



# **Mental Health and Recovery Services Board**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Local Overdose Reports**

written by Mircea Handru, MBA

So where are we when it comes to the local overdose death numbers? Are things getting better or worse? According to the Ohio Department of Health, which just released the 2017 overdose death numbers, Sandusky County increased from 22 overdose deaths in 2016 to 23 overdose deaths in 2017 (4.5% increase); Seneca County increased from 5 overdose deaths in 2016 to 19 overdose deaths in 2017 (280% increase); and Wyandot County decreased from 4 overdose deaths in 2016 to 3 overdose deaths in 2017 (25% decrease). Especially for Seneca County, these numbers don't look good. Most of the overdose death increases had been linked to synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl and carfentanyl. Across the state, other remarkable data shows cocaine-related deaths climbed 39%, while heroin deaths dropped 46%.

Locally, I believe these numbers will drop, and we are now starting to make headways (2018). I hope I can write about it next year when the 2018 data will come out. Access to and quality of treatment services improved, more individuals are being educated about drug use, the local judicial system is helping and providing more alternatives to drug addicted individuals, and additional recovery supports are available. I would also like to mention the reality that many individuals using drugs changed from opioids to meth. The concern of dying led many to change the drug of choice. This doesn't make it better for anyone in long term; it is just different.

To access addiction or mental health treatment services and support, please call the Board's office at **419-448-0640**.

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