

The Halton Region noted that between Jan. 1 and Oct. 31, there were 189 ambulance calls for suspected opioid overdoses in Halton, which is up from 116 calls during the same period in 2018.



Chris Simon/Torstar

## FATAL OVERDOSES MAY BE ON THE DECLINE

DAVID LEA  
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Nov. 18 alone.

Emili said the estimate for 2019 is also subject to the Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario determining whether some suspected opioid overdoses were actually opioid overdoses.

"It's hard to know. Is that truly a decrease, or have we just not gotten all the reports from the coroner's office," said Emili.

"I would hope that it is a true decrease and it's reflective of all the hard work we are doing in terms of getting the message out of how to use safely, of what services in the community are available to help you and then getting naloxone into as many hands as possible through police, fire, pharmacies."

While the number of overdose fatalities may be going down, the number of opioid overdoses appears to be on the increase.

The Halton Region noted that between Jan. 1 and Oct. 31, there were 189 ambulance calls for suspected opioid overdoses in Halton, which is up from 116 calls during the same period in 2018.

This total includes 15 ambulance calls for suspected overdoses during October alone.

There were also 167 emergency room visits by Halton residents for a confirmed opioid overdose between Jan. 1 and Oct. 31 - up from 147 visits during the same period in 2018.

Emili noted that opioid overdoses are on the increase provincially.

It was also pointed out that 224 naloxone kits have been distributed through the Halton Region's Harm Reduction Program in the last 12 months.

The Region said 273 naloxone kits were distributed by pharmacies to Halton residents in April 2019 alone.

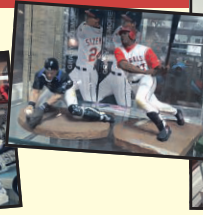
Jennifer Hartman, co-ordinator of Halton Police Corporate Communica-

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