



North Carolina's Opioid Crisis

*How the opioid crisis continues to impact
North Carolina's Veterans*

**VOICES
FOR NON-OPIOID
CHOICES**

STATE FACTS



376,180

VETERANS

in North Carolina are
enrolled in the VA
health care system.¹



952,939

Prescriptions

for opioids were dispensed in 2024,
an average rate of 8.9%.²



\$4.7 BILLION

was spent on Veterans
Medical Care in North
Carolina in 2024.³

NATIONAL DATA



632,000

Veterans misused
opioids in 2023.⁴



~ 50%

Nearly half of combat
wounded veterans report
misuse of prescription
opioids.⁵



\$1 BILLION

is spent each year on
Veterans abusing prescription
opioids.⁶

7.6 MILLION

adults misused prescription
opioids in 2024.⁷

\$3.94 TRILLION

estimated economic burden of fatal
overdoses and OUD between
2025 and 2028.⁸

1 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2024). State Summaries. <https://www.data.va.gov/stories/s/57p5-4mwf>

2 North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (n.d.). North Carolina Overdose Epidemic Data. <https://www.dph.ncdhhs.gov/programs/chronic-disease-and-injury/injury-and-violence-prevention-branch/north-carolina-overdose-epidemic-data#data-dashboard>

3 Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (2024). National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics. <https://www.va.gov/vetdata/Expenditures.asp>

4 2023 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Among the Veteran Population Aged 18 or Older. (2023). SAMHSA. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt53159/2023-nsduh-pop-slides-veterans.pdf>

5 Opioid and sedative misuse among veterans wounded in combat. (2019). Science Direct. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0306460318310141>

6 The effect of combat deployments on veteran opioid abuse. (2024). Wiley. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/heec.4812>

7 2024 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. (2024). Samhsa. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt56287/2024-nsduh-annual-national-report.pdf>

8 Burden of overdoses among persons with opioid use disorder in the United States, 2025–2028: a simulation modeling study. (2026). The Lancet Regional Health. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanam/article/PIIS2667-193X\(26\)00065-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanam/article/PIIS2667-193X(26)00065-7/fulltext)

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