



2022 Van Wert County Community Health Assessment

Prepared by:

The OHIO Alliance for Population Health

Funded by:

The Van Wert County General Health District

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Forward

The Van Wert County General Health District is pleased to present the 2022 Van Wert County Community Health Assessment (CHA). This report is a snapshot of the health of our community and was collected from residents 18 years and older through online and paper surveys as well as community engagement opportunities.

The statistics in this report provide valid and reliable measures of the collective health of Van Wert County residents. The document will guide the health department and community health partners over the next few years to strengthen the local public health system and to provide programs and services that will improve the overall health and well-being of Van Wert County residents.

In the past, the assessment has been used by the health department and local organizations to leverage grant dollars to provide funds to the county to address the needs identified within this report. The community assessment is a tool that various community agencies and individuals can use for data-driven decision-making. We hope the current information will provide similar opportunities.

We greatly appreciate the community groups and partners who assisted with the development of the survey and review of the data. This community assessment belongs to the people of Van Wert County and could not have been completed without their support and participation in the survey, focus groups and community forums.

Our intent is to periodically repeat the process to measure improvements and to identify emerging issues of population health. Our hope is that the assessment will stimulate new collaborations among public and private agencies in the years ahead.

We encourage you to contact Van Wert County General Health District for questions or assistance with the Community Health Assessment.

Respectfully,
Paul A. Kalogerou, MD
Health Commissioner/Medical Director

Acknowledgments

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The 2022 Van Wert County Health Assessment can be found on the following website: www.vanwertcountyhealth.org

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Key Findings

The statistics in this report provide important measures of the collective health and wellbeing of Van Wert County residents. The document, a multi-phase health assessment, is comprised of a survey of Van Wert County adult residents, an in-depth analysis of Van Wert County health perspectives, an analysis of mortality records, and a brief overview of important Van Wert County demographics. The research team notes the following significant findings:

1. Van Wert County residents perceive their health as being average to excellent, which aligns with the County Health Rankings of Health Factors; Van Wert is ranked among the healthiest counties in the state when considering health factors including health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the environment.¹
2. Residents report being impaired by high blood pressure, arthritis, and high cholesterol to a significant degree. The top five causes of death in Van Wert County are heart failure, cancer, chronic lower respiratory diseases, and cerebrovascular diseases. It is noteworthy that Van Wert does have a slightly larger population of adults over the age of 65 than the state average.
3. Diabetes fatality rates for Van Wert County are higher than the state average.
4. Van Wert County residents saw increased and improved collaboration across systems and organizations to improve the health and resources in the community.
5. Residents of Van Wert County were concerned about their access to health care, including specialists. Van Wert County is a designated Health Professional Shortage Area for primary care, dental health, and mental health, according to the US Health Resources & Services Administration.
6. Community members would like to be more active and support improved walkways and additional greenspace to encourage physical activity.
7. While county graduation rates fell into the top range of the state, a significantly lower percentage of residents have completed college.

¹ Health factors, according to 2022 County Roadmap and Rankings, include health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment. More details can be found at <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/ohio/2022/rankings/van-wert/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>

8. While concerns were voiced about substance use and overdose rates in the county during focus groups and in the survey, the mortality data for the county indicated that overdose and suicide rates lagged behind state rates by 42 percent and 14 percent respectively, while the alcohol-related cirrhosis rate exceeded the state average by 7 percent.
9. Van Wert County residents are proud of and familiar with the resources available in their community for individuals across the lifespan. They would like to see more community events and activities where young people can gather and additional services for populations including the aging and homeless.

Mobilizing for Action Through Planning and Partnerships Process

A Community Health Assessment provides comprehensive information about the community's current health status, needs, assets, and issues and encourages shared ownership of the processes including assessment, planning, investment, implementation, and evaluation (Figure 1). Data is collected through various methods from the community to provide a full picture of its health. The data collection team followed an adaptation of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) process to collect data about the health of Van Wert County's residents. MAPP is a flexible "community-wide strategic planning process for improving public health. This framework helps communities prioritize **public health** issues, identify resources for addressing them, and take action to improve conditions that support healthy living."²

² From Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) User's Handbook by National Association of County and City Health Officials (2013).

The MAPP process includes four phases:

Phase One: Organize for success/Partnership Development

During this phase, participants, needs, and resources are identified. A plan for how the community will be engaged through the MAPP process is defined.

Phase Two: Visioning

Visioning answers the questions *Where do we, as a community, see ourselves in three to five years? What values will support us through the MAPP process?*

Phase Three: Assessments

This phase consists of data collection using four MAPP Assessments (Community Health Status Assessment, Community Themes and Strengths, Local Public Health System Assessment, and Forces of Change Assessment).

Phase Four: Identify Strategic Issues

What issues are critical to the success of the local public health system? What fundamental policy choices or critical challenges must be addressed for the community to achieve its vision?



Figure 1: MAPP Academic Model

Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB)

To receive accreditation status from The Public Health Accreditation Board it is required to complete a community health assessment (CHA) every five years. The purpose of a CHA is to describe the health status of the community, by gathering information on community members' health status, community health needs, assets, and local health issues. With the PHAB national accreditation model, the main goal is to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing the quality and performance of Tribal, state, local, and territorial public health departments.

Ohio State Health Assessment (SHA)

The 2019 State Health Assessment (SHA) provides needed data to inform health improvement priorities and strategies in the state. This assessment includes over 140 metrics, organized into data profiles, as well as information gathered through five regional forums, a review of local health department and hospital assessments, and plans, and key informant interviews. The Ohio SHA also provides a template for local partners, with a uniform set of categories and metrics to use in related assessments. The 2019 Ohio State Health Assessment was a well-used resource throughout this community health assessment process.

To see the Ohio 2019 SHA Full Summary Report please proceed to this website:

<https://odh.ohio.gov/static/SHA/2019/Ohio-2019-SHA-Full-Summary-Report.pdf>

Primary Data

Survey Methodology

The quantitative data for this cross-sectional community health assessment was collected using a paper and online survey of adults in Van Wert County (see Appendix I). This process was a joint effort with community members, the Van Wert County General Health District (VWCGHD), and the Ohio Alliance for Population Health (OAPH) who were engaged throughout the entirety of this assessment.

The survey used for the quantitative data collection was created using the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) 2020 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Questionnaire.³ Survey creation was discussed in the initial plenary meeting with the Van Wert County General Health District Administrator and Ohio Alliance for Population Health staff members. Questions were selected based on which would best evaluate the health needs, assets, and status of Van Wert County residents. The first draft of survey questions included 112 questions. These questions were chosen based on the interests of community physicians, rising concerns, and the past needs of the Van Wert community. This initial draft was sent for approval to the VWCGHD Administrator who assessed the survey with their communications team and other departmental staff members.

It was decided that, to reach the most individuals, an online survey and a mailed paper survey would be the best distribution methods. The online survey, built in Qualtrics, was repeatedly posted to VWCGHD social media accounts. The online survey link was sent out to twelve area partners to distribute via email and social media. The online survey link was also released by five area newspapers, two of which had online versions. Paper surveys were distributed to the local Council on Aging and the Department of Job and Family Services to reach older adults and those with limited internet access. Twenty paper copies were also given to health department home visitors to reach lower-income families.

An additional 800 paper surveys were mailed, targeting the population without internet or social media, using addresses for those 60 and older. Those surveys were mainly mailed to households in the villages of Wren, Willshire, Scott, Elgin, Venedocia, Spencerville, Ohio City, and Middlepoint because they may not have a regular newspaper source. A letter from VWCGHD was sent along with paper surveys, informing residents of the importance of the community health assessment.

Responses to both the paper and online survey were anonymously collected. The data that was collected was analyzed by the OAPH team. The group of survey respondents was small.

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, August 26). *CDC - BRFSS - Questionnaires*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/questionnaires/index.htm>

The adult survey sample consisted of Van Wert County residents who were eighteen and older. There were 225 completed questionnaires from the estimated 22,219 adult residents. Assuming that the survey participants are representative of the adult population, then the power analysis shows we can be 95% confident that the margin of error of the survey is +/- 6.5%. SPSS Version 281 was used to produce cross-tabulations and frequency counts. The data were weighted based on gender to correct for the under-sampling of male respondents. The statistical packages R⁴ along with R Studio⁵, and ggplot2⁶ were used in the preparation of data visualizations.

With every research study and community health assessment, there are limitations. The first limitation faced was the number of respondents to both the online and paper survey. This limited the measurable data and does not fully reflect the health status and needs of Van Wert County Residents. However, secondary data, mortality data, and qualitative data derived from focus groups provide a fuller picture of the health status of the population. For example, survey data showed no reported drug usage, but this is proven incorrect by the Ohio overdose mortality data set presented later in this document and by community members' comments during focus groups. It is also important to note that the online survey and paper survey had multiple questions that varied in the way they were asked. However, these questions did result in the same answer.

Focus Group Methodology

The data collection team gathered community information about Van Wert County through focus groups and community forums. In order to engage a diverse representation of the county and minimize attendance barriers, one open community forum was offered at the Van Wert County fairgrounds, and one was offered as a virtual meeting. The core group determined that it was also important to target specific groups based on community concerns and available data. One focus group was held with the Overdose Intervention Team, a group of community

⁴ R Core Team (2013). R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria.
URL <http://www.R-project.org/>.

⁵ RStudio Team (2020). RStudio: Integrated Development for R. RStudio, PBC, Boston, MA
URL <http://www.rstudio.com/>.

⁶ Hadley Wickham (2016). ggplot2: Elegant Graphics for Data Analysis. Springer-Verlag New York.

members employed in substance use and mental health settings. A second focus group targeted community members concerned about or directly affected by cancer rates in Van Wert County; individuals, close family members, or friends were invited to attend and share their story. Meeting notices were released on social media and through five local newspapers. Additionally, focus group questions were posted on the social media site Facebook in order to solicit additional responses from the community.

The group facilitators shared data from the Area Deprivation Study and Mortality Data from the Ohio Department of Health to begin the discussion about community health in Van Wert County. This data included county- and state-specific information. Facilitators then prompted participants with questions selected to encourage them to envision the future health of Van Wert, reflect on the current health status, and identify assets, gaps, collaborations, and resources in the community. The group did revise questions after holding the first focus group to clarify what was being asked and elicit stronger responses.

The question “What do you consider to be the most important health concern affecting people in Van Wert County?” was asked at the end of the Adult Survey in order to collect qualitative responses through the written survey.

The primary limitation to the qualitative portion of the data collection was a low participation rate, despite offering a variety of times, locations, and formats for joining. Low community engagement could be partially attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic; the schools, for example, declined the invitation, due to Covid concerns. Engagement has also been a challenge in the development of past community health assessments and virtual options were offered this time to minimize this limitation.

Questions asked of participants included:

What does a healthy community mean to you?

Five years from now, what would you want the local news to say about the health of your community?

How healthy is the community?

What does the health status of the community look like?

What assets and resources does the community have that can be used to improve the community health?

Where are the assets located and who has access to them? How do these assets support health?

Secondary Data

Secondary data for this report was incredibly important and was collected by the Ohio Alliance for Population Health Team. Sources included the U.S. Census data, Ohio Department of Health Webpages, Ohio Mortality Data, Areas of Deprivation Index, U.S. Census Bureau along with various other local, state, and national data sources.

Social Deprivation Study

The Social Deprivation Index (SDI) is a statistical tool that can be used to stratify areas based on relative social and economic deprivation. All SDI calculations were completed in R using *sociome*, a package specifically designed to compute deprivation scores for multiple levels of geography, including states, counties, census tracts, and zip code tabulation areas. The figures for Ohio, and Van Wert County presented in the following pages were produced using R, R Studio, tidyverse, tidycensus, and *sociome*.

Sociome uses data from the American Community Survey, a product of the U.S. Census Bureau that maintains detailed statistical information about U.S. citizens organized at multiple geographic levels. A global area deprivation index score is calculated along with 1) community financial strength, 2) economic hardship and inequality, and 3) education attainment sub-scores.^{7 8}

Summary of Area Deprivation Study Findings:

- Adams, Scioto, Jackson, Vinton, and Meigs counties (all located in Appalachia) exhibited the highest Ohio deprivation scores.
- Van Wert County, with the 46th highest social deprivation score among the 88 Ohio counties, is deemed to have a moderate level of social deprivation.

⁷ Nik Krieger [aut, cre], Jarrod Dalton [aut], Cindy Wang [aut], Adam Perzynski [aut], National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Aging [fnd] (The development of this software package was supported by a research grant from the National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Aging, (Principal Investigators: Jarrod E. Dalton, PhD, and Adam T. Perzynski, PhD; Grant Number: 5R01AG055480-02). All its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the NIH.)

⁸ Operationalizing Social Determinants of Health Data for Researchers [R package *sociome* version 2.1.0]. (2021). Retrieved 19 December 2021, from <https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/sociome/index.html>

- Census tracts 206, 208, and 207, all located within the city of Van Wert exhibited the highest levels of estimated deprivation within Van Wert County.

Analysis of Mortality Data

The Ohio University College of Health Sciences and Professions obtained identified mortality records for all Ohio decedents from the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) spanning January 1st, 2010, through December 31st, 2019. The data included detailed demographic information for each decedent including age, gender, race, ethnicity, multiple ICD code causes of death, location of injury, location of death, and location of residence.

These data were obtained through a data use agreement with the ODH Bureau of Vital Statistics which stipulated confidentiality and data management standards. ODH neither agrees nor disagrees with any of the specific findings in this study.⁹

The statistical packages R¹⁰ along with R Studio¹¹, ggplot2¹², and sf¹³ were the primary statistical and data visualization software used in the production of this report.

Summary of Mortality Study Findings:

- Heart failure, followed by cancer, other unspecified diseases, chronic lower respiratory diseases, and cerebrovascular diseases constituted the top five causes of death in Van Wert County from 2010 through 2019.
- The heart failure and cancer rates were respectively 3 and 9 percentage points higher than the state average.

⁹ *Mortality | DataOhio*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 13, 2022, from <https://data.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/data/view/mortality>

¹⁰ R Core Team (2013). R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. URL <http://www.R-project.org/>.

¹¹ *RStudio Team (2020). RStudio: Integrated Development for R. RStudio, PBC, Boston, MA* URL <http://www.rstudio.com/>.

¹² Hadley Wickham (2016). *ggplot2: Elegant Graphics for Data Analysis*. Springer-Verlag New York.

¹³ Edzer Pebesma (2018). Simple Features for R: Standardized Support for Spatial Vector Data. *The R Journal*, 10(1), 439–446.

- Among diseases of despair (overdose, suicide, and alcohol-related cirrhosis), overdose accounted for the highest number of fatalities for the ten-year period, followed by suicide and alcohol cirrhosis.
- Overdose and suicide rates lagged behind state rates by 42 percent and 14 percent respectively, while the alcohol-related cirrhosis rate exceeded the state average by 7 percent.

Survey Data Summary

Surveys help discover a community's attitudes, experiences, strengths, and needs. The Adult Community Health Survey will also help the Van Wert General Health District identify issues that affect the community's health and inform its plan to address health issues. While there are certainly challenges to be addressed, overall perceived health in Van Wert County was reported as average to excellent and residents were supportive of increased opportunities for physical activities including more available and improved existing parks, bike trails, and walking paths, designated safer routes, and more public events and programs involving parks, trails, and paths.

Some challenges and barriers to health identified through the survey included:

- Shortages of primary care physicians and specialists, dentists, and mental health professionals in the county
- Cost was a notable factor for not visiting the dentist
- Chronic diseases that *impaired* residents were primarily high blood pressure, arthritis and high cholesterol, and participants noted asthma rates as an additional chronic disease of concern
- Sixty-five percent of survey participants reported having at least one alcoholic beverage in the past month
- When asked what the most important health problem was affecting Van Wert residents, responses included: access to specialists; COVID and vaccination rates; access to affordable food; drugs; affordable prescription drugs; healthcare (vision, dental, hospital); transportation; cancer; access to the internet; communication about

community activities; obesity; no hospice center; lack of exercise; elderly care; and children's mental health services.

- Fruit and vegetable consumption was, on average, fewer than two servings per day. While this is consistent with the national average, the USDA's Dietary Guidelines recommend that adults eat between 5 to 13 servings per day, or 2 cups of fruit and 2.5 cups of vegetables.¹⁴

¹⁴ Data taken from the United States Department of Agriculture Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025. Retrieved on June 22, 2022 from https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans_2020-2025.pdf

Focus Group Results

While the focus groups were small, participants were engaged in answering the questions, analyzing the data presented, and providing a snapshot of the community's health in Van Wert County. When asked to envision the future of Van Wert, community members hoped for stronger collaboration and connection among resources, and a welcoming place

where families wanted to move. They envisioned Van Wert as being the healthiest county in the state in five years. Participants were concerned about the access to health care specialists, the mental health of its youth, and the overall lack of focus on the health of the community. Additional greenspace, public transportation options, and improved walkways were suggestions for community improvements. There was an overarching focus on the health and wellness of young people in the community, with several participants suggesting additional youth spaces and activities be created in the county. Other populations named as being under-resourced included those without housing, low-income and single parents, the elderly, and those with disabilities. Along with mental health, substance use disorders, obesity, and food insecurity were identified as primary health issues in the county through both the focus groups and the question at the end of the survey, "In your opinion, what are the primary health problems affecting people in Van Wert County?"

"As a nurse, I can see how we may need to focus more on the county. Maybe have a community center where people can do things."

-Focus group participant

Perceived Health

When compared with the rest of Ohio, Van Wert County's Health Outcomes rank in the higher middle range of counties in Ohio, and Van Wert falls in the 75-100% range as one of the healthiest counties in the state based on County Health Rankings of Health Factors. According to the Adult Survey conducted, Van Wert County residents perceive their health as ranging from average to excellent. This data is similar to the 2018 CHA Perceived Health Status.



Health Outcomes

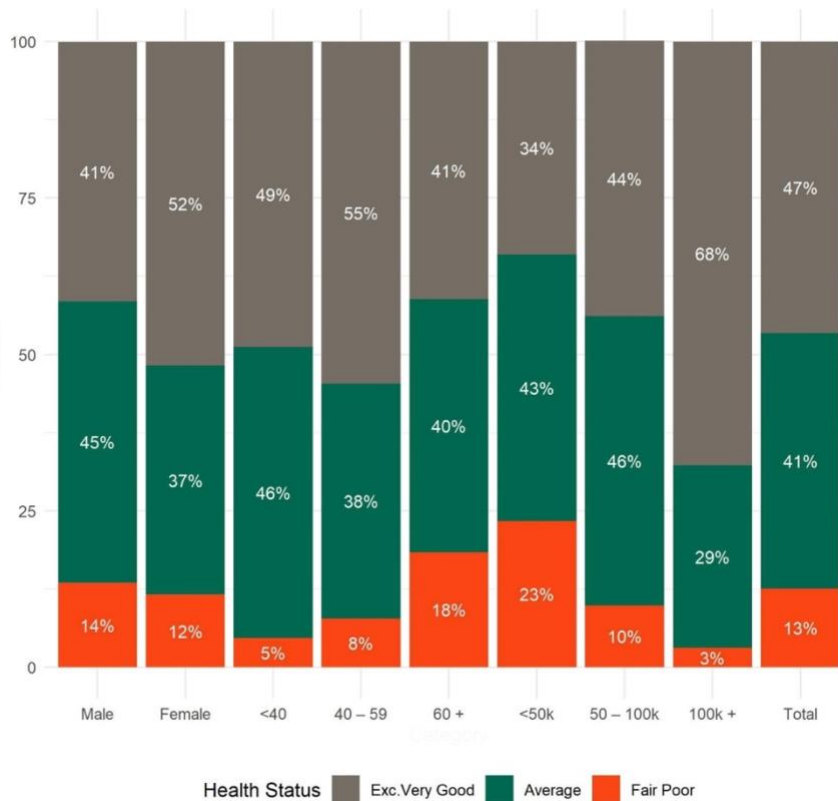
Van Wert (VW) is ranked in the higher middle range of counties in Ohio (Higher 50%-75%)



Health Factors

Van Wert (VW) is ranked among the healthiest counties in Ohio (Highest 75%-100%)

Van Wert County Adult Residents Reporting Perceived Health Status



Health Care Access

Like many rural counties in Ohio, Van Wert County is designated as a US Health Professional Shortage Area.¹⁵ Primary Care Physicians and Mental Health Professionals both have a higher-than-average ratio of providers to patients. Access to healthcare was also named as a concern by focus group participants.

	Primary Care Physicians: Patients	Mental Health Professionals: Patients
Ohio	1,300:1	380:1
Van Wert County	2,180:1	1,050:1

Healthcare costs were cited as an issue for some adult survey respondents, with copays ranging from \$30 to a reported \$14000 and deductibles ranging from \$1500 to \$17000. Nearly half of American adults reported it is difficult to afford out-of-pocket health care costs; adults over the age of 65 reported difficulty paying for various aspects of health care, including services not covered by Medicare such as dental and hearing services and prescription drug costs. In terms of health equity, high health care costs disproportionately affect uninsured adults, Black and Hispanic adults, and those with lower incomes in the US. Such barriers result in people not getting the necessary care or filling prescriptions that they need.¹⁶

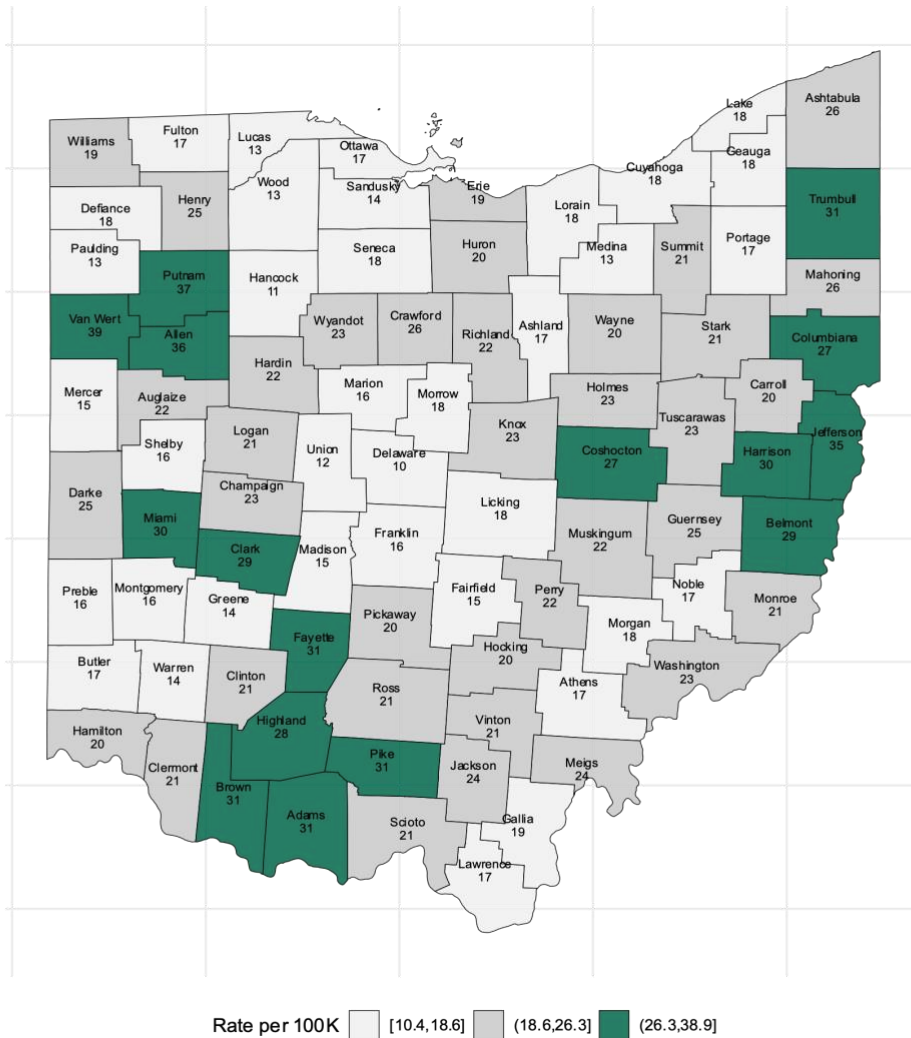
Survey Item	Minimum	Mean (Average)	Maximum
High copays	\$30	\$1581.30	\$14000
High deductible	\$1500	\$4928.57	\$17000
High deductible with a Health Savings Account	\$1000	\$5119.05	\$10000
High Premium	\$100	\$528.93	\$1200
Other	\$1500	\$4250	\$7000

¹⁵ Retrieved from HPSA Find, a tool through the US Health Resources and Services Administration that displays Health Professional Shortage Areas by county throughout the US. This data was retrieved April 13, 2022, from <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area/hpsa-find>

¹⁶ Retrieved from Kaiser Family Foundation's report Americans' Challenges with Health Care Costs, published December 14, 2021 and accessed June 22, 2022 from <https://www.kff.org/health-costs/issue-brief/americans-challenges-with-health-care-costs/>

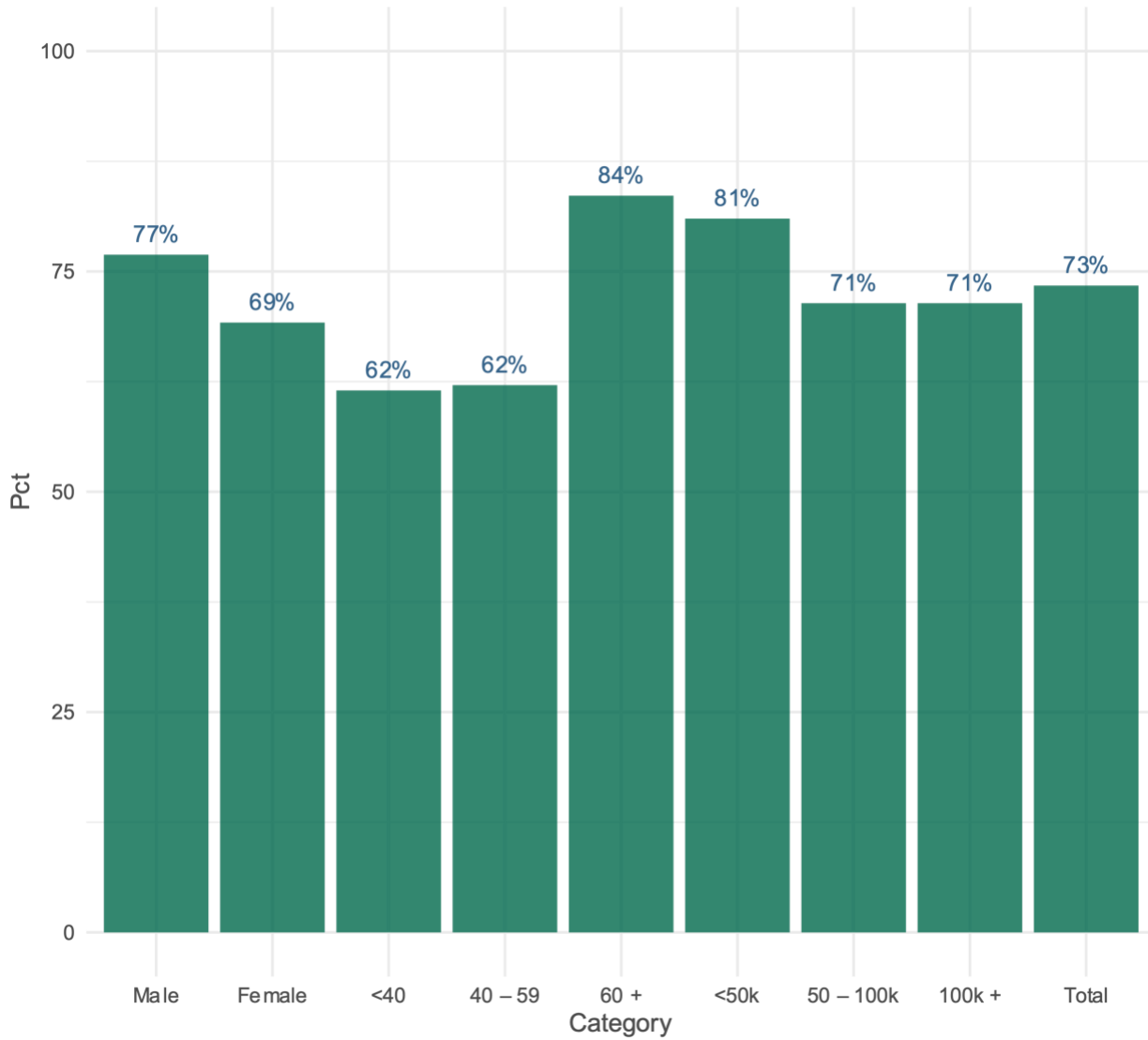
Average Annual Influenza & Pneumonia Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population: 2010 – 2019

Van Wert residents died of influenza and pneumonia at a higher rate than average in the state of Ohio during the 2020-2019 period.



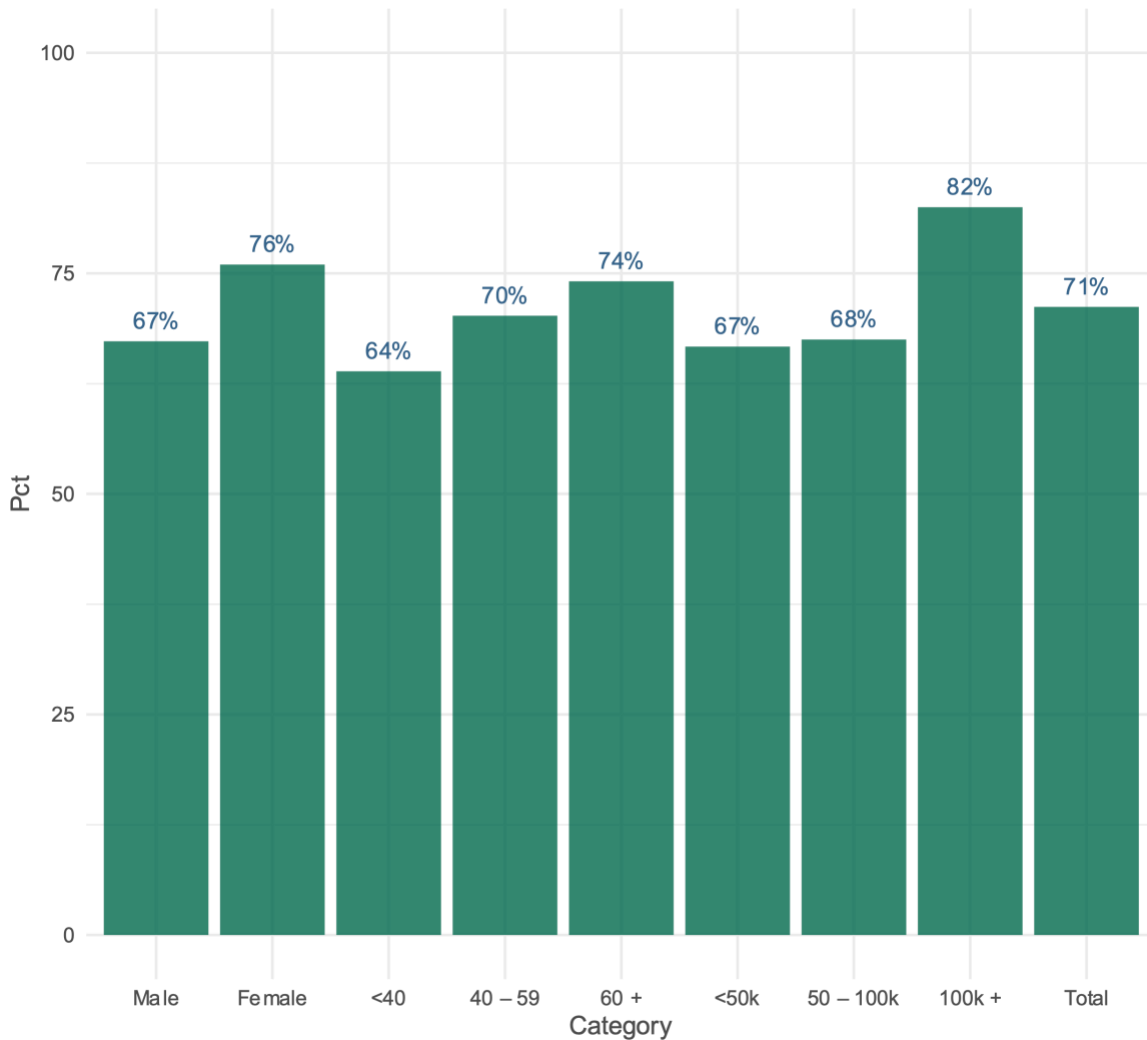
Van Wert County Adults Who Received a Flu Vaccine Within the Past Year

According to the Adult Survey, 73% of adults received the flu vaccine in the past year. This increase from 58% in 2015 could be attributed to the small sample size.



Van Wert County Adult Residents Reporting Dental Visits Within the Past Year

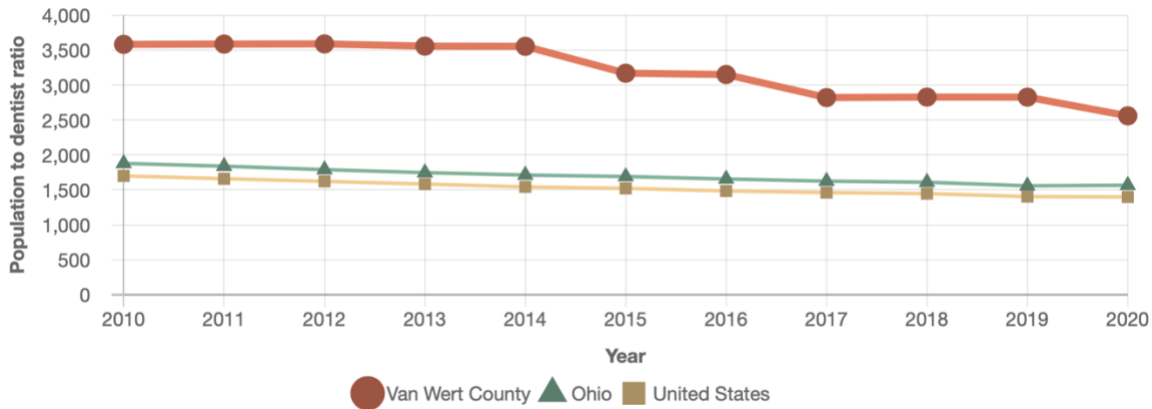
Seventy-one percent of Van Wert County adults had visited a dentist within the past year, which was a slight decrease from 75% in 2018. According to the US Health and Human Services Administration, Van Wert County is a Health Professional Shortage Area for dentists with a score of 25 out of 26, with a higher score indicating a higher priority area.¹⁷ The Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), Family Health Care of Northwest Ohio, Inc., provides dental care to at-risk and underserved Van Wert County residents.



¹⁷ The Health Professional Shortage Area Find tool displays county-level data regarding HPSA designations around the US and can be found at <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area/hpsa-find#top>

Dentists in Van Wert County, OH County, state and national trends

Van Wert County is getting better for this measure.



Notes:
The data in this table reflect the average population served by a single dentist.

According to County Health Rankings, the patient: dentist ratio is 2,560:1, which is higher than average. It is trending down since 2014.

What is the main reason(s) that you have not visited the dentist in the last year?

Response	Percent
Cost	25%
No reason to go/have not thought of it	17%
Fear, apprehension, nervousness, pain, dislike going	13%
Did not respond	11%
Worried about Covid-19 exposure	9%
Do not have/know a dentist	6%
Does not accept my medical coverage	5%
Have dentures	5%
Cannot get into the dentist	3%
Cannot find a dentist that takes Medicaid	1%
Transportation issues	1%
Other	5%

Health Behaviors

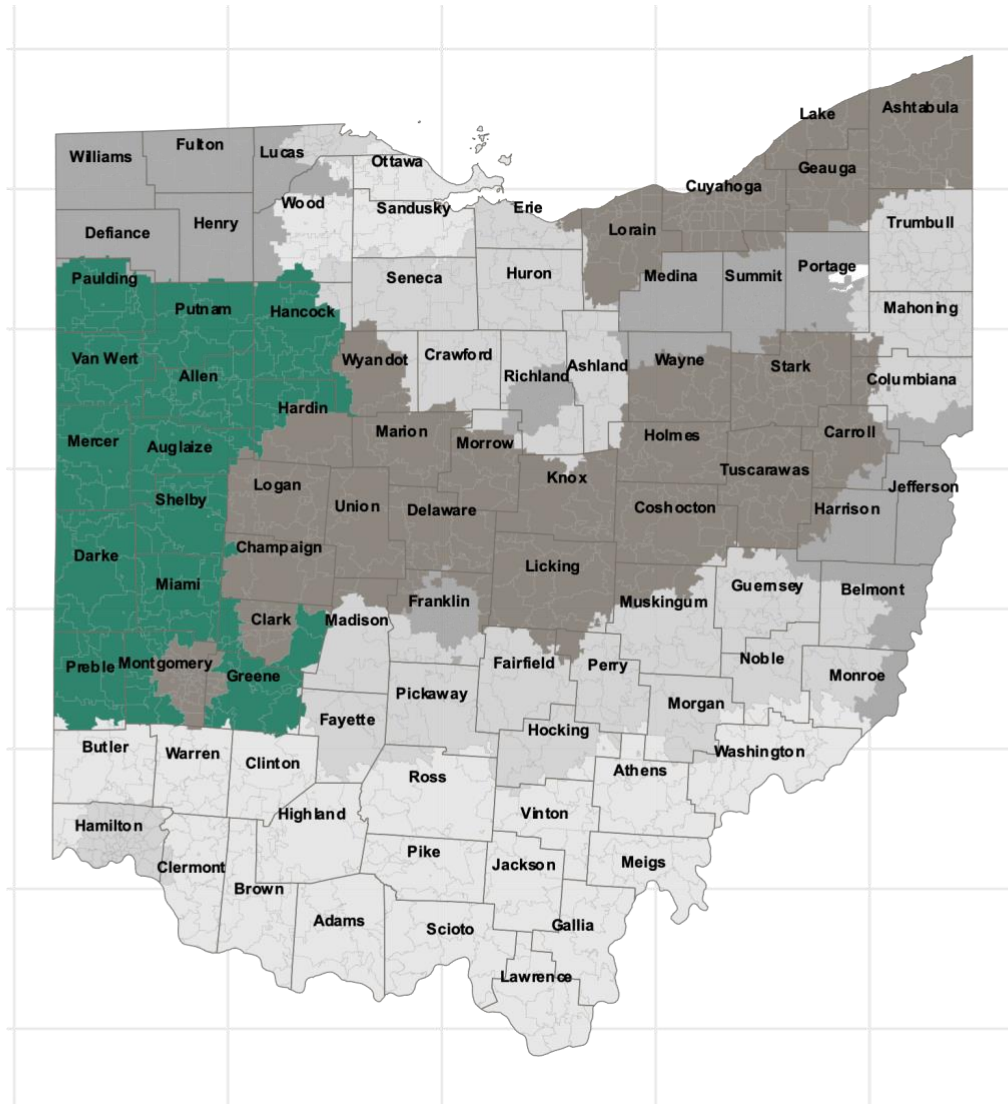
Addiction Treatment Admissions

Analysis of substance abuse admissions by three-digit zip code area for 2018¹⁸ shows that demand for treatment in Van Wert County is likely to be significantly elevated for alcohol. Admissions for illicit drug use are slightly lower than the state average for cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamines, while treatment demand for illicit fentanyl, heroin, and other opioids appears to be significantly lower in the Van Wert area than in most Ohio regions.

It is worth noting that overdose deaths in Ohio are mostly accounted for by fentanyl and other opioids and that Van Wert and adjoining counties have historically exhibited lower than state average overdose death rates. While these comparative trends have been consistent for the past several years, overdose and drug trafficking patterns are dynamic and should be closely watched by Van Wert County public health and behavioral health officials.

¹⁸ OBHIS | Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. (n.d.). Retrieved June 8, 2022, from <https://mha.ohio.gov/research-and-data/obhis>

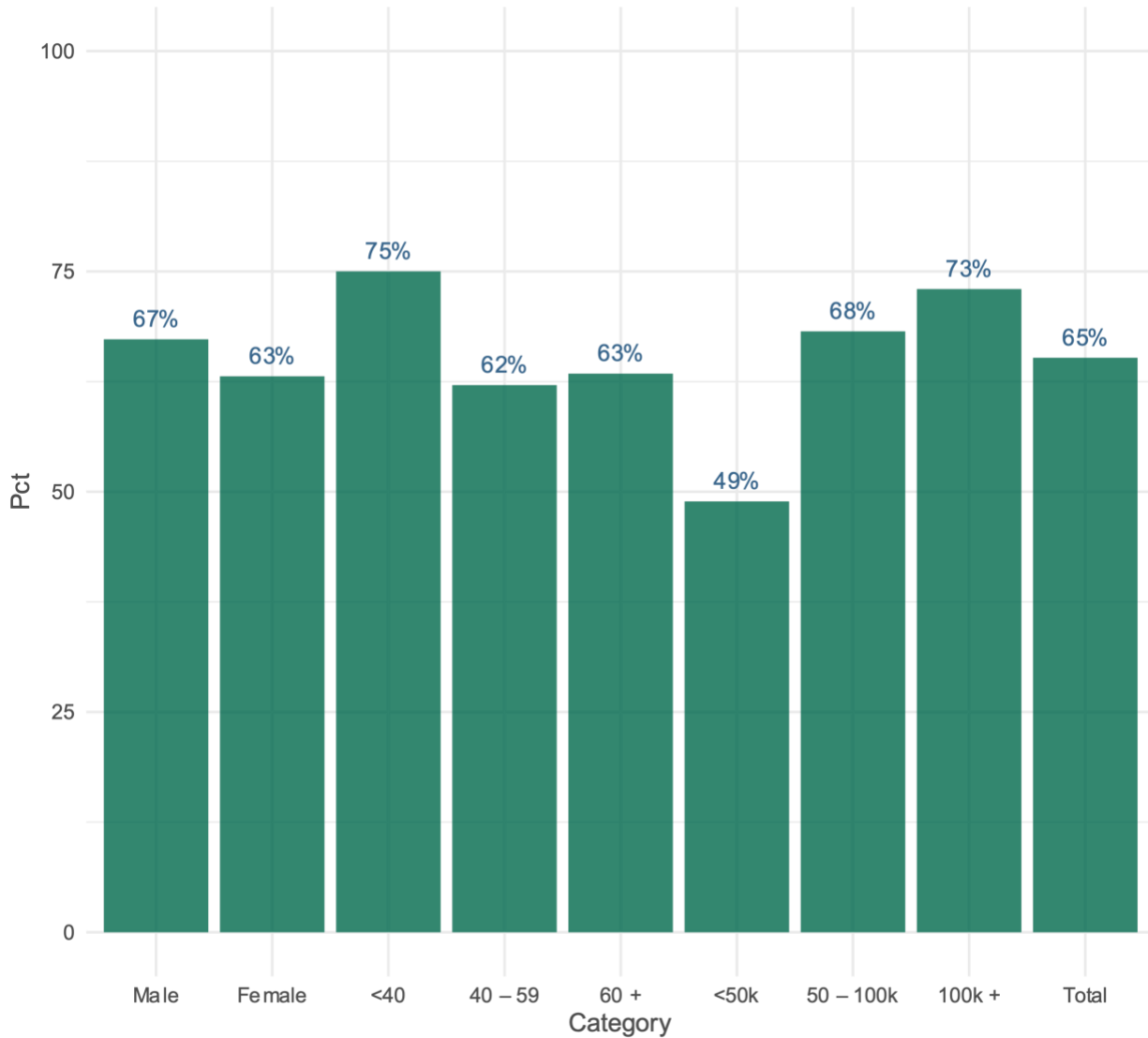
2018 Treatment Admissions by Primary Drug of Use: Alcohol



Pct Admissions [14,17.7] (17.7,22.1] (22.1,26] (26,31.8] (31.8,38.2]

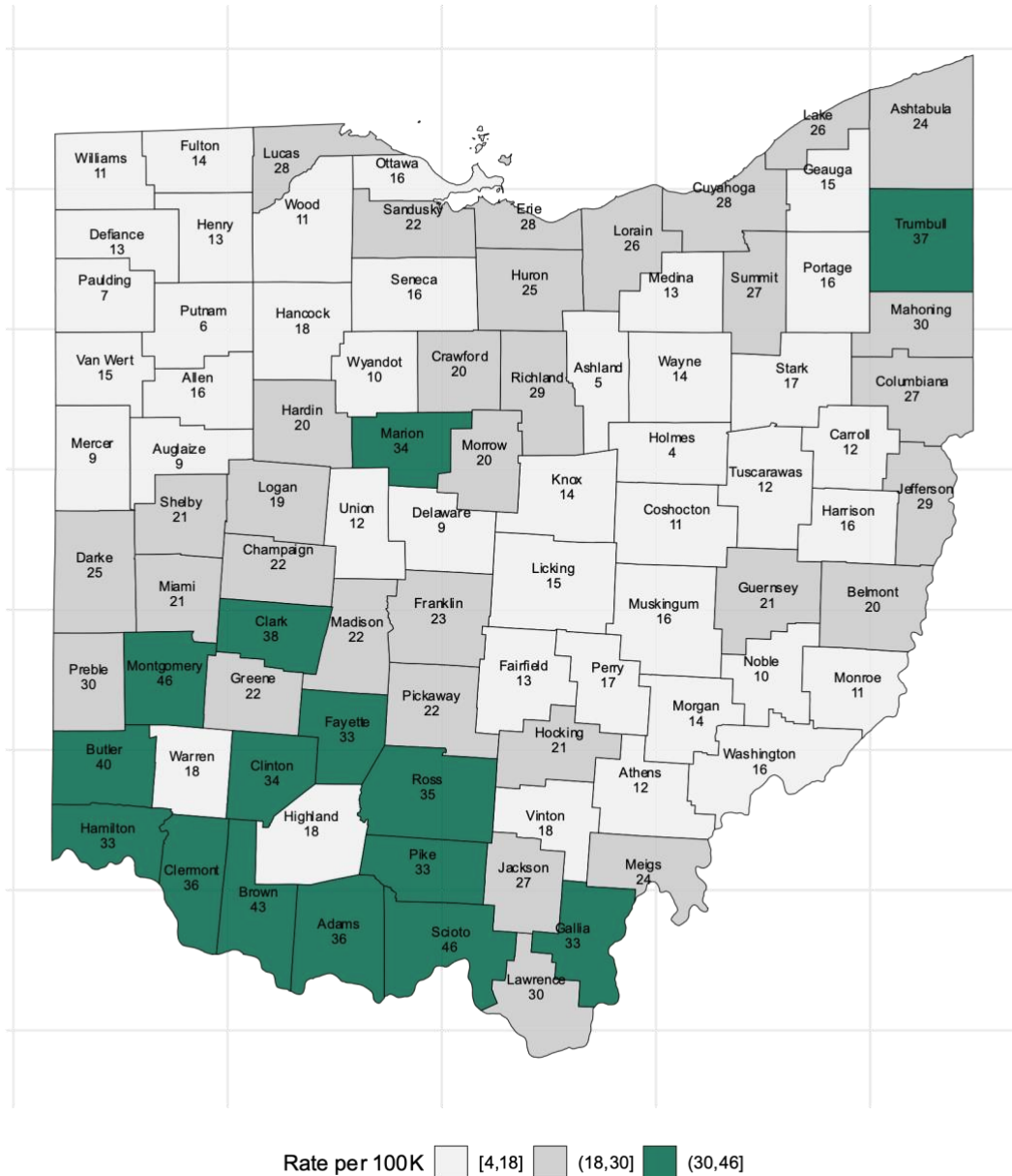
Van Wert County Adult Residents Reporting Any Alcohol Use in the Past 30 Days

Sixty-five percent of Van Wert County adults reported having at least one alcoholic beverage in the past month. Alcohol-related cirrhosis rate exceeded the state average by 7 percent.



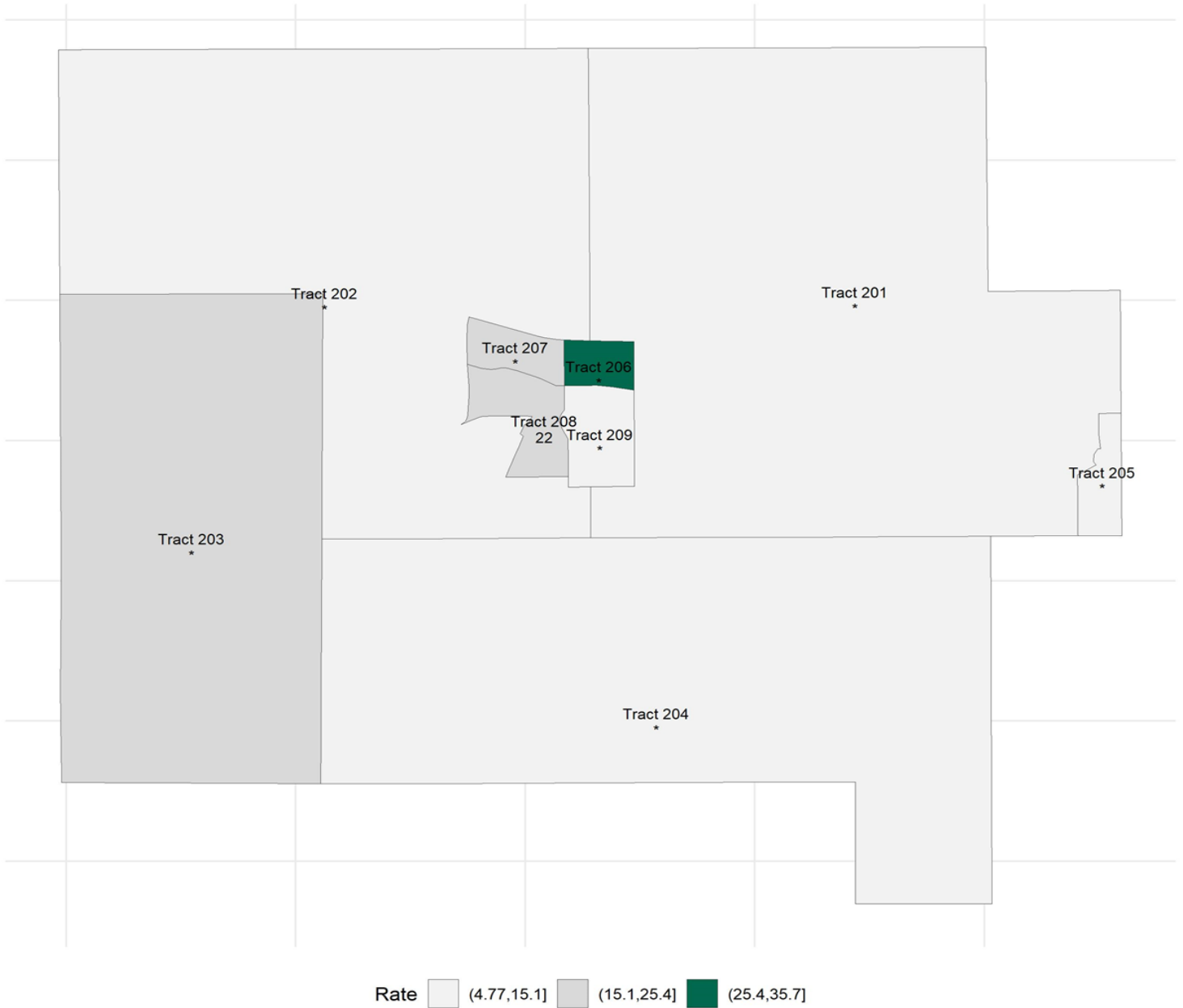
Average Annual Overdose Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population: 2010 – 2019

While there was community concern about high rates of illegal drug use and overdoses in the focus groups and Adult Survey, Van Wert overdose fatality rates were comparatively low from 2010-2019. Low overdose rates relate to low illicit drug use; adult survey data also indicated low rates of illicit drug use. The small sample size must also be considered when reviewing this data.



**Van Wert Average Annual Overdose Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population:
2010 – 2019**

Overdose fatalities were most frequent in Census Tract 206, or in the northeast corner of city of Van Wert. (Readers should note that an asterisk indicates that the number of cases for the year fell below 10 and cannot be shared to protect privacy.)



Social Conditions

Social Determinants of Health

“Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks” (Healthy People 2030). SDOH are key drivers that determine health equity or one's ability to attain their fullest health potential.

These social determinants of health (SDOH) can be grouped into 5 categories which include: Education Access and Quality, Healthcare Access and Quality, Neighborhood and Built Environment, Social and Community Context, and Economic Stability. Within each of these categories there are many SDOH such as racism, job opportunities, exposure to pollution, literacy skills, transportation access, and much more.¹⁹

Social Determinants of Health

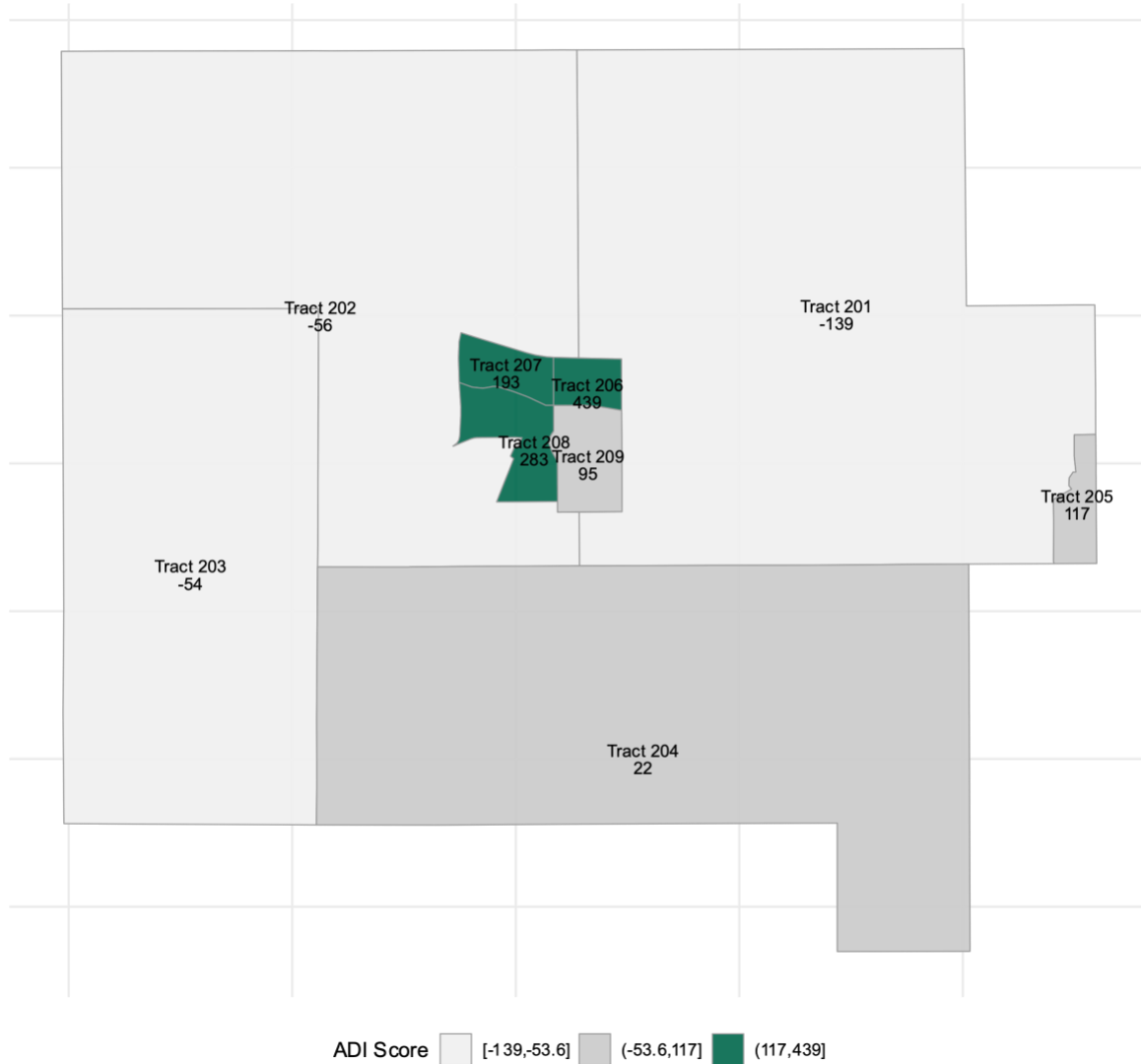


Figure 2

¹⁹ Healthy People 2030, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved May 15, 2022, from <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/social-determinants-health>

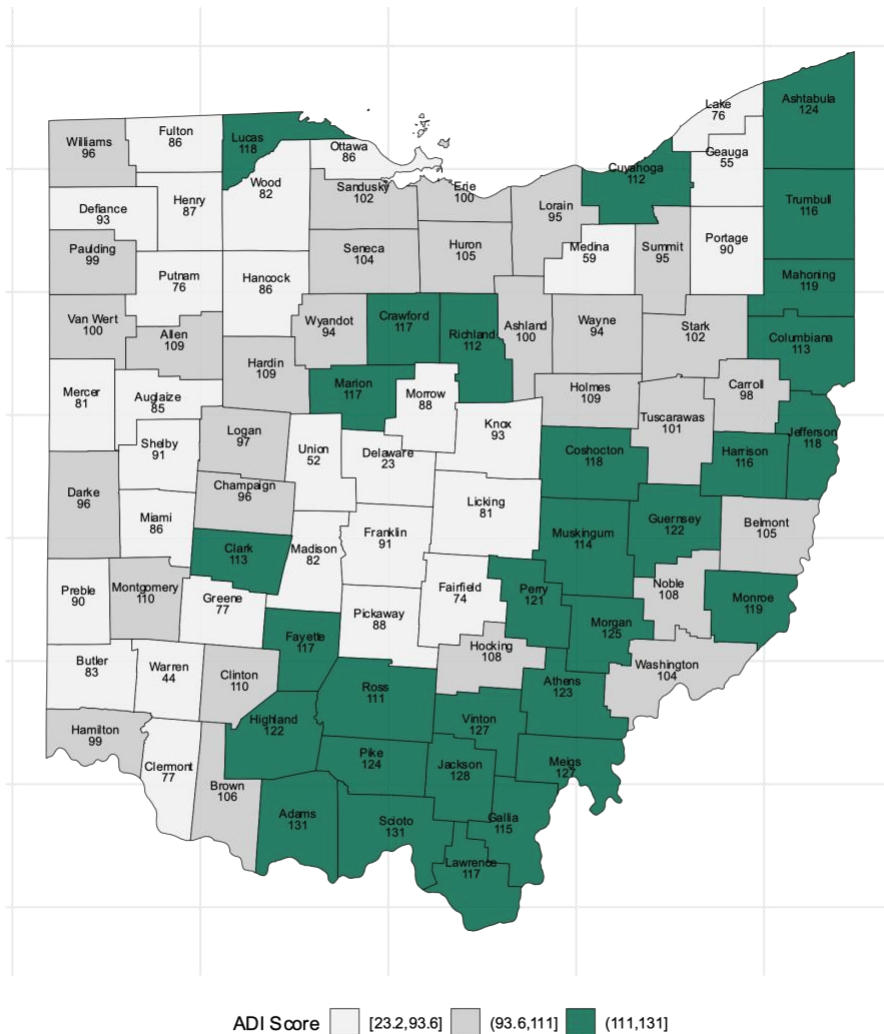
Census Tract Deprivation Estimates for Van Wert

Census tracts highlighted in green represent areas with high deprivation according to the Areas of Deprivation Index. Areas with high deprivation are associated with health outcomes; this information can be used to target health and social services and facilitate access to resources.



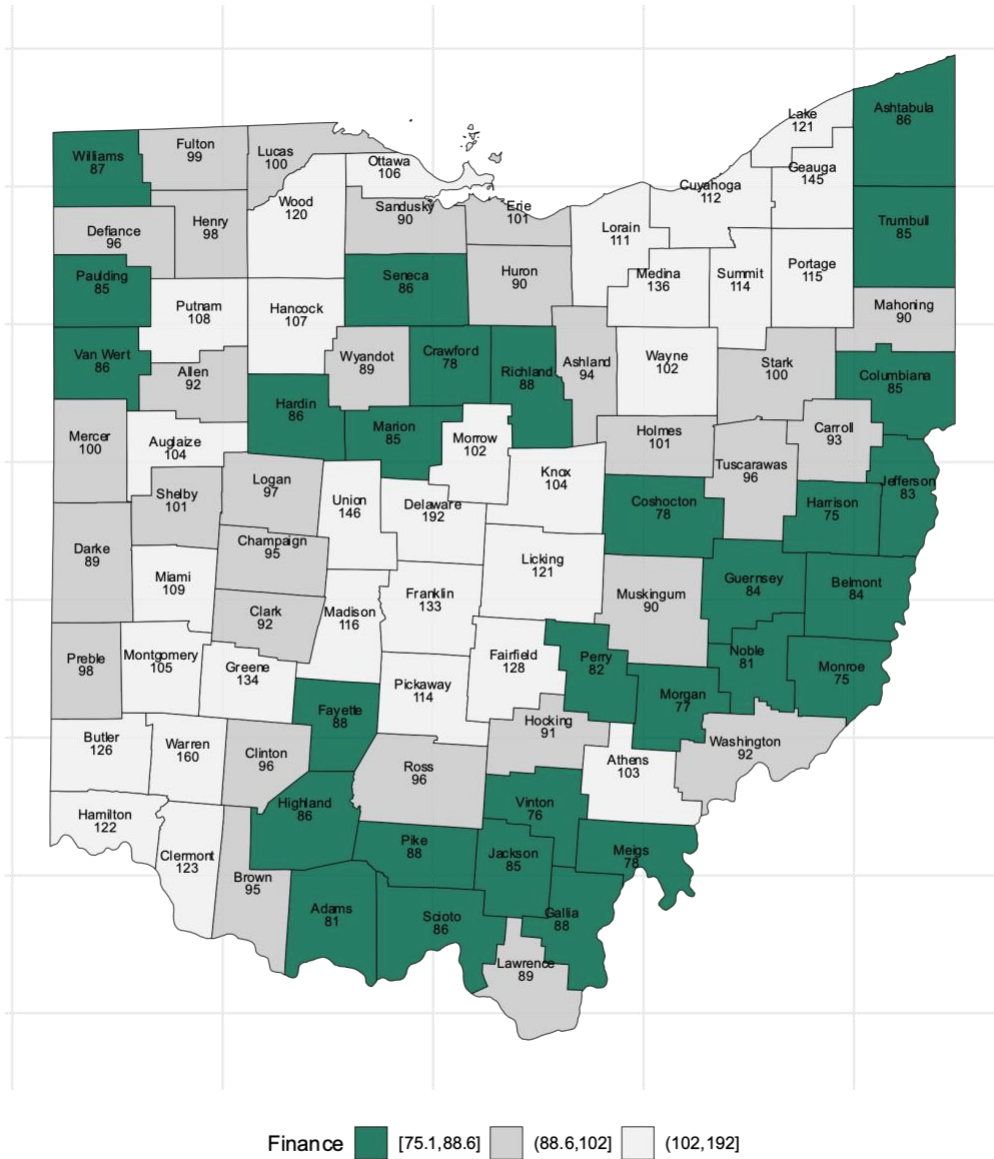
Total County Deprivation for Ohio

Overall, Van Wert County's total ADI score is in the moderate range compared to the rest of the state. Van Wert County, with the 46th highest social deprivation score among the 88 Ohio counties, is deemed to have a moderate level of social deprivation. Census tracts 206, 208, and 207, all located within the city of Van Wert exhibited the highest levels of estimated deprivation within Van Wert County.



County Finance Scores for Ohio

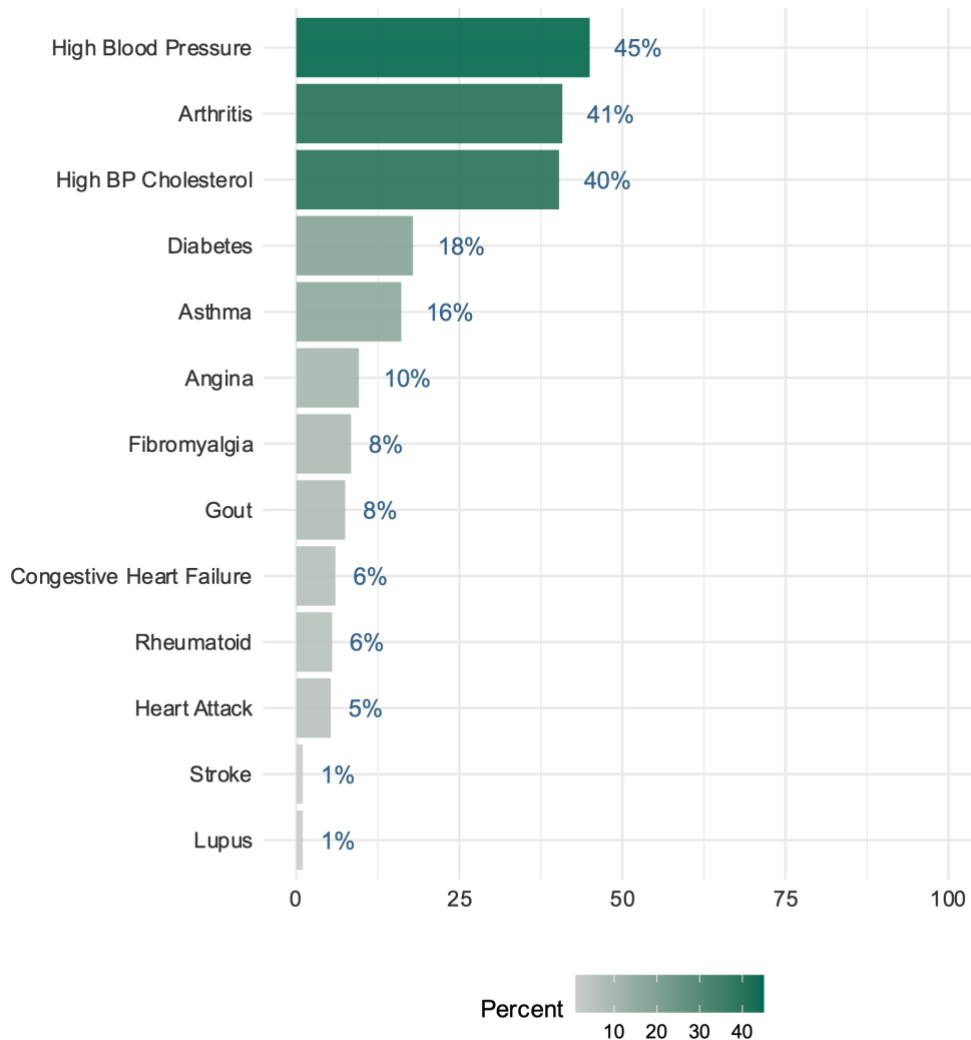
The median capita income for Van Wert County (\$28,093) is lower than the Ohio average of \$32,465.



Chronic Disease

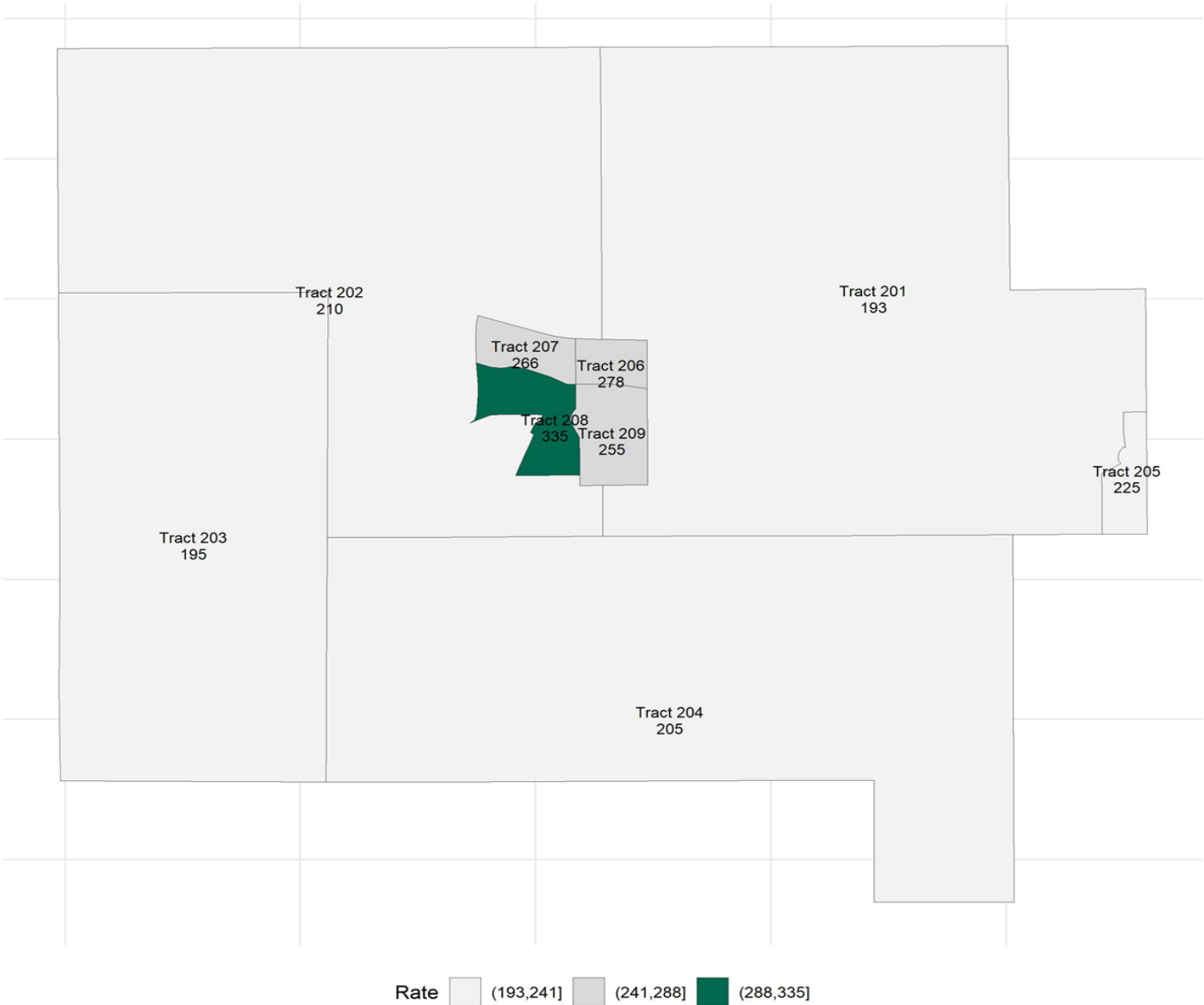
Van Wert County Adult Residents Reporting Impairment Caused by Chronic Illness

Adult residents of Van Wert County reported being most significantly impaired by high blood pressure, arthritis, and high cholesterol. Mortality findings show that heart failure, followed by cancer, other unspecified diseases, chronic lower respiratory diseases, and cerebrovascular diseases constituted the top five causes of death in Van Wert County from 2010 through 2019. Van Wert County does have a slightly larger population of adults 65 years and older than the state average (19.40 percent vs. 17.50 percent).



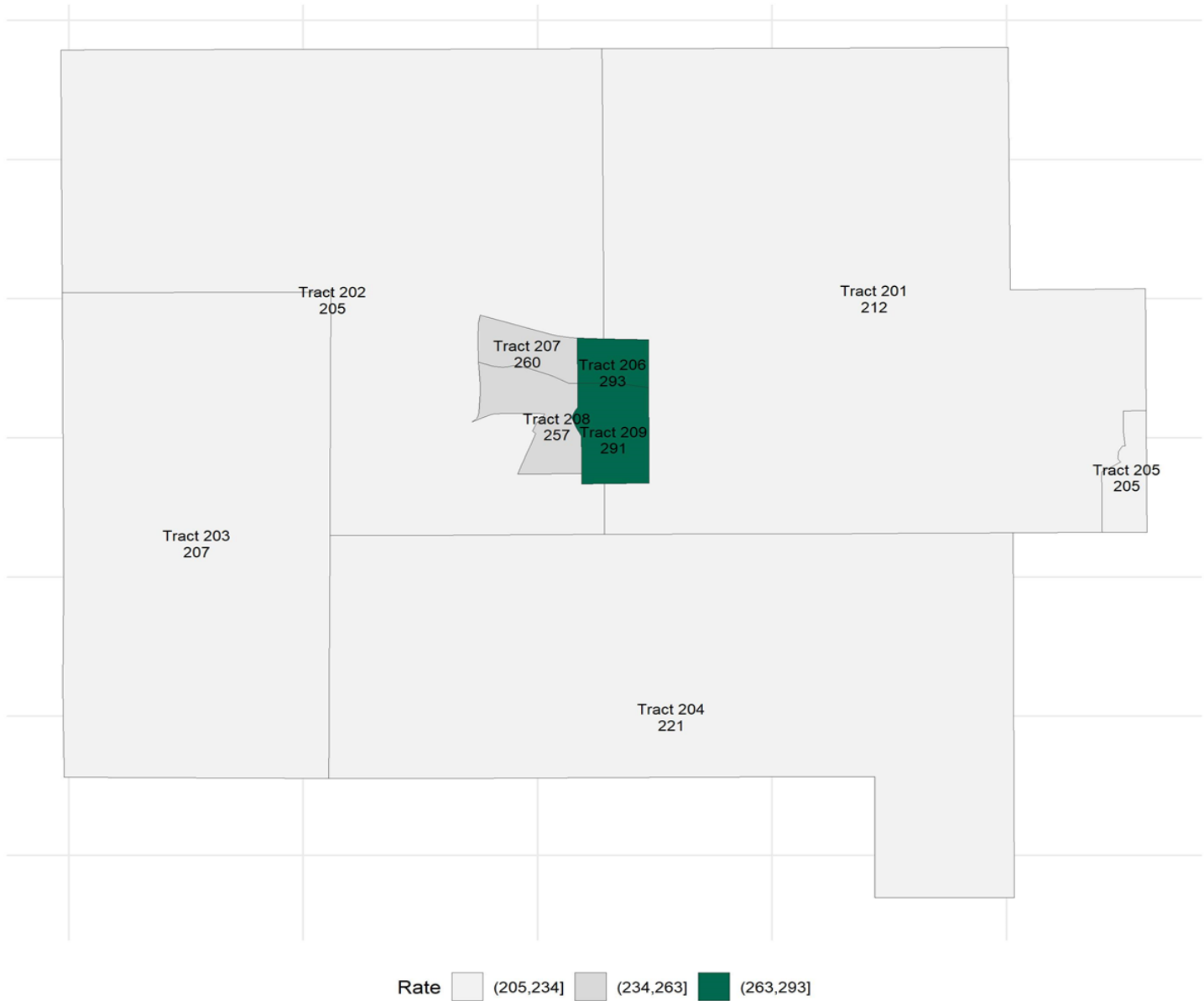
**Van Wert Average Annual Heart Failure Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population:
2010 – 2019**

Census Tract 208 rated highest in the county for heart fatalities between 2020-2019, with heart fatality being the cause of 355 deaths in this tract.



Van Wert Average Annual Cancer Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population: 2010 – 2019

Cancer fatalities were more prominent in Census Tracts 206 and 209, or the eastern neighborhoods in the city of Van Wert.



Van Wert County Cancer Deaths by Type: 2010 – 2019

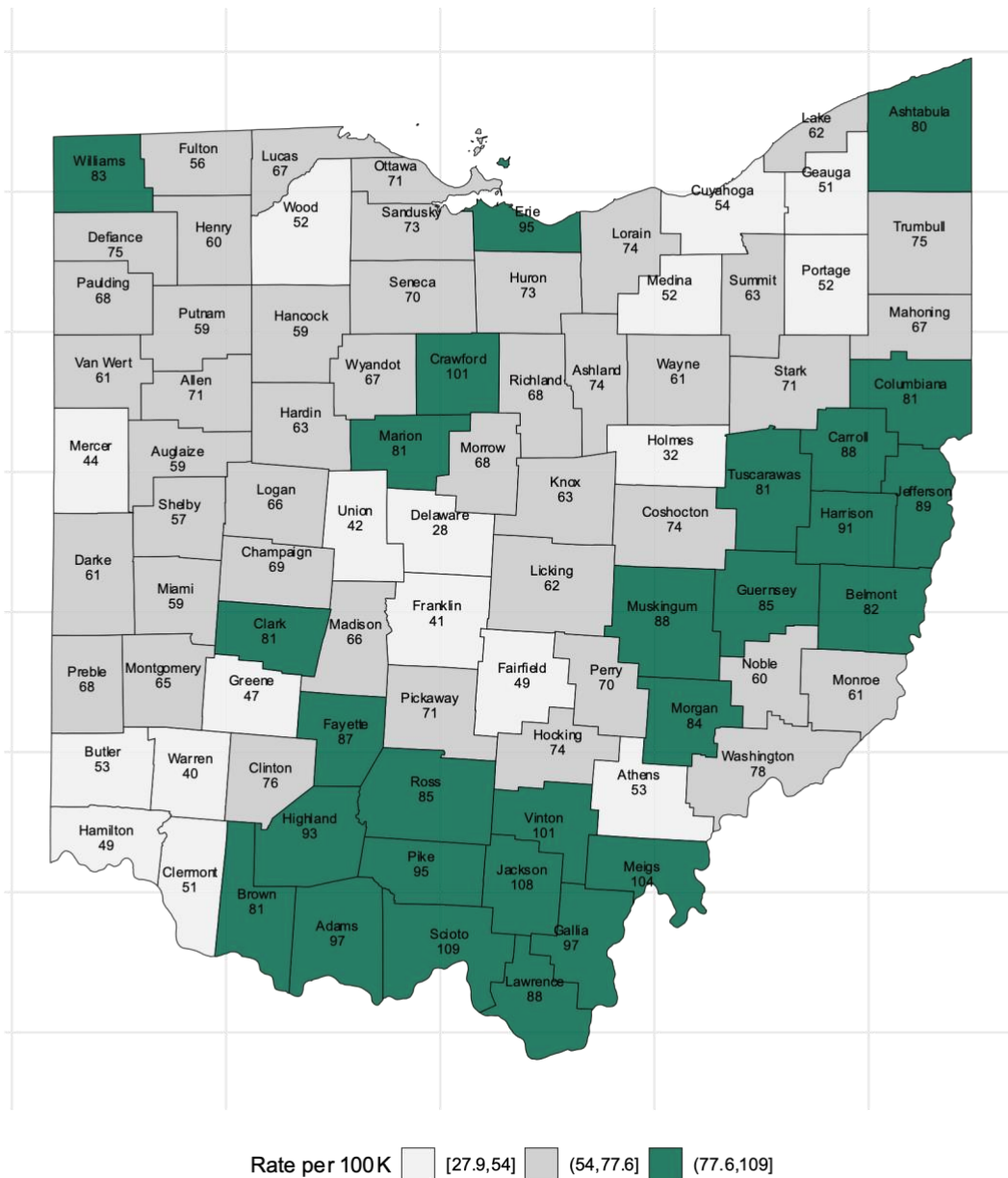
Lung cancer is the leading cause of death by cancer in Van Wert County. Note that the “Other” category includes various forms of cancer that are not specifically labeled individually.

Cancer	Number	Percent
Other	188	27.29%
Lung	168	24.38%
Colon	56	8.13%
Pancreas	53	7.69%
Breast	50	7.26%
Prostate	32	4.64%
Non-specific	31	4.50%
Brain	18	2.61%
Leukemia	18	2.61%
Kidney	16	2.32%
Lymphoma	16	2.32%
Ovarian	16	2.32%
Esophagus	14	2.03%
Liver	13	1.89%
Total	689	

Figure 3

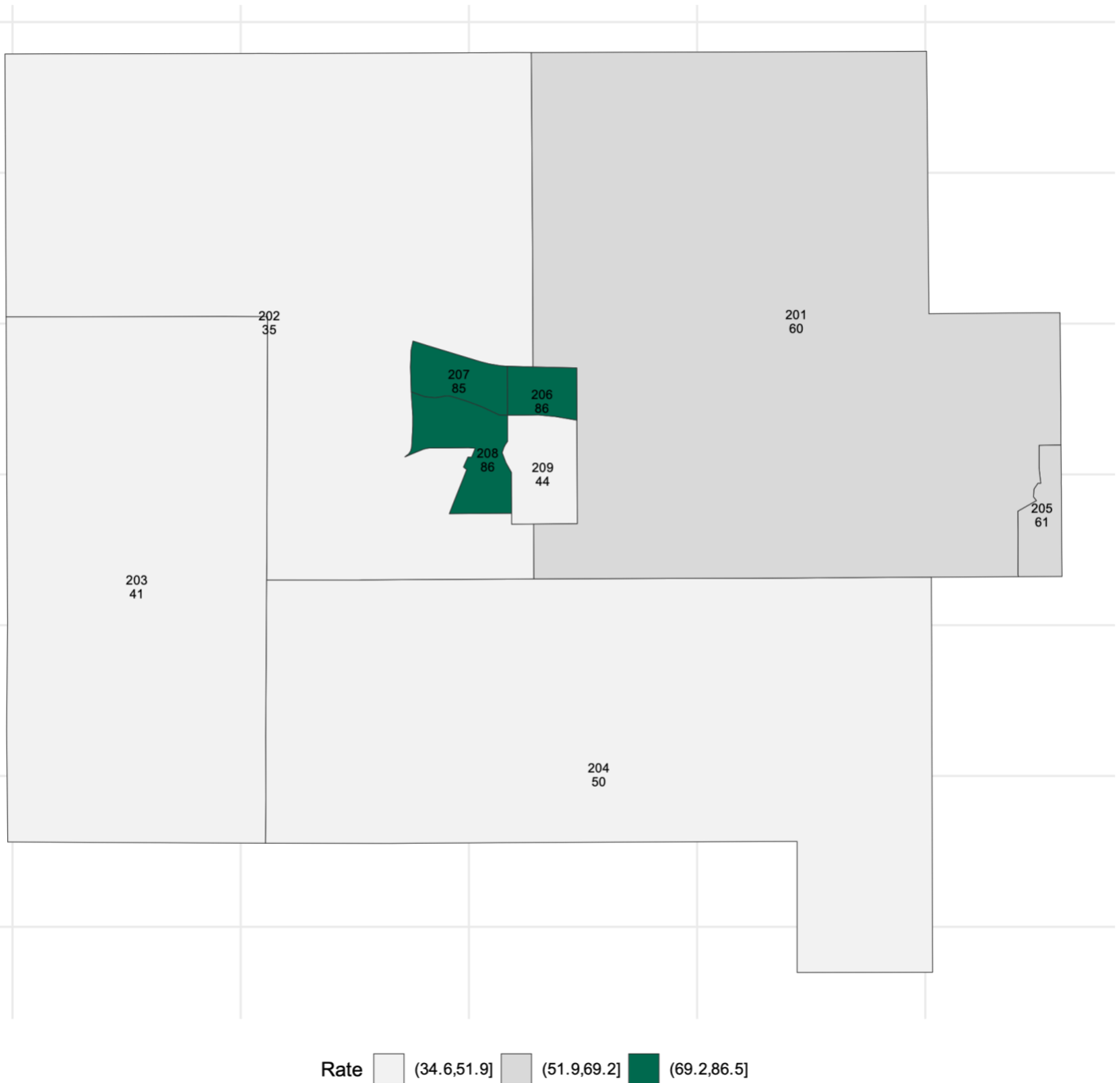
Average Annual Chronic Lower Respiratory Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population: 2010 – 2019

Chronic lower respiratory fatalities were a leading cause of death in Van Wert and the county was rated in the mid-range compared to other counties in the state. Survey respondents were also concerned about asthma rates and air quality.



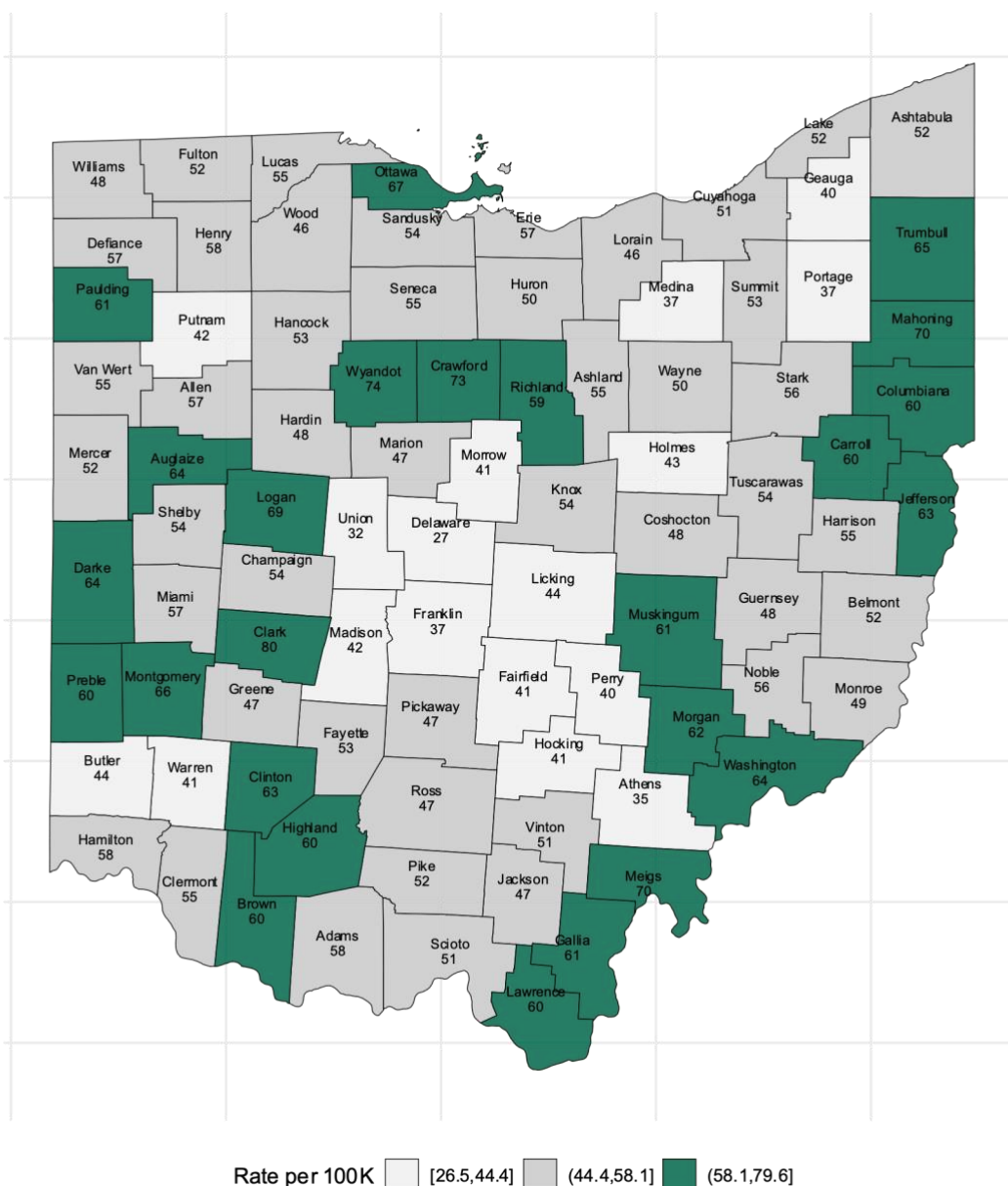
Van Wert Average Annual Chronic Lower Respiratory Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population: 2010 – 2019

Chronic respiratory disease was one of the leading causes of death from 2020-2019. Highest fatality rates were concentrated in census tracts 206, 207, and 208.



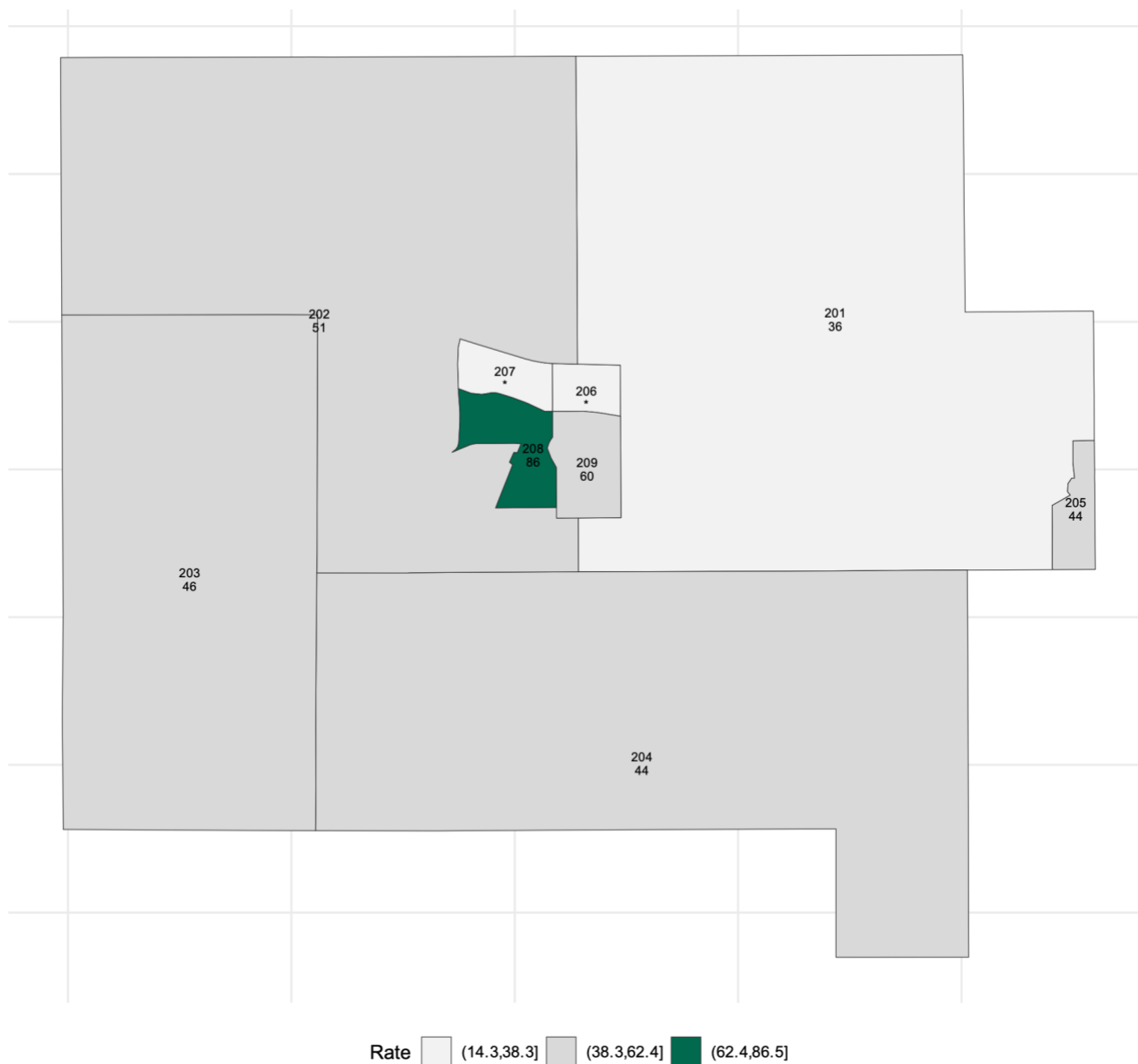
Average Annual Cerebrovascular Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population: 2010 – 2019

Average annual cerebrovascular fatality rates for Van Wert County fell in the moderate range during 2010-2019. These conditions include stroke, carotid stenosis, vertebral stenosis and intracranial stenosis, and aneurysms.



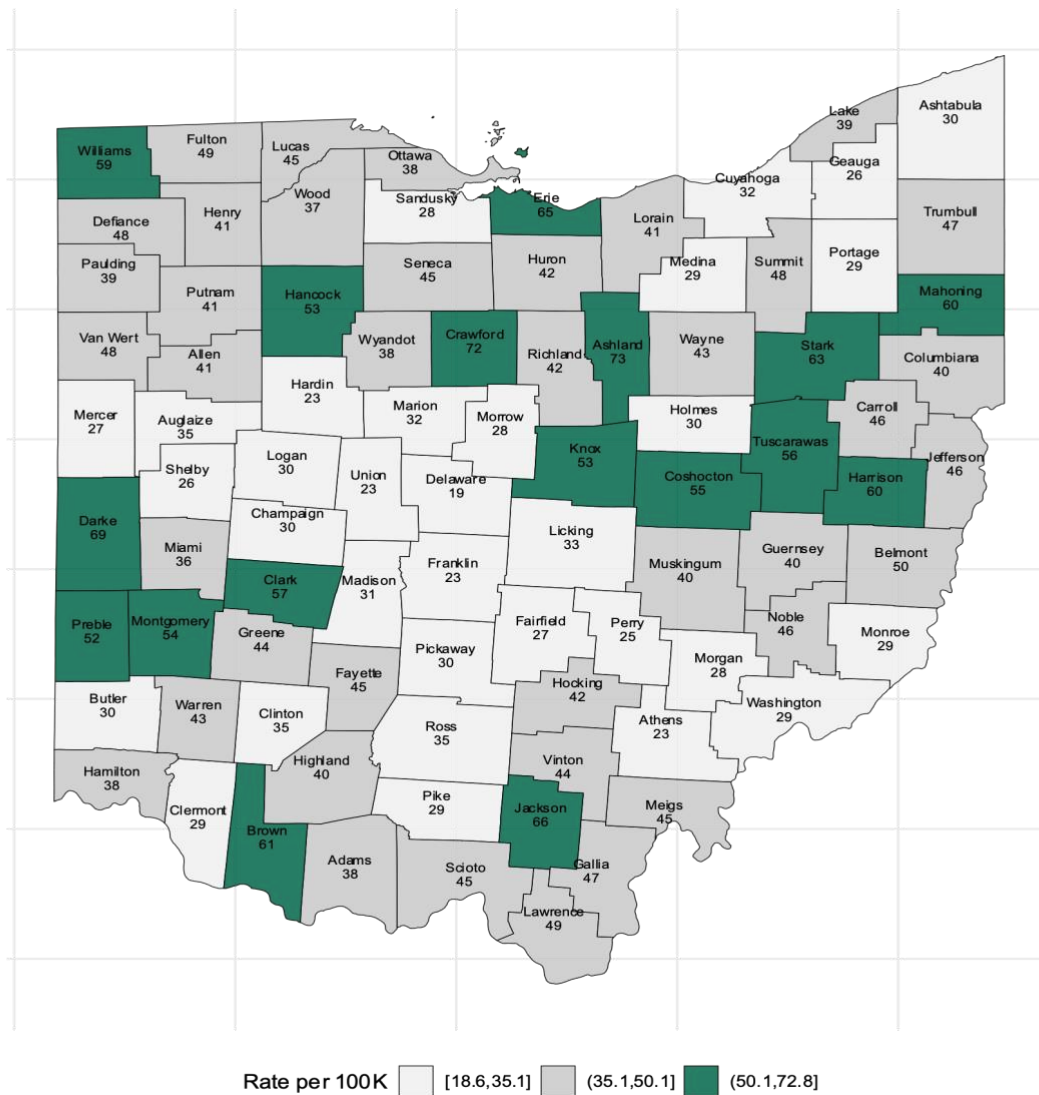
Van Wert Average Annual Cerebrovascular Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population: 2010 – 2019

According to the Mortality Data, cerebrovascular fatalities were highest in census tracts 207 and 208.

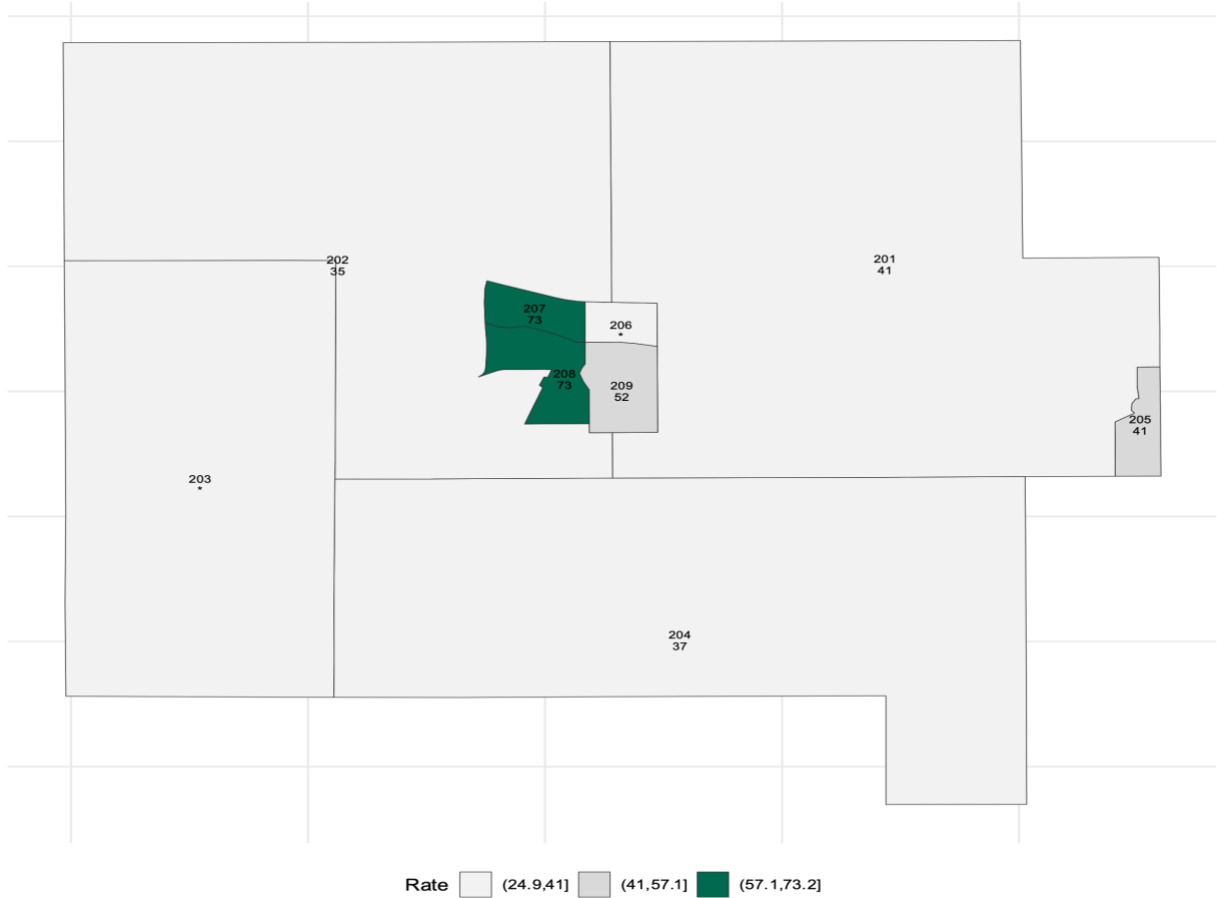


**Van Wert Average Annual Alzheimer’s Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population:
2010 – 2019**

Alzheimer fatality rates in Van Wert County were in the moderate range in comparison with statewide rates. The average age of death was 76.38, which is higher than the state average of 73.23 for the time period of 2010-2019.



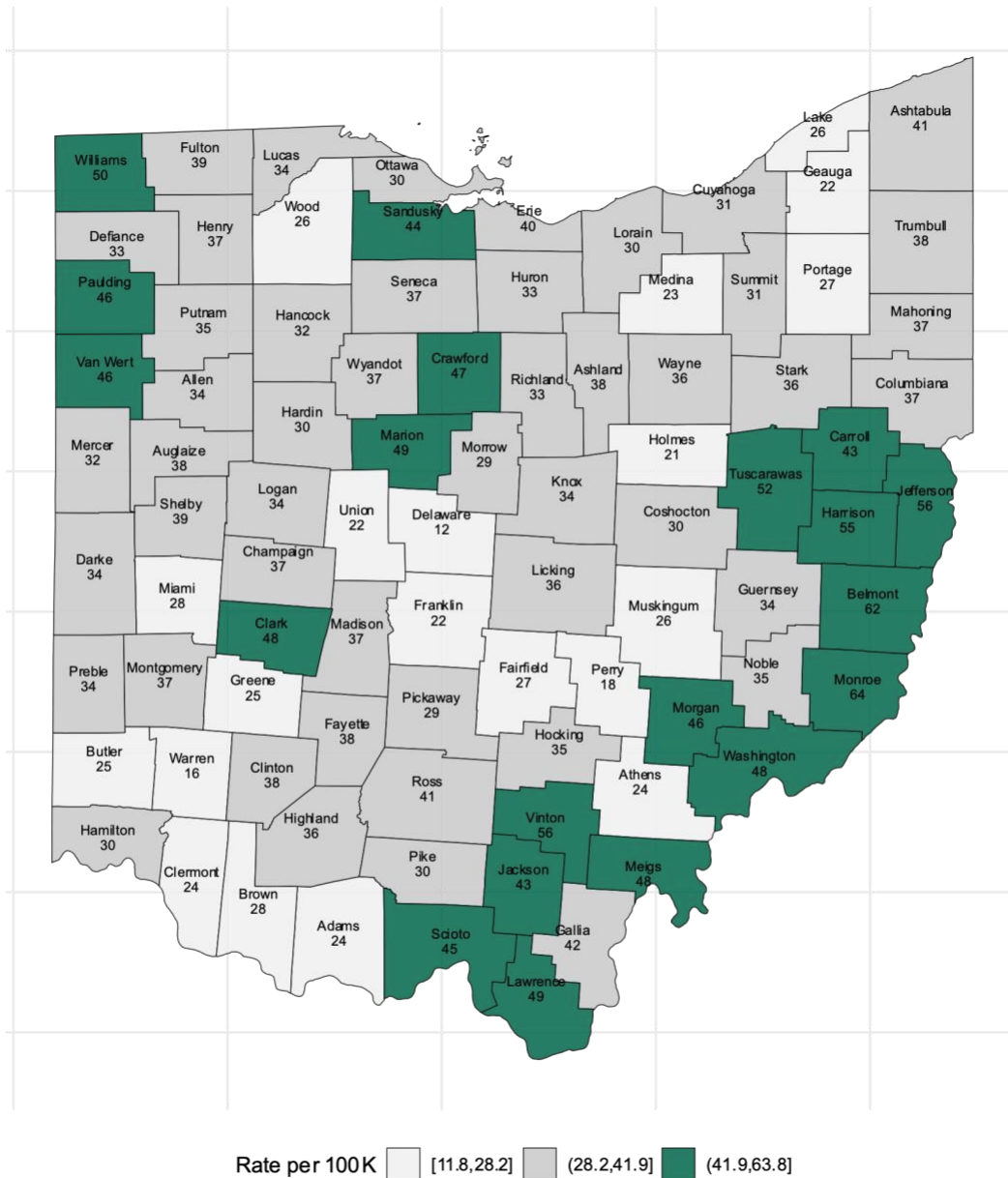
Van Wert Average Annual Alzheimer's Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population: 2010 – 2019



Average Annual Diabetes Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population: 2010 – 2019

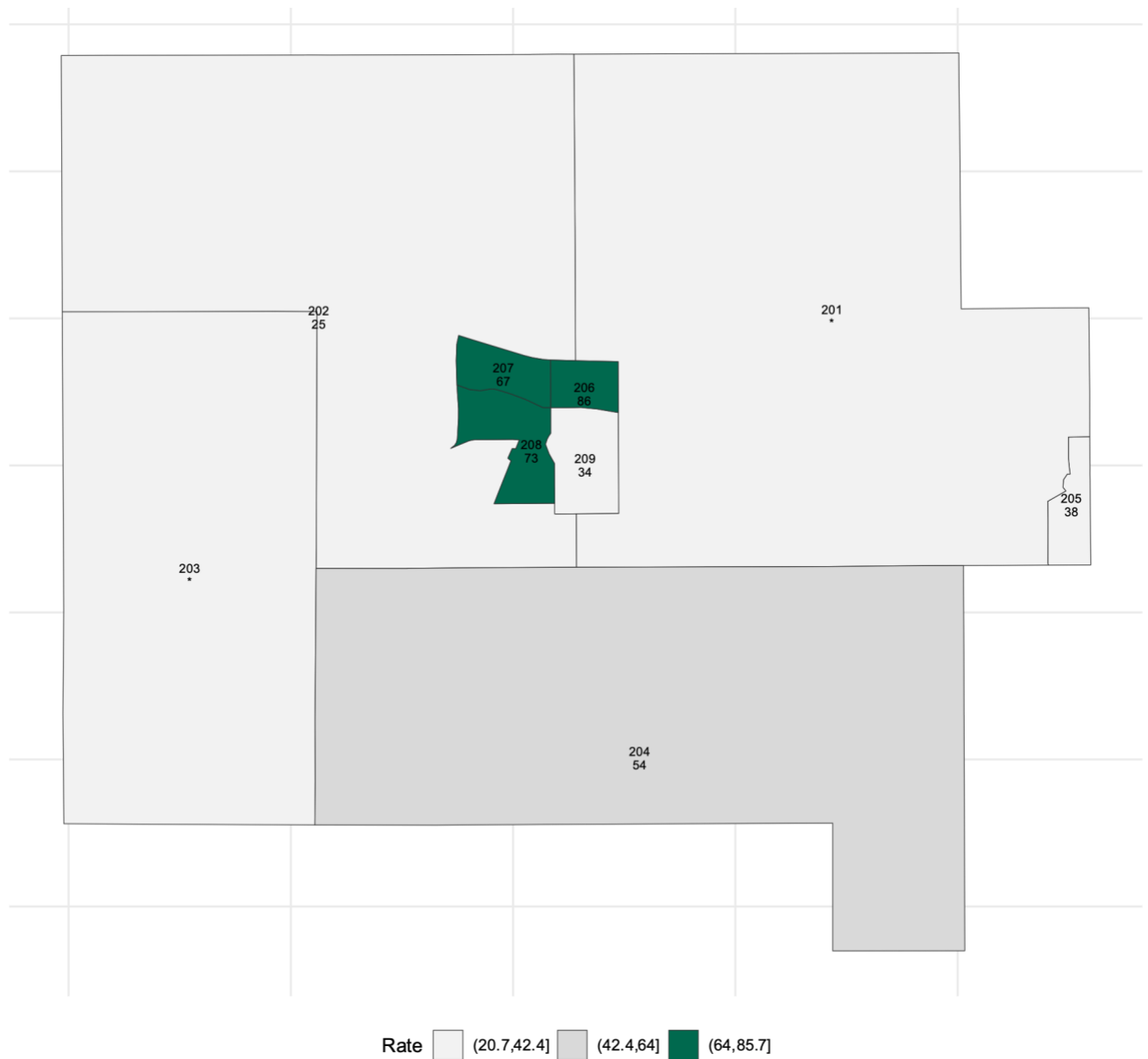
Diabetes was the 7th leading cause of fatalities in Van Wert County between 2020 and 2019.

Van Wert County has high rates of diabetes fatalities compared with other counties in the state of Ohio.



Van Wert Average Annual Diabetes Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population: 2010 – 2019

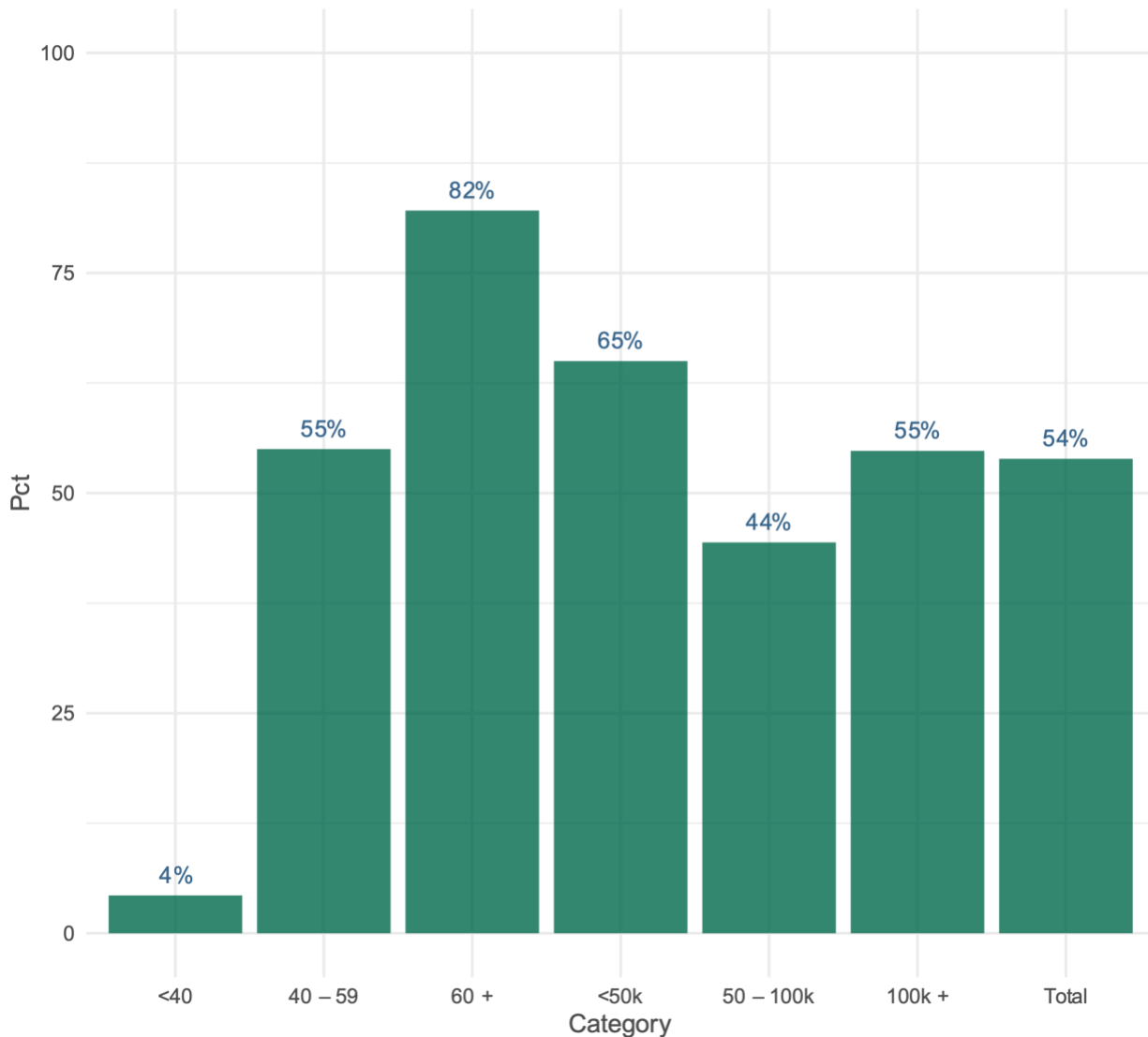
Deaths by diabetes were highest in census tracts 206, 207, and 208.



Women's Health

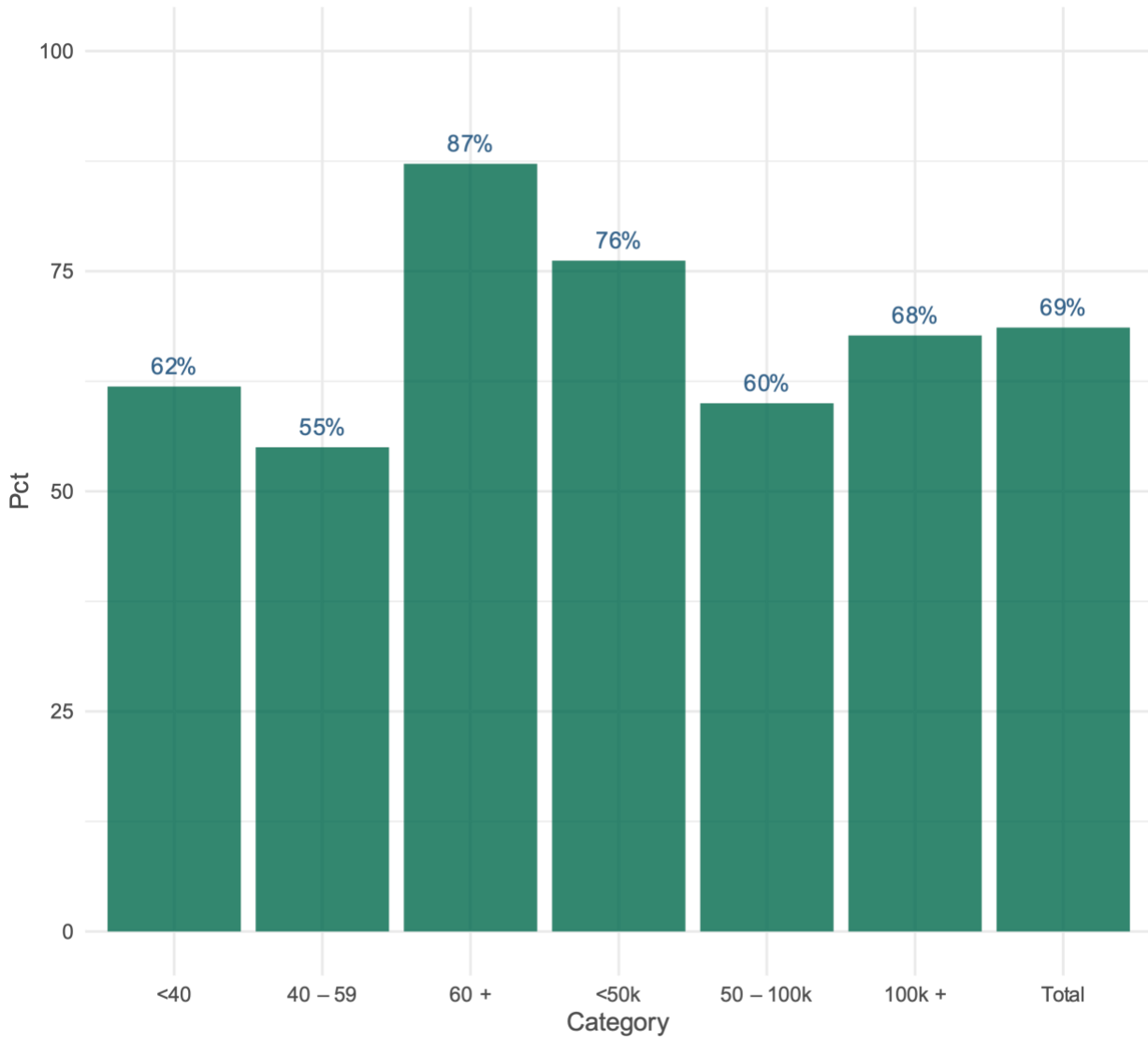
Van Wert County Women Reporting Mammograms Within the Past Year

Based on the Adult Survey, 54 percent of women reported having a mammogram within the past year, compared with 59 percent of women over the age of 40 in the 2018 CHA. Breast cancer deaths accounted for 7.9 percent of all cancer fatalities between 2010-2019.



Van Wert County Women Reporting Breast Examinations Within the Past Year

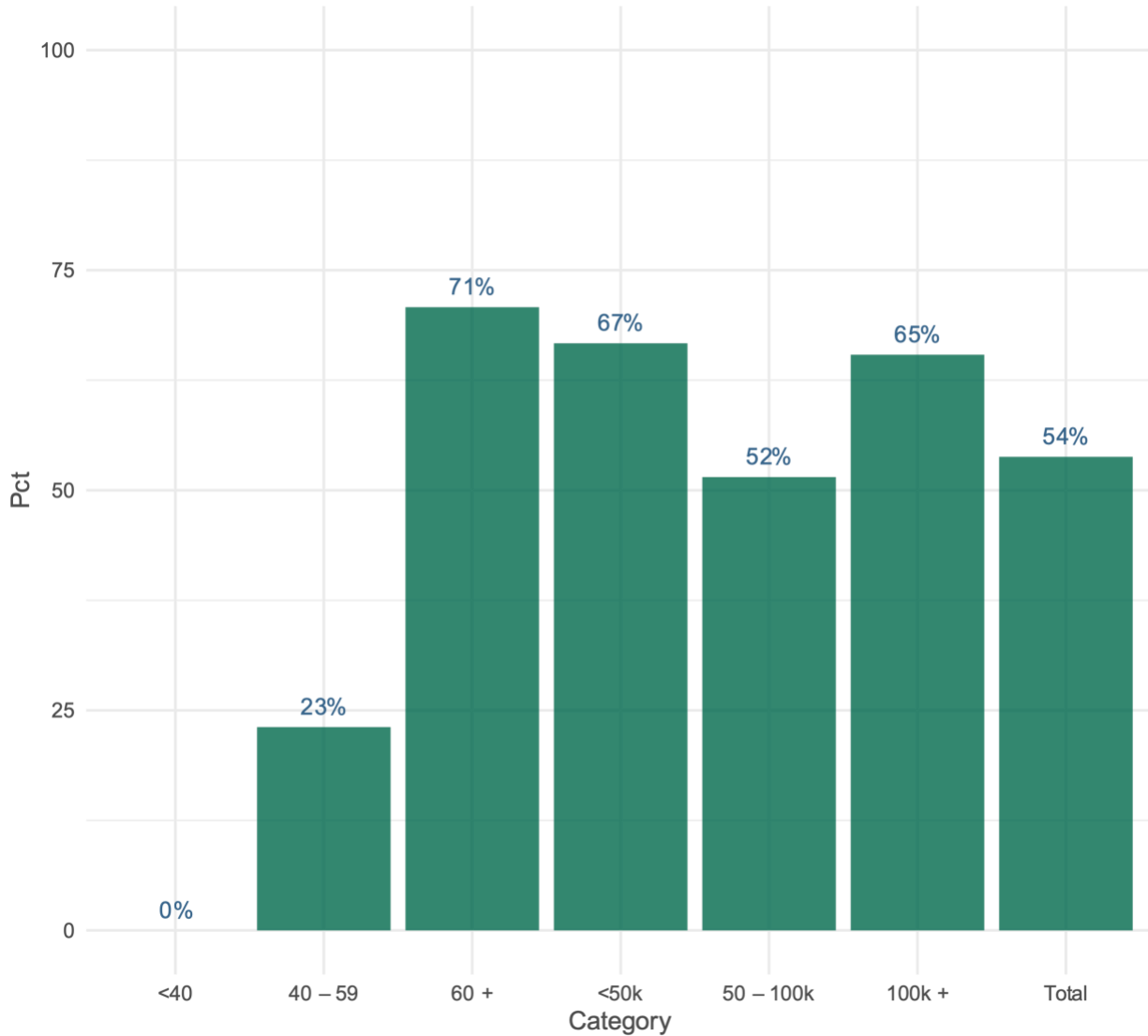
Sixty-nine percent of women reported having breast examinations within the past year; 87 percent of women in the 60+ category reported having a breast exam.



Men's Health

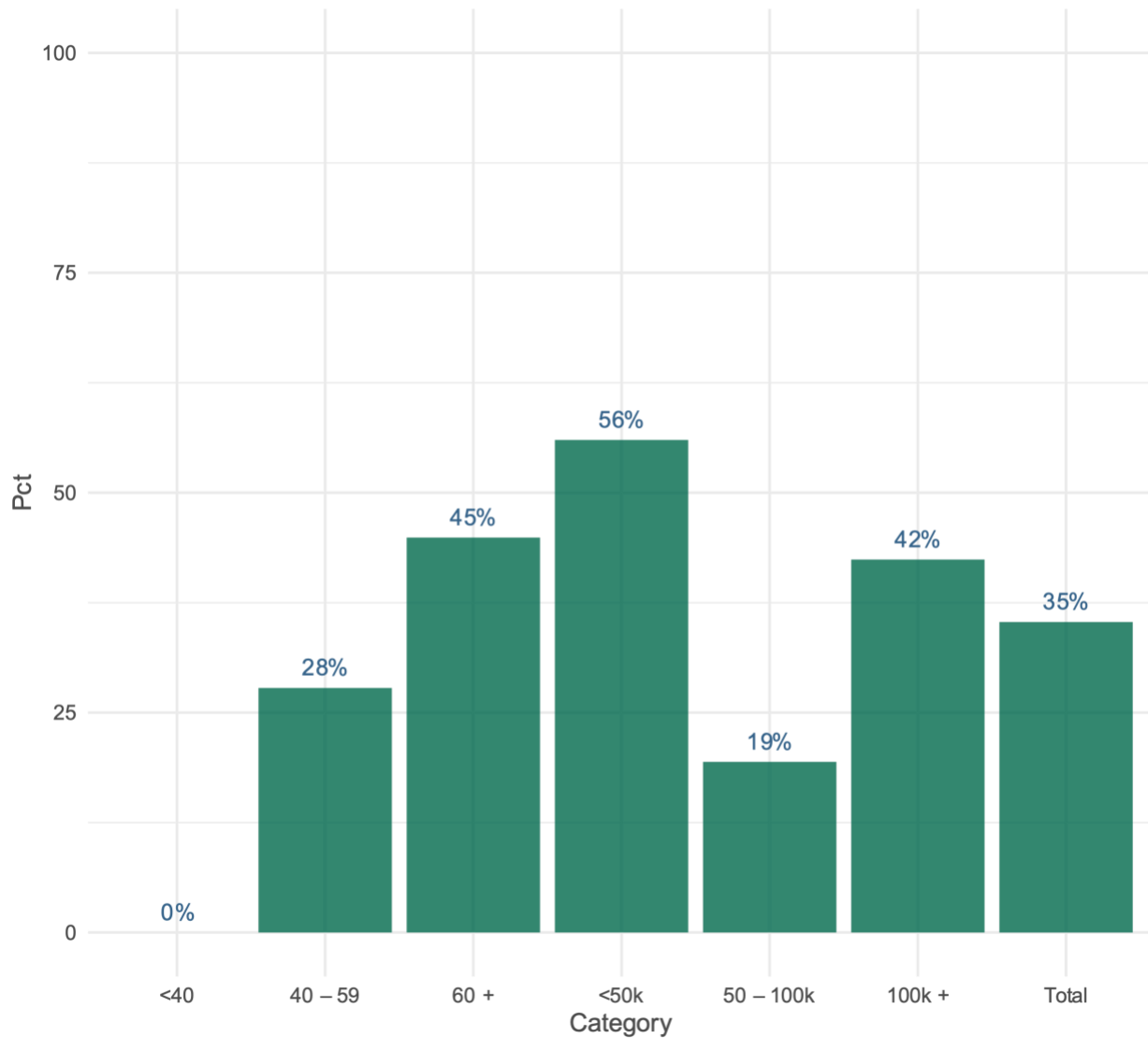
Van Wert County Men Reporting Prostate Examinations Within the Past Year

Over half of men (54 percent) had a prostate examination within the past year.



Van Wert County Men Reporting Digital Rectal Examinations Within the Past Year

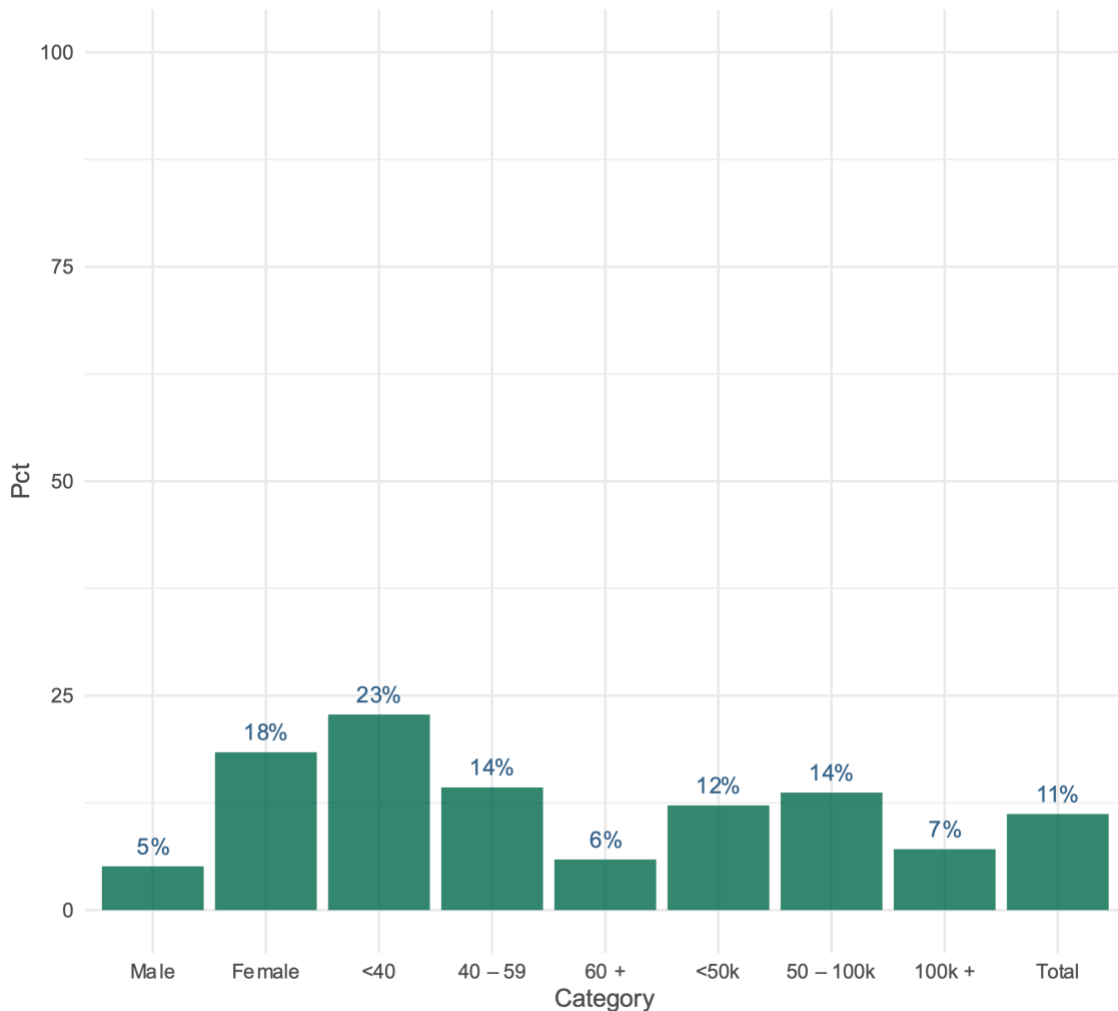
Thirty-five percent of men in Van Wert County reported having a digital rectal examination within the past year. Prostate cancer accounted for 4.64 percent of cancer fatalities between 2010-2019.



Mental Health

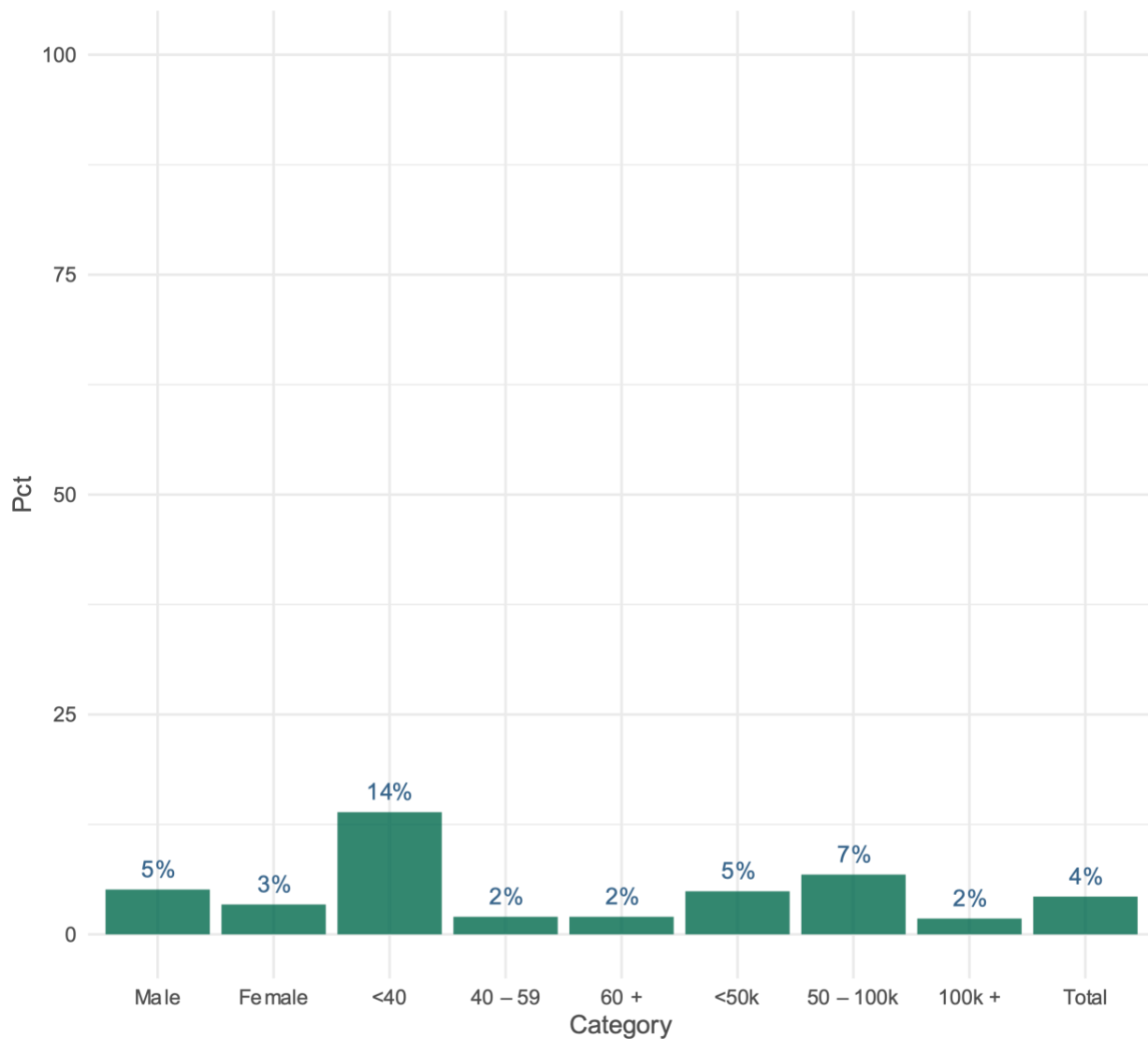
Van Wert County Adult Residents Reporting Sadness or Hopelessness for Two Weeks in a Row During the Past Twelve Months

According to the Adult Survey, 11 percent of adults reported sadness or hopelessness for two weeks in a row during the past twelve months. This is a slight increase from 8 percent in the 2018 Community Health Assessment. Van Wert has a higher-than-average mental health professional: patient ratio, which makes it a designated Health Professional Shortage Area for mental health services. *The small sample size must also be considered when reviewing this data.*



Van Wert County Adult Residents Reporting Suicidal Ideation During the Past Twelve Months

According to the Adult Survey, 4 percent of Van Wert County adults reported experiencing suicidal ideation during the past twelve months, compared to two percent considering attempting suicide in the 2018 survey.



Analysis of Mortality Data

Summary of Mortality Study Findings

1. Heart failure, followed by cancer, other unspecified diseases, chronic lower respiratory diseases, and cerebrovascular diseases constituted the top five causes of death in Van Wert County from 2010 through 2019.
2. The heart failure and cancer rates were respectively 3 and 9 percentage points higher than the state average.
3. Among diseases of despair (overdose, suicide, and alcohol-related cirrhosis), overdose accounted for the highest number of fatalities for the ten-year period, followed by suicide and alcohol cirrhosis.
4. Overdose and suicide rates lagged behind state rates by 42 percent and 14 percent respectively, while the alcohol-related cirrhosis rate exceeded the state average by 7 percent.

Underlying Cause	Van Wert County	Rate per 100k	Ohio	Rate per 100k	Diff	Pct Diff
Heart failure	711	252	280,488	241	8	3%
Cancer	689	244	257,558	221	19.9	9%
Other	507	179	195,433	168	9.6	6%
Chronic lower respiratory diseases	172	61	71,943	62	-1.5	-2%
Cerebrovascular diseases	155	55	61,678	53	1.3	2%
Alzheimer's disease	135	48	46,103	40	7.6	19%
Diabetes mellitus	129	46	37,119	32	13.1	41%
Influenza and pneumonia	110	39	23,068	20	18.5	93%
Accidents (unintentional injuries)	90	32	39,427	34	-2.3	-7%
Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, and nephrosis	75	27	21,505	18	7.7	43%

Septicemia	43	15	18,764	16	-1	-6%
Unintentional overdose	43	15	30,512	26	-11	-42%
Intentional self-harm (suicide)	35	12	16,542	14	-1.9	-14%
Essential (primary) hypertension and hypertensive renal	29	10	13,603	12	-1.5	-13%
Chronic liver disease and alcohol cirrhosis	24	8	8,450	7	1.1	16%
In situ neoplasms, benign neoplasms, and neoplasms of	24	8	7,151	6	2.2	37%
Parkinson's disease	24	8	11,855	10	-1.8	-18%
Pneumonitis due to solids and liquids	18	6	8,921	8	-1.3	-16%
Alcohol-related cirrhosis	17	6	6,483	6	0.4	7%
Nutritional deficiencies	12	4	2,856	2	1.7	85%

The preceding table presents total death counts for Van Wert and Ohio for all disease categories with more than ten deaths in Van Wert County. Rates per 100,000 represent the average annual crude death rate for the county and Ohio.

Van Wert and Ohio Demographic Data

The most recent data available from the U.S. Census Bureau's *QuickFacts website* was used to generate comparative profiles of Van Wert County and Ohio.²⁰ The site provides a summary of basic population, business, and geography statistics for all states and places with populations greater than 5,000.

Summary of Key Demographic Findings

1. Van Wert County and Ohio lost population between the 2010 and 2020 census counts. The rate of loss for Van Wert was less than the overall state loss for the ten-year period but appears to have accelerated between the 2020 count and the 2021 estimate.
2. Van Wert County is racially homogenous with 96.6 percent of the population reporting they were white as compared to 81.7 percent of the total Ohio population. This racial homogeneity creates significant challenges for researchers attempting to generalize about the health status of minority populations within the county.
3. The rate of dependent persons in Van Wert County (as measured by the number of persons under 18 and over 65) is higher than the state average. Forty-two point-six (42.6) percent and 39.6 percent respectively.
4. Van Wert County has a slightly higher percentage of adult high school graduates than Ohio (92.2 vs 90.8 percent) but a significantly lower percentage of residents who have completed college (17.2 vs 28.9 percent).
5. The cost of housing in Van Wert, as measured by the median value of owner-occupied housing, median monthly mortgage, and median gross rent is lower in Van Wert County than in the State of Ohio.
6. The median per capita income for Van Wert County (\$28,093) is lower than the Ohio average (\$32,465).

²⁰ U.S. Census Bureau *QuickFacts: Van Wert County, Ohio*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 12, 2022, from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/vanwertcountyohio>

Fact	Van Wert County	Ohio
Population Estimates, July 1 2021, (V2021)	28,732	11,780,017
Population estimates base, April 1, 2020, (V2021)	28,931	11,799,448
Population, percent change - April 1, 2020 (estimates base) to July 1, 2021, (V2021)	-0.70%	-0.20%
Population, Census, April 1, 2020	28,931	11,799,448
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	28,744	11,536,504
Persons under 5 years, percent	6.30%	5.90%
Persons under 18 years, percent	23.20%	22.10%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	19.40%	17.50%
Female persons, percent	50.70%	51.00%
White alone, percent	96.60%	81.70%
Black or African American alone, percent	1.10%	13.10%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	0.40%	0.30%
Asian alone, percent	0.30%	2.50%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent	0	0.10%
Two or More Races, percent	1.40%	2.40%
Hispanic or Latino, percent	3.70%	4.00%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	93.50%	78.40%
Veterans, 2016-2020	1,490	685,905
Foreign-born persons, percent, 2016-2020	0.50%	4.60%
Housing units, July 1, 2019, (V2019)	12,709	5,232,869
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2016-2020	77.70%	66.30%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2016-2020	\$111,000	\$151,400
Median selected monthly owner costs -with a mortgage, 2016-2020	\$934	\$1,286

Fact	Van Wert County	Ohio
Median selected monthly owner costs without a mortgage, 2016-2020	\$385	\$480
Median gross rent, 2016-2020	\$706	\$825
Building permits, 2020	39	29,686
Households, 2016-2020	11,640	4,717,226
Persons per household, 2016-2020	2.4	2.41
Living in the same house 1 year ago, percent of persons aged 1 year+, 2016-2020	90.00%	86.00%
Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons aged 5 years+, 2016-2020	2.20%	7.20%
Households with a computer, percent, 2016-2020	89.20%	90.70%
Households with a broadband Internet subscription, percent, 2016-2020	79.90%	84.50%
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons aged 25 years+, 2016-2020	92.20%	90.80%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons aged 25 years+, 2016-2020	17.20%	28.90%
With a disability, under age 65 years, percent, 2016-2020	10.00%	10.00%
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent	7.20%	7.80%
In civilian labor force, total, percent of population aged 16 years+, 2016-2020	64.50%	63.00%
In civilian labor force, female, percent of population aged 16 years+, 2016-2020	59.90%	58.90%
Total accommodation and food services sales, 2012 (\$1,000)	31,163	20,652,777

Fact	Van Wert County	Ohio
Total health care and social assistance receipts/revenue, 2012 (\$1,000)	113,252	80,915,693
Total manufacturers' shipments, 2012 (\$1,000)	1,505,673	313,629,976
Total retail sales, 2012 (\$1,000)	282,687	153,553,997
Total retail sales per capita, 2012	\$9,835	\$13,301
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers aged 16 years+, 2016-2020	19.9	23.7
Median household income (in 2020 dollars), 2016-2020	\$55,991	\$58,116
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2020 dollars), 2016-2020	\$28,092	\$32,465
Persons in poverty, percent	7.40%	12.60%
Total employer establishments, 2019	548	250,981
Total employment, 2019	10,520	4,916,956
Total annual payroll, 2019 (\$1,000)	408,173	243,906,995
Total employment, percent change, 2018-2019	2.40%	0.80%
Total non-employer establishments, 2018	1,662	802,331
All firms, 2012	2,295	904,814
Men-owned firms, 2012	1,290	510,078
Women-owned firms, 2012	606	306,824
Minority-owned firms, 2012	39	122,653
Nonminority-owned firms, 2012	2,136	759,569
Veteran-owned firms, 2012	164	91,316
Nonveteran-owned firms, 2012	1,879	776,193
Population per square mile, 2010	70.3	282.3
Land area in square miles, 2010	409.16	40,860.69

List of Appendices

- Appendix I [Adult Health Survey](#)
- Appendix II [Focus Group Moderator Guide](#)
- Appendix III [Focus Group Report](#)
- Appendix IV [Longitudinal Mortality Study PowerPoint](#)
- Appendix V [Area Deprivation Index Study PowerPoint](#)