



Vermont's Social Autopsy

An analysis of interactions with state services among drug-related fatalities

Funding: CDC Prevention for States Prescription Drug Overdose Grant

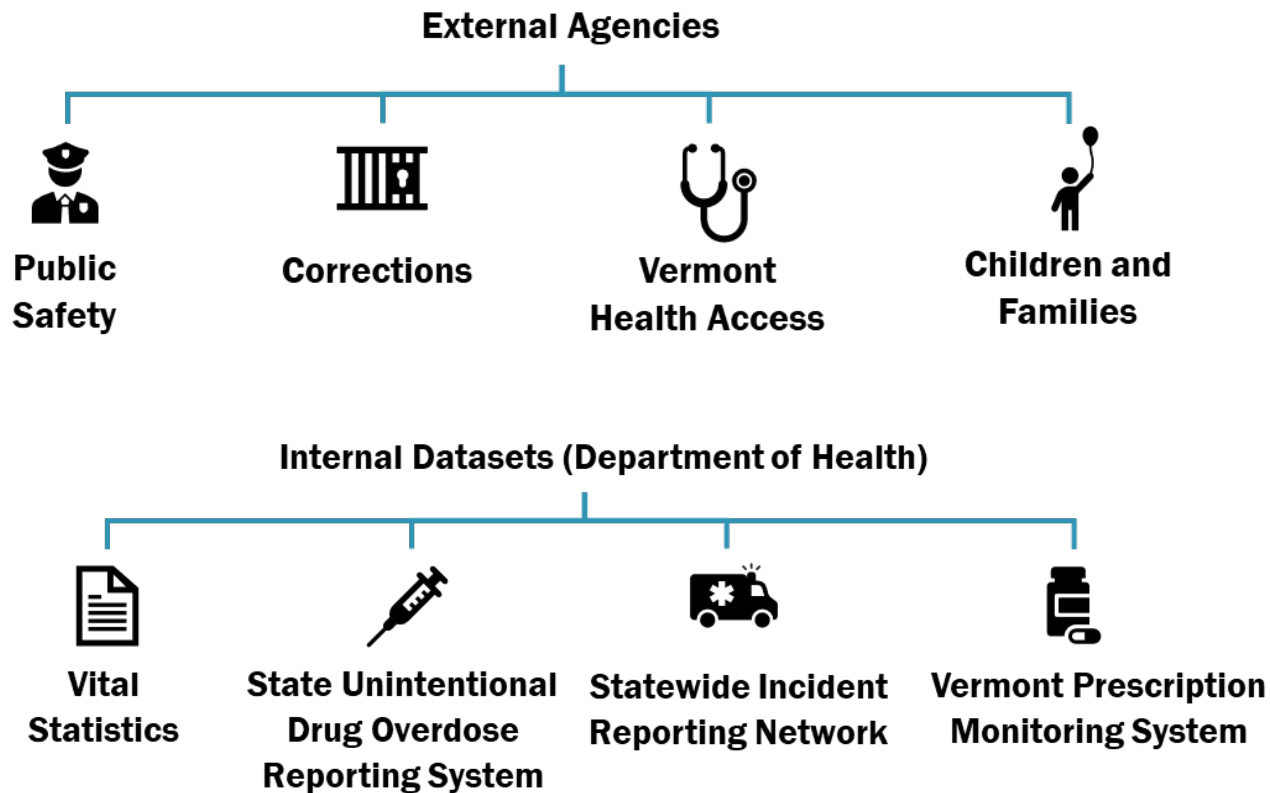
Vermont was inspired by West Virginia's “Overdose Fatality Analysis” of 2016 deaths.

Main Goal

Strengthen institutions' abilities to identify and aid those experiencing substance use disorder.

- What happened in the years preceding the overdose?
- Did individuals interact with State of Vermont agencies or services?
- What factors were associated with overdose?

We identified the following external agencies and internal datasets to work with...



Key Takeaways

1

Interactions with State agencies and services were frequent among individuals who died.

2

We established collaborative relationships with external agencies.

3

This project could provide a framework for other states to work from.

What is the Vermont Prescription Monitoring System?

The Vermont Prescription Monitoring System (VPMS) is a statewide, electronic database of controlled substance prescriptions dispensed by Vermont-licensed pharmacies.

- VPMS is a clinical tool to promote appropriate prescribing, while deterring the misuse, abuse, and diversion of controlled substances.
- VPMS is also a surveillance tool that is used to monitor statewide trends in the dispensing of controlled substances.

VPMS Quarterly Report Data Exclusions

VPMS does not collect data on prescriptions dispensed by:

- Emergency rooms
- Veterinarian offices
- Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) that dispense methadone and buprenorphine for opioid addiction, sometimes called a “hub”.
- Pharmacies not licensed in Vermont, such as those in New Hampshire or Massachusetts. Vermont residents can and do pick up prescriptions from these pharmacies and this data is not in VPMS.

Some prescriptions may not be included on this report if there were delays in data submission. Final data is reconciled in the Annual Report totals.

Data submitted to VPMS by pharmacies can contain errors. Each data upload is screened for errors and sent back to the pharmacy to be corrected if errors are discovered. However, not all errors are found or corrected.

VPMS data is on prescriptions dispensed. The VPMS does not contain information about if a medication was prescribed but not filled, the associated diagnosis, instructions, or how a prescribed medication is used once it has been picked up.

Why does this report use Morphine Milligram Equivalents (MME) to measure opioid prescriptions?

Using Morphine Milligram Equivalents (MME) allows for comparison between types and strengths of opioids.

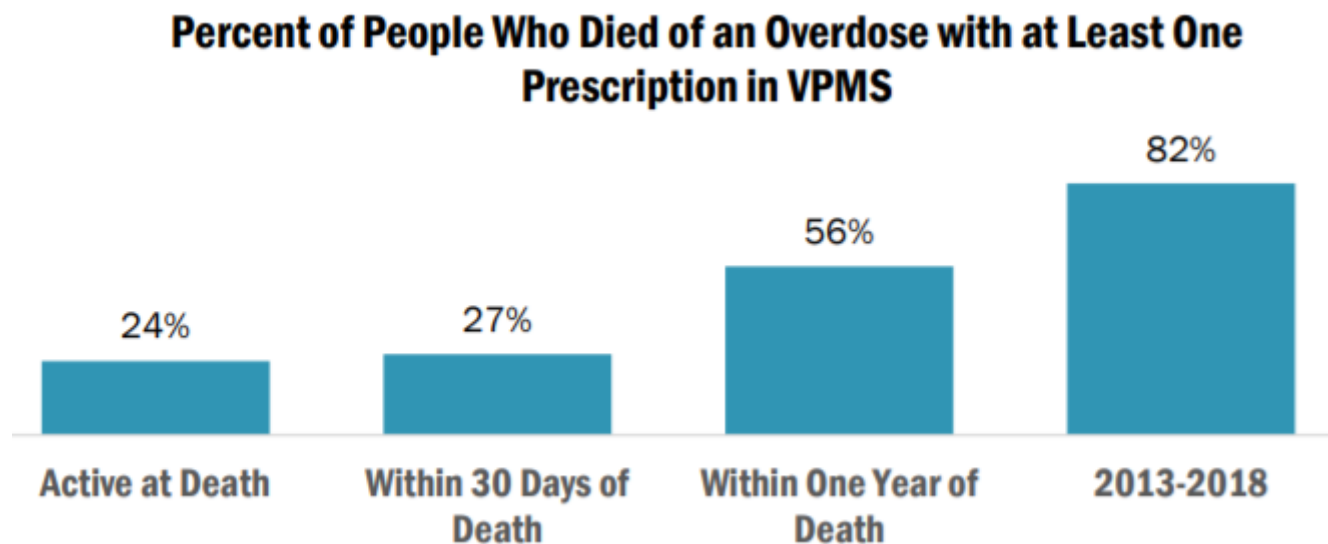
MME is a way to express the strength of an opioid analgesic prescription as though the prescription were converted to morphine.

For instance, the following medications each provide 50 MME/day:

- 10 tablets of hydrocodone/acetaminophen 5/300
- 2 tablets of oxycodone sustained-release 15 mg
- <3 tablets of methadone 5 mg

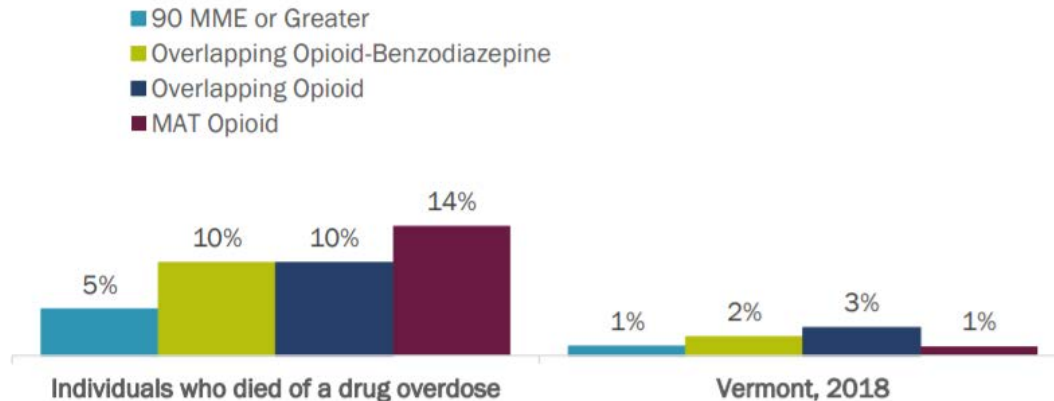


Vermont Prescription Monitoring System (VPMS) results, 2018

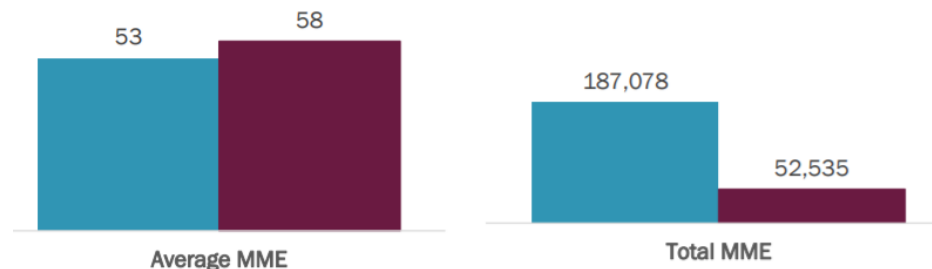


Vermont Prescription Monitoring System (VPMS) results, 2018

Percent of Population with High Risk or MAT Prescriptions



People who died of a drug overdose had a lower average daily MME but a higher total MME of prescriptions compared to Vermonters in 2018.



Thank you!

Any questions?

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