



Easy Read Synthetic Opioid Preparedness Plan

Local Response to Synthetic Opioids in Cornwall

This plan explains how Cornwall is preparing to deal with dangerous synthetic opioids and other new drugs that could harm people. It follows national guidance from the Government's Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) and is updated regularly.

Who's Most at Risk?

- **Opiate users:** Around 2,500 people in Cornwall use heroin or crack. About 934 are not getting help.
- **Young people:** May try drugs without knowing they contain synthetic opioids.
- **Recreational users:** Adults using drugs like MDMA, ketamine, or cocaine may be exposed.
- **Prison leavers:** Lower tolerance after release increases overdose risk.
- **Online buyers:** People buying pills like Xanax or oxycodone online may be at risk.
- **Homeless and vulnerable groups:** Especially women and rough sleepers.
- **Nighttime economy** those taking drugs on a night out.

Communication Strategy

- The plan is shared across the Combating Drugs Partnership and posted on the Safer Cornwall website.
- Cornwall Council's Drug and Alcohol Team and Communications staff handle media and public updates.
- People in treatment are contacted through the specialist treatment provider.
- Wider public messages go out via media and social platforms.
- In serious cases (like a major drug incident), a special communication plan is created.

Everyone Has a Role

- Local services, community groups, and families can help prevent overdoses.
- Outreach workers, police, housing providers, and probation officers help find and support people not in treatment.

- Promoting needle exchanges, fast access to treatment, and harm reduction is a shared responsibility.



Need Help?

- Visit [Drug and Alcohol Support in Cornwall | WithYou](#)
- Email: DAAT@cornwall.gov.uk



Incident Response Levels

1. **Minor Incident (level 1):** Handled by regular services.
2. **Critical Internal Incident (level 2):** Affects service delivery, needs tactical coordination.
3. **Major Incident (level 3):** Serious situation needing emergency response from multiple agencies.

All incidents regardless of level are reported to OHID.



Out-of-Hours Support

The system is monitored during the evening and weekends by Cornwall Council's drug and alcohol team.



Key Safety Messages

- Don't advise smoking drugs—overdose can still happen.
- Carry and use naloxone (an overdose-reversing medicine).
- Multiple doses may be needed for strong opioids like nitazenes.
- Don't use drugs alone.
- Check on people after hospital discharge—opioids can stay active longer than naloxone.
- Ambulance staff should try and keep drug samples for testing.



Naloxone Access

- Available at:
 - [You searched for naloxone - Safer Cornwall](#)
 - WithYou service bases
 - Needle exchanges
 - Outreach workers
 - Supported housing
 - Police vehicles
 - Ambulance services
 - Some of Cornwall Council's staff
- Can be ordered online or purchased at Exchange Supplies <https://www.exchangesupplies.org>
- Offered to families, friends, and through peer support projects.



Drug Testing and Checking

- **Test strips** for dangerous drugs like Nitazenes, Fentanyl, and Xylazine are available from **With You**.
- These strips help people check their drugs and stay safer.
- If drugs are found or handed in, they can be tested using the **drug testing pathway**. [Drug-testing-pathway_Cornwall-IoS-v3-September-2025-SCwebsite-v.pdf](#)
- Staff at With You can help people send drug samples to **Wedinos** for testing: [WEDINOS - Sample Testing](#)



Monitoring Drug Risks

Cornwall Council's Drug and Alcohol Team (DAT) looks out for signs of dangerous drugs using different sources:



Source



What It Tells Us

Local Drug Info System (LDIS)	Reports from the public about strong synthetic opioids
Ambulance Service (SWAST)	Overdose cases needing lots of naloxone
Hospital (RCHT)	More overdose patients than usual
Police	999 calls about serious overdoses
With You	Info from drug workers
Coroner's Office	Reports when synthetic opioids are found in deaths
Supported Housing	Reports of drug incidents in housing
Drug Testing	Results from strips, police, or Wedinos



Non-Fatal Overdose Monitoring

- People who survive an overdose are at higher risk of dying in the following weeks.
- These people need extra care and support.
- Cornwall tracks overdose cases using ambulance, hospital, and treatment data.
- Everyone in treatment should have a personalised overdose rescue plan.
- Hospital Outreach Teams contact overdose patients while they're still in hospital.
- Naloxone use is tracked across services.



What Happens When a Risk Is Found

The **LDIS system** is run by Cornwall Council's DAT team.
If someone reports a drug risk:

1. **Action** – At least 3 experts check the report.
 2. **Assess** – They use a grading system to decide what to do.
 3. **Respond** – They log the decision, inform partners, and give feedback.
- Alerts follow national guidance from OHID.
If the risk is serious, more help may be needed from health services, police, and other partners.



Ongoing Actions

If the risk is high (Level 2 or above), an **Incident Management Team (IMT)** may be called.

The IMT brings together:

- Drug Partnership leads
- DAT team
- Police
- Ambulance service
- NHS care board
- UK Health Security Agency
- Local pharmacies and GPs
- Hospital emergency staff
- OHID
- With You treatment provider

They work together to manage the situation and reduce harm.



After an Incident

Each organisation involved must:

- Return to normal services
- Review what happened and learn from it
- Improve plans for future incidents

People affected by the incident should get:

- Fast access to treatment and prescriptions
- Extra support in the first month (when risk is highest)
- Trauma-informed care
- Naloxone restocked and shared
- Updates from the Community Drugs Partnership



Enforcing the Law

Drug policing is complex. It involves:

- Local police experts
- Regional crime teams
- National Crime Agency

Key contacts include:

- Drug Liaison Officers
- Harm Reduction leads
- Partnership Inspector and Superintendent

They help assess drug risks and respond through the LDIS system.



Drug Testing

- Police can take and test drug samples to help reduce harm.
- With You staff can help people in treatment send samples to Wedinos for testing.



Plan Review Date: November 2025- The plan is reviewed every year or after a serious incident.