

OKLAHOMA OPIOID OVERDOSE FATALITY REVIEW BOARD

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2021*

DR. JASON BEAMAN, CHAIRMAN

JANUARY 31, 2022

*Due to health concerns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and due to the expiration of the amendments to the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act which allowed virtual meetings, the Board was unable to assemble a quorum to meet in-person in January 2022 to conduct business. As a result, the Chairman submits this report only to document the meetings of the Board for 2021. This report will be presented to the members in 2022 for approval and possible amendment. An adopted final report will be supplied as soon as the group is able to safely conduct business.

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BOARD MEMBERS

Mike Hunter (Jan. 2019-May 2021) John O'Connor (July 2021 to present) Lori Carter (<i>Designee, Jan. 2019-Nov. 2021</i>) Samantha Guinn (<i>Designee, Nov. 2021-present</i>) Emma Sherry (<i>Alt. Designee</i>)	Attorney General
Eric Pfeifer, M.D.	Chief Medical Examiner
Lance Frye, M.D. (May 2020-Oct.2021) Keith Reed, R.N., M.P.H., C.P.H. (Oct. 2021-present) Buffy Heater (<i>Designee</i>)	Commissioner, Oklahoma State Department of Health Interim Commissioner, Oklahoma State Department of Health
Tracy Wendling, Ph.D. Marvin Smith (<i>Designee</i>)	Chief of Injury Prevention Services, Oklahoma State Department of Health
Jean Hausheer, M.D.	President, Oklahoma State Medical Association (Immediate past president)
Donnie Anderson Angie Woodrow (<i>Designee</i>)	Director, Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics Dangerous Drugs Control
Carrie Slatton-Hodges, M.S., L.P.C. Jessica Hawkins (<i>Designee</i>) Andrea Hamor Edmondson (<i>Alt. Designee</i>)	Commissioner, Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
Timothy Moser, D.O. (Jan. 2019-April 2021) Jason Hill, D.O. (April 2021-present) Leroy Young, D.O. (<i>Designee</i>)	President, Oklahoma Osteopathic Association
Justin Brown Debi Knecht (<i>Designee</i>) Jennifer Postlewait (<i>Alt. Designee</i>)	Director, Oklahoma Department of Human Services
Rick Adams Shannon Desherow (<i>Designee</i>)	Director, Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation
Wayne Stinett Brett Wellden (<i>Designee</i>)	President, Association of the Oklahoma Narcotic Enforcers
Marty Hendrick, Pharm. D., D.Ph.	Executive Director, Oklahoma State Board of Pharmacy
Derek Manning	County Sheriff, Beckham County Sheriff's Office
Brandon Clabes (Vice Chair) (Jan. 2019-May 2021)	Chief of Municipal Police Department, Midwest City Police Department
Linda Scoggins	Private Practice Attorney licensed in the state of Oklahoma
Chris Boring	District Attorney, District 26
Vacant	Physician with emergency medical training
Jason Beaman, D.O. (Chair)	Physician with experience in drug addiction treatment and recovery
Sheila St. Cyr, M.S., R.N.,N.P.D.-B.C.	Nurse
Paul Hesse	Member of the Judiciary
Lance Lang	Individual who currently receives or has been a consumer of addiction recovery services related to opioid use
Mike Maddox	Individual who currently receives or has been a consumer of addiction recovery services related to opioid use
Board Staff: Megan Wurzer, Senior Prevention Field Representative, ODMHSAS; Alexandra Adkins, Assistant Attorney General, Office of Attorney General Mike Hunter (2020 to 2021); Emma Sherry, Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of Attorney General John O'Connor.	

Letter from the Chairman

January 31, 2022

The work of the Oklahoma Opioid Overdose Fatality Review Board (OOFRB) has never been more important. Opioids continue to ravage the state of Oklahoma at levels not seen before. New patterns and trends are emerging that requires the kind of in-depth analysis and discussion provided by the expertise of the OOFRB Members.

However, the last year has not been without its challenges. Like most entities, the OOFRB has struggled with maintaining a safe and productive environment, preserving the privacy of the overdose victims, and keeping transparency to the citizens of the State of Oklahoma. While these challenges have not allowed us to provide as many in depth analyses as we would like, we have reviewed many. These reviews, with the incredible insight and experience of the Board members, have allowed us to gain insight into the extent and nature of overdoses in Oklahoma.

I look forward to the year ahead and our continued work on this matter, which is more important, now than ever before.

Jason Beaman D.O., M.S., M.P.H., FAPA

Assistant Clinical Professor

Chair, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences

Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences

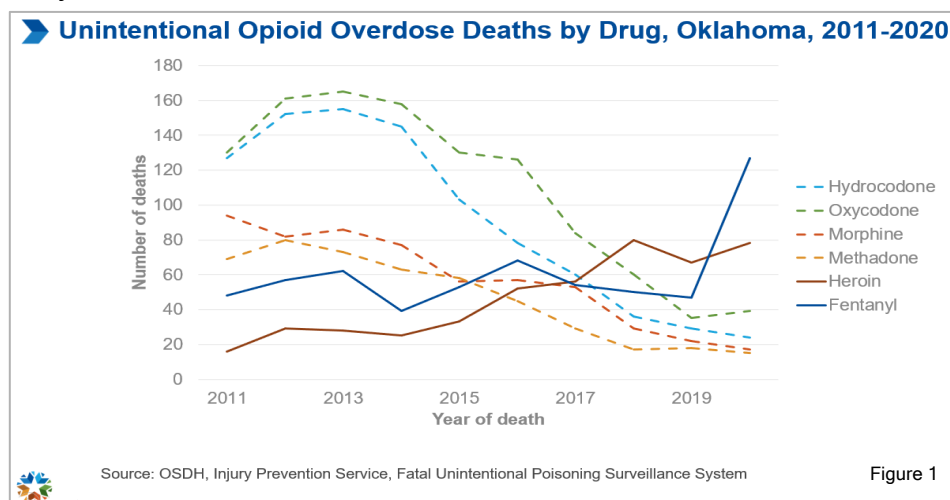
Background

The Oklahoma Opioid Overdose Fatality Review Board was developed from a recommendation by the Oklahoma Commission on Opioid Abuse through House Bill 2798 in 2018. The 20-member Board, chaired by Dr. Jason Beaman, is comprised of a multidisciplinary team of subject matter experts in the following areas: forensic medicine, law enforcement, criminal justice, emergency medical services, public health, drug addiction treatment and recovery, and lived experience. Members meet quarterly to review cases and develop strategies to improve the state's response to opioid overdose.

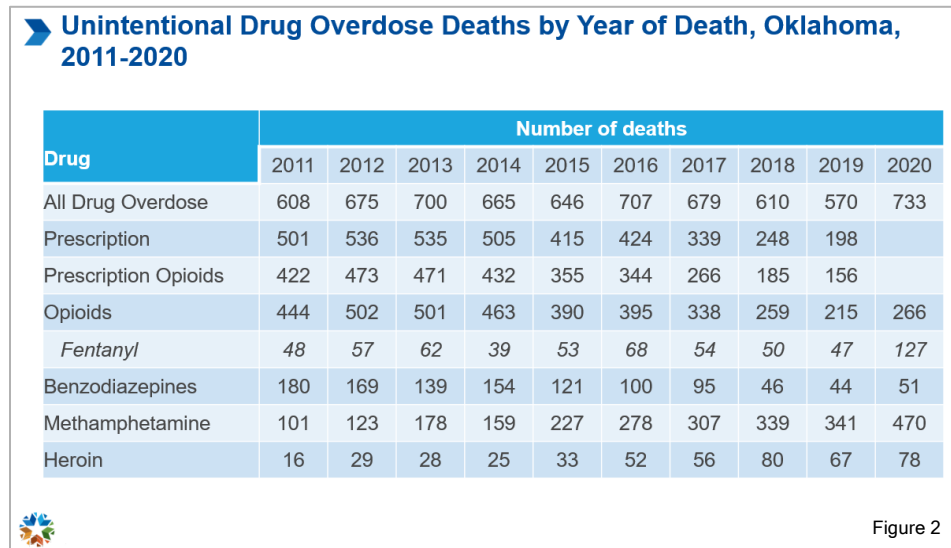
Due to health concerns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and due to the expiration of the amendments to the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act which allowed virtual meetings, the Board was unable to convene a quorum of members in January 2022 in order to adopt a final report. As a result, I am submitting this document to report on the work of the Board for 2021. An adopted final report offering recommendations regarding legislation and other preventative measures based on case review findings will be supplied as soon as the group is able to safely conduct business. Until then, this remains only a Chairman's Report.

Unintentional Opioid Overdose Fatality in Oklahoma

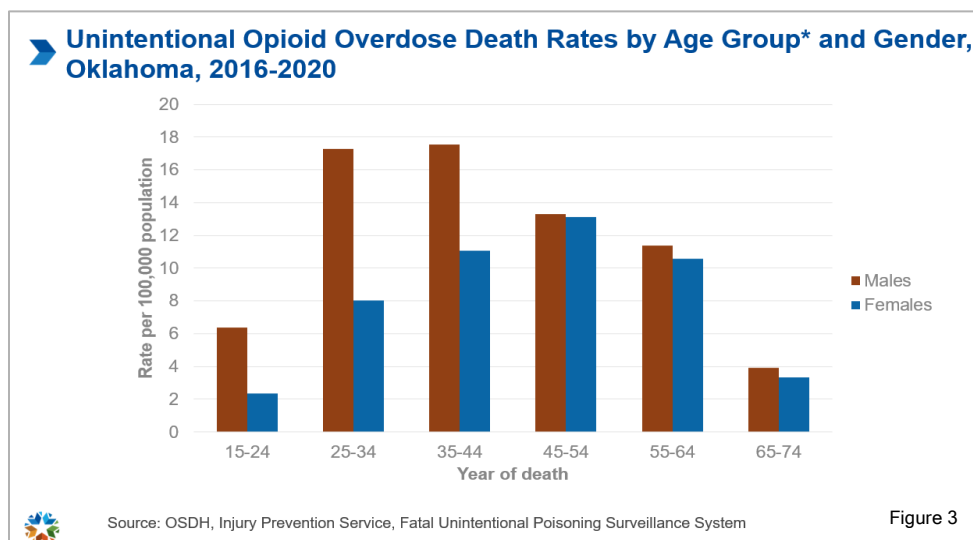
Data from the Oklahoma State Department of Health, Injury Prevention Services show that in 2020 there were 733 drug overdose fatalities in Oklahoma, an increase of 24% from 2019 (Figure 1). This includes a 170% increase in the number of fentanyl deaths from 2019 to 2020 with more fentanyl overdose deaths appearing to involve illicitly manufactured fentanyl than in previous years.



In 2020, the most common substances listed as the primary cause of death in unintentional drug overdose deaths included opioids and methamphetamine. Methamphetamine accounted for the highest number of deaths followed by opioids and benzodiazepines. Of the overdose deaths involving opioids, 77% involved fentanyl and/or heroin (Figure 2). Due to the dramatic increase in unintentional overdose deaths involving fentanyl, the Oklahoma State Department of Health is no longer reporting the number of overdose deaths involving prescription opioids.



From 2016-2020, unintentional overdose deaths occurred among males at higher rates than females in all age groups. The highest rates were in the 35-44 year old age group for males and 45-54 year old age group for females. The male and female rates become comparable in the 45-54 year old age group (Figure 3).



Overview

The Oklahoma Opioid Overdose Fatality Review Board held three public meetings in 2021. Due to health concerns presented by the COVID-19 pandemic the Board was unable to meet in person in January of 2021. Changes to the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act allowed the Board to convene virtually in April 2021. In July 2021, decreasing COVID-19 rates allowed the Board to safely convene in person for the remainder of the year. The following is a brief summary of the 2021 meetings.

Board Activities 2021

During the 2021 meetings, the Board was presented with multiple resources related to opioid overdose education and prevention, conducted nine case reviews, and developed recommendations based on information obtained during case review. In November 2021, the Board welcomed two new members from the Association of the Oklahoma Narcotic Enforcers and the Oklahoma State Board of Pharmacy as outlined in SB94.

Senior Deputy Attorney General Lori Carter provided an update on opioid related legislation from Oklahoma's 2021 legislative session including an overview of the following bills:

All signed by Governor:

- **HB1567 by Representative Boardman and Senator Weaver**
Creates aggravated trafficking offense for fentanyl, heroin, LSD and PCP and clarifies that any person convicted must serve 85% of sentence before being parole eligible.
- **HB2676 by Representative Marti and Senator Weaver**
Allows controlled dangerous substances issued by a practitioner to be dispensed with an electronic prescription if certain conditions apply. The measure also allows electronic prescriptions to be utilized for compounded prescriptions, compounded infusion prescriptions, and prescriptions issued under approved research protocols.
- **SB57 Senator Rader and Representative Echols**
Grants Opioid Overdose Fatality Review Board access to the PMP and clarifies the exemption for cancer treatment hospice providers
- **SB58 Senator Rader and Representative Echols**
Provides an exemption to the electronic to the prescribing requirement for practitioners who administer a controlled dangerous substance through a hospice program

- **SB94 Senator Hall and Representative Mize**

Adds the President of the Association of the Oklahoma Narcotic Enforcers and the Executive Director of the State Board of Pharmacy or designee to the OOFRB.

Carried Over:

- **SB241 Senator Thompson and Representative Kannady**

Amending reporting requirements for every registered manufacture and distributor of controlled dangerous substances by requiring schedule II through V to be reported to the OBN. in the same format as reported to the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration.

- **SB605 Senator Thompson and Representative Kannady**

Amending reporting requirements for every registered manufacture and distributor of controlled dangerous substances by requiring schedule II through V to be reported to the OBN. in the same format as reported to the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration.

- **SB888 Senator Standridge and Rep Echols**

Mandates registration with the State Board of Medical Licensure for pain clinics.

Vetoed:

- **HB2510 Rep Kannady and Sen Thompson**

Modifies and clarifies disbursement procedures for the Opioid Abatement Funds

The Board also discussed and voted to: approve the recommendations for the 2021 Oklahoma Opioid Overdose Fatality Review Board Annual Report and elected District Attorney Chris Boring as the new Vice Chair of the Board.

Board Findings 2021

The Board reviewed nine cases of individuals who died from unintentional opioid overdose between July 2020 and April 2021.

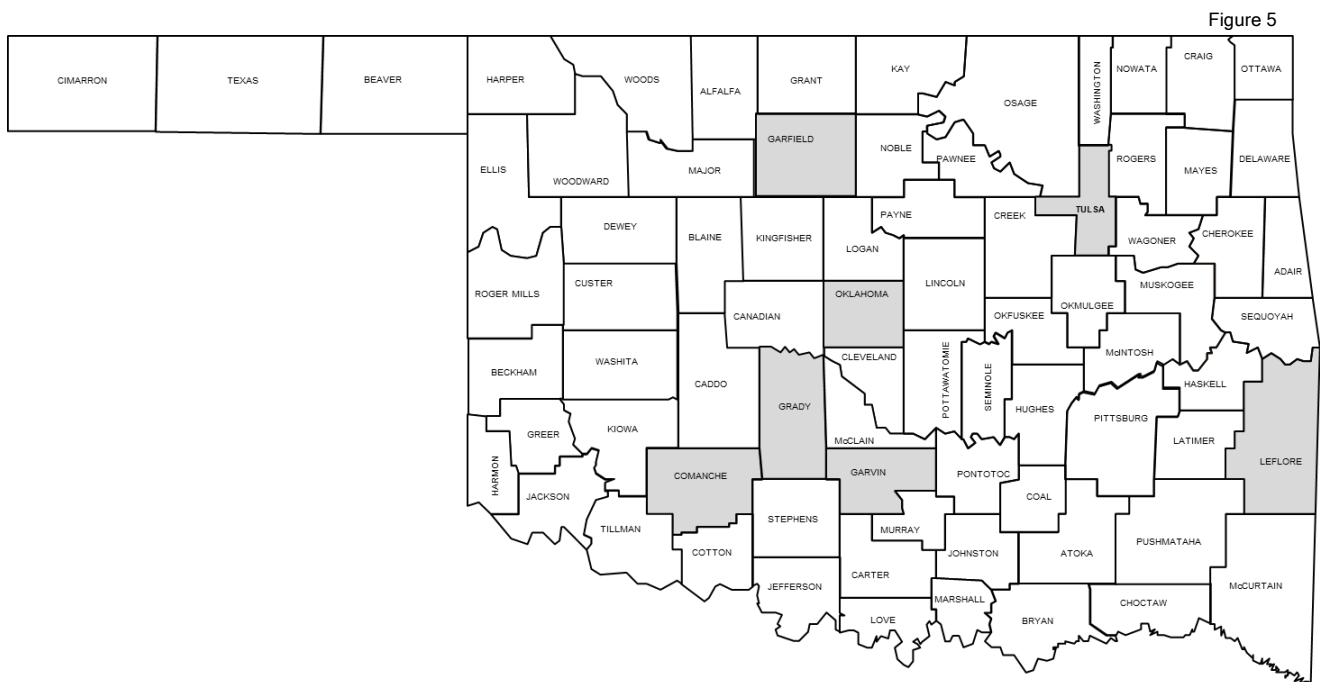
Demographics

Of the cases reviewed, 78% (7) were men and 22% (2) were women. Decedents ranged in age from 21 to 63 years with the average age of 38 years. The majority of decedents reviewed were White (56%), and between the ages of 36 to 45 (56%) (Figure 4).

Decedents from reviewed cases resided in 7 Oklahoma counties: Comanche (2); Garfield (1); Garvin (1); Grady (1); LeFlore (1); Oklahoma (2); and Tulsa (1) (Figure 5).

Figure 4. Demographics

Gender	Number	%
Female	2	22%
Male	7	78%
Race		
White	5	56%
African American	2	22%
Native American	2	22%
Hispanic	0	0%
Asian	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Age		
18 to 25	2	22%
26 to 35	1	11%
36 to 45	5	56%
46 to 55	0	0%
56 to 65	1	11%
66+	0	0%



Cause of Death by Drug Type

The Oklahoma Office of the Chief Medical Examiner investigates and determines manner and cause of death. The manner of death for all cases reviewed was accidental, and the primary cause of death included at least one opioid (illicit and/or licit).

Illicit opioids were listed as the primary cause of death in all 9 cases, including fentanyl (6) and heroin (3). Prescription opioids were listed in the primary cause of death in 1 of the cases reviewed. The majority of cases 67% (6) listed more than one drug as the primary cause of death. In 6 of the cases reviewed, additional substances were listed in the primary cause of death including an opioid plus methamphetamine (4), opioid plus benzodiazepine (2), and opioid plus cocaine (2).

Figure 5. Drugs Involved in Primary Cause of Death

Drug	Number of Deaths*
Fentanyl	6
Methamphetamine	4
Heroin	3
Cocaine	2
Alprazolam	2
Hydrocodone	1
Oxycodone	1

*One death may be counted in multiple drug categories if the primary cause of death on the Medical Examiner's report included more than one drug.

Education Level, Marital Status, and Military Service

It was reported that 88% (7) of decedents in the cases reviewed had a high school diploma or less and 12% (1) had a bachelor's degree. Half (4) were never married; 38% (3) were divorced; and 12% (1) was married at the time of their death. None of the decedents in the cases reviewed were reported to have served in the military. Data on education level, marital status, and military service was not available for 1 of the cases reviewed.

Criminal Justice Involvement

Of the cases reviewed, it was reported that 78% (7) were criminal justice involved at least once in their lifetime.

Domestic Violence

Fifty-six percent (5) of the decedents reviewed had a documented history of domestic violence. Of those 5 cases, 5 male decedents were reported to be perpetrators of domestic violence.

Conclusion

The work of the Board, the work of the review process, and the development of data-informed recommendations is vital in combatting and reducing opioid overdose deaths in the state of Oklahoma. The members of the Board are dedicated to preventing the loss of our fellow community members to opioid overdose and look forward to continuing these efforts in 2022.