

WEST VIRGINIA COUNTY REPORTS 144 OVERDOSES IN A 6 MONTH SPAN

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PRINCETON, W.Va. (AP) — Social workers are providing a deep look into opioid addiction in a West Virginia county, where they say some addicts relapse as many as seven times before getting clean.

The Bluefield Daily Telegraph reports that Mercer County had 144 overdoses including four deaths through June of this year.

The Southern Highlands Community Mental Health Center presented its report on the situation to the county commission on Tuesday. Southern Highlands CEO Lisa Jones says only 44% of the overdoses involved illicit drugs, while 56% involved prescription opioid medications.

She says programs like hers and others are working with the county follow up with people who overdose to guide them into treatment.

West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources says about 7,000 people died from overdoses between 2001 and 2015.