

OPIOID CRISIS AND AGING COMMUNITY

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February 13, 2020



Improving the lives of 40 million older adults by 2030

The Impact of the Opioid Epidemic on Older Adults: Findings from a National Survey of Community-Based Organizations

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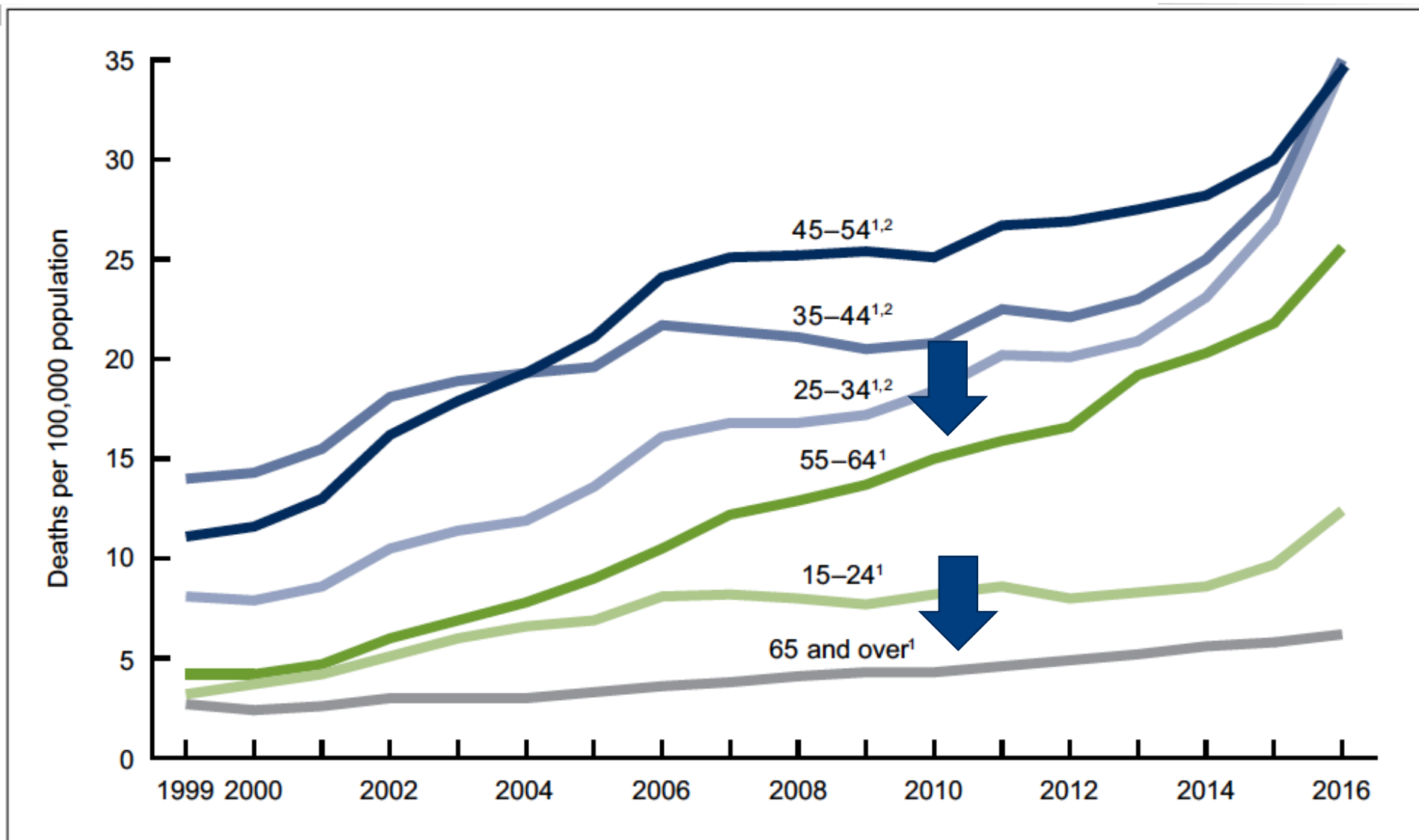
Improving the lives of 40 million older adults by 2030

The Opioid Epidemic



- More than 47,000 people died from opioid overdoses in the U.S in 2017, 6 times higher than 1999 (CDC, 2018)
- 11.1 M had a prescription opioid disorder in 2017 (SAMHSA, 2018)
- Emergency department visits by people 65+ with opioid related diagnoses increased 220% between 2006 and 2014 (Carter et al, 2019)

U.S. drug overdose death rates, per 100,000 population, 1999–2016



2017

Opioid Use among Older Adults

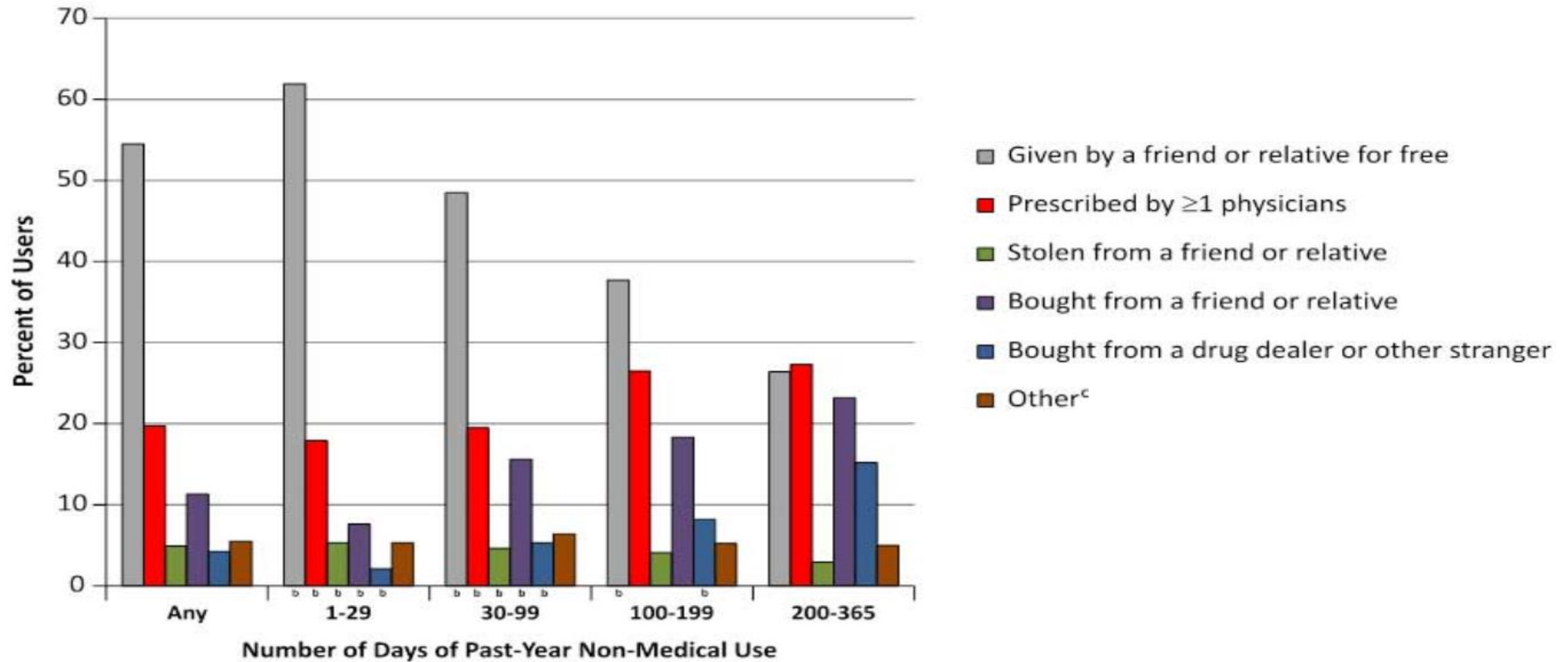
- **DHHS OIG, 2017**

- 1 in 3 Medicare Part D enrollees received an opioid prescription in 2016.
- 500,000 enrollees received high amounts of opioids.
- Almost 90,000 enrollees were at serious risk of addiction due to being prescribed high amounts of opioids.
- More than 6 out of every 1,000 Medicare enrollees are diagnosed with an opioid disorder, compared with 1 of every 1,000 enrollees in commercial plans.

- **DHHS OIG, 2018**

- Nearly 1 in 3 Part D beneficiaries received a prescription opioid in 2017.
- Overall Part D spending for opioids decreased due in part to declining prices.
- Almost 460,000 beneficiaries received high amounts of opioids in 2017, fewer than in 2016.
- About 71,000 beneficiaries are at serious risk of opioid misuse or overdose, also fewer than in 2016.

Sources of Prescription Opioids Among Past-Year Non-Medical Users^a



^a Obtained from the US National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2008 through 2011.⁵

^b Estimate is statistically significantly different from that for highest-frequency users (200-365 days) ($P < .05$).

^c Includes written fake prescriptions and those opioids stolen from a physician's office, clinic, hospital, or pharmacy; purchases on the Internet; and obtained some other way.

SOURCE: Jones C, Paulozzi L, Mack K. Sources of prescription opioid pain relievers by frequency of past-year nonmedical use: United States, 2008–2011. *JAMA Int Med* 2014; 174(5):802-803.

Chronic Pain and Other Chronic Conditions Among Older Adults

- Chronic Pain
 - 30% of older adults have chronic pain
 - Significant negative impact on their quality of life
 - Pain leads to increased physician visits, hospital stays, medication use
- Depression is highly prevalent (up to 20%)
 - Depression is a risk factor for substance use disorders and suicide
 - Depression is linked to pain and social isolation
- 80% of older adults have at least one chronic disease; over 60% have multiple chronic conditions
- Fragmented care, especially for individuals with multiple chronic conditions, makes conditions difficult to manage



Purpose

The purpose of the survey was to better understand how older adults and their caregivers are affected by the opioid epidemic, as well as identify new resources and tools needed for organizations to better serve their communities.

The specific research objectives were to:

1. Identify changes in CBOs' efforts in service delivery compared to two years ago, as a result of the opioid epidemic;
2. Describe unique issues reported by older adults, directly or indirectly, resulting from opioid use disorders experienced by them or loved ones;
3. Describe how organizations are screening and referring older adults for support associated with opioid use disorders; and
4. Identify gaps in resources that may help organizations to more effectively respond to these issues.

Survey Methodology

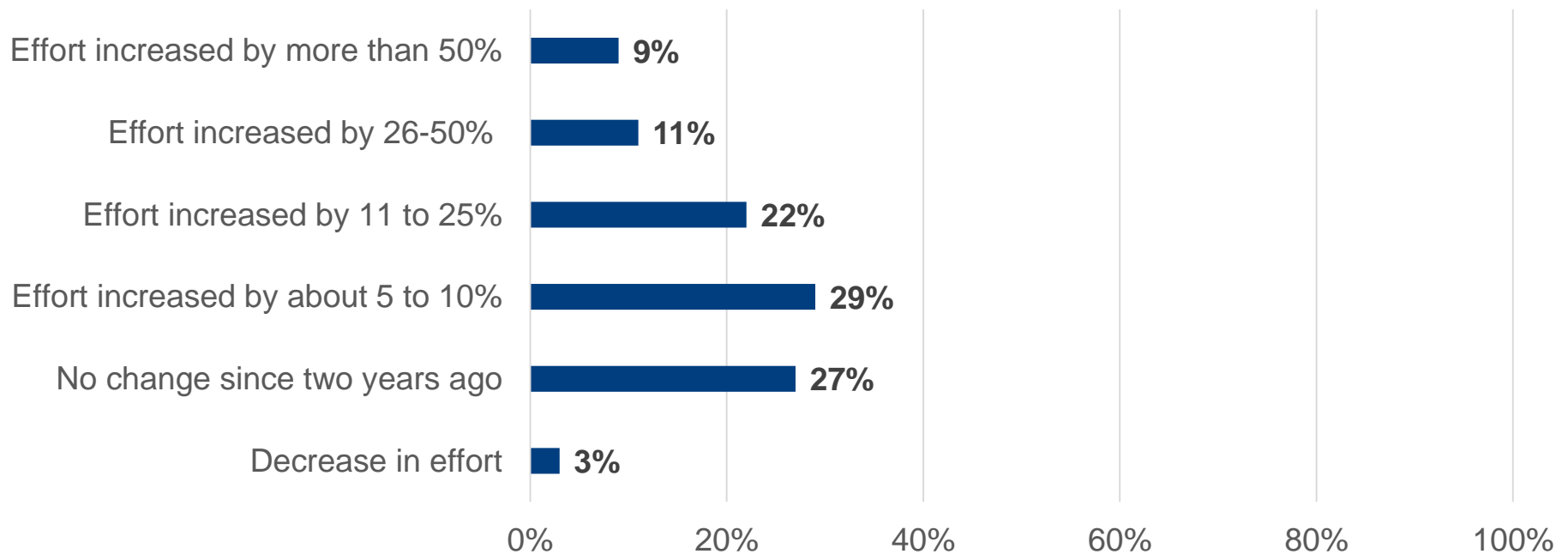
- The National Council on Aging (NCOA) queried aging network service providers through online survey
- Mid-Jan to mid-Feb 2019
- 15-20 minute response time
- One response per organization/agency
- Not anonymous
- Multiple-choice and open-ended

Sample

- Over 200 organizations responded to the survey.
 - 40 States and Puerto Rico – oversample from Wisconsin and Kentucky
- Top organization types represented among responses:
 - AAAs (23%)
 - Senior Centers (21%)
 - Health care organizations (15%)
 - Multi-purpose social services organizations (14%)
 - Other (14%)
- Service area: Rural (77%), Suburban (39%), and Urban (37%) (Note: more than one type of service area may be applicable per organization)
- Response rate not available
 - Multiple list-serves across NCOA programs (e.g. Benefits Enrollment Centers, State Health Insurance Assistance Programs, ACL Chronic Disease Self-Management Education, Senior Community Service Employment Programs)
- Removed duplicates or averaged & merged responses from duplicate sites, where

Increased Efforts Focused on Older Adult Clients Affected by the Opioid Crisis

Changes in Efforts to Address Opioid-Related Issues
(n=162)



- 7 in 10 CBOs increased effort spent in addressing issues related to the opioid epidemic affecting their older adult clients or their caregivers, compared to two years ago.
- 1 in 5 organizations have increased their efforts by more than 25%

Qualitative: Key Factors Fueling Opioid Crisis in Their Community

- The sheer volume of opioids available
- Lack of information about the potential for misuse or addiction

“As young as 12 are abusing opiates. Lots of drugs are easy for a 12 year old to get. Twelve-year-olds do not have the ability to understand death as a consequence”

“Overprescribing patients to a point of addiction and then cutting them off, which leads them to look elsewhere for pain management knowing they can only get it from illegal street drugs”

“Doctors and ERs impelled to treat pain aggressively”

Qualitative: Key Factors Fueling Opioid Crisis in Their Community

“Doctors prescribing pain medication after a surgery or for arthritis pain”

- Misconstrued beliefs about the best remedy for pain
- Lack of attention to other forms of treatment outside of opioids

“People believe that they have a right to be comfortable and that they should not have to tolerate pain. They are looking for an instant fix.”

“Doctors prescribing opioids to put a band aid on the problem”

Qualitative: Unintended Consequences

Decreasing opioid availability has led to patients with significant pain without the treatment they need

“Pain patients are now being left behind. Doctors are afraid to fill prescriptions for pain patients or they refuse. Many pain patients are innocent victims being swept up in the hype of the opioid epidemic”

“As a result of government cutbacks on the dispersion of pain opioids people are changing doctors, lying about their pain and going elsewhere (some the streets) to get pain relief meds.”

Opioid Misuse is a Common Reason Why Some Older Adults Become Caretakers to Grandchildren

- **5-10%** of older adult clients are the primary caregiver for their grandchildren (n=153, reported by 57% of CBOs)
- A quarter (**23%**) say that half of those situations where an older adult is raising his/her grandchildren is due to the child's parent's opioid use
- Among older adult clients raising their grandchildren:
 - **78%** report financial concerns about affording the added cost of caring for grandchildren
 - **35%** report health-related concerns from managing the burden of caring for grandchildren

Health-Related Concerns from Older Adult Clients

% Reporting Concern <i>(Often or Occasionally)</i> <i>(n=161)</i>	Health Concerns
81%	Do not understand safe, effective, and affordable alternatives to reducing pain without prescription opioid medications
80%	Face challenges obtaining needed prescriptions or refills for opioid pain medication because of increased scrutiny and/or changing prescribing patterns
77%	Difficulty managing the side effects of taking opioid pain medication alongside medications for other chronic conditions
77%	Accessing alternative therapies for pain management
76%	Reporting and/or preventing the theft of prescribed opioid pain medication by friends, family, or others
71%	Finding available and affordable treatment options for substance abuse for older adults, adults with disabilities, or their family members

Financial-Related Concerns from Older Adult Clients

% Reporting Concern (Often or Occasionally) (n=161)	Financial Concerns
84%	Increased reliance on federal benefits
80%	Theft of pain medication by family members or others who use it for themselves to sell
75%	Concerns about the theft of cash or other goods to sell in order to buy pain medication or other illicit drugs
63%	Using savings to pay for drug rehabilitation for themselves or adult children
49%	Concerns about increased costs of obtaining opioid pain medication to manage their pain because these medications are only available out-of-state, at greater distances, or by certain providers

Organizations Report Needing More Resources, Training, and Support for Opioid-Related Issues

- Most organizations in the aging services network do not routinely screen for opioid abuse and dependency (72%)

% Reporting Usefulness	Desired Opioid-Related Resources
92%	Best practices (case studies, tip sheets, issue briefs)
92%	Referral sheets of local and national resources
89%	Webinars
87%	Online training modules (short bite-sized segments)
82%	Ready to use marketing templates/print materials
80%	Substance use screening or assessment tools
79%	E-newsletters with practical tips and resources
74%	Interactive, online toolkits
74%	Short-term, skill-building groups on specific topics
74%	In-person group trainings

Conclusions

- Organizations **report spending more time** addressing opioid-related problems in last two years
- **Opioid volume and lack of awareness and information** fuel the opioid epidemic
- Opioid addiction is a common reason why older adults must take on **caregiving for their grandchildren or other young relatives**
- **Myriad of health concerns** related to the opioid crisis are common
- Older adult clients face **financial concerns** related to the opioid crisis
- Most organizations in the **aging network do not routinely screen for opioid use issues**
- Organizations serving older adults **need more opioid-related resources**

Recommendations

- Equip frontline aging network professionals with reliable and **easy-to-access training, validated screening tools and other resources** to better identify at-risk older adults
- Support CBOs with implementing **effective referral pathways** through collaboration with local mental health and substance use treatment providers.
- Raise awareness and increase educational efforts to **improve the health literacy of older adults and their caregivers** related to the safe and appropriate use of opioids.
 - Capitalize on educational materials developed to improve opioid literacy, developed by federal agencies (e.g. CDC, NIDA, SAMHSA) and others

Recommendations

- Improve access to and knowledge of **non-pharmacological and alternative approaches** to manage chronic pain (e.g., acupuncture, hypnosis, Tai Chi, CBT, music, Chronic Pain Self-Management Program, etc.).
 - Improve insurance coverage, including Medicare, for alternative therapies and programs
- Incorporate the older adult perspective in **national, state and local efforts focused on the opioid epidemic**
- Promote awareness of the risk factors associated with financial **fraud and abuse** and resources available
- Educate older adults about **public benefits and legal supports** to alleviate financial burdens

Professional Resources

- **National Council on Aging**
 - Impact of the Opioid Epidemic Report
 - Implementing Evidence-based Programs to Address Chronic Pain
- **Administration for Community Living**
 - Addressing the Opioid Crisis web page on ACL.gov
- **Generations United**
 - Raising the Children of the Opioid Epidemic
- **Grantmakers in Aging**
 - Opioid Epidemic's Impact on Rural Older Adults
- **U.S. Health and Human Services**
 - Toolkit for Helping Faith and Community Leaders Bring Hope and Healing to Our Communities
- **SAMHSA**
 - Get Connected Tool Kit
 - Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)
 - SAMHSA and HRSA Older Adults Page

Consumer Resources

- NCOA's BenefitCheckUp.org
- CDC
 - Prevent Opioid Misuse; Prescription Opioids: What You Need to Know; Preventing an Opioid Overdose; Promoting Safe & More Effective Pain Management.
- FDA
 - A Guide to Safe Use of Pain Medication; Drug Information for Consumers
- NedyMeds Be MedWise
 - MUST: Medication Use Safety Training for Older Adults



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Local Responses to the Opioid Overdose Epidemic: An Environmental Scan

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NACCHO is the only organization dedicated to serving every local health department in the nation. NACCHO serves 3000 local health departments and is the leader in providing cutting-edge, skill-building, professional resources and programs, seeking health equity, and supporting effective local public health practice and systems.

OUR MISSION

To improve the health of communities by strengthening and advocating for local health departments

OUR VISION

Optimal health, equity, and security for all people in all communities



Why did we conduct this survey?

Approximately two-thirds of local health departments (LHD) reported conducting activities to address the opioid crisis in 2017. To do so, LHDs partnered with local/state government agencies and healthcare organizations.”

– NACCHO 2018 *Forces of Change Study*

CDC released *Evidence-Based Strategies for Preventing Opioid Overdose*

NACCHO identified a gap – there was a lack of more granular data around local opioid overdose prevention and response activities.



The scan surveyed 198 of 399 LHDs (Response Rate = 51%)

Methodology

- Ø 15-20 minute online survey
 - Quantitative and qualitative questions
 - Option for file upload

Data Analysis

- Ø Quantitative: Subgroup Analysis (LHD size and governance)
- Ø Qualitative: in vivo coding and pattern coding

Report Authors:

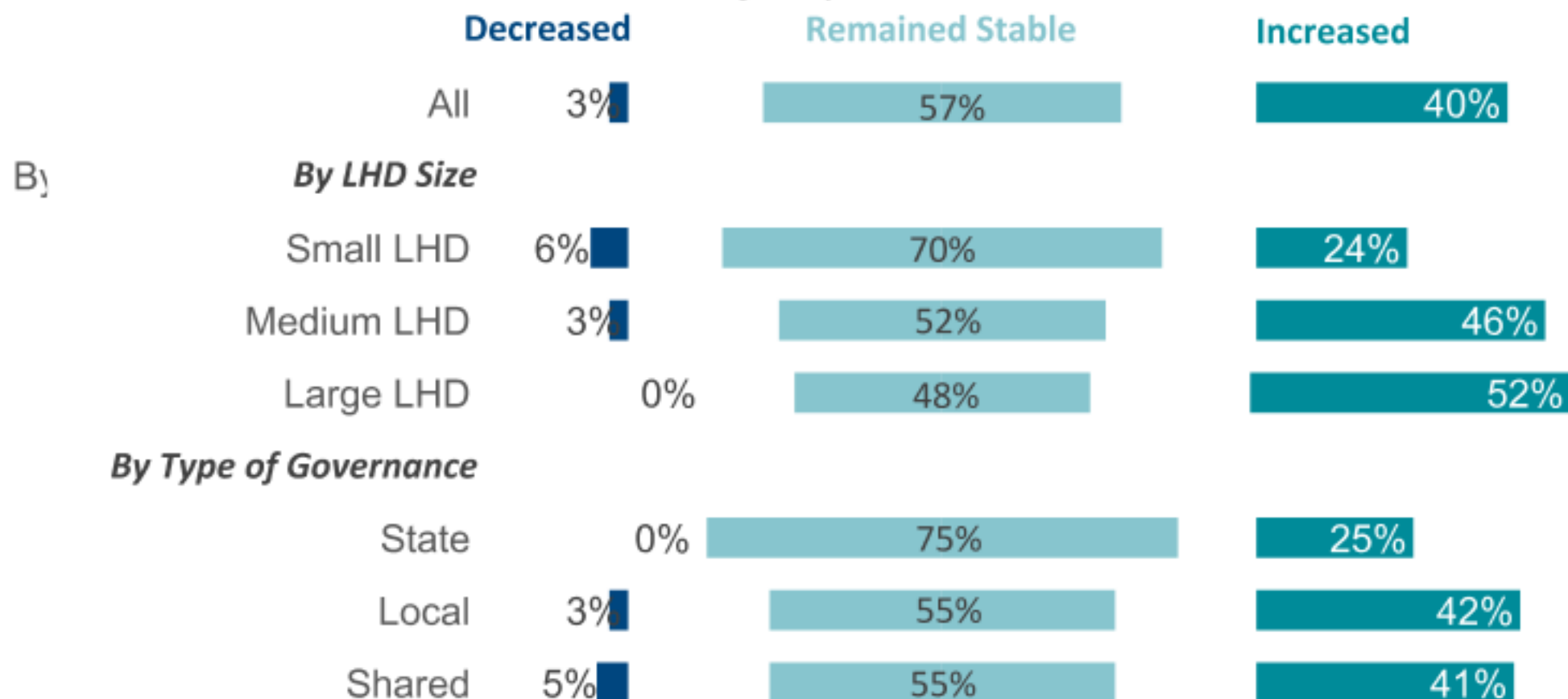
Kamya Raja, MSPH

Francis Higgins, MSc

Data collection and visualization support provided by Kellie Hall

Opioid-Related Staffing Changes 2017-2018

Percent of respondents, n=160



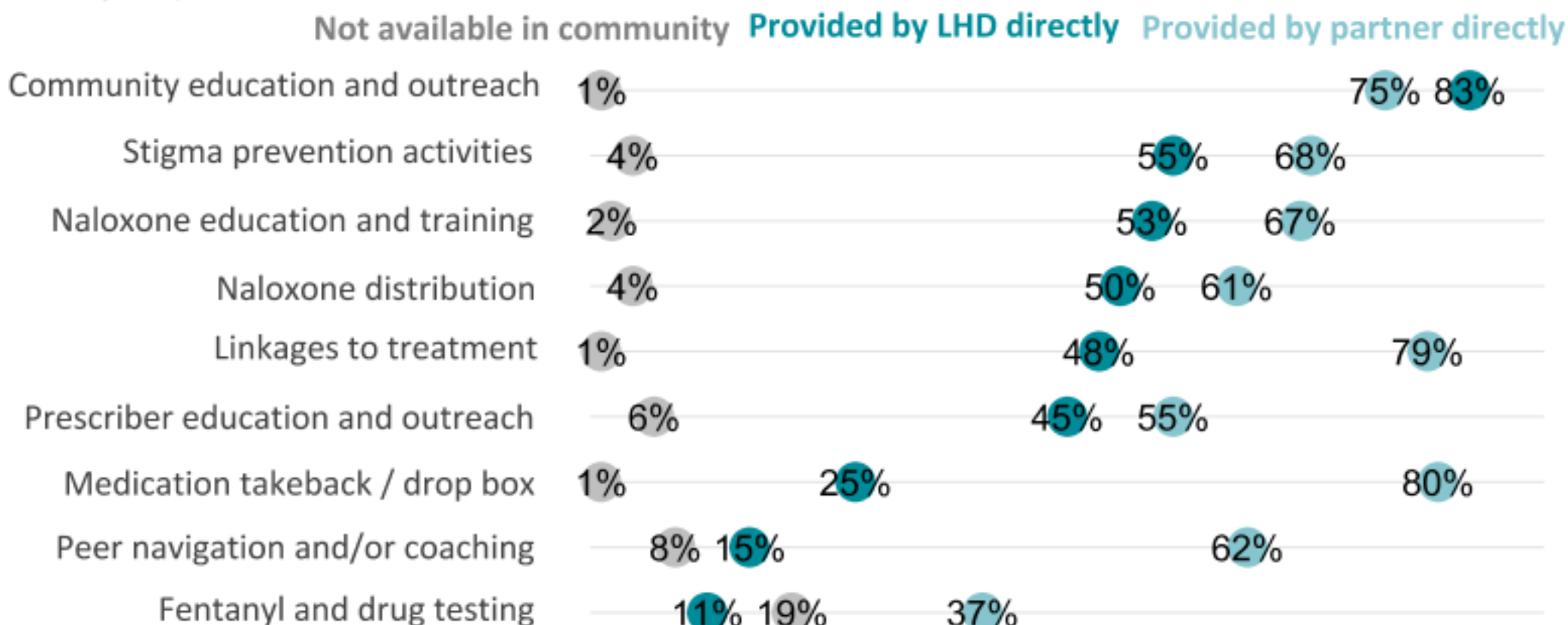
Primary Positions of Staff Conducting Opioid Activities

Percent of respondents, n=145



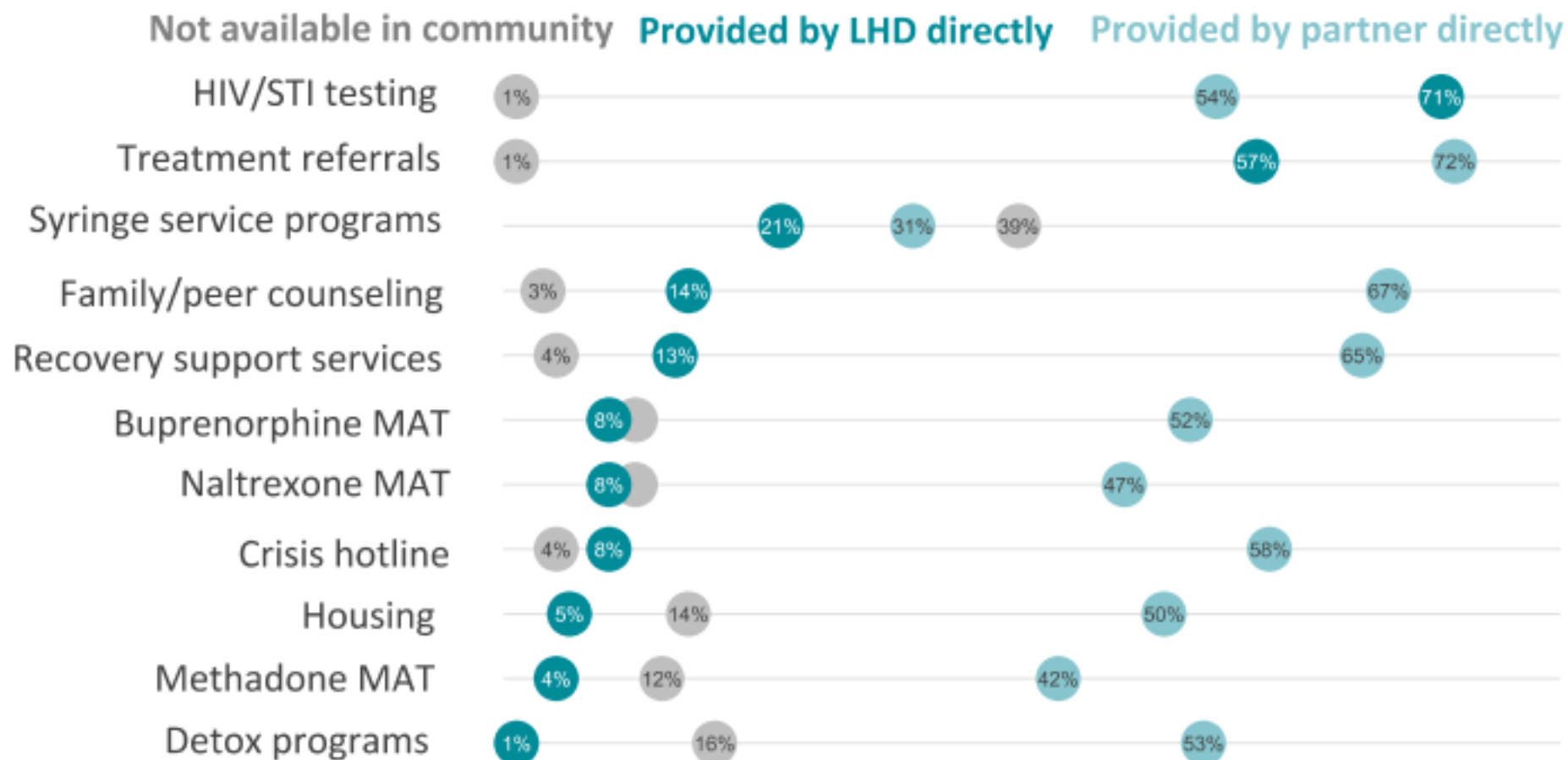
Opioid-Related Programmatic Services Provided

Percent of respondents, n=151–159



Opioid-Related Clinical Services Provided

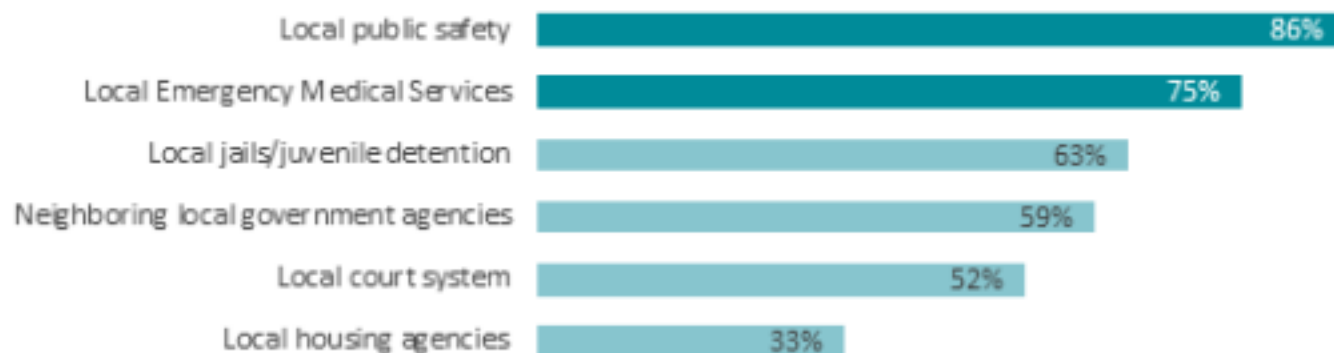
Percent of respondents, n=153–158



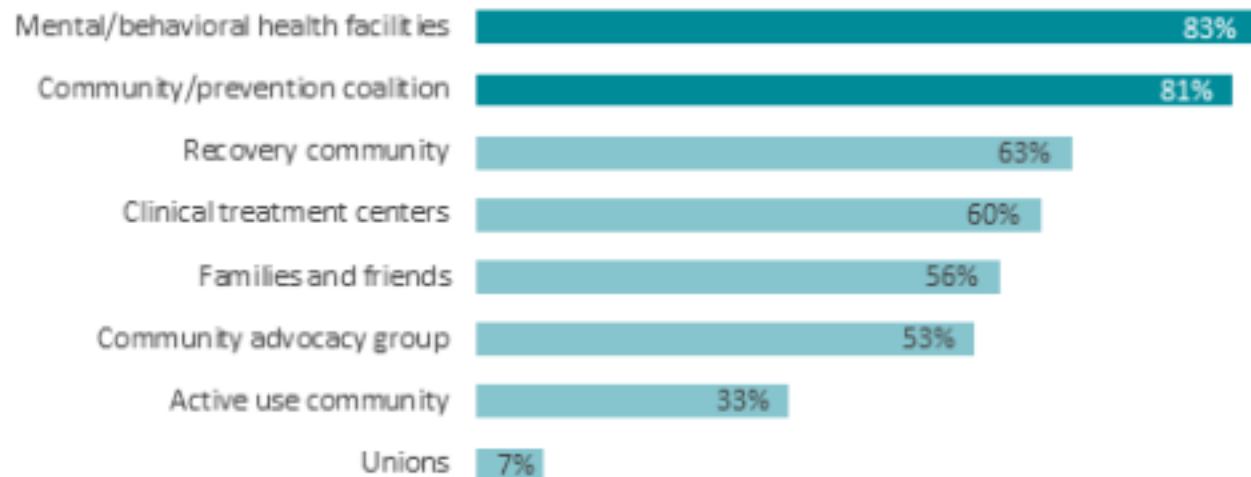
Organizations Partnering with LHDs to Conduct Opioid-Related Activities

Percent of respondents, n=151–156

Local Government Agencies



Opioid Use Disorder Community



MAJOR TRENDS IN OPIOID USE AMONG SENIORS



Older adults are often prescribed opioids to cope with persistent or ongoing pain rather than alternative pain therapies

1 IN 3

Medicare Part D beneficiaries received a prescription opioid in 2017



Opioids have a stronger impact on older adults because the body metabolizes drugs more slowly as someone ages



Across the U.S., older adults have the fastest growing rate of: opioid use, opioid-related hospital visits, and opioid-related deaths

Local Health Collaboration Examples



Questions?

Resources

Local Health Department Approaches to Opioid Use Prevention and Response: An Environmental Scan

<https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Environmental-Scan-V3-July-2019-FINAL-v2.pdf>

Local Health Department Resources

<https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/NACCHO-Opioid-Environmental-Scan-Resources.pdf>

NACCHO's Opioid Response Toolkit

<https://www.naccho.org/programs/community-health/injury-and-violence/opioid-epidemic/local-health-departments-and-the-opioid-epidemic-a-toolkit>

Project Lazarus

<https://www.projectlazarus.org/>