

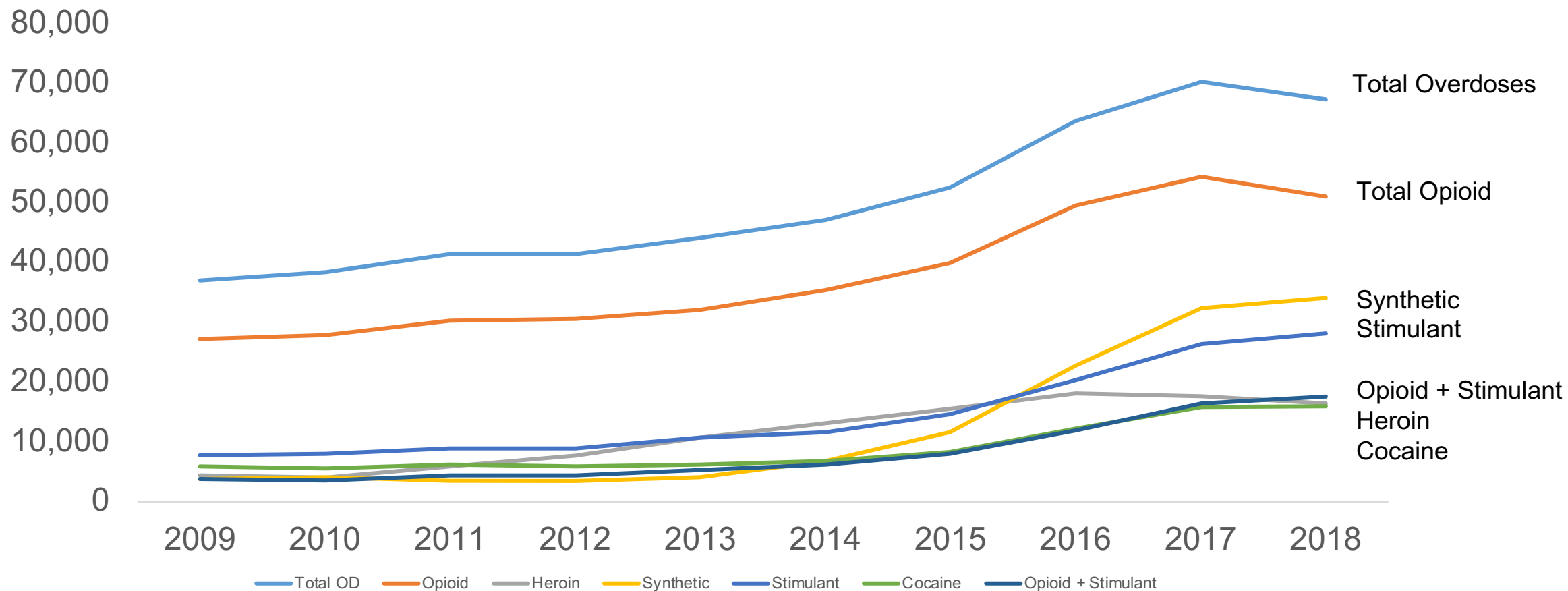
Epidemic in a Pandemic

Opioid overdoses and COVID-19

Patricia Strach, Elizabeth Pérez-Chiqués, Katie Zuber
July 16, 2020

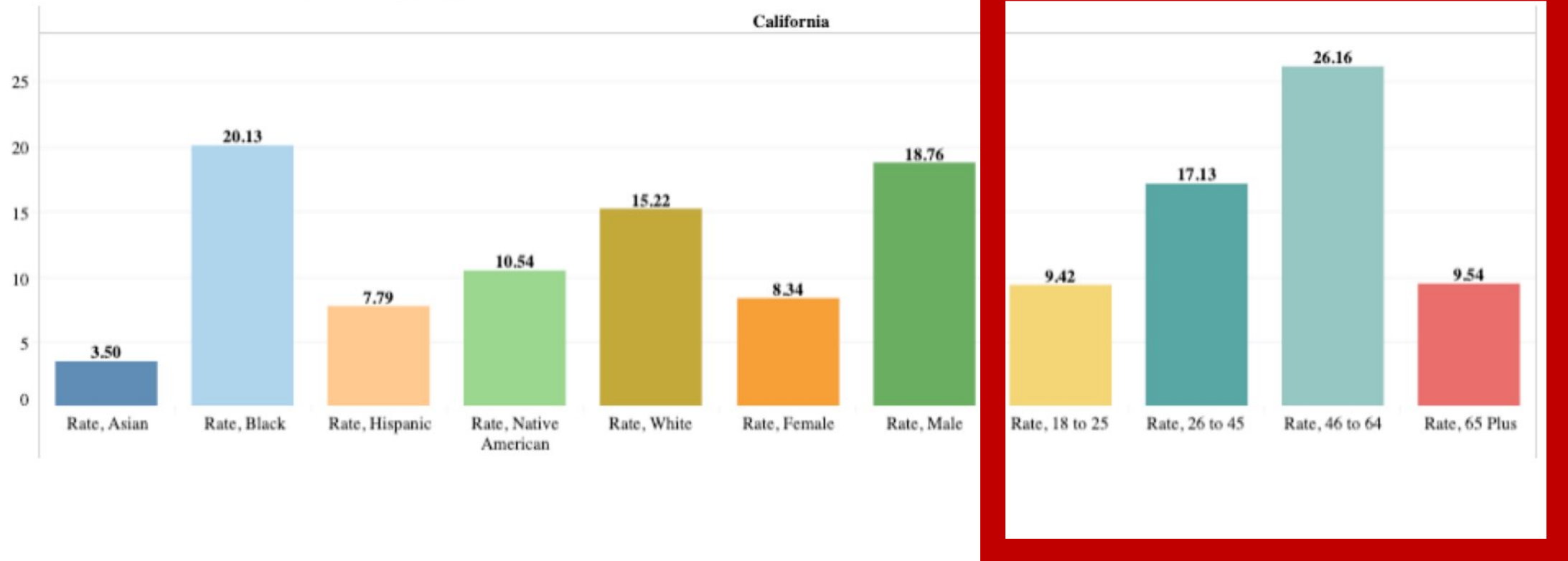
US Drug Overdose Deaths 2009-2018

Among 67,367 drug overdose deaths in 2018, 50,908 involved opioids.

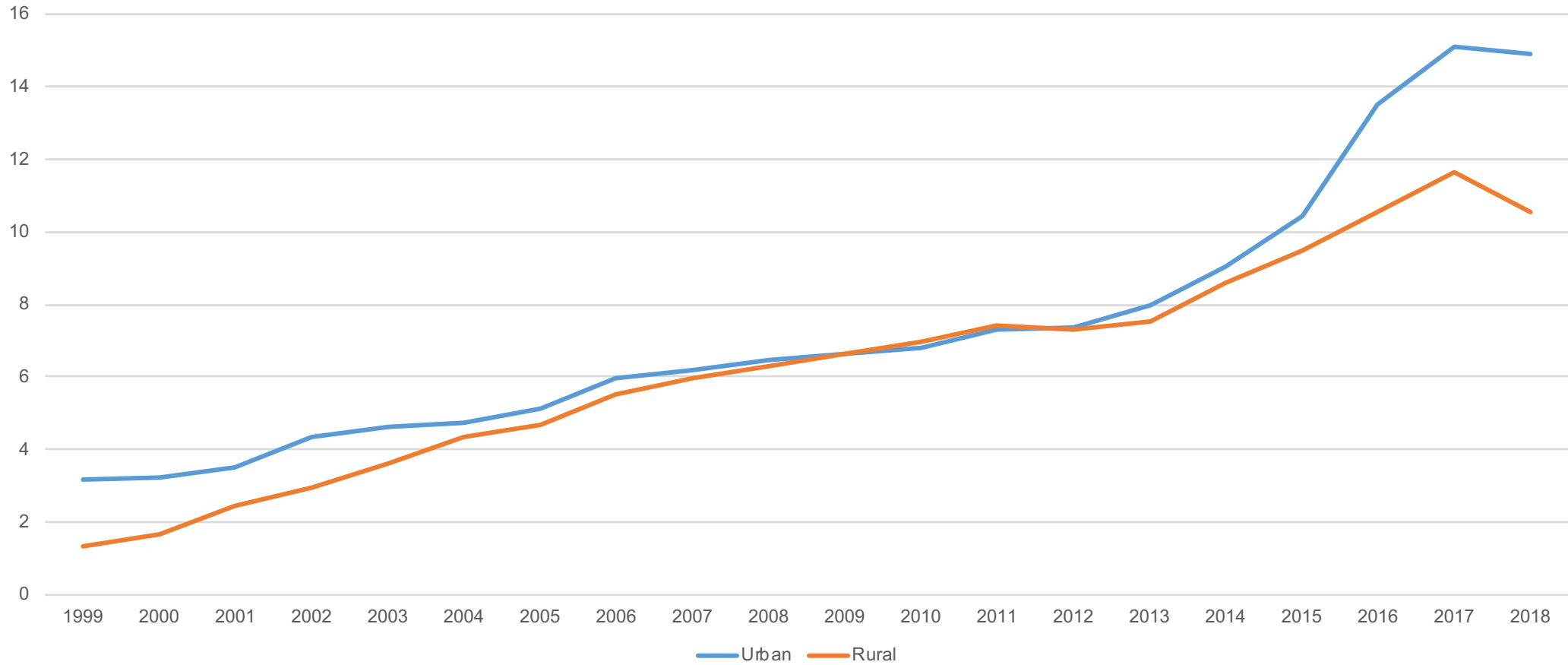


CA Opioid Overdose Death Rates by Age 2018

Overdose Death Rate per 100,000 by Demography Type (2018)



US Opioid Overdose Death Rates by Urban/Rural 2018



Source: CDC Overdose Data



NOT DEATHS OF DESPAIR: MECHANISMS

Opinion

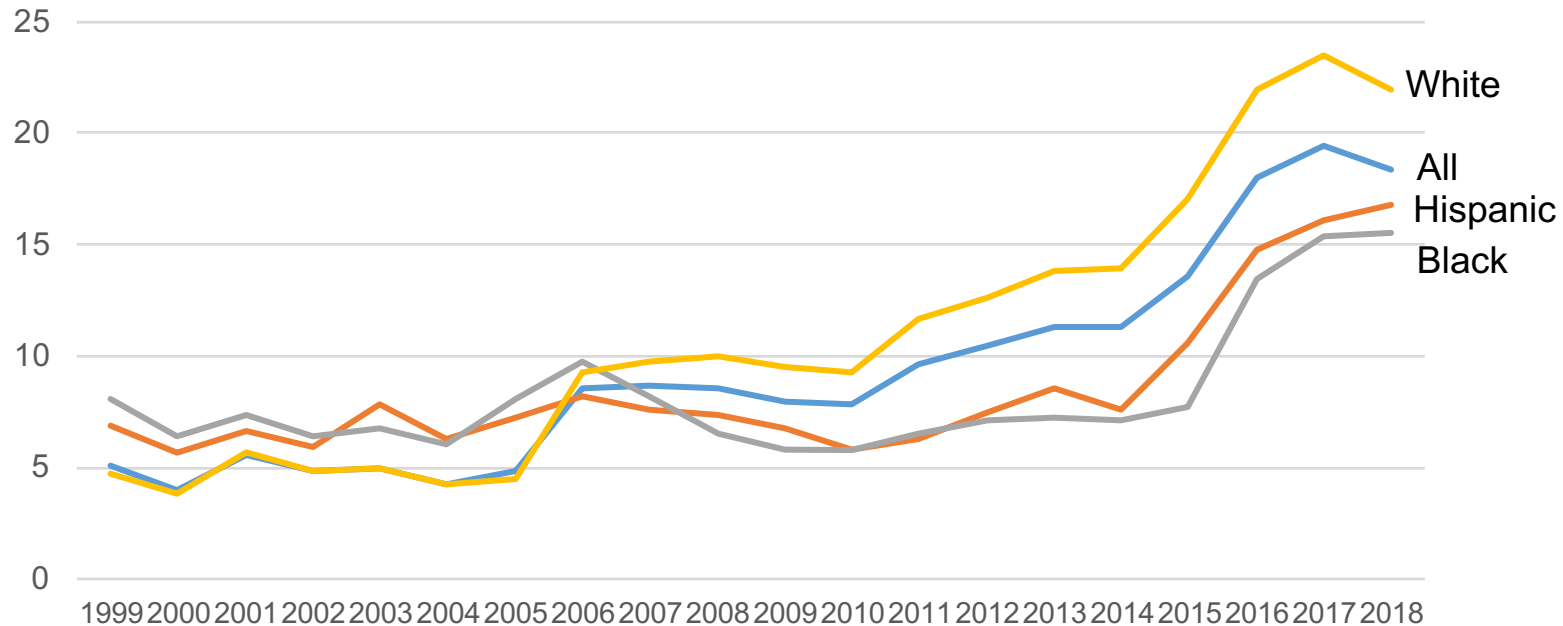
Who Killed the Knapp Family?

Across America, working-class people — including many of our friends — are dying of despair. And we're still blaming the wrong people.

**Social science
patterns suggest
concrete
mechanisms,
not despair.**



NYS Opioid Overdose Death Rates by Race/Ethnicity 1999-2018



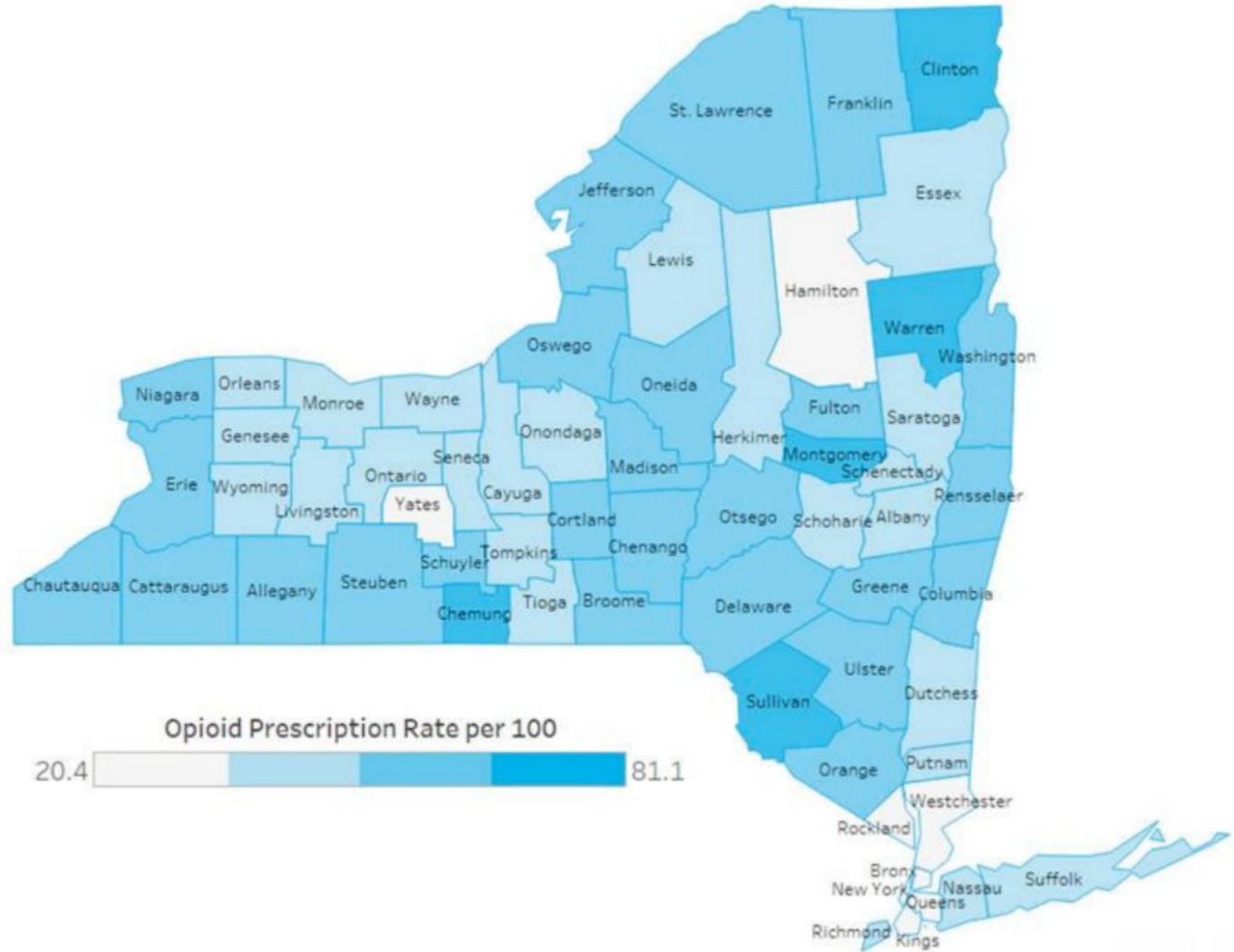
White Americans have higher opioid overdose rates, but they also have greater access to prescription opioids within the healthcare system.

Hispanic Americans are 22 percent less likely to be prescribed opioids relative to white Americans, while Black Americans are 29 percent less likely to receive them (Meghani et al. 2012).

PATHWAYS IN

2017 Age-Adjusted Opioid Prescription Rate Per 100 Population

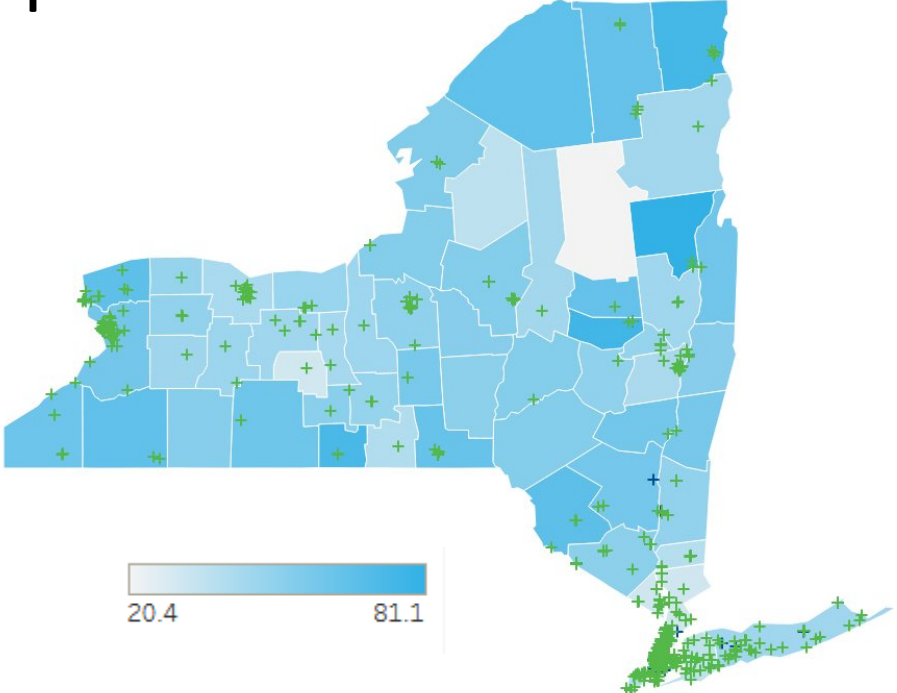
New York's highest prescribing rates are in rural areas.



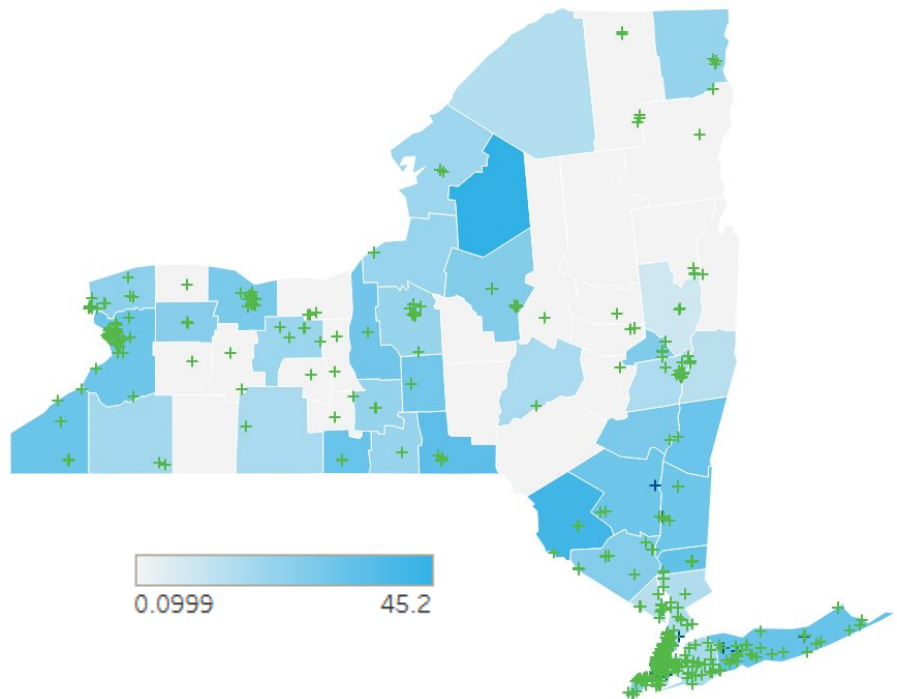
Source: CDC overdose data

PATHWAYS OUT

Hitting hardest the areas without infrastructure to deal with opioid addiction



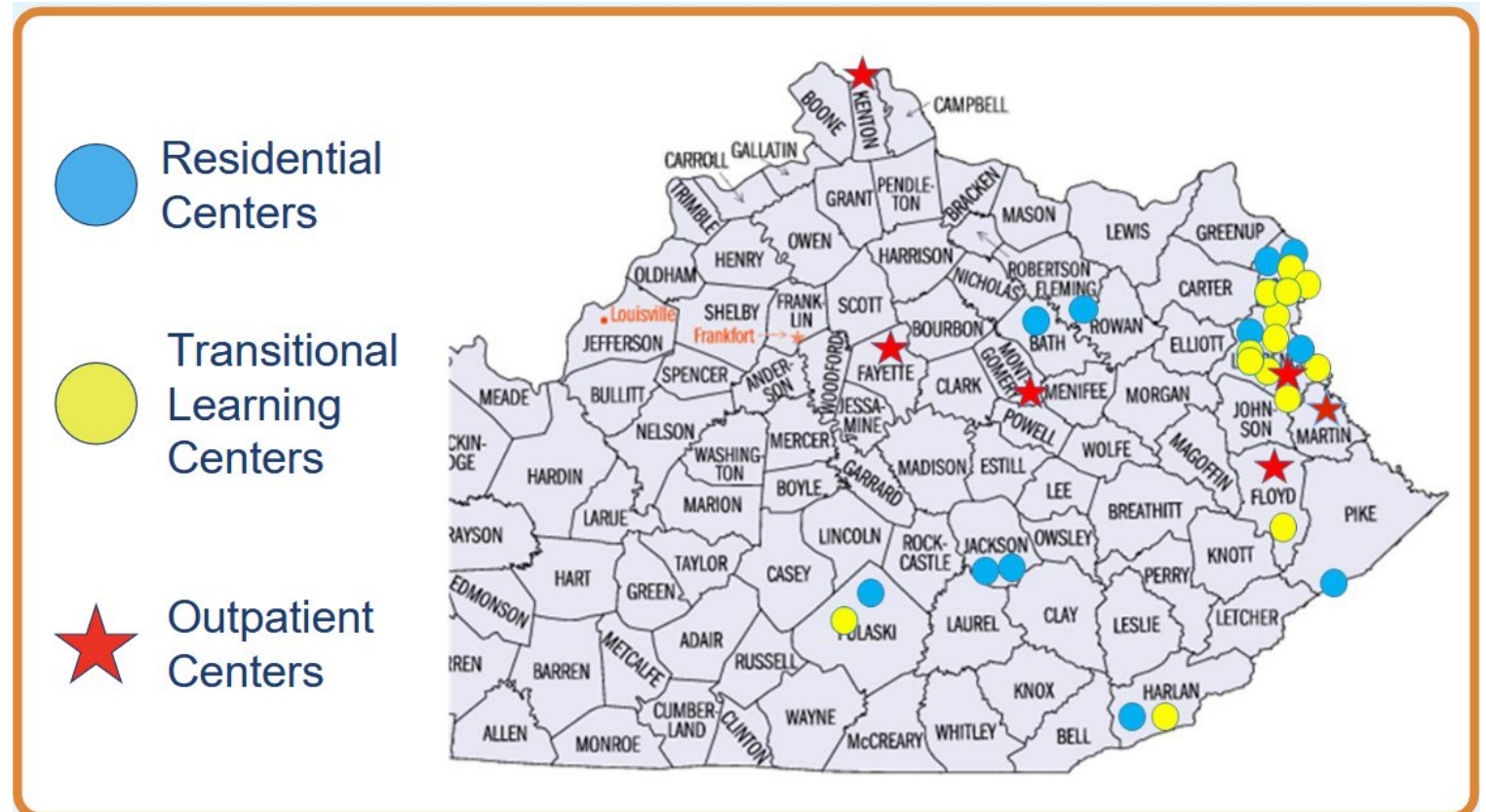
2017 Opioid Prescription Rate per 100 people (blue) and Treatment Options (+)



Opioid Overdose Death Rate per 100,000 (blue) and Treatment Options (+)

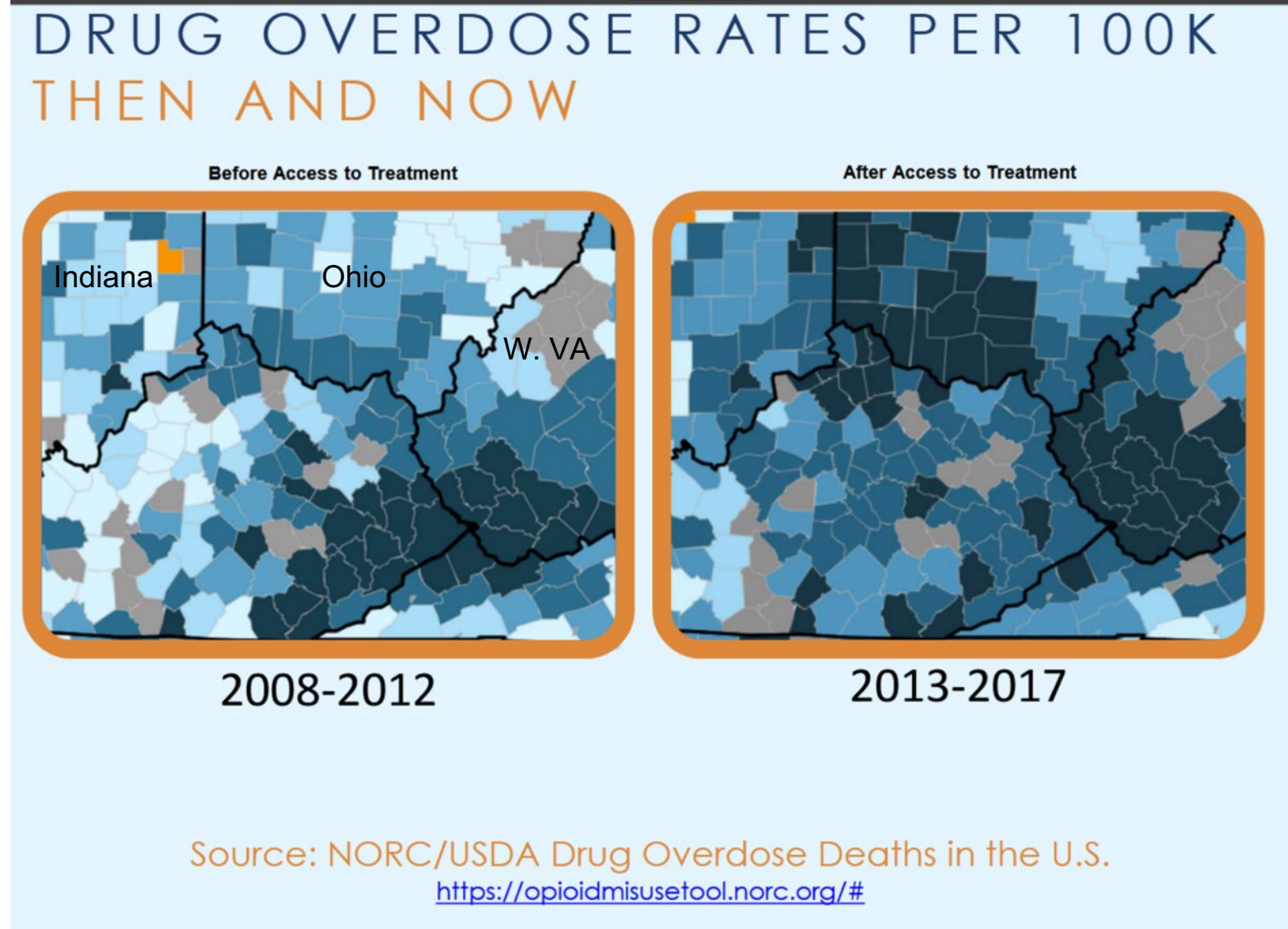
Access Matters

Addiction Recovery Care of Kentucky opened 30+ programs in 12 counties



Source: Addiction Recovery Care

Overdose deaths in Eastern Kentucky fell, but rose in neighboring Indiana, Ohio, and West Virginia



Source: Addiction Recovery Care

THE VIEW FROM THE FRONTLINES



A METHOD OF LISTENING

160+ interviews:

Law enforcement,
lawyers, judges,
doctors, nurses,
social workers,
government
officials, activists,
families, and
people in
recovery prior to
COVID pandemic



“

[T]his COVID pandemic has hit us on top of the overdose epidemic that we were already dealing with and that took us almost 10 years to, if you will, flatten the curve....It took millions and millions of dollars and a lot of innovative practices to get a handle on curbing the number of overdoses, and...it took a lot to reach that point and then on top of that we now have COVID.

– provider

Overdose deaths increased up to 42% during COVID-19

Monthly overdoses grew dramatically during the pandemic

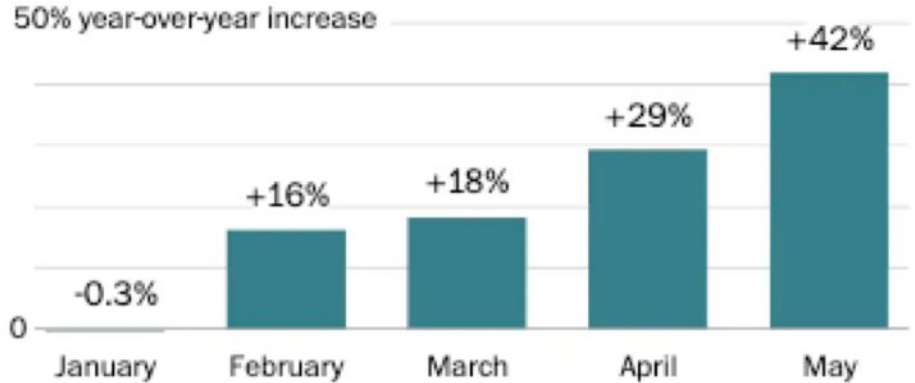
For every 10 suspected overdoses reported to ODMAP in May 2019 ...



... 14 overdoses were reported in May 2020.



Overdoses increased up to 42% per month during the pandemic, as compared to the same months in 2019.



Note: Percent growth references the 1,201 agencies reporting to ODMAP by January 2019.

Source: ODMAP

ALYSSA FOWERS/THE WASHINGTON POST

Pandemic makes opioid epidemic worse

- + Increased stress
- + Decreased access to treatment
- + Fear of seeking treatment
- + Isolation (Narcan)



ADDRESSING THE CRISIS

People on the frontlines want change

If it's a crisis, why don't you treat it like one?

--mom

RESILIENCE

DEATHS OF DESPAIR?

The deaths of despair narrative is speculative, overlooks black lives, and implies that lack of resilience explains the life expectancy inequities among whites, especially of those who have been socioeconomically disenfranchised.

-- Dr. Arline Geronimus



In Loving Memory of



III
MCMXXIII
VI
XXXVII
II

THE KINGFISHER PROJECT



INFORMATION VS. HEROIN

wjff 90.5fm

VI
XXII
II
MMIV

Pisall





Takeaways

- + Opioids are highly lethal and have hit rural communities especially hard.
- + Despair isn't killing people in these communities, easy access to opioids and a lack of access to treatment is.
- + Staff shortages—especially in rural communities—make it hard to get help.
- + COVID-19 did not displace opioids, it made the opioid epidemic worse.



#StoriesfromSullivan

ROCKINST.ORG