

Urine Drug Testing Data Can Provide Timely Estimates of Overdose Death, 'JAMA Network Open' Study Shows

Millennium Health, Ohio State University researchers say drug test data could "close the gap" in the timeliness of reporting overdose mortality



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/EINPresswire.com/ -- The availability of overdose

mortality data generally lags by up to 6 months,

hindering public health efforts to address the crisis in the present. A study published in 'JAMA

Network Open', co-authored by researchers at The Ohio State University College of Medicine and

[Millennium Health](#) (MH), demonstrates that aggregated urine drug testing data can be used to

estimate timely overdose death trends, presenting an opportunity to "close the gap" in reporting recent overdose mortality trends.

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The 'JAMA Network Open' article can be [accessed here](#).

The researchers drew their conclusions from evaluating more than 3.1 million urine drug test specimens collected from adult patients in substance use disorder treatment facilities in all 50 U.S. states between January 1, 2015, and January 31, 2025, and analyzed by Millennium Health. The Ohio State College of Medicine and MH teams developed statistical models to evaluate the utility of urine drug testing data in generating estimates of overdose mortality trends during the most recent 6-month period, for which

data are not yet available. The work builds upon their previous research that showed urine drug test results robustly correlate with overdose mortality trends.

"More than one million people have died from drug overdose since 2000, yet up-to-date estimates of overdose remain unavailable," said Charles Marks, PhD, MPH, Sr. Epidemiologist, Millennium Health. "This work builds upon our previous research showing that urine drug test data correlate with overdose and demonstrates that these data can be used within a strategy to generate up-to-date overdose estimates."

"The results of this study displayed that Millennium Health's model correctly identified the sudden increase of overdose at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and later decreases beginning in 2023. This gives us the capability of capturing the evolution of overdose as it's happening," added Eric Dawson, PharmD, Vice President, Clinical Affairs, Millennium Health.

"Aggregated urine drug testing results can be used to inform current overdose mortality trends and identify emerging threats allowing for timelier, targeted, data-driven public health responses to reduce overdose deaths," said Soledad Fernandez, PhD, Department of Biomedical Informatics and Center for Biostatistics, Ohio State College of Medicine.

The study is "Generating Timely Estimates of Overdose Death For the United States Using Urine Drug Test Data," by John V Myers, MS¹; Charles Marks, PhD²; Joanne Kim, PhD^{1,3}; Naleef Fareed, PhD³; Neena Thomas, MS¹; Penn Whitley, BA²; Soledad Fernandez, PhD^{1,3}

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About Millennium Health

Millennium Health is an accredited [specialty laboratory](#) with over 15 years of experience in drug testing. We provide objective information about patients' recent use of prescription medications and/or illicit drugs which helps clinicians monitor and treat millions of Americans living with chronic pain, substance use disorders, mental health disorders or other health conditions. Our ability to monitor drug use trends allows us to alert clinicians, health agencies, and others to real-time drug use changes to help inform more targeted drug overdose prevention and response strategies to save lives.

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