



MARYLAND Department of Health

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis Schrader, Secretary

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

State releases 2nd quarter fatal overdose data

Largest category increase continues to be fentanyl-related deaths, heroin-related deaths flat, prescription opioid-related deaths decrease

Baltimore, MD (October 24, 2017) – The Maryland Department of Health today released data for fatal overdoses in the second quarter of 2017. During this period, which encompasses January through June of 2017, there were 1,172 overdose-related deaths in the state, including 799 fentanyl-related deaths. The report can be found [here](#).

Fighting the heroin and opioid epidemic in Maryland has been a top priority of Governor Larry Hogan's administration. The Health Department, in partnership with the Opioid Operational Command Center and other state agencies, continues to collaborate with federal, state, and local partners to fight to reduce the number of overdoses and resulting fatalities in a multitude of ways.

“We continue to see a dramatic increase in the number of overdose deaths connected to fentanyl, and the Maryland Department of Health is committed to building a continuum of care for those with substance use disorders,” said Health Secretary Dennis Schrader. “We are working closely with local jurisdictions to analyze the data and inform overdose and opioid misuse prevention strategy to leverage the state's unprecedented investment in prevention, treatment and recovery resources.”

Marylanders can find treatment resources at [MdDestinationRecovery.org](#), [BeforeItsTooLateMD.org](#), and the state crisis hotline, 1-800-422-0009.

The largest increases in overdose deaths continue to be fentanyl-related, carfentanil-related, and from cocaine use combined with opioids. These synthetic substances, often combined with other drugs, continue to claim the lives of Marylanders in staggering numbers. Fentanyl deaths alone increased by more than 300 from the first quarter through the second quarter. Fentanyl and carfentanil are 50 and 100 times more potent than heroin, respectively. The Health Department issued a warning about such fentanyl consumption, later adding carfentanil to the list, in 2016 and continues to maintain that warning.

Heroin and prescription opioid deaths for the second quarter of 2017 are relatively flat compared to the second quarter of 2016. Heroin overdose deaths increased by seven in the second quarter of 2017 when compared to the same timeframe in 2016. Overdose deaths from prescription opioids fell by seven, totaling 218 in the second quarter of 2016 and falling to 211 during 2017.

“Maryland is continuing to combat this crisis – including the increasingly deadly threat posed by fentanyl

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and carfentanil, with everything we've got, and we see a significant amount of work being done at the state and local level each day," said Clay Stamp, executive director of the Opioid Operational Command Center. "It will take everyone working together – from the federal, state, and local levels – to turn the tide in this epidemic and save the lives of thousands of Marylanders."

Marylanders who need help finding substance related disorder treatment resources should visit MdDestinationRecovery.org, BeforeItsTooLateMD.org or call the Maryland Crisis Hotline, which provides 24/7 support, at 1-800-422-0009. If you know of someone who could use treatment for substance related disorders treatment facilities can be located by location and program characteristics on our page at <https://goo.gl/aRRExJ>.

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The Maryland Department of Health is the State agency that protects Maryland's public health. We work together to promote and improve the health and safety of all Marylanders through disease prevention, access to care, quality management, and community engagement. Stay connected: www.twitter.com/MDHealthDept and www.facebook.com/MarylandDHMH.