data.

**Trends:**

- Opioid related ED visits increased by 7% from August to September.
- In September, residents from Coos County had the most opioid related ED visits per capita with 2.22 visits per 10,000 population. Hillsborough County followed with 1.88 visits per 10,000 population.
- In September, the age group with the largest number of opioid related ED visits was 30-39 year olds with 24%.

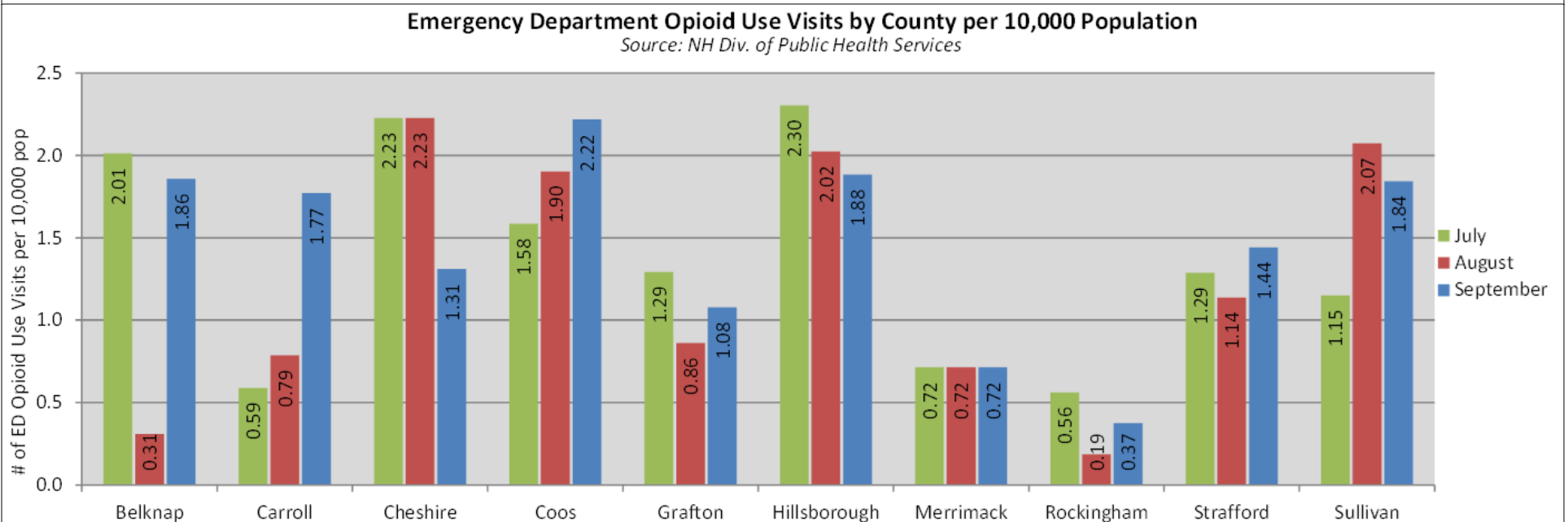
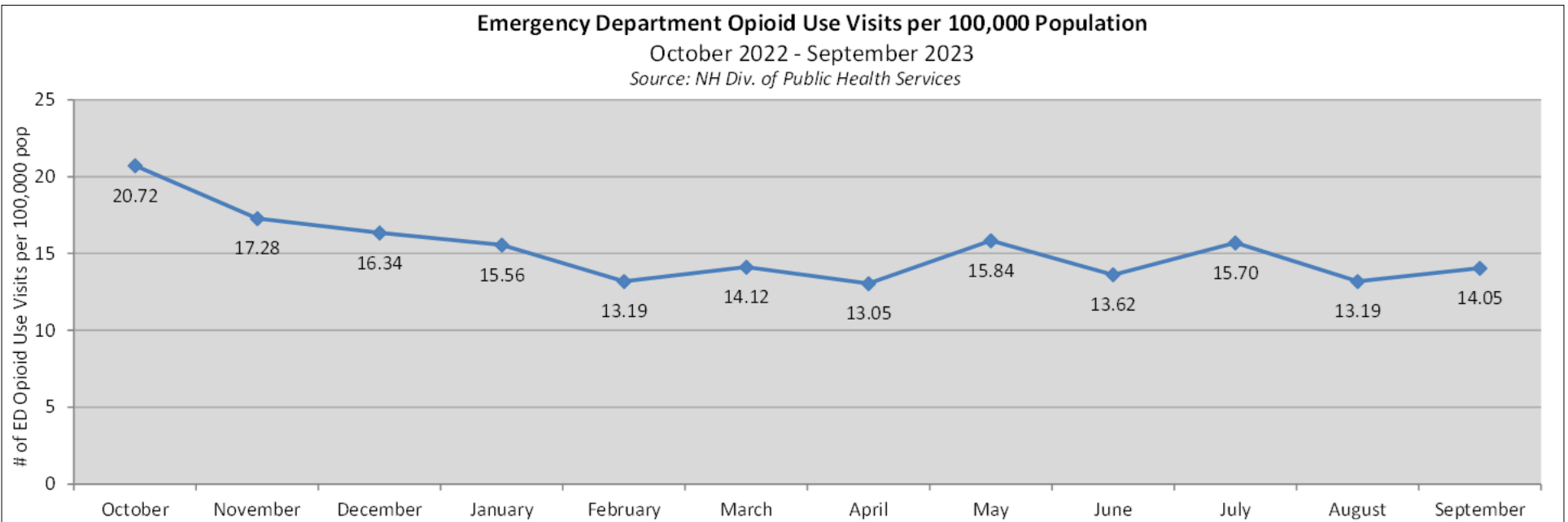
**\*\*\* IMPORTANT DATA NOTES \*\*\***

- **Data Note (September 2023):** Four hospitals are temporarily not reporting data to the relevant system and thus are not included in this months data set.
- The data being reported starting January 2020 has different collection criteria than previous months/years. Due to the new collection criteria, the data is no longer comparable to previous data.
- County represents where the opioid use patient resides.
- These data include data on suspected overdoses categorized as "all drug," "all opioid," "heroin," and "all stimulant." This report uses key words and ICD-10 associated overdose codes that CDC has defined as tailored to nonfatal opioid overdoses.
- These data are now collected using criteria the CDC established for their Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) grant "making this report more transparent."



**Opioid Related Emergency Department Visits (Continued):**

Data Source: NH Division of Public Health Services



### Treatment Admissions:

Data Source: NH Bureau of Drug & Alcohol Services

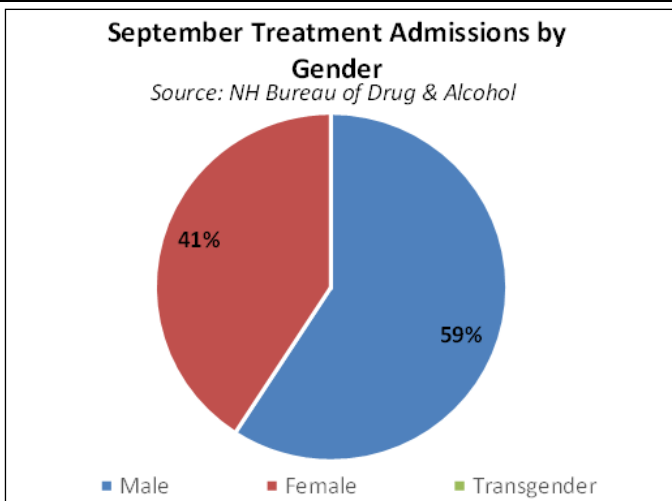
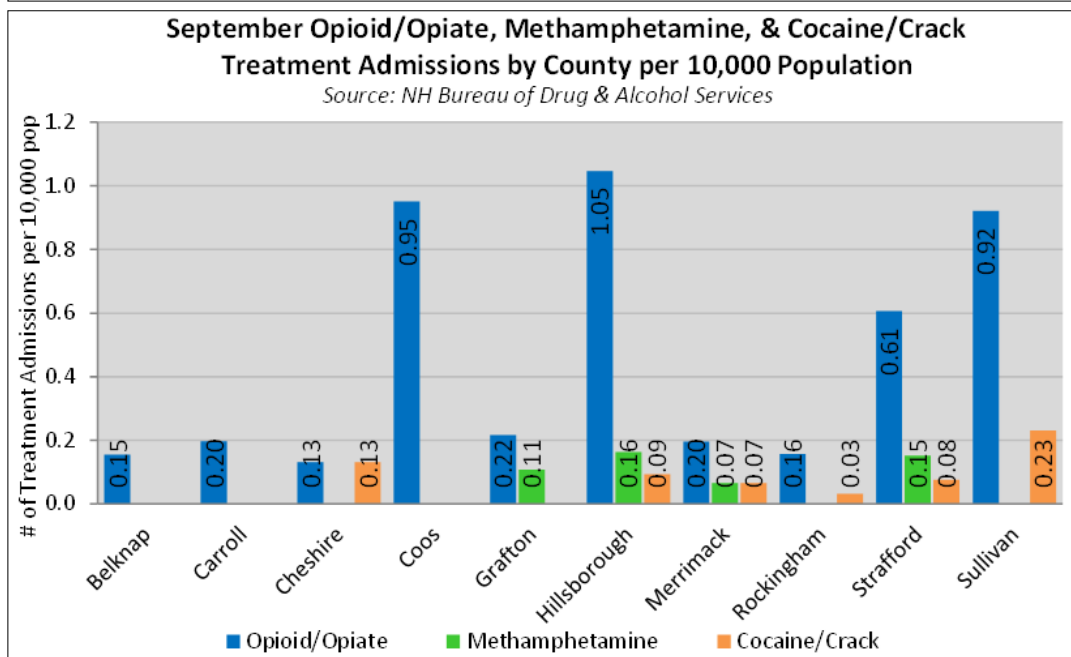
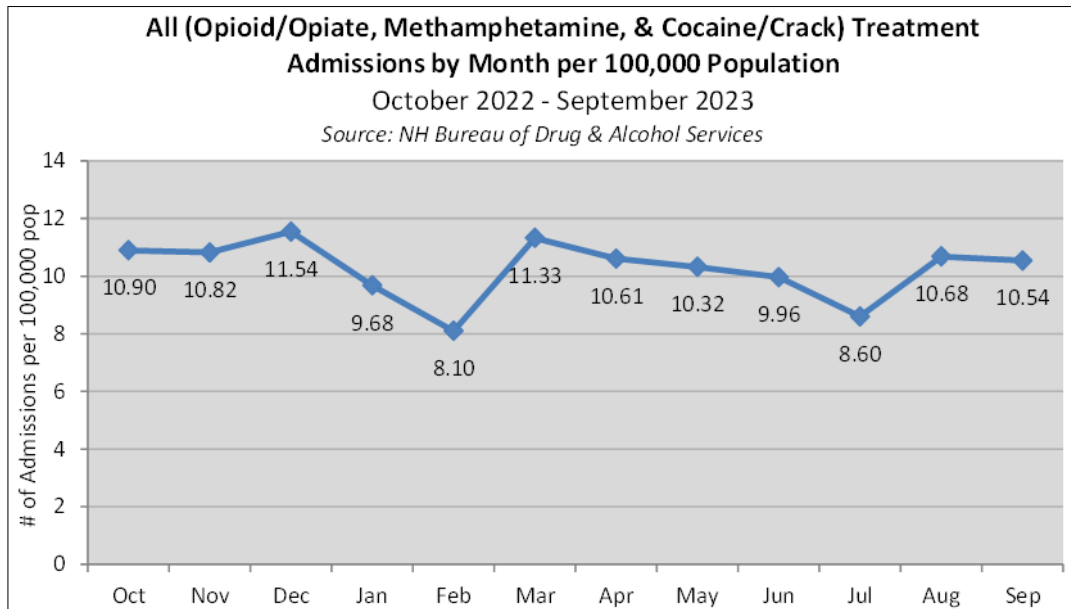
Right click on the paperclip and select "Open File" to view additional data.

#### Trends:

- Opioid/Opiate, Methamphetamine & Cocaine/Crack treatment admissions decreased by 1% from August to September.
- In September, Hillsborough County had the highest admission per capita rate for opioid/opiate treatment, with 1.05 admissions per 10,000 population.
- Males accounted for 59% of those admitted to state funded treatment facilities in September for Opioid/Opiate, Methamphetamine & Cocaine/Crack use.
- From August to September, Methamphetamine treatment admissions decreased by 9%, Cocaine/crack admissions decreased by 21%, and Heroin/Fentanyl admissions increased by 4%.

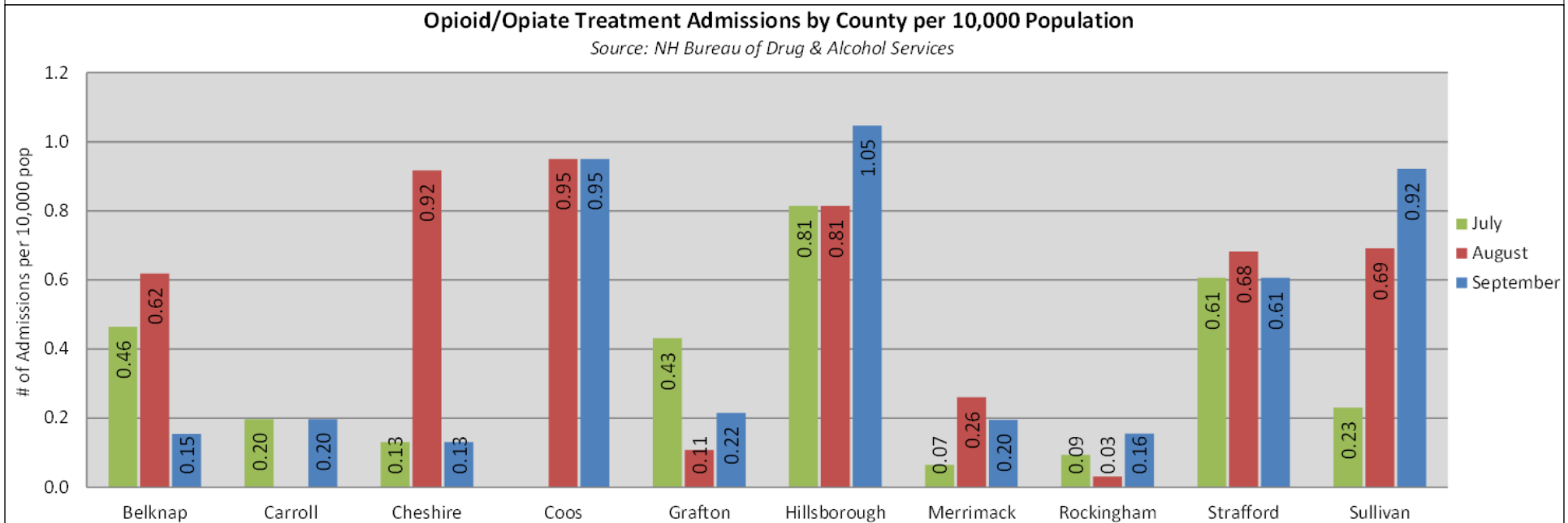
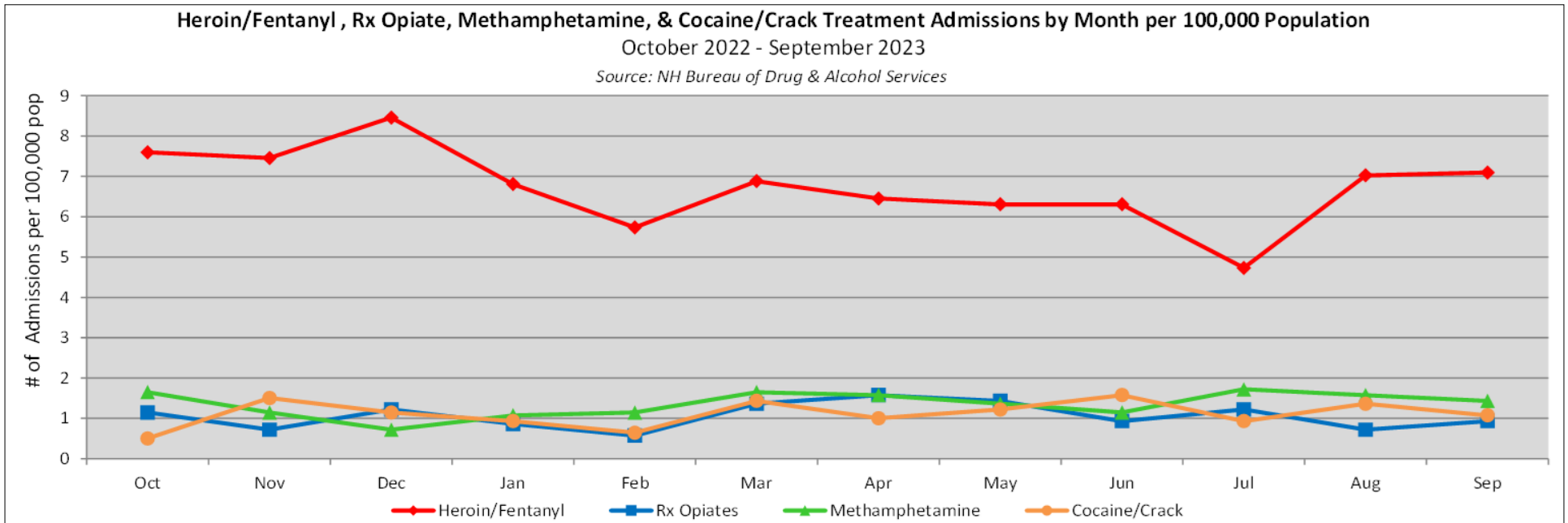
#### \*\*\*IMPORTANT DATA NOTES\*\*\*

- County represents where the patient resides.
- These data represent treatment admissions to state funded facilities.
- These data have decreased due to numerous factors. The Affordable Care Act has been fully implemented, resulting in increased access to affordable health insurance and coverage for substance use disorder treatment in NH. New Hampshire expanded its Medicaid program, which also provided increased opportunities for substance use disorder treatment in the state. Substance use disorder treatment in the state has increased sharply in response to these policies which has shifted clients served by state of New Hampshire contracted treatment providers to other payment models and facilities.



**Treatment Admissions (Continued):**

Data Source: NH Bureau of Drug & Alcohol Services





### Situational Awareness/Press Reporting:

#### **One Of The Largest-Ever Fentanyl Seizures In NYC Results In Four Charged For Operating Fentanyl Mill In Bronx Residence**

“DEA Special Agent in Charge Frank Tarentino said: “This is one of the largest fentanyl pill mills we have seen in New York City. The DEA recently announced that 7 out of 10 pills tested by the DEA laboratories across the county contain a lethal dose of fentanyl. Allegedly, this industrial pill mill, located in the heart of the Bronx, had enough lethal fentanyl to dispense well over a million lethal doses. Fentanyl pills are being manufactured in these clandestine pill mills right here, in our neighborhoods, and unleashed into our communities. They are then marketed and sold to many who have no idea the pills — many of which are purposefully made to look like other prescription or party drugs — contain fentanyl.’ Since at least in or about September 2023, members of law enforcement have been investigating a network of drug traffickers who, among other things, appear to have converted an apartment within a two-family house in a residential neighborhood in the Bronx, New York, to be utilized for the purpose of packaging large quantities of fentanyl into portions for wholesale distribution...On or about October 5, 2023, members of law enforcement searched the Fentanyl Mill and found all four defendants inside. During their search, investigators found, among other things, approximately 24 kilograms of suspected fentanyl in powder form...as well as over 200,000 suspected fentanyl pills already packaged and ready for distribution to other traffickers for further sale. Some of the pills appear to have been manufactured to mimic prescription drugs, and others were pressed into colorful shapes to resemble party drugs such as ecstasy.”

Source: <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/one-largest-ever-fentanyl-seizures-new-york-city-results-four-charged-operating> (October 2023)

#### **Researchers Discover New Way To Reverse the Effects of Fentanyl**

“Researchers at Indiana University have identified a new method of reversing the effects of fentanyl. Their study, published in the Journal of Medicinal Chemistry, could lead to a new way to reverse overdoses either through a new product or working synchronously with naloxone. ‘The synthetic opiates bind very tightly to the opioid receptors,’ said Alex Straiker, senior research scientist for the Gill Center for Biomolecular Science. ‘Naloxone must compete with opioids for the same binding site in the central nervous system to cancel out an overdose. But during a fentanyl overdose, naloxone and fentanyl bind to different sites, meaning there is no competition. We wanted to see if a negative allosteric modulator could reverse the fentanyl effects’...Researchers found cannabidiol, or CBD, could behave as a negative allosteric modulator at the binding site. However, high concentrations were necessary during initial testing. Researchers modified the cannabidiol structure to be more effective and found that in the in vitro – tests done on blood or tissue samples – diagnostics, it successfully reversed the effects of fentanyl. ”

Source: <https://scitechdaily.com/researchers-discover-new-way-to-reverse-the-effects-of-fentanyl/> (September 2023)

#### **Joint Intrepid Laboratory Releases Priority Project: Sourcing Xylazine**

INTREPID confirms both liquid veterinary preparations and powdered xylazine are being used to adulterate fentanyl. INTREPID observed chemical markers in xylazine seizures that can assist in determining precursors, synthetic routes, and potentially connecting cases.

[Joint Intrepid Laboratory Releases Priority Project: Sourcing Xylazine \(dea.gov\)](#) (October 2023)

A full list of Substance Use Disorder Treatment Facilities and Recovery Support Services can be found by calling 211.