



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
DIVISION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH

HEALTH CARE COMMISSION

Alexis Teitelbaum, MSW

Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Data Overview (September 2020)



- Delaware currently has the second highest overdose death rate in the nation. We lost 431 lives in 2019. 79% of the overdose deaths in 2019 involved fentanyl, this was up 5% since 2018.
- This year, through the end of August, there have been 268 deaths from suspected overdose -- that's a 40% increase over the same time frame in 2019.
- We lost 39 lives to suspected overdose in the month of May, the highest Delaware has ever seen in a single month.
- CDC's Aug 14 MMWR report present data on COVID19's impact on mental health. According to a survey of more than 5,000 adults in the last week in June:
 - 40% are struggling with mental health & substance use;
 - 1 in 3 adults in America reported anxiety or depression symptoms,
 - 26% reported symptoms related to trauma and stress,
 - 13% have started or increased substance use; and
 - 1 in 10 have seriously considered suicide



COVID RISK POPULATIONS



COVID-19 has caused us to place heightened attention on special populations to minimize disparities in the care they pursue and receive. These groups include (but not limited to):

- Older populations
- Communities of color
- Populations where English is not the primary language in the household
- Pregnant women, homeless populations
- People who are working in industries at high risk for substance misuse and criminal justice involved clients



Behavioral Health Disparities



- Nationally we are seeing patterns that identify systemic issues in healthcare
- We co-create solutions with multiple communities to have a diverse set of voices making decisions about population behavioral health
- Prior to the epidemic, DSAMH started an equity analysis based on literature on behavioral health disparities including the WIN measurement framework, SAMHSA's behavioral Health Equity, National Survey of Drug Use and Health data, Census data, and Colorado's Behavioral Health Equity Report.
 - ◆ Findings of this equity analysis have illuminated areas of focus for the Division recognizing these difficult times of economic and social distress which have been exacerbated by COVID.



Connecting During COVID-19



- **Telehealth services enable a proactive approach to treatment via virtual connectivity**
- **Client facing portal on DTRN**
- We want those who are experiencing mental health or substance abuse challenges to:
 - ◆ Continue to get any medications they need for treatment
 - ◆ Contact our crisis or Bridge centers if they are experiencing challenges, and we will walk you through a screening process to understand your needs
 - ◆ Work with peers virtually
 - ◆ Continue to use public health precautions for general health and wellness during this time



Our Work: COVID-19 Response



We have responded to these alarming effects of COVID-19 in a number of ways. DSAMH continues to:

- Expand how we connect virtually, including: launching our public portal called Treatment Connection
- Training people with lived experience (peers) to help others who need guidance as they move through treatment
- Increasing the follow-up outbound call processes to make sure that people are engaged and to address well-being during this sensitive time
- Mobile Bridge services have canvassed communities at high risk for overdose, providing counseling, information and other wrap around services. Since May, we have worked with partners like the Food pantry to distribute over 8,000 pallets of food, over 1,200 units of Narcan and shared mental health and substance use information to over 4,000 families



Suicide



- As many as 75,000 more people will die from drug or alcohol misuse and suicide, according to new research released by Well Being Trust (WBT) and the Robert Graham Center for Policy Studies in Family Medicine and Primary Care.
- DSAMH recently received a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to focus suicide prevention efforts on high risk groups. The Delaware Emergency Response to Suicide Prevention project will provide:
 - ◆ Training and outreach to community workers who work with these populations
 - ◆ Tools to identify and screen individuals at risk for suicide
 - ◆ Interventions for those who are experiencing suicidality
 - ◆ Support for anyone in the state experiencing domestic or intimate partner violence





Thank you!

