

February 7, 2022

Public Statement:

We lack timely, local data about opioid poisoning events

When will the Government provide the people of Alberta with the community-relevant data they need so that front line workers and community partners can reduce the needless deaths and harm caused by opioid poisoning events?

The Edmonton Zone Medical Staff Association's (EZMSA) Opioid Poisoning Committee (OPC) has twice requested the release of the local geographical area (LGA) data for opioid poisoning related deaths and calls made to EMS in this province. A letter was sent to Minister Copping in December 2021 and to Associate Minister Ellis in January of this year but so far, we have received no response and no data.

It is imperative that this information be added to the publicly facing dashboard, and by extension that it be provided in a timely manner. This information helps mobilize the resources and efforts in the communities to reduce incidents of harm and death, ensuring that those working on the front lines of this effort can be where they need to be. The information would not impact the privacy of Albertans but would identify and support neighbourhoods that are being most impacted by this crisis.

We know, from seeing the reporting done around COVID-19, that the data can be updated in a very timely manner. We further call on the government to ensure that the Data Office and the Coroner's Office are adequately funded so they can provide the information to the public as it is happening.