



Pennsylvania
Department of Health

4/16/25

The State of Rural Health in Pennsylvania

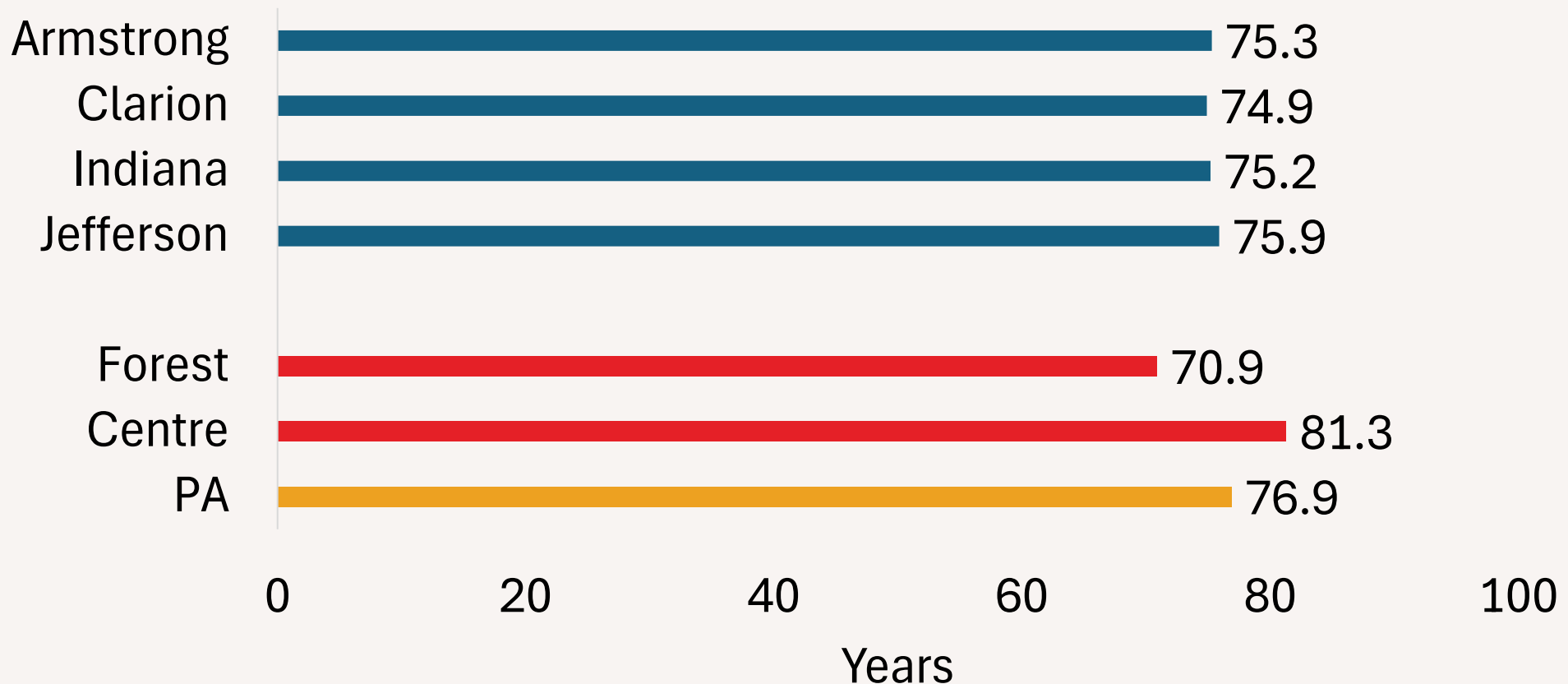
Debra L. Bogen, MD, FAAP
Secretary of Health

Western Pennsylvania Regional Rural Health Summit

Outline

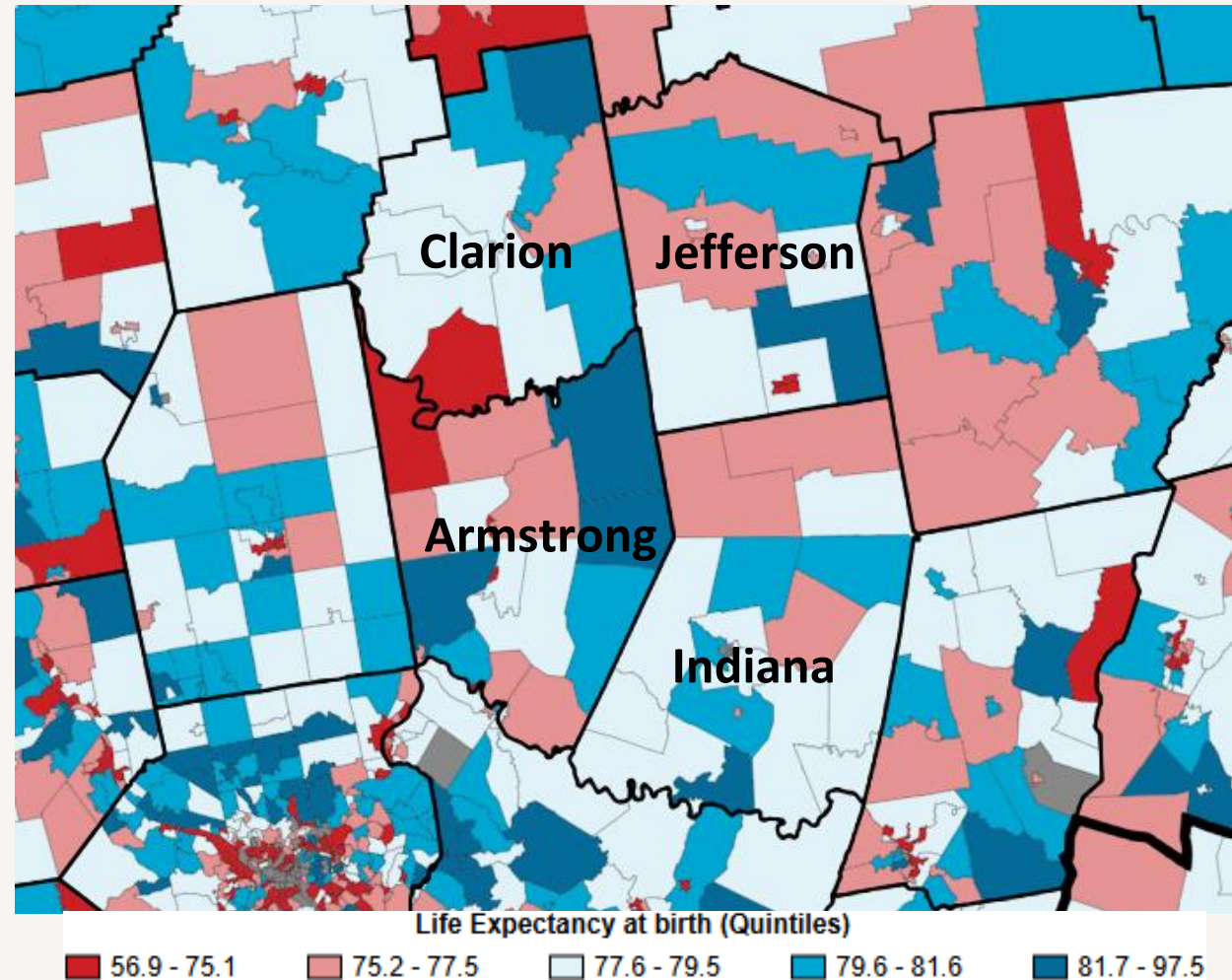
1. Explore health indicators for Armstrong, Clarion, Indiana, and Jefferson counties and compare them to PA
2. Review Department of Health (DOH) roles
3. Discuss DOH's work to improve rural health in PA

Life expectancy in this region is ~6 years lower than the PA county with the highest life expectancy

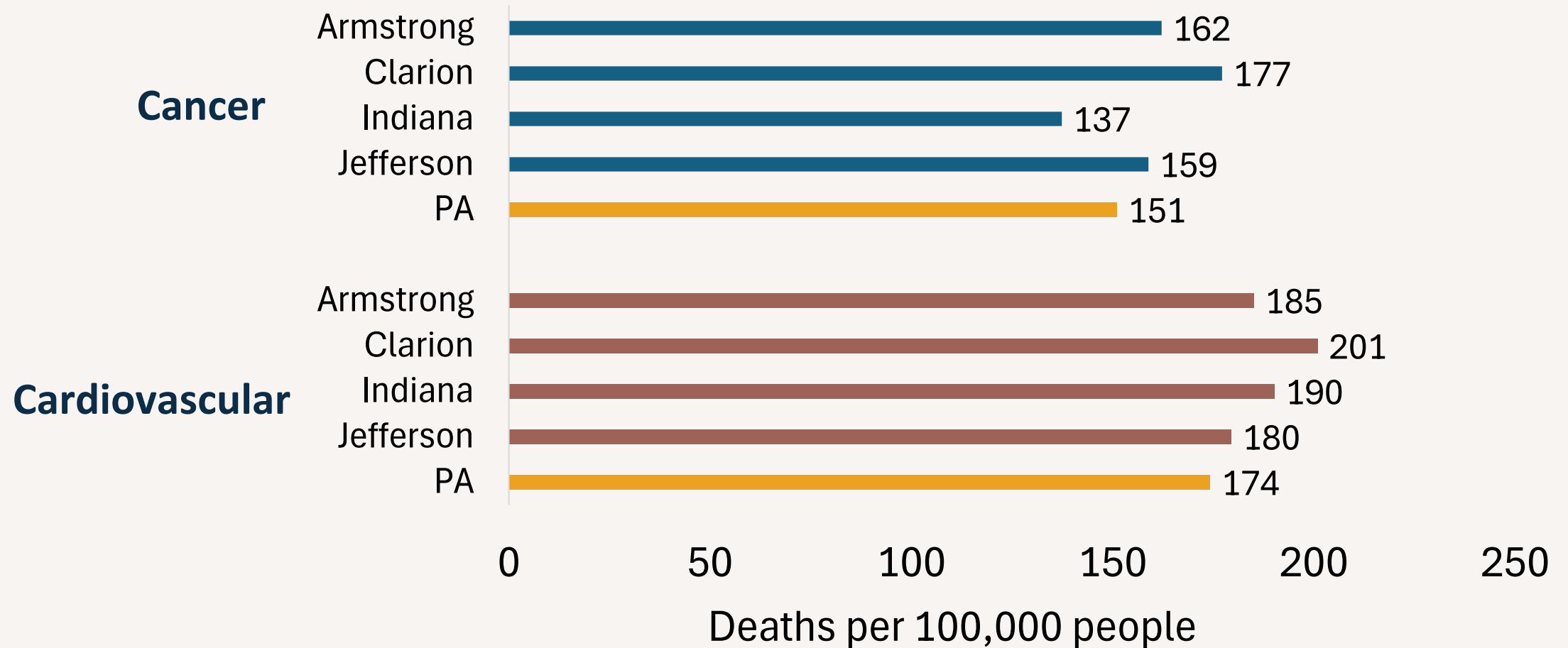


Differences by census tract more pronounced

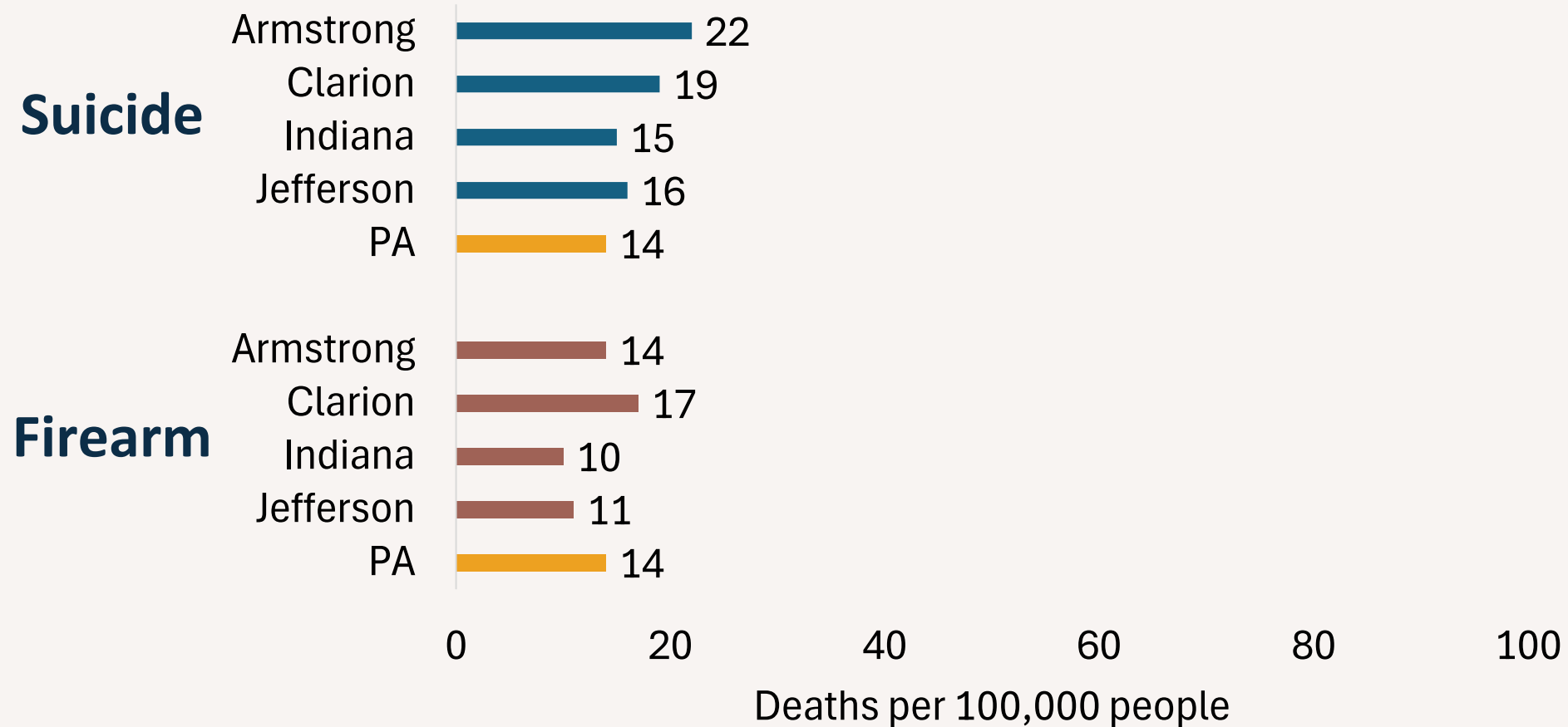
LE by census tract
ranges 73–85 years



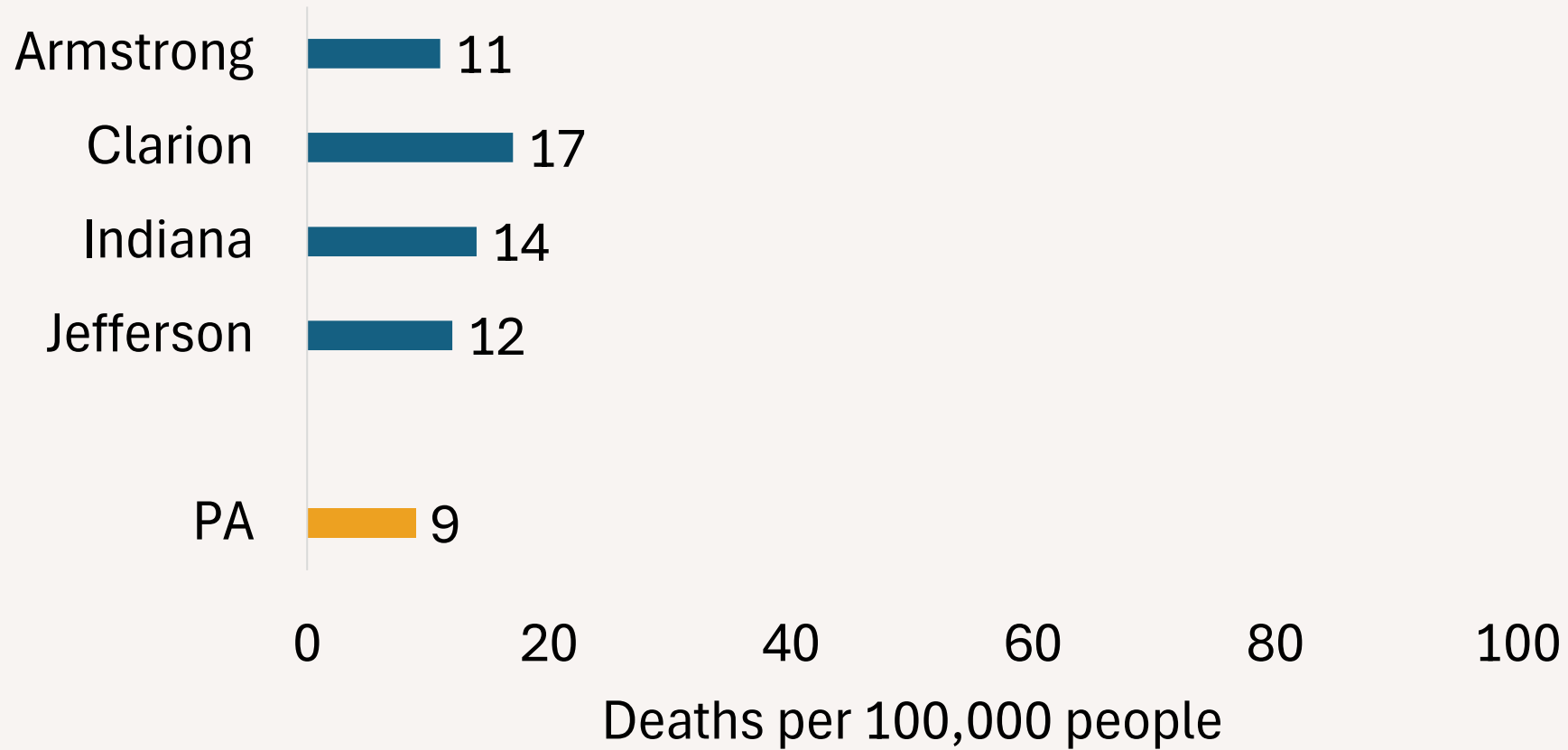
Cancer and cardiovascular deaths per 100,000 people, 2019–2023



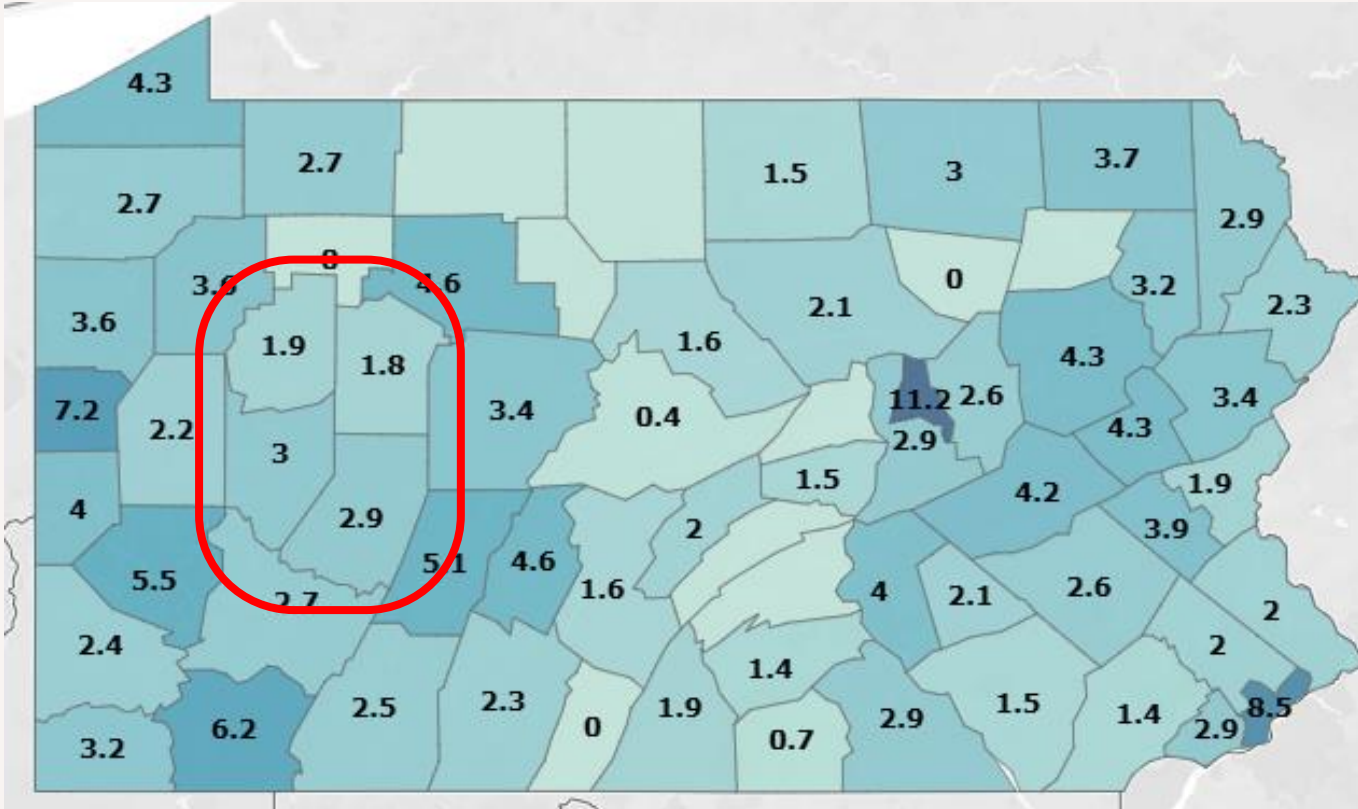
Suicides and firearm deaths per 100,000 people, 2018–2022



Motor vehicle crash deaths per 100,000 people, 2016–2022

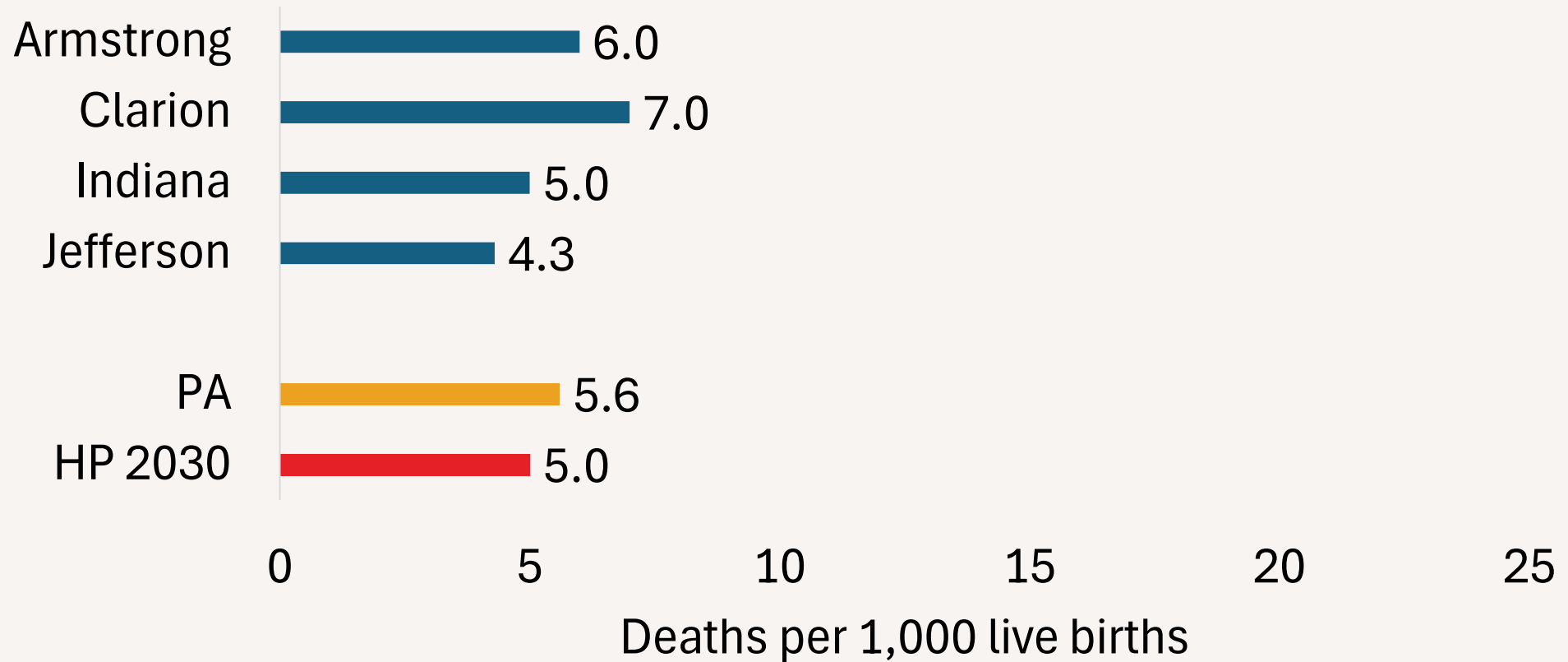


Drug overdose deaths per 10,000 people, 2023



PA average:
3.6 deaths per
10,000 people

Infant deaths per 1,000 live births, 2019–2023

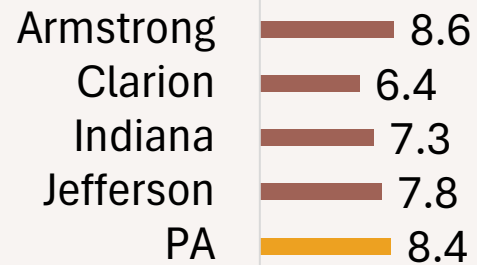


Birth statistics, 2019–2023

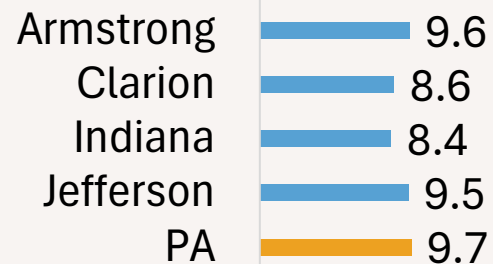
Prenatal care in 1st trimester



Low birth weight



Preterm birth

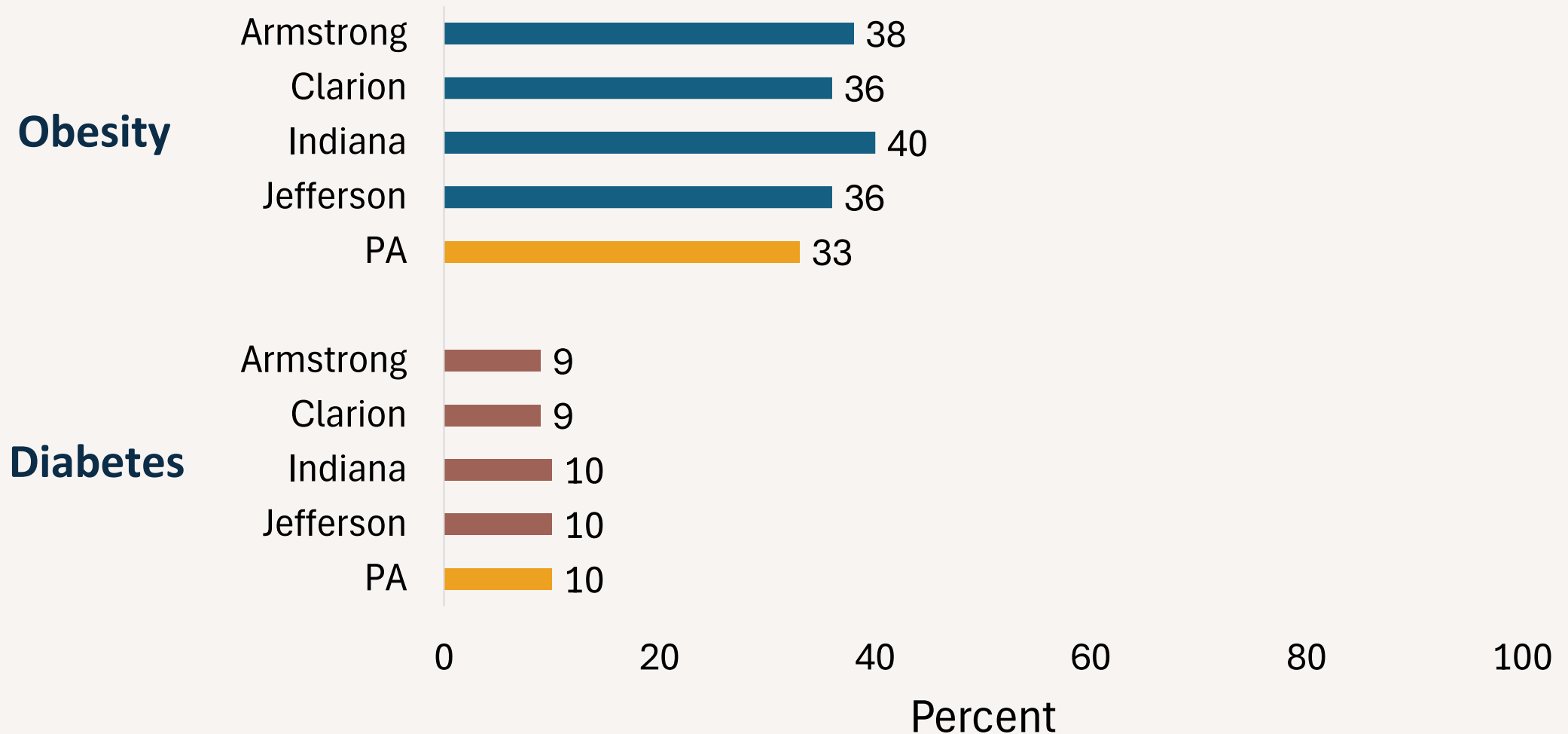


0 20 40 60 80 100

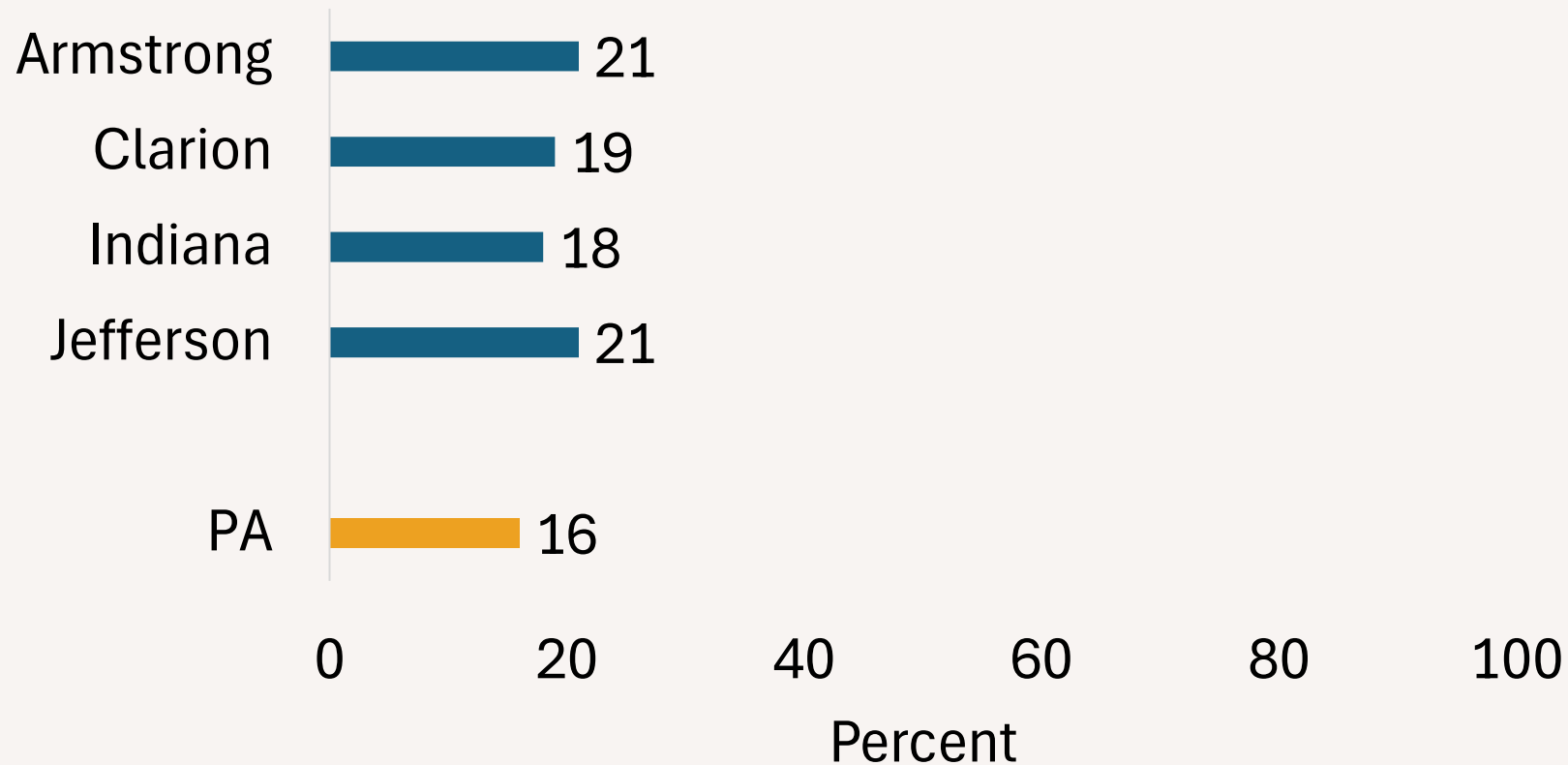
Percent



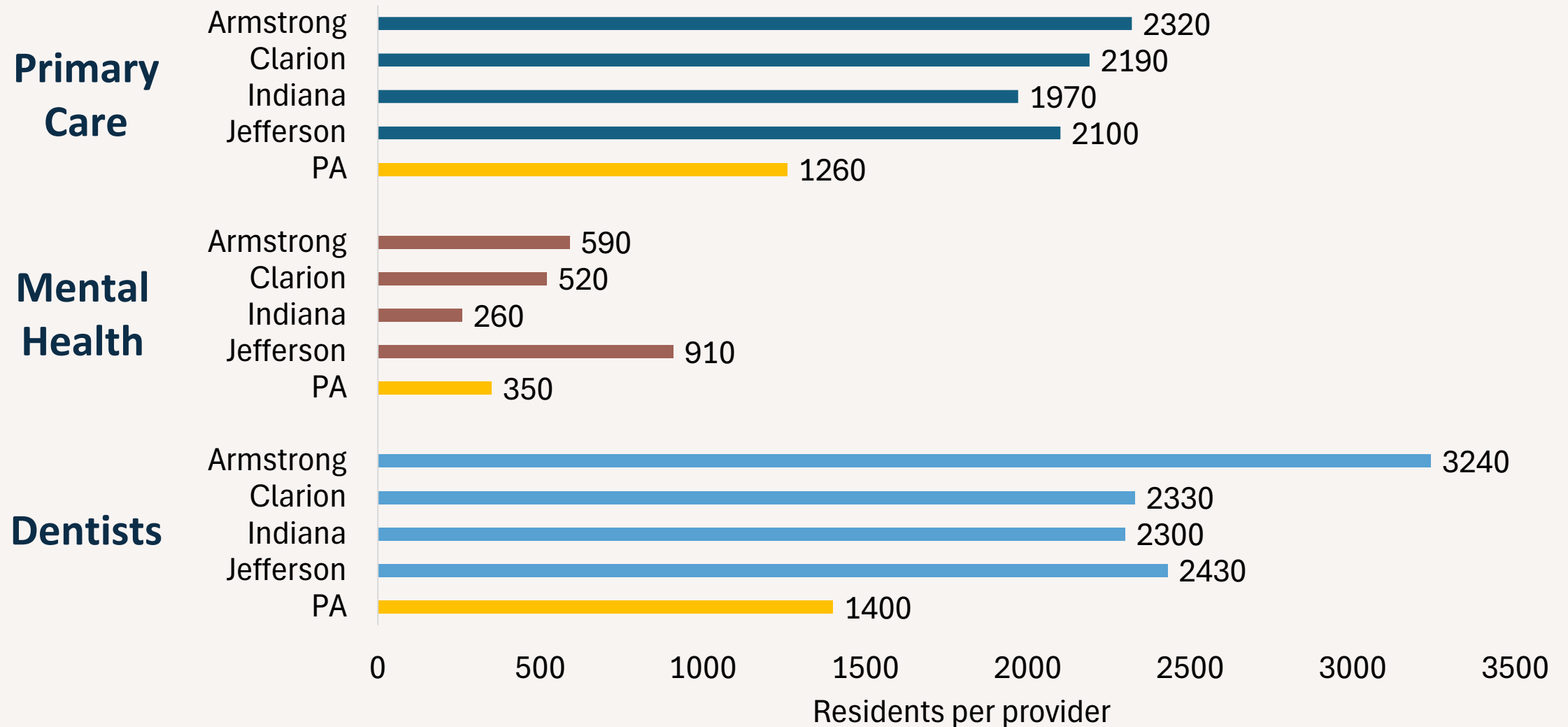
Adult **obesity** and **diabetes** prevalence, 2022



Cigarette smoking prevalence among adults, 2022



Resident to health care provider ratios



Key takeaways from health indicators



Rural health challenges in PA

Workforce

Financial
models

EMS

Opioid
epidemic

Behavioral
health

Distance to
care



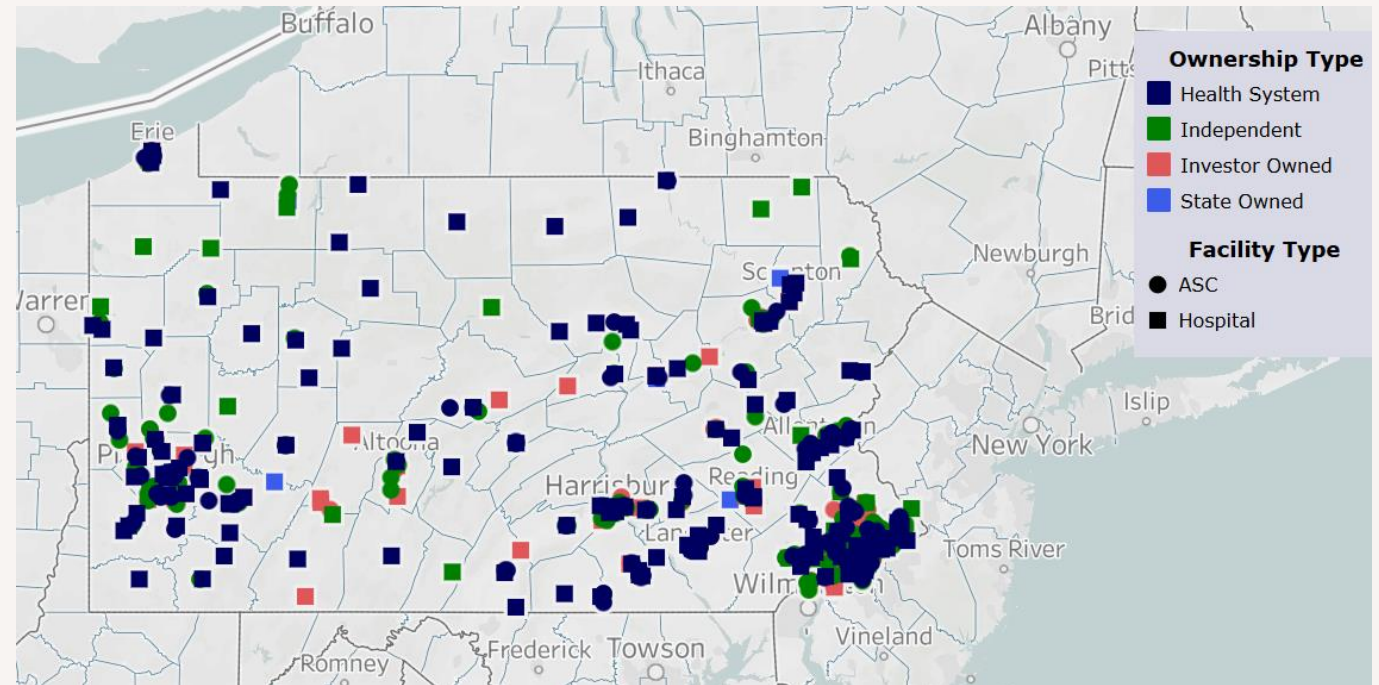
Roles of DOH

- Study the distribution and causes of disease (epidemiology)
- Educate the public on healthy behaviors and disease prevention
- Prevent and respond to outbreaks and health emergencies
- Provide limited clinical services
- Assure safe delivery of quality health care
- Coordinate emergency medical services (EMS)



Improving rural health in PA

- DOH Primary Care Office
- EMS workforce
- Hospital regulations and flexibilities
- Regional rural health care summits
- Mobile clinic convening



Clinton County maternity care pilot



Partnership with UPMC and other partners

Goal to increase access to maternal health services in this rural community



State Health Centers

- **Armstrong County:** 245 Butler Road, Suite 1, Kittanning, PA, 16201
- **Clarion County:** Applewood Center, 162 S. 2nd St., Suite D, Clarion, PA, 16214
- **Indiana County:** 75 N. 2nd St., Indiana, PA, 15701
- **Jefferson County:** 200 Prushnok Dr., Suite 202A, Punxsutawney, PA, 15767



DOH Resources

- [County health profiles](#)
- [Enterprise Data Dissemination Informatics Exchange \(EDDIE\)](#)
- [Health statistics home page](#)
- [Health facility annual surveys](#)
- [State Health Assessment](#) (SHA) and [dashboard](#)
- [State Health Improvement Plan](#) (SHIP)



Conclusions

- Health indicators at or slightly below state average
 - Major exception: health care provider ratios
- DOH plays critical role in advancing health across the Commonwealth
- DOH efforts to improve rural health include:
 - Workforce initiatives
 - Improving maternal and child health
 - Modernizing and improving flexibility in health care regulations
- It will take all of us working together to develop effective and lasting solutions

Questions?

