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For Immediate Release – April 14, 2021

Today (April 14) marks five years since BC declared an overdose crisis. Troy Clifford is a working paramedic and president of Ambulance Paramedics & Dispatchers of BC. If you are doing a story about the overdose crisis and would like to speak with Troy, he is available. Below is a video message from paramedics, and a transcript from Troy.

**Video:** [Message from Paramedics](#)

### ***Troy Clifford, president, Ambulance Paramedics of BC***

On this sombre anniversary, your ambulance paramedics and emergency dispatchers pay their respects to those who have lost their lives to drugs, and to their families whose lives have changed forever.

This is *not* a crisis of the homeless. This is a crisis that hits all demographics – young and old; advantaged and disadvantaged. In fact, almost **60 per cent of deaths take place in people's own homes – not on the streets.**

Today, we are responding to more than 70 calls per day related to overdoses. And every day, 5 people are dying across the province.

We've been on the frontline of the opioid epidemic. We know that timely access to high-quality care saves lives. There are also ways people can decrease their risk of an overdose.

- If you are going to use drugs, have someone there with you.
- Carry Naloxone, a medication that quickly reverses effects of an overdose from opioids. You can get it without a prescription.
- Go to a harm reduction facility where you will be supervised while using drugs.
- And download the Lifeguard app ... it will connect to 9-1-1 automatically in the event of an unexpected overdose.

We ask you to join us in remembering, and to help put an end to this crisis. Thank you.

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