



MEASURING COMMUNITY IMPACTS OF THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

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HRSA HEALTH CENTER PROGRAM

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) receive federal funds to provide primary health care to underserved communities across the United States and its territories.

FQHCs primarily serve vulnerable populations, making them a vital part of the mitigation of public health crises.

**Is there a way to measure
the impact of the opioid
epidemic at the
community level, instead
of the individual level?**



IMPACT MEASURES

Individual

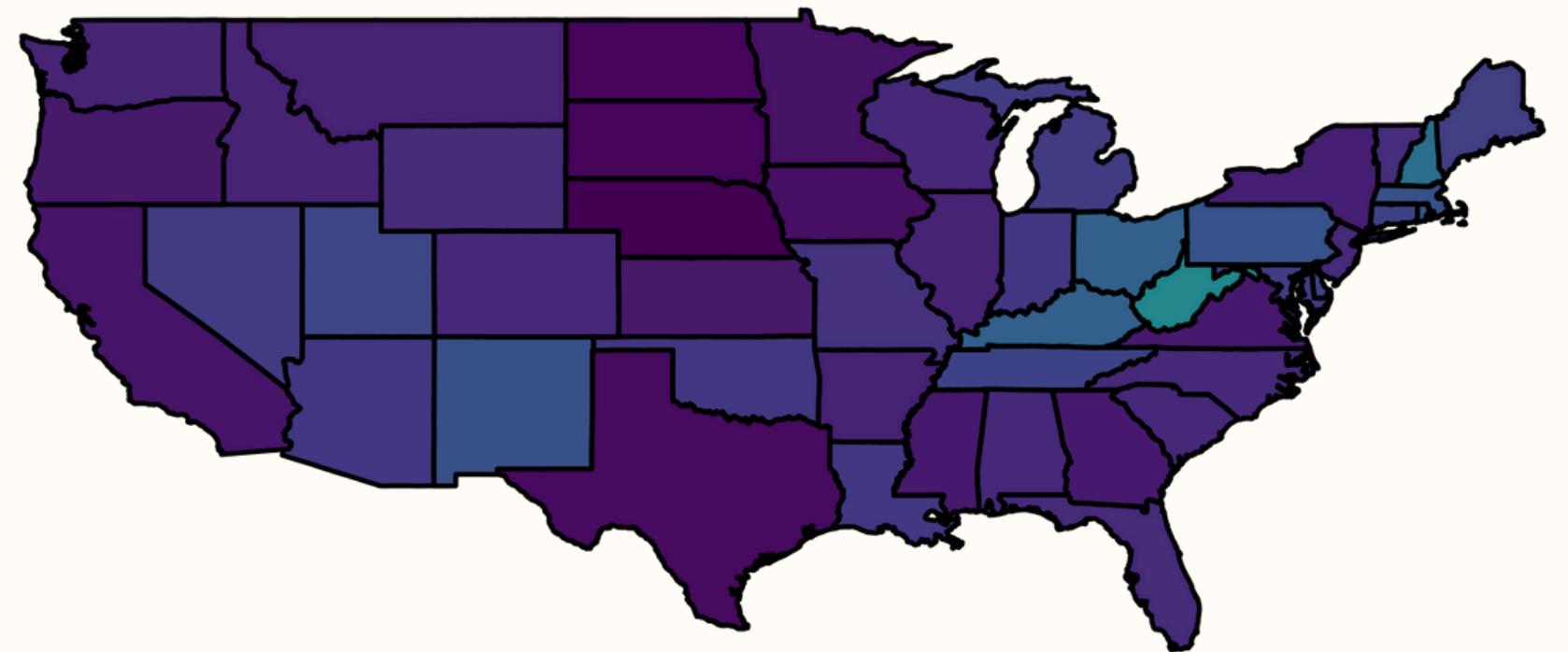
Drug Overdose Death
Rate

Community

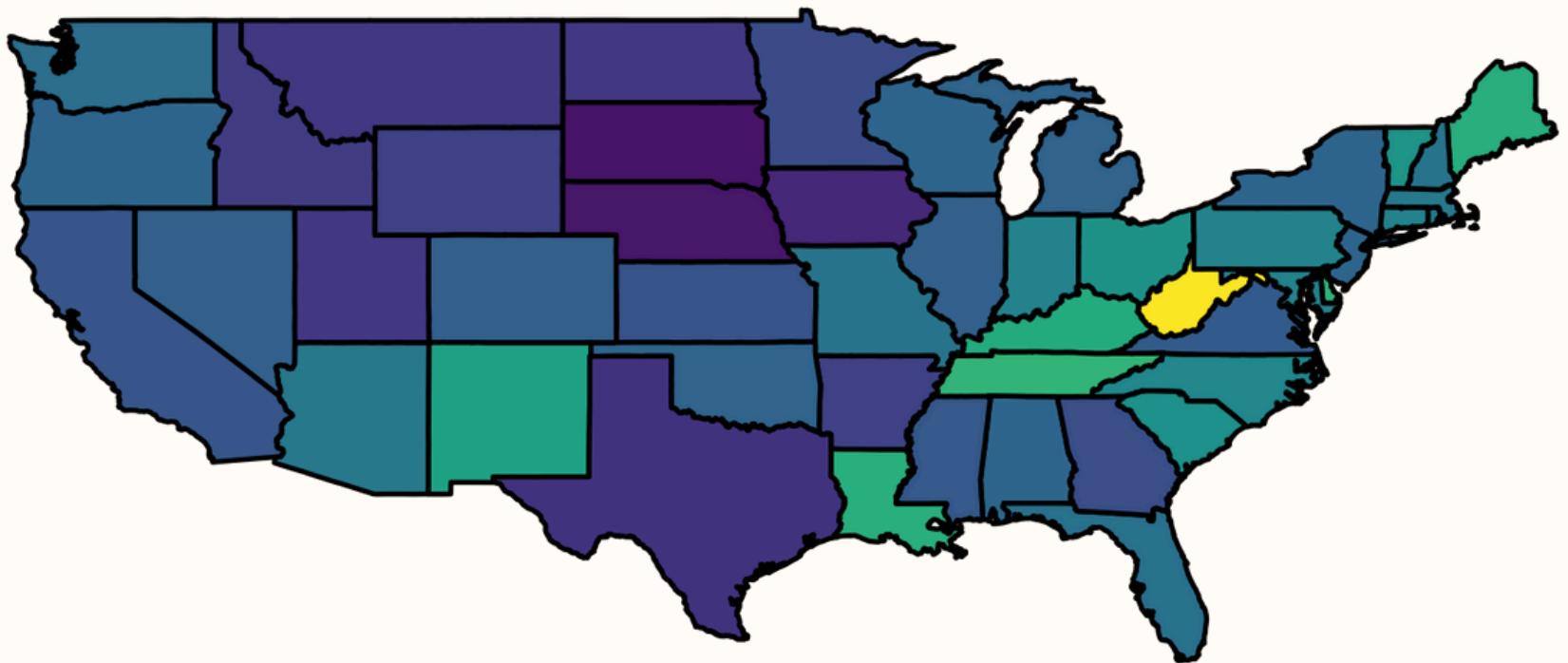
State Labs Positive for
Opioids

Figure 1: Deaths Due to Drug Overdose

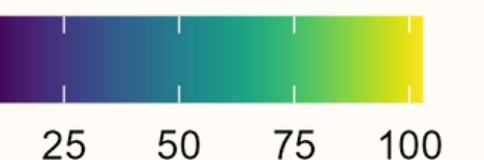
2015



2022



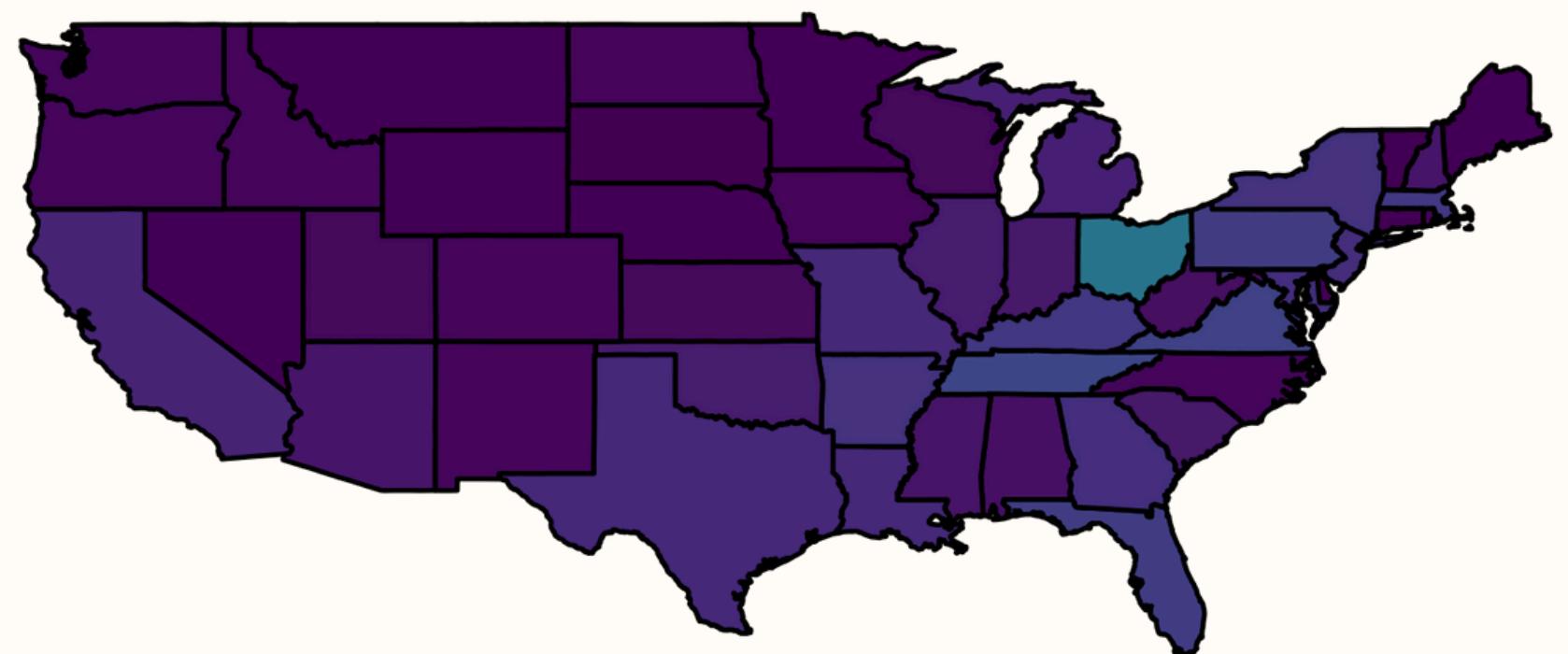
Age-Adjusted Death Rate
(per 100,000)



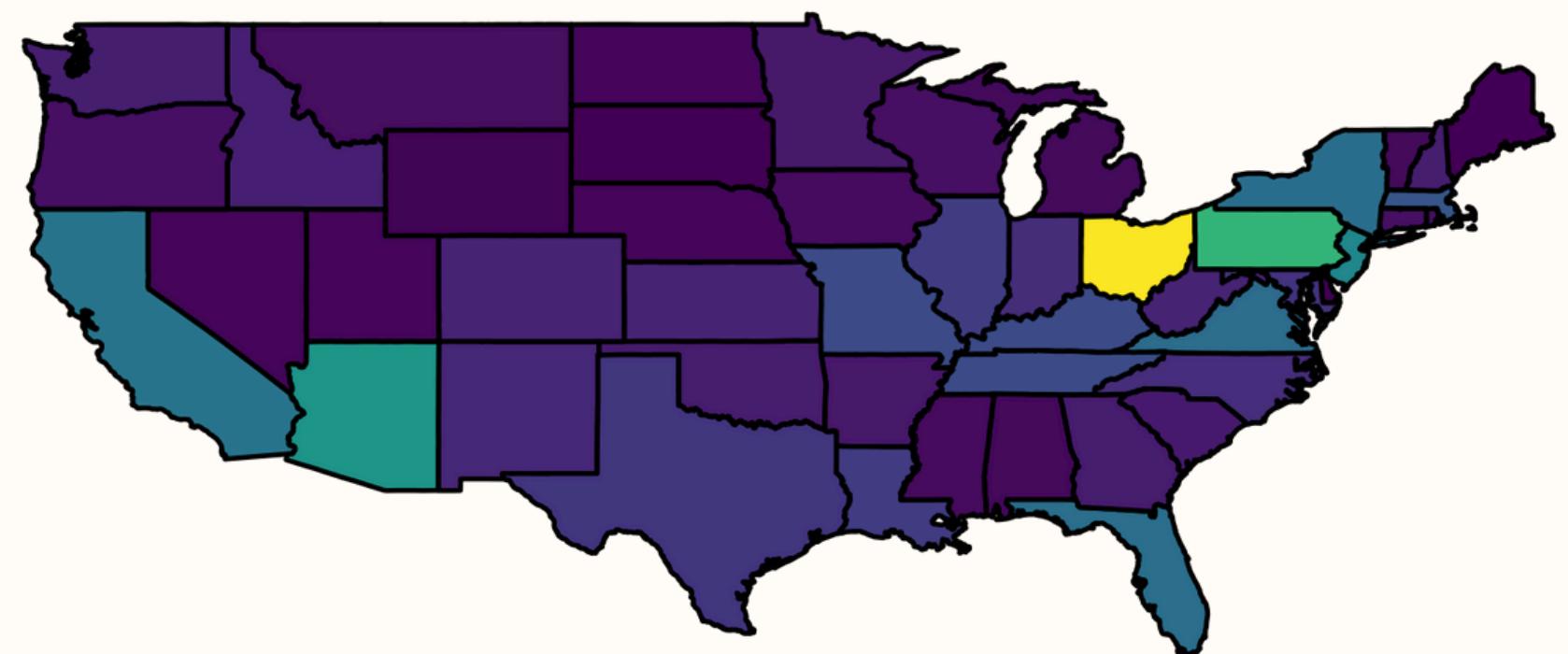
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, WONDER, Underlying Cause of Death

Figure 2: Total Opioids Identified by NFLIS-Drug Laboratories

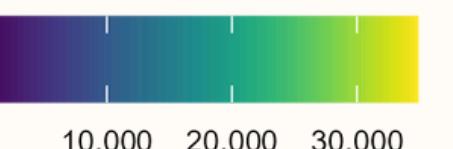
2015



2022



Total Opioids Identified



U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Agency, NFLIS-Drug Public Data

COMMUNITY HEALTH MEASURES

Patients with Substance Use Disorder

Visits Associated with Substance Use Disorder

Patients Receiving Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) for Substance Use Disorder

METHODOLOGY

Model

Year-State fixed effects regression
Single and multivariate models

Controls

Social, economic, and
demographic characteristics

RESULTS

1

State Labs Positive for Opioids **performed better** in our models than Drug Overdose Death Rate

2

Patients receiving MAT is our **best** performing community health measure

3

There is an **inverse relationship** between patients receiving MAT and state labs positive for opioids

LIMITATIONS

Data quality and availability

Limited causal inferences due to bias

RECOMMENDATIONS

Innovation in
measuring the
opioid epidemic

Improve **data collection** and
publication

Partnerships
between public
health and
public safety



THANK YOU

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