



MEMORANDUM

Date: September 21, 2017

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator 

Re: **2017 Quarterly Report - Pima County Overdose Deaths**

Attached for your information is a report from the Medical Examiner's Office in cooperation with the Health Department regarding overdose deaths related to opiate compounds in Pima County. This is a standard quarterly reporting provided to the State, per their request.

There are no new or alarming trends beyond a marginal increase in the frequency of Fentanyl deaths.

CHH/anc

Attachment

c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Dr. Francisco Garcia, Assistant County Administrator for Community and Health Services
Dr. Gregory Hess, Pima County Medical Examiner

PIMA COUNTY OVERDOSE DEATHS – 2017 QUARTERLY REPORT

JANUARY – JUNE 2017

The Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner (PCOME), in cooperation with the Health Department, will provide County administration with quarterly updates and trend analysis of overdose deaths to include deaths related to opiate compounds.

BACKGROUND

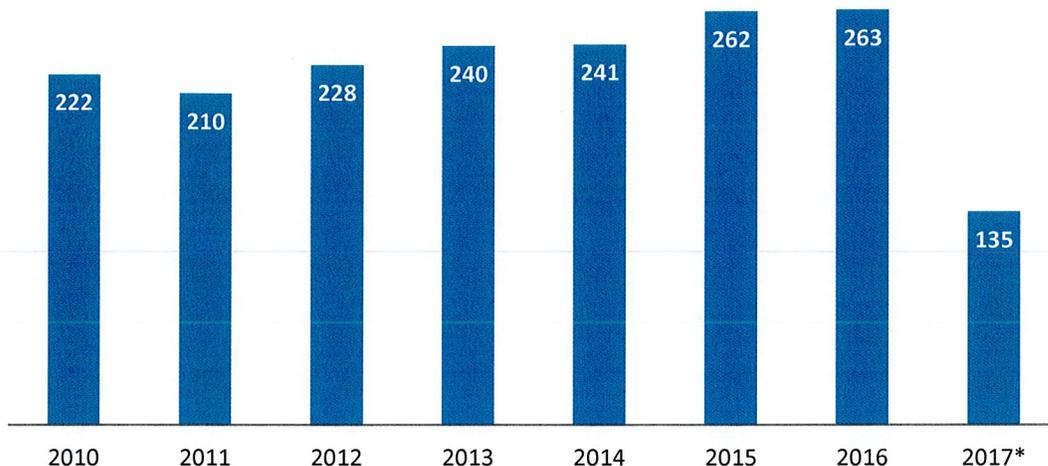
Overdose deaths in Pima County have increased by 18% overall from 2010 (222) to 2016 (263), punctuated by plateaus from 2013 (240) to 2014 (241) and again from 2015 (262) to 2016 (263) (F1). The PCOME has not historically reported overdose deaths in which an opiate compound was a component of the death separately from the total number of overdose deaths. That stated, 2016 overdose deaths were re-examined and an opiate compound contributed to 175 (67%) of the 263 total overdose deaths in 2016 either as a single or poly drug overdose. At this time, Pima County has not been subject to the wave of synthetic opiate deaths (fentanyl analogs such as carfentanil) that other regions of the country have experienced.

The total number of deaths attributed to an overdose by year, regardless of whether an opiate was a component of the overdose, are displayed in Figure 1. The number of overdose deaths by month in 2017, regardless of whether an opiate was a component of the overdose, are listed in Figure 2. The number of overdose deaths by month in 2017 in which an opiate was a component of the overdose are listed in Figure 3. Specific drugs contributing to 1st and 2nd quarter overdoses are listed in Figure 4. Select individual drugs by month are depicted in Figures 5-12.

FIGURES

FIGURE 1 (F1)

Pima County Overdose Deaths 2010 - 2017



*01/01/2017 – 06/30/2017

FIGURE 2 (F2)

Pima County Overdose Deaths by Month 2017*

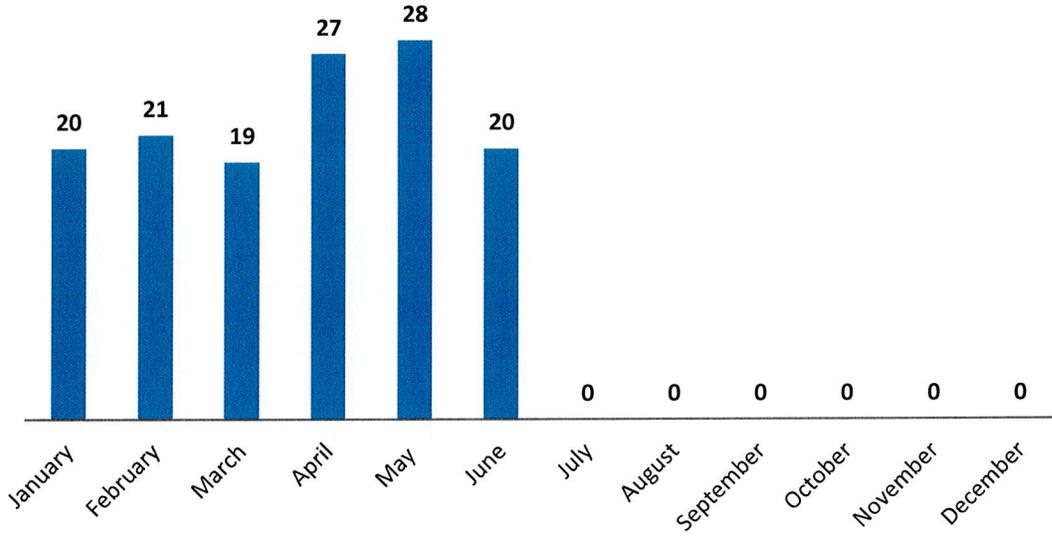
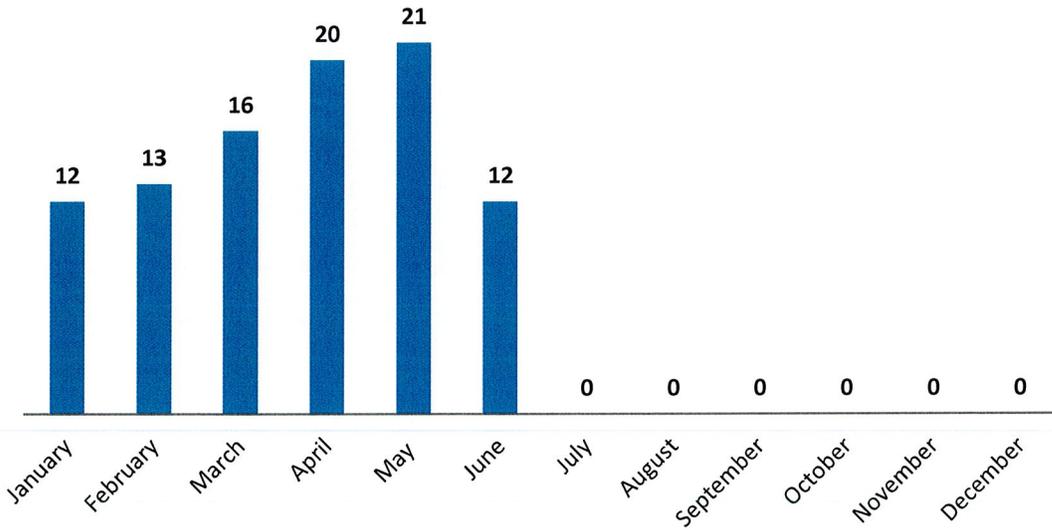


FIGURE 3 (F3)

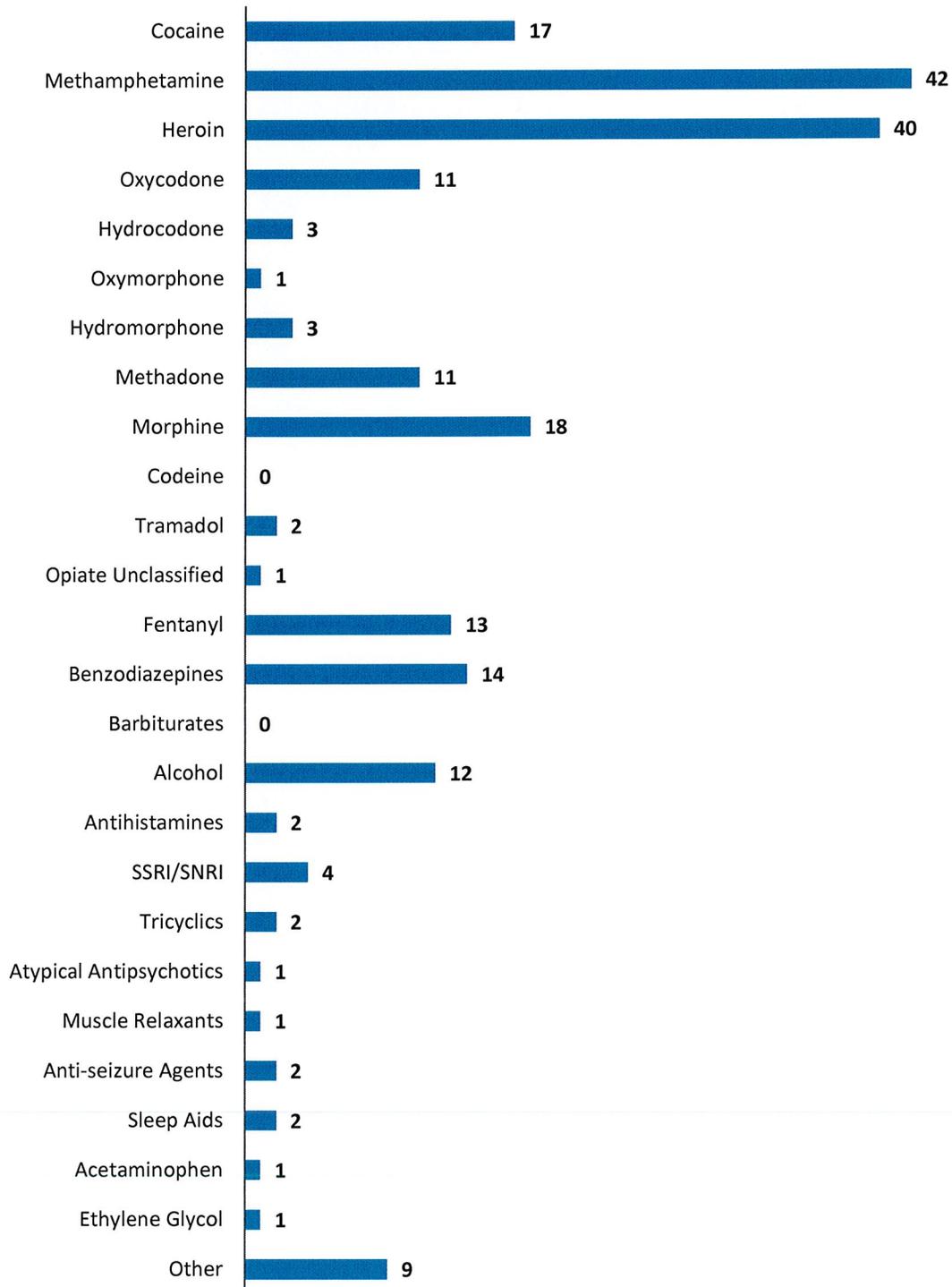
Overdose deaths in which an opiate was a component of the overdose by month 2017*



*01/01/2017 – 06/30/2017

FIGURE 4 (F4)

Pima County Overdose Deaths by Drug 2017*



*01/01/2017 – 06/30/2017

FIGURE 5 (F5)

2017: HEROIN BY MONTH*

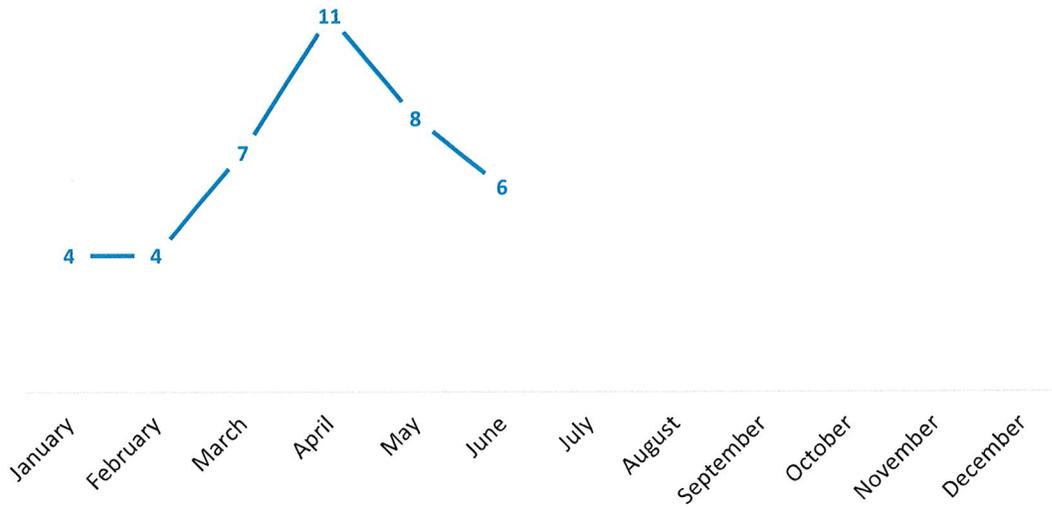


FIGURE 6 (F6)

2017: FENTANYL BY MONTH*



*01/01/2017 – 06/30/2017

FIGURE 7 (F7)

2017: OXYCODONE BY MONTH*

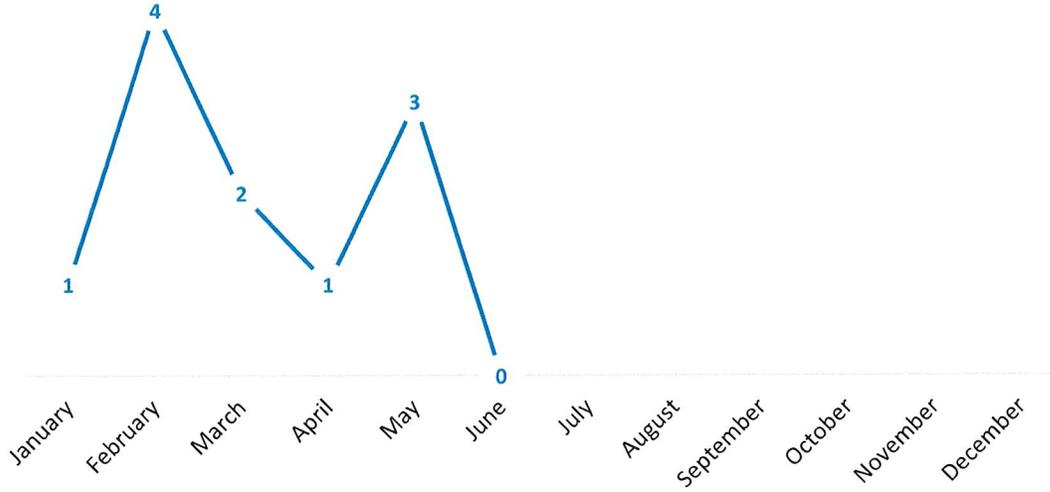
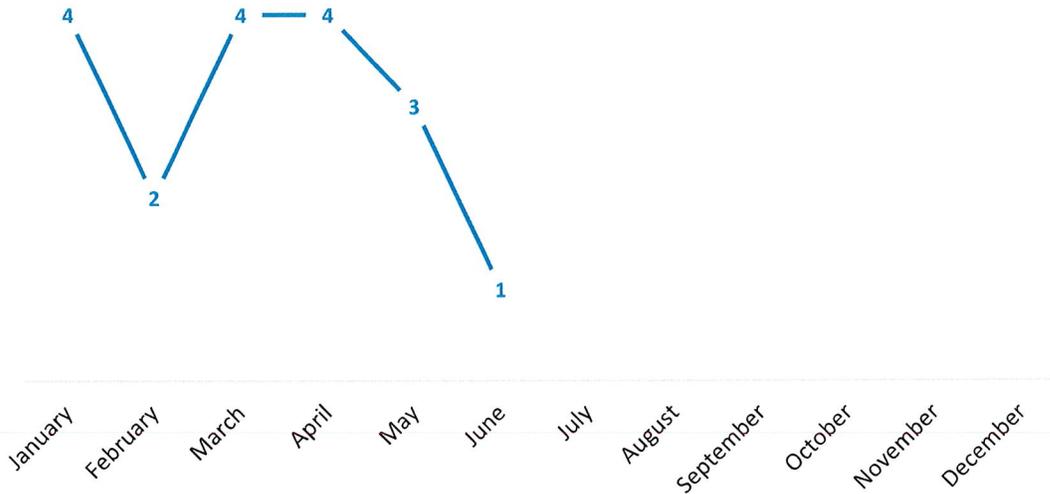


FIGURE 8 (F8)

2017: MORPHINE BY MONTH*



*01/01/2017 – 06/30/2017

FIGURE 9 (F9)

2017: METHAMPHETAMINE BY MONTH*

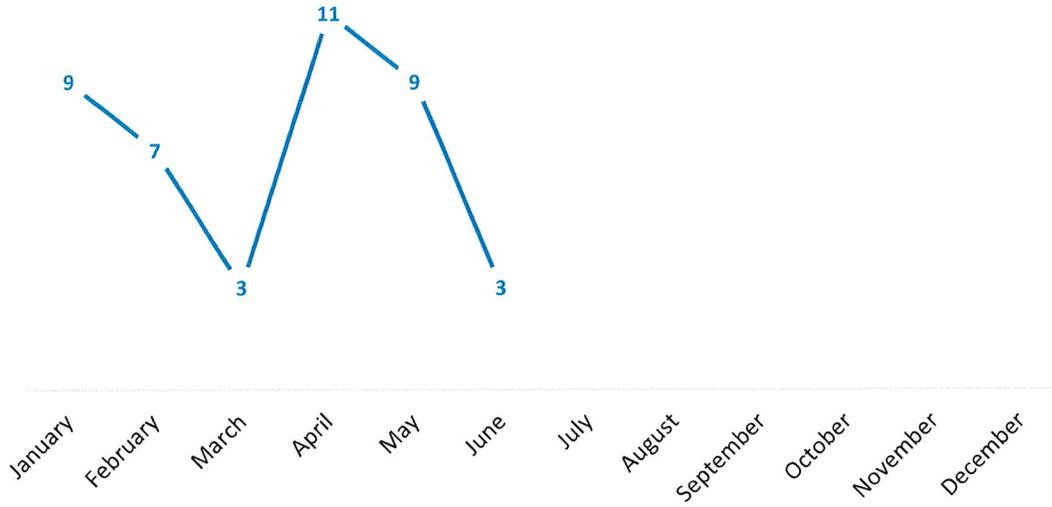
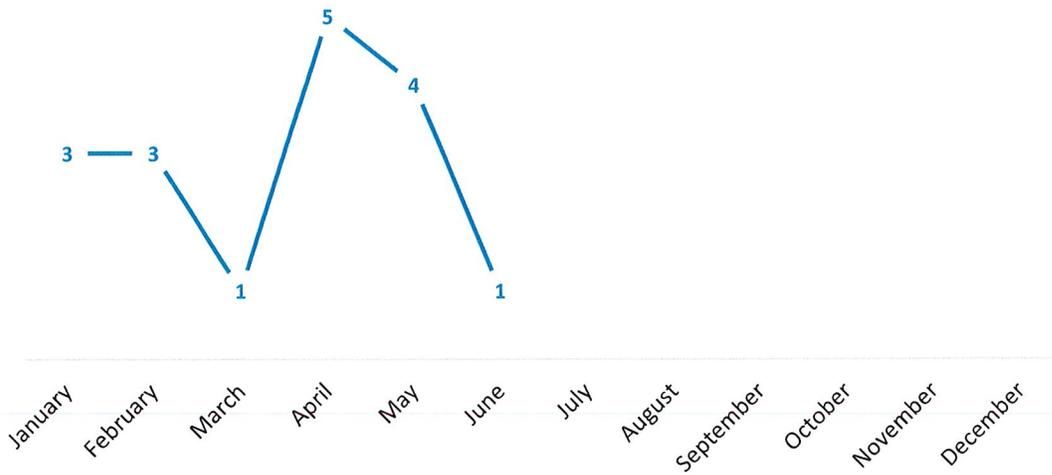


FIGURE 10 (F10)

2017: COCAINE BY MONTH*



*01/01/2017 – 06/30/2017

FIGURE 11 (F11)

2017: BENZODIAZEPINES BY MONTH*

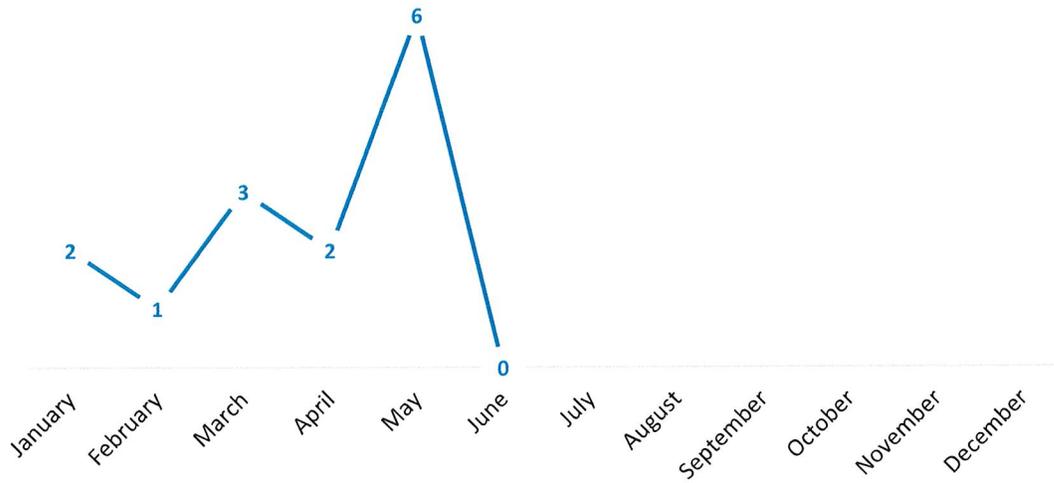
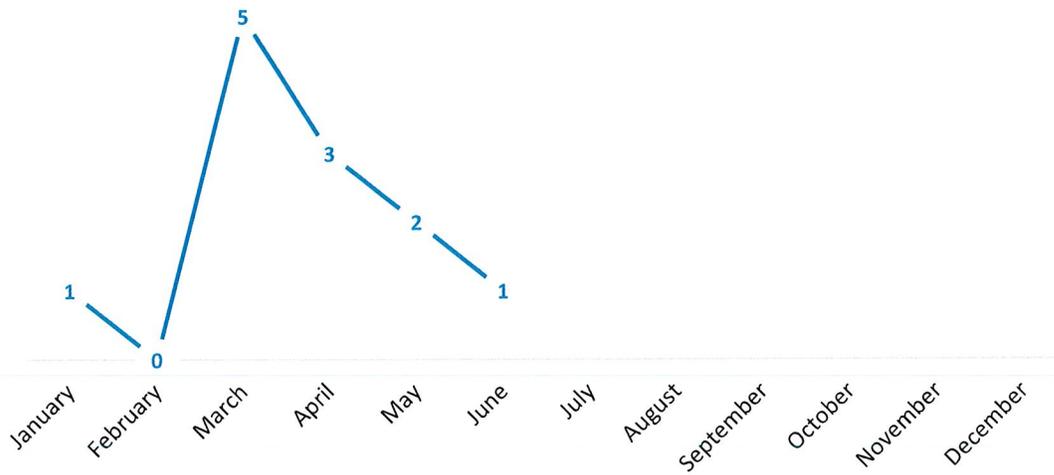


FIGURE 12 (F12)

2017: ALCOHOL BY MONTH*



*01/01/2017 – 06/30/2017

DISCUSSION

I do not see any new or alarming trends beyond a marginal increase in the frequency of fentanyl deaths upon review of these 2017 1st and 2nd quarter overdose data. There were 60 and 75 overdose deaths in the 1st and 2nd quarters respectively (**F2**), for a total of 135 overdose deaths over the first half of 2017 (**F1**). Opiate compounds were involved in 41 (68%) of the 60 deaths in the 1st quarter and 53 (71%) of the 75 deaths in the 2nd quarter for a combined total of 95 (70%) of the 135 overdose deaths over the first half of the year (**F3**).

The drugs that most frequently contributed to overdose deaths are similar to that seen in 2016 (**F4**); methamphetamine (42) followed by heroin (40), either as a single drug overdose or a component of a polydrug overdose. As mentioned above, deaths involving fentanyl are increased in 2017. Fentanyl was a contributor to 16 overdoses in 2016 and was involved in 13 overdoses in the first two quarters of 2017 (**F4, F6**).

If first and second quarter trends were to be considered a barometer for the remainder of the calendar year, I would project 270 total overdose deaths in 2017, approximately 70% of which involve an opiate compound, over 20 of which involve fentanyl. This would place the total number of overdose deaths similar to 2015 and 2016 numbers. Please expect to see an updated analysis to include data through the end of September 2017 towards the end of the fourth quarter 2017.