

# Powder is most common form of fentanyl

## GENERAL COUNCIL continued from front page

tributor to fatal overdoses in the United States.

Fentanyl comes in both pharmaceutical and illicitly made forms, both of which are considered synthetic opioids. Pharmaceutical fentanyl is prescribed by doctors to treat severe pain. As per CDC statistics, most recent cases of fentanyl-related overdose are linked to illegally manufactured fentanyl, which is often added to other street drugs because of its potency and makes those drugs more dangerous and addictive.

"When I first began working in health care, one of the first places I worked was a hospital and fentanyl was a hospital drug. ... But like other illicit drugs, it made its way out of there and is being manufactured illicitly and being distributed in every format you can think of onto the street," Rowe said.

Currently, the most common form of fentanyl is a powder form that is put into tablet form, or crushed up to be smoked or injected.

"It is very powerful and people are trying to use it and it takes over the neuro receptors in a person's body, and they will do anything to get ahead of it," Rowe said. "We see their struggles at Great Circle Recovery and at the clinic in Grand Ronde. We're trying to do everything we can, collaborating with the Tribal Police and Social Services to put supports around it, but continue to see people struggling and we're trying to respond accordingly. ... There is no way to know what is in the pills. That is why we have started the 'One Pill Can Kill' awareness campaign and have been giving out Narcan at the pharmacy and teaching people



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~ Health Services Executive Director  
**Kelly Rowe**

how to use it."

Narcan is a medication that reverses opioid overdoses and can be easily sprayed into someone's nose in a similar manner as one would use an allergy spray. Even if someone hasn't overdosed, using Narcan is not harmful, Rowe said.

The federal Food and Drug Administration approved Narcan for over-the-counter use last month.

"Drug overdose persists as a major public health issue in the United States, with more than 101,750 reported fatal overdoses occurring in the 12-month period ending in October 2022, primarily driven by synthetic opioids like illicit fentanyl," the FDA stated in a press release announcing the decision.

In addition to giving out Narcan at the clinic, Rowe said that mandatory training was recently provided for all Tribal employees on how to use Narcan properly if they suspect someone is experiencing a drug overdose.

"It only takes a very small amount (of fentanyl) to trigger a lethal overdose," Rowe said. "When it's being illicitly created, there is lots of mixing with other drugs and we have even seen it mixed into marijuana."

During her presentation, Rowe shared several slides with the audience, including one that tracked fentanyl-related deaths in Oregon from 2019 to 2020. These skyrocketed

from 75 to 298. Although the number itself is not large, the percentage increase is telling. Compounding this is Oregon ranking number one in the country for the highest rates of drug addiction, but the lowest for its access to treatment options, Rowe said.

"It's like the perfect storm of horrible," she said. "We have all the people who need services and no services to give to them. For Native people, we are disproportionately impacted by substance use and overdose. You have the perfect storm and then the storm within the storm."

In response, the Tribe increased its prevention programming and training, and also implemented good medicine programming to offer traditional activities and offerings to promote healing. There are also two outpatient medication-assisted treatment centers – Great Circle Recovery – in Salem and Portland, which opened to the public in 2021 and 2023, respectively. There is also a mobile treatment clinic that makes stops in Grand Ronde, McMinnville, Willamina and other areas of the West Valley.

In addition to the medication, the centers offer a cultural component that is often missing in traditional drug treatment, as well as wound care and referrals for other services.

"Having these options available is critical," Rowe said. "What we found is fentanyl is so addictive and so hard to treat that having multiple

tools in our tool belt is necessary. We have to have as many options as possible to get people to wellness."

After her presentation, Rowe took 16 questions and comments from the online and in-person audience.

"Thank you for the presentation and for the recent staff training," Tribal Council member Kathleen George said. "When in doubt, use Narcan if you see someone unresponsive. It won't hurt them if they aren't overdosed and it could save their life."

Tribal Police Chief Jake McKnight urged caution even when accepting aspirin or Advil from someone.

"These fentanyl pills come in many forms, which can even look like Adderall and Xanax," McKnight said. "Don't be surprised if we start seeing them in vitamin or aspirin form next. If you didn't buy the medicine, don't use it."

In other action, it was announced that the next General Council meeting will be in a hybrid format at 11 a.m. Sunday, May 7, on Zoom and in Tribal Council Chambers.

Door prize winners were Boaz Wolpe, Karon Chapman, Tonya Gleason-Shepek, Bill Stephens and Mike Portwood, \$50 each; and Robert Wiggs, Elias LaGoy and Tyla LaGoy, \$100 each.

After the General Council meeting concluded, a community input meeting was held at 1 p.m. to seek advisory vote topics to possibly be placed on the September Tribal Council ballot. After a list of topics is compiled, Tribal Council will select the questions to be placed on the ballot.

The entire meeting can be viewed by visiting the Tribal government's website at [www.grandronde.org](http://www.grandronde.org) and clicking on the Government tab and then Videos. ■

You're invited to

# mək<sup>h</sup>mək mania

A celebration of local food, farmers, hunting & gathering

Saturday, May 6th  
from 10 AM - 2 PM at the Tribal Gym

Free and open to all community members

- Cooking Demonstrations
- Educational Workshops
- Informational booths
- Free community meal

Organized by Grand Ronde's Food Access and Community Team, Sponsored by Marion-Polk Food Share & The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde

## Fatherhood Is Sacred<sup>®</sup>, Motherhood Is Sacred<sup>®</sup> Training

*"I totally love the program of Motherhood Is Sacred and Fatherhood Is Sacred. The sessions are true to all native people and the way we were brought up. Several of the sessions are the way I was taught as a child and have taught & passed down to my children, nieces, nephews, and family members. This program needs to be offered throughout our communities, and in schools to our students. I love how it is non-judgmental and open, makes you feel welcomed and willing to open up."* – Tammy Morin, LSW

All sessions are on Fridays  
from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

April 28th: Introduction to the Program  
May 5th: Laying the Foundation  
May 12th: The Creator  
May 19th: Choice  
May 26th: Essential Part of Choice  
June 2nd: Teachable  
June 9th: Barriers to Being Teachable  
June 16th: Wisdom  
June 23rd: Service  
\*June 30th: Self Identity  
July 7th: Relationships  
July 14th: Nurturing

\* This schedule may be extended by one week depending on how participants vote on how to handle the Friday prior to July 4th.

Please RSVP by Monday, April 17th by scanning the QR code or using the link below:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FISMIS23>

RSVP is required so we can plan for food and child care needs.

This training will be facilitated by Nicholas and Alisa Mull. If you have any curriculum questions, please email [Nicholas.mull@grandronde.org](mailto:Nicholas.mull@grandronde.org) or [Alisa.mull@grandronde.org](mailto:Alisa.mull@grandronde.org).

Native American Fatherhood & Families Association