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NEWS

Office of Macomb County Executive
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Health & Community Services

For Immediate Release

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Macomb County Medical Examiner's 2017 annual report shows increase in Macomb County drug deaths

The Macomb County Medical Examiner's Office has released a [2017 annual report](#) that shows 380 drug-related deaths occurring in the county. This figure marks a 6.2 percent increase from 2016 and is an all-time high for the report.

The 380 drug-related deaths occurring in 2017 increased from 358 in 2016 and 280 in 2015. There were 110 heroin-related deaths reported in 2017 compared to 124 heroin-related deaths in 2016. However, the total number of fentanyl-related deaths significantly increased from 144 in 2016 to 199 in 2017, a 38 percent jump.

“We continue to see a rise in the number of overdose deaths involving fentanyl and fentanyl analogs,” said Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Daniel Spitz. “Overdose deaths involving poly-drug combinations of opioids with other substances such as cocaine are also expanding across the United States and in the county.”

The opioid overdose epidemic is not unique to Macomb County or the Metro Detroit region. Communities across the state of Michigan and country are seeing similar, and in some instances, higher numbers of opioid-related deaths. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that opioid overdose deaths were five times higher in 2016 than 1999, with many of these overdose deaths involving illicitly manufactured fentanyl and an array of potent fentanyl analogs.

In July 2018, it was announced that the Macomb County Office of Substance Abuse and Macomb County Community Mental Health received \$1.3 million in funding for substance abuse prevention and treatment initiatives from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. The Office of Substance Abuse provides services for eligible residents and maintains a comprehensive directory of service providers on their [website](#). Individuals looking for help for themselves or a family member are encouraged to call 586-948-0222 for information. In an emergency or during non-business hours, call the Crisis Center at 586-307-9100.

The Macomb County Health Department oversees the Medical Examiner's Office, which is an accredited office of the National Association of Medical Examiners. The Medical Examiner's Office is responsible for determining and certifying the cause of death and the manner of death where death has occurred violently, accidentally, unexpectedly or without medical attendance. The Medical Examiner's Office also determines whether or not autopsies should be conducted.