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**New Mexico Health Alert Network (HAN) Alert**  
**Recent Increase in Overdoses**  
September 12, 2025**Background:**

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) has confirmed increases in overdose deaths and overdose-related emergency department visits during the first half of 2025 in three counties in the Northeast – Rio Arriba, Santa Fe, and Taos. These events are primarily driven by opioids, with fentanyl use linked to most of the fatalities. Providers across New Mexico should be aware that these trends could spread to other areas of the state.

The increase in overdose incidents may stem from instability in the drug supply. Recently, the NMDOH Adulterant Checking Program has detected higher concentrations of fentanyl in fentanyl products. While typical samples contain approximately 1% fentanyl, recently identified samples have contained up to 20% fentanyl. Disruptions in the local drug supply allow for new sources to fill in the gaps, which may cause persons who use drugs (PWUD) to buy from unfamiliar sources. Existing harm reduction tools and strategies can mitigate these impacts - having naloxone on hand, using substances slowly in small amounts and in the presence of others, and rescue breathing. As the fentanyl supply changes, including to a more potent supply, individuals are more susceptible to unintended fatal and non-fatal overdoses. Additionally, individuals may experience increasing and more severe withdrawal symptoms.

The latest data on overdose numbers in these counties can be found [here](#). Data on overdose-related deaths is considered preliminary until all death records have been officially reported. Data for overdose-related emergency department visits is considered final.

**Recommendations for Clinicians:**

- Encourage all persons who use drugs (PWUD) to have their substances tested through the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) Adulterant Checking Program. Current locations are The Mountain Center in Espanola, New Mexico Harm Reduction Collaborative in Albuquerque, Alianza in Roswell, and the NMDOH public health office in Las Cruces.
- Talk to PWUD about safety precautions such as:
  - In cases of emergency or suspected overdose, individuals should call 911, as symptoms may not always be opioid-related.
  - Reinforce the importance of carrying and using naloxone. Let patients know about the recent increased risk of overdose.
  - Give naloxone for any suspected overdose – the individual should be monitored for restored breathing and restored skin color, rather than wakefulness.
  - If respiratory depression is noted, use rescue breathing (CPR without chest compressions) to maintain oxygenation.
  - Advise on using substances slowly and in small amounts at a time.

- Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) is now offered at NMDOH Public Health Offices at no cost. These low-barrier resources offers buprenorphine to individuals with opioid use disorder. For more information, see the [New Mexico Pathways website](#).
  - Additional providers for MOUD and Medication Assisted Treatment can be found by [clicking here](#).

**Additional Resources:**

1. **Find a harm reduction site near you:** [The New Mexico HIV-Hepatitis-STD Online Resource Guide \(nmhivguide.org\)](#)
2. **Order no-cost naloxone and learn how to use it:** [NMDOH Harm Reduction | Transforming Lives for Healthier Communities \(nmharmreduction.org\)](#)
3. **Find a Public health office offering MOUD:** [Home - New Mexico Pathways \(pathwaysnm.org\)](#) or call the NM Health Helpline at 1-833-796-8773.
4. **Find additional MOUD/MAT providers:** [Opioid Treatment is Available Now | MAT | Statewide \(doseofreality.com\)](#)

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**New Mexico Health Alert Network:** To register for the NM Health Alert Network, please visit the following site <https://nm.readyop.com/fs/4cjZ/10b2> Please fill out the registration form completely and click Submit at the bottom of the page, to begin receiving Important health alerts, advisories, and updates.

**Please Note** that our system also utilizes text messaging to notify members of important health information. Due to FCC Regulation changes that are designed to decrease the amount of unwanted spam text messages sent each year to citizens, please save this phone number **(855) 596-1810** as the “**New Mexico Health Alert Network**” default phone number for your account used for text messages on the mobile device(s) you register with us.