

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | October 21, 2022

Fargo Area Opioid Roundtable Discussion

NARRATIVE: On October 20, 2022, the North Dakota Highway Patrol and Fargo Police Department hosted a roundtable discussion about the opioid crisis in Fargo and surrounding areas. The goal was to reignite the conversation about opioids and related overdoses and strengthen relationships between entities working toward positive outcomes.

The topics included drug trafficking trends, overdose statistics, prevention efforts, and treatment and recovery services. During the meeting, the Health Statistics and Performance (HSP) Section within the North Dakota Department of Health shared preliminary overdose data. Their data indicates there were 131 drug overdose deaths statewide in 2021 which is an increase from 76 in 2019. Thirty-nine of those deaths occurred in Case County which is a 130% increase from 17 deaths in 2019.

Toxicology reports showed that the most common drugs present during overdose deaths are opiates and amphetamines. North Dakota Highway Patrol Colonel Brandon Solberg stated, "Addressing overdoses takes strong partnerships between public safety and public health entities, including the entire criminal justice system which includes law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, and corrections." Fargo Police Chief David Zibolski stated, "We identified a lot of issues to be resolved and need to look for innovative ideas to enhance the good work we are already doing."

Representatives from 26 public and private entities ranging from law enforcement, health and human services, education, elected offices, and local and state governments attended the meeting. Those entities are listed below:

- Cass County Coroner's Office
- Cass County Sheriff's Office
- Cass County State's Attorney's Office
- City of Fargo
- City of West Fargo
- Community Medical Services
- Fargo Cass Public Health
- Fargo Police Department
- Midwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area
- North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services
- North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation

- North Dakota Highway Patrol
 - North Dakota House, District 46
 - North Dakota Senate, District 11
 - North Dakota Senate, District 13
 - North Dakota Senate, District 27
 - North Dakota Senate, District 44
 - North Dakota State and Local Intelligence Center
 - North Dakota Office of the Governor
 - North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
 - North Dakota Office of Recovery Reinvented
 - North Dakota State University Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute
 - Southeast Human Service Center
 - State of North Dakota Courts
 - United States Drug Enforcement Administration
 - West Fargo Police Department
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