# Addressing Alberta's Opioid Crisis

Supporting those living with addiction is essential. Alberta needs more funding and resources to go towards address the provincial opioid crisis.

## Issue Summary

2020 saw a record number of deaths due to opioids, with more than 1,144 out of 1,316 drug-related deaths being linked to opioid use.[29] The first two months of 2021 saw a 153 per cent increase in opioid-related fatalities compared to 2020.

## Solution

**A multi-pronged approach must be taken to reduce opioid-related deaths and addictions in Alberta, including strategic areas such as:**

- Harm-reduction initiatives
- Treatment
- Prevention
- Enforcement and supply control
- Collaboration
- Surveillance and analytics

**Canadian Mental Health Association** in Alberta
*Mental health for all*

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## Research

"In response to surveillance data that showed a further increase in the number of fentanyl-related deaths, the [Government of Alberta] Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health began leading the urgent opioid response in October 2016 and implemented a range of new tools to address overdoses and deaths related to fentanyl and other opioids."

−Grant Toolkit and Resources, Accelerating Change Transformation Team, Alberta Medical Association,[30] n.d.

## Alberta Examples

Alberta Health Service's Opioid Dependency Program provides maintenance treatment for individuals dependent on opioids.[31] The program also helps those dependent on opioids find services they need to live healthy lives. When properly prescribed and dispensed, a person on an opioid dependency program is able to function normally with no drowsiness and no withdrawal symptoms.

[29] Smith, A. (2021, April 21). Alberta opioid deaths continue to spiral, with 228 in first two months of 2021. *Calgary Herald*. **https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/alberta-opioid-deaths-continue-to-spiral-with-228-in-first-two-months-of-2021**

[30] Grant Toolkit and Resources (n.d.). *Accelerating Change Transformation Team*. Retrieved from **https://actt.albertadoctors.org/PMH/organized-evidence-based-care/Opioid/Pages/Grant-Toolkit-and-Resources.aspx**

[31] Opioid Dependency Program For Youth and Adults (n.d.). *Alberta Health Services*. Retrieved from **https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/services/odp.aspx**