

Opioid update

Meg Lelonek, MD Co-Health Officer

October 28, 2025

Joint Board of Health Public Health Advisory Board

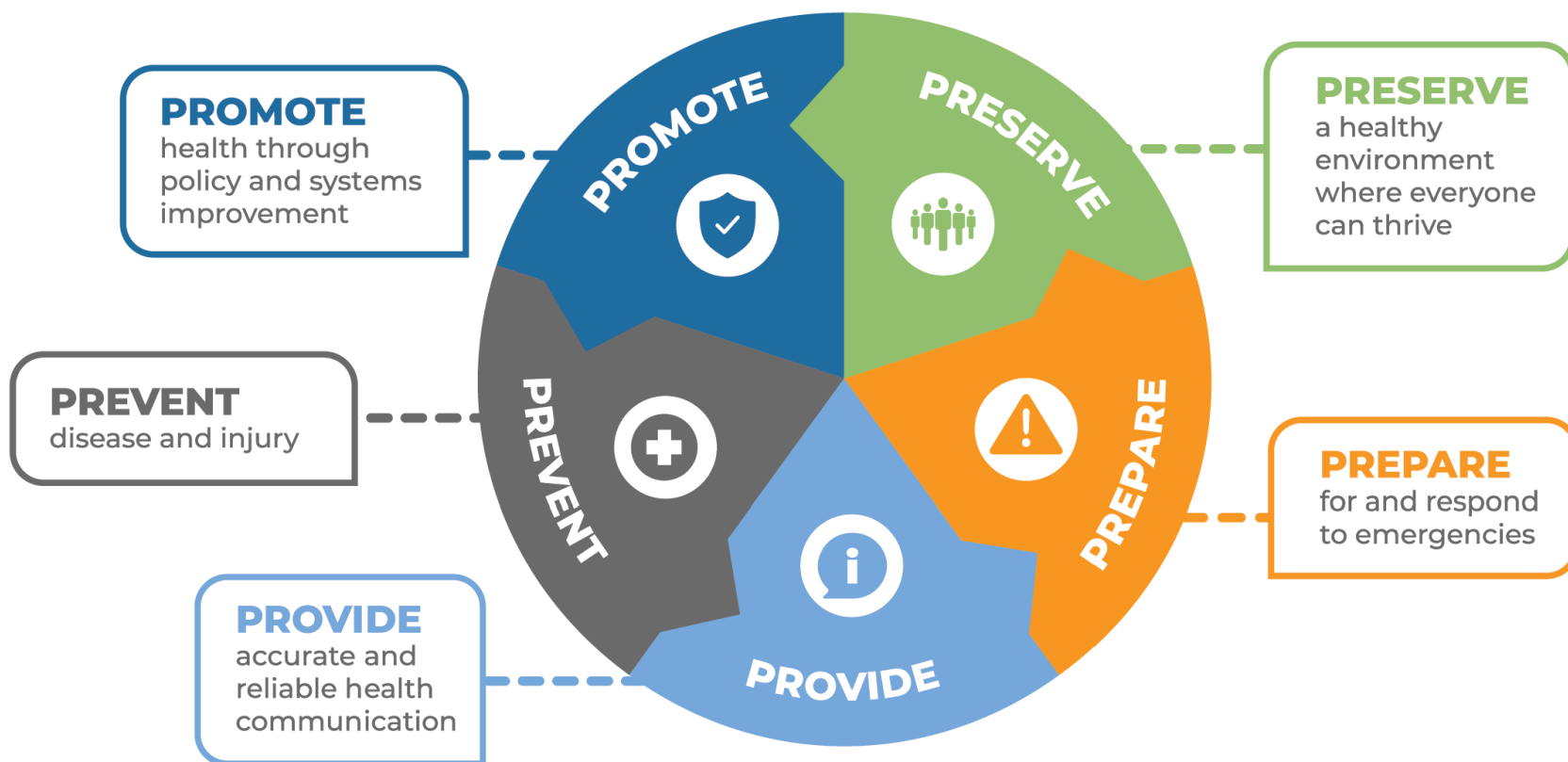


WHATCOM COUNTY
**HEALTH AND
COMMUNITY
SERVICES**



OUR PURPOSE:

We serve Whatcom County by
ADVANCING EQUITY & **PARTNERING WITH OUR COMMUNITY** to:



Objectives



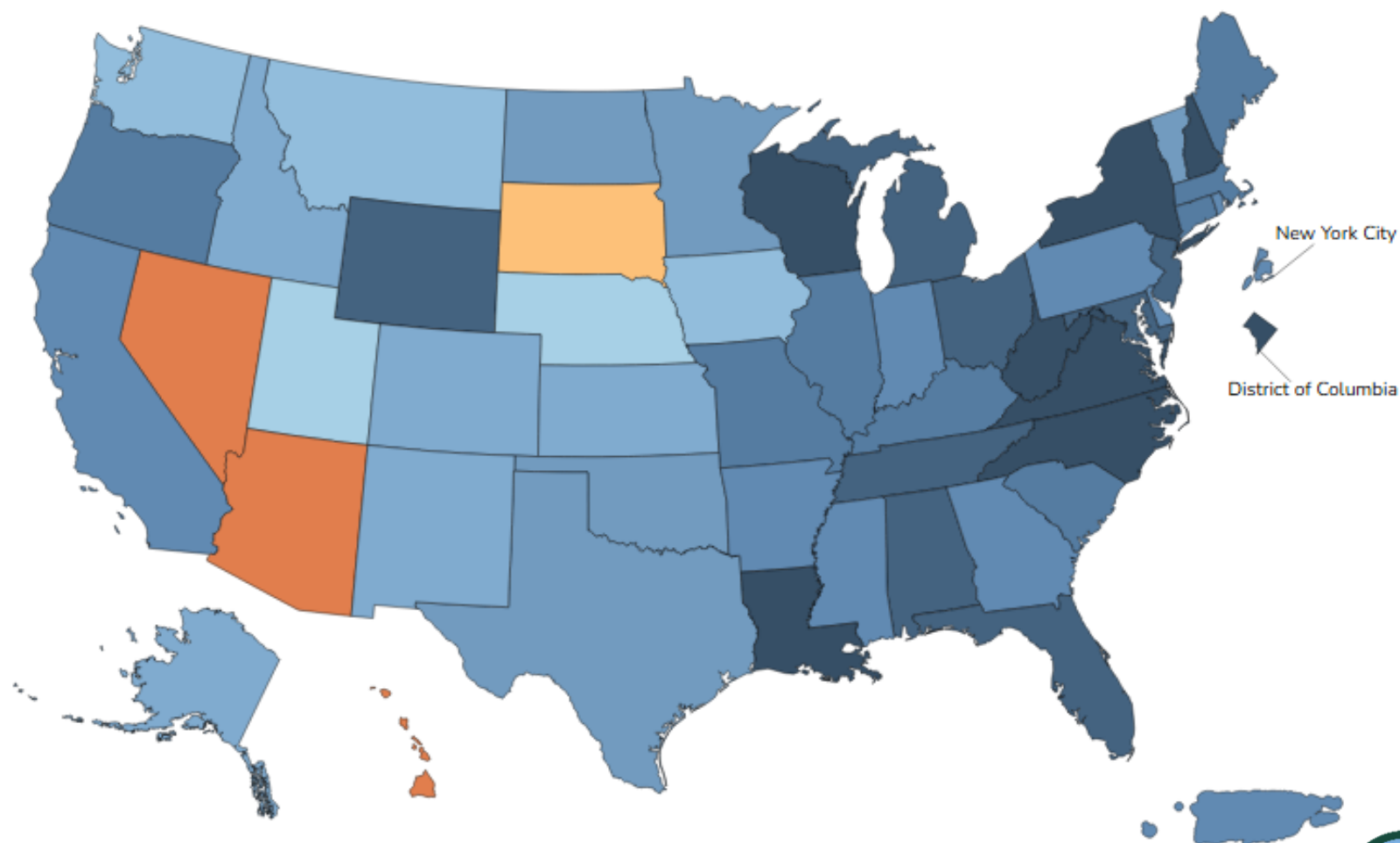
- Review the data landscape in Whatcom county, Washington state, and nationally
- Give a snapshot of local programs supporting opioid use disorder prevention and response
- Update on local Opioid Settlement Funds- Kari Holley



By the numbers



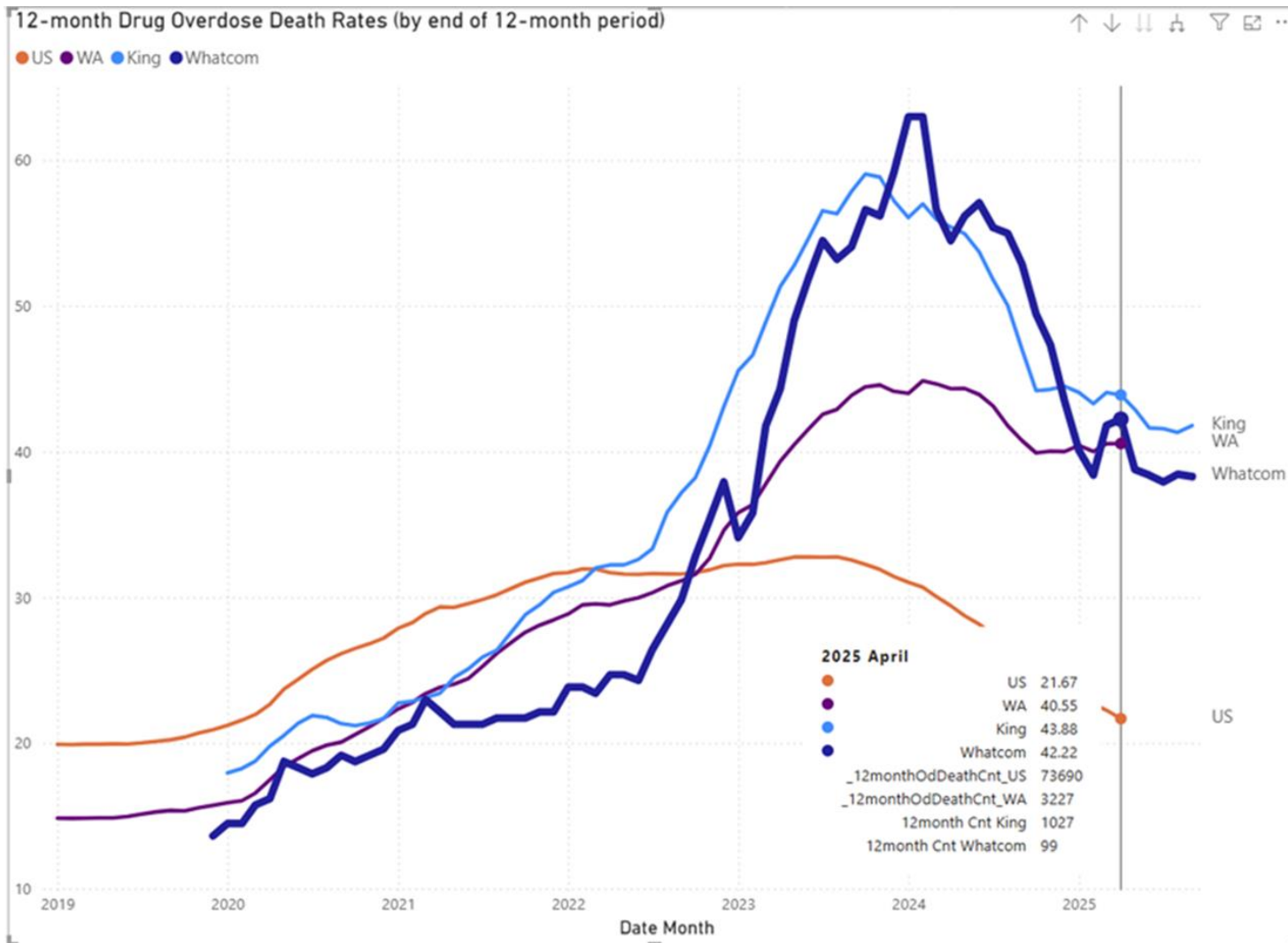
Figure 1b. Percent Change in Predicted 12 Month-ending Count of Drug Overdose Deaths, by Jurisdiction: April 2024 to April 2025



Legend for Percent Change in Drug Overdose Deaths Between 12-Month Ending Periods

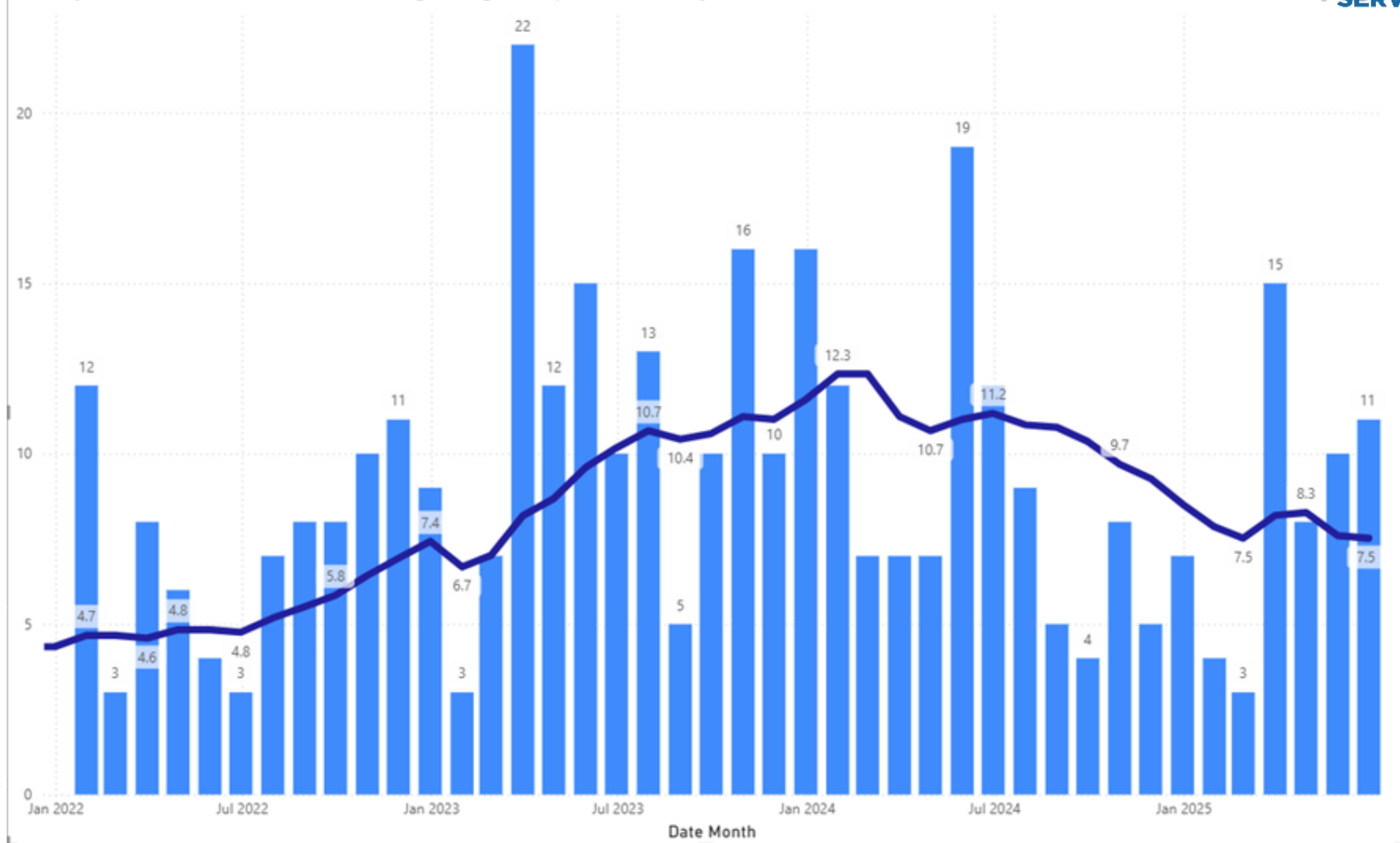
-39.9% 8.8%

National, state, county comparison



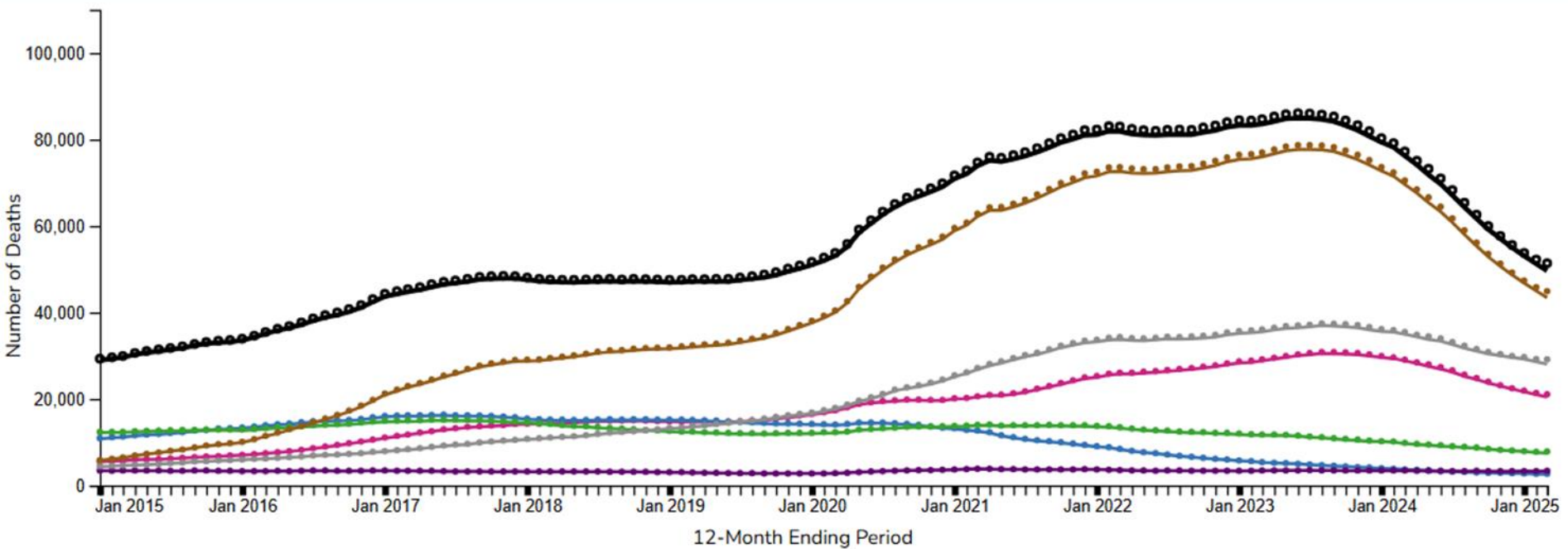
Whatcom County Drug related deaths

Monthly Overdose-related Deaths (and rolling average over previous 365 days)

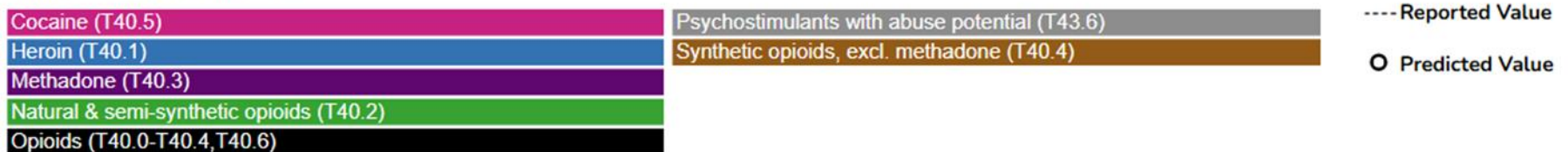


What type of drug? National data

Figure 2. 12 Month-ending Provisional Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug or Drug Class: United States

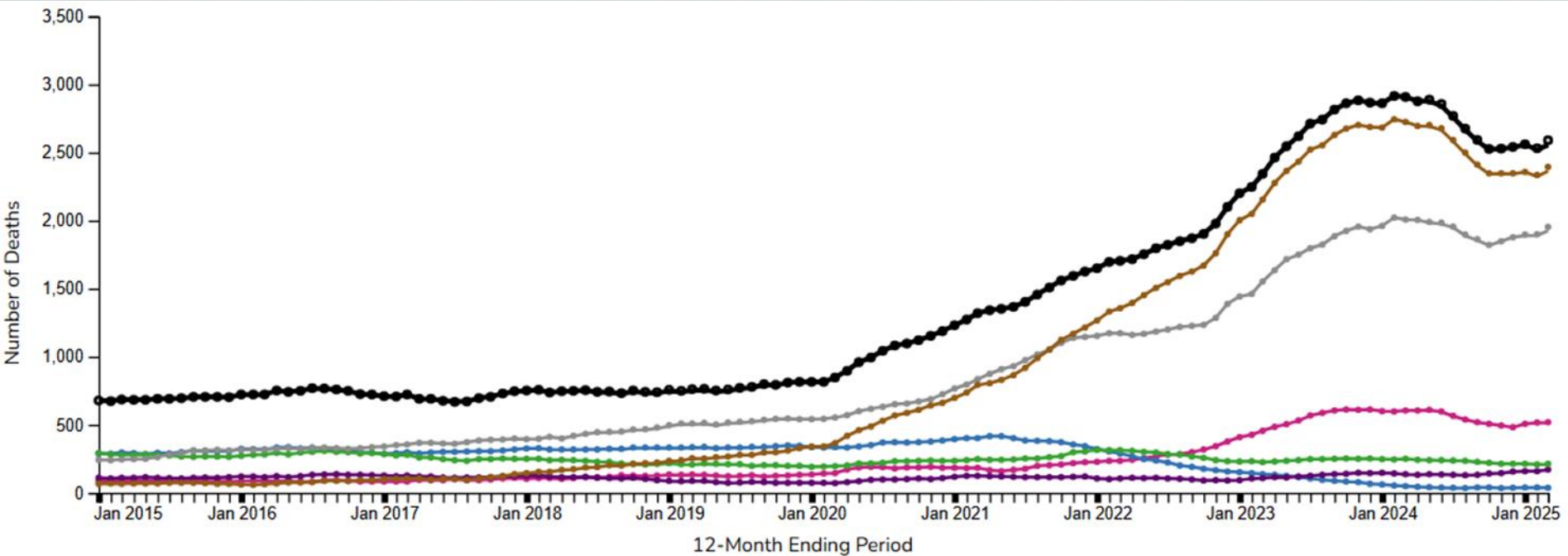


Legend for Drug or Drug Class

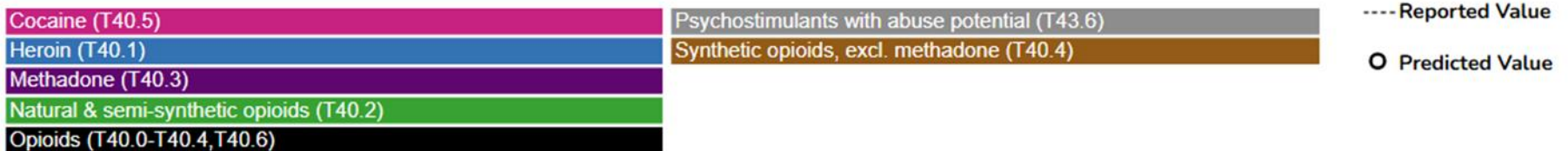


What type of drug? State data

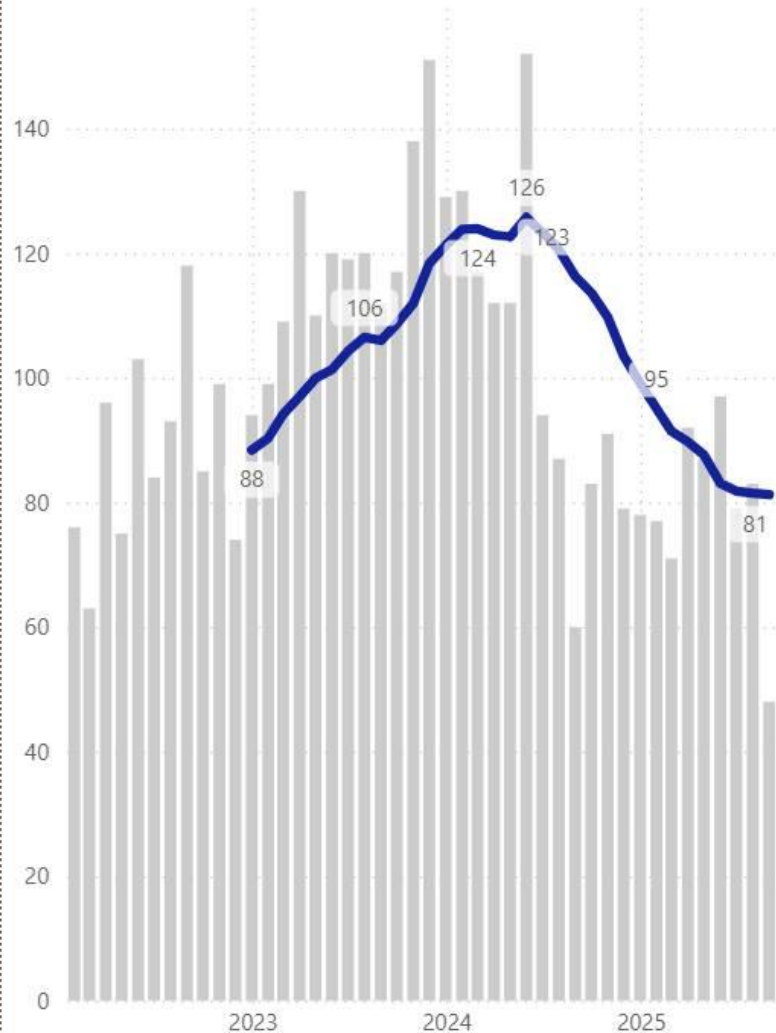
Figure 2. 12 Month-ending Provisional Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug or Drug Class: Washington



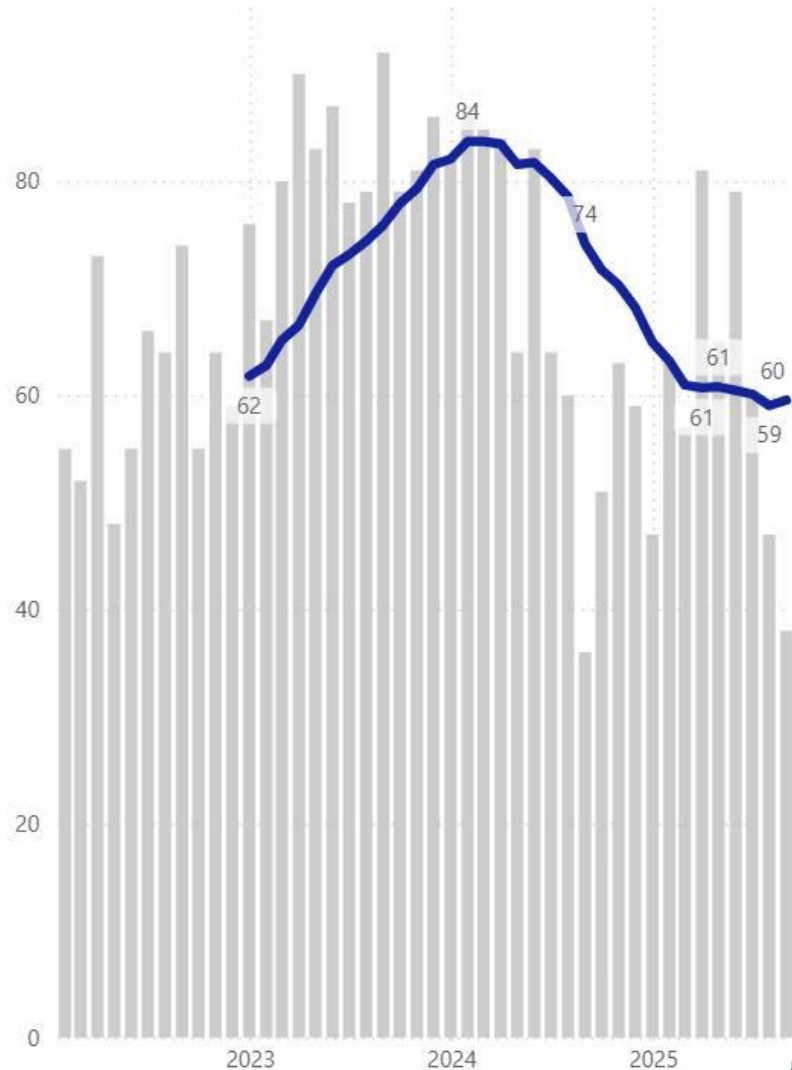
Legend for Drug or Drug Class



Monthly EMS Suspected Overdose Incidents (count by month and rolling monthly count over previous 365 days)



Monthly Drug-Related ED visits (count by month and rolling monthly count over previous 365 days)





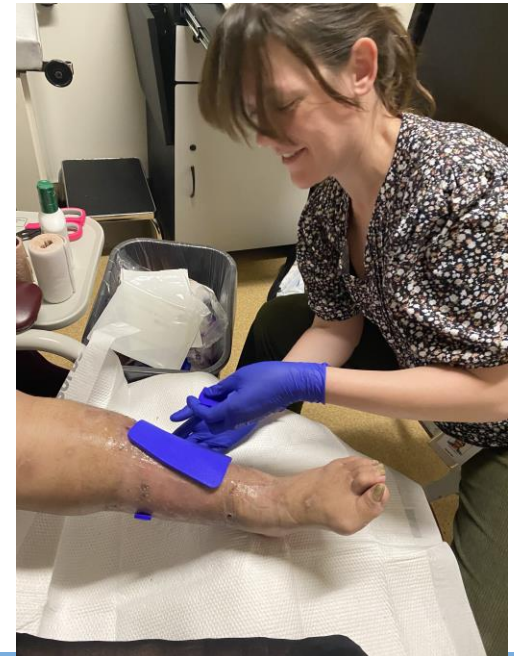
Program Highlights

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MOUD Treatment Highlights



- Co-organized and presented with local healthcare and first response providers
- Opioid Advisor work with EMS to encourage Buprenorphine in the field, ED initiation of buprenorphine, and increase support for hospitalized patients
- Continuing to partner with MOUD treatment clinics, encouraging use of tele-buprenorphine line through UW
Low barrier access and care coordination at the sites of care with the Street Medicine Team





ALL HANDS WHATCOM

It's All Connected **SUMMIT 2025**

Opioid Crisis, Mental Health, & The Power of Second Chances | Sept 24 & 25

Overdose Response Pilot Program



- Initial positive response
- Planned for 6 months through 12/2025, now partnering with UW with plans to continue and have 50% funding for the position through grants
- Specialist works with EMS, RSD, and community partners

Strategy	Initiative	Action Steps	Operational Period Cost	Funding Source	Department/ Division Responsible	Timeline for Completion*	Budget Supplemental required?
2e	Partner with fire and emergency medical systems and other jurisdictions to support an Overdose Response Team to connect people to follow up care and services	-Convene partners via MAC workgroup -Identify challenges/ barriers and opportunities -Develop a budget and staffing plan -Execute a plan and systems to ensure communication	\$75,000/ year	Multiple, including outside funding	EMS, WCHCS/ RS/ Health Officers/CD&E, Fire Districts, Providers, PeaceHealth	Medium-term	Yes

Naloxone Distribution and Training

- Naloxone out via boxes since start of program (Sept 2024): 3,559
- Naloxone out via boxes in 2025 alone: 2,490
- Naloxone out via SSP this year (2025): 2,990



Strategy	Initiative	Action Steps	Operational Period Cost	Funding Source	Department/ Division Responsible	Timeline for Completion*	Budget Supplemental required?
1g	Install and promote the use of at least one naloxone vending machine at a central location	-Installed vending machine at Girard on 5/31/24. -Promoted on all public facing HCS websites and communications	\$25,000/ year	Council-directed ARPA funds for naloxone purchase	WCHCS/ CD&E Division	Short-term	No



The logo features a stylized illustration of five human figures of varying heights and colors (gray, yellow, blue, orange, and light blue) standing within a circular frame. The figures are positioned in a way that suggests a group or community. The text "Thank you!" is overlaid on the lower part of the logo.

Thank you!

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