

Finger Lakes Regional Community Health Assessment

Prepared for: Chemung, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne and Yates Counties.

Prepared by: Common Ground Health



Introduction

The Prevention Agenda is New York State's blueprint to help improve the health and well-being of its residents and promote health equity through state and local action. Every three years, New York State requests that local health departments and their local hospital systems work together to create a joint community health assessment and improvement plan using the Prevention Agenda guidelines. Local entities must choose two areas in which to focus community improvement efforts during the plan period. Local entities can choose from five priority areas:

1. Prevent Chronic Diseases
2. Promote a Healthy and Safe Environment
3. Promote Healthy Women, Infants and Children
4. Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders
5. Prevent Communicable Diseases

During each new cycle, public health and hospital systems turn to key partners and community informants to help determine what actions ought to be taken to improve **the population's health**. **The following report summarizes pertinent information** relating to the above priority areas.

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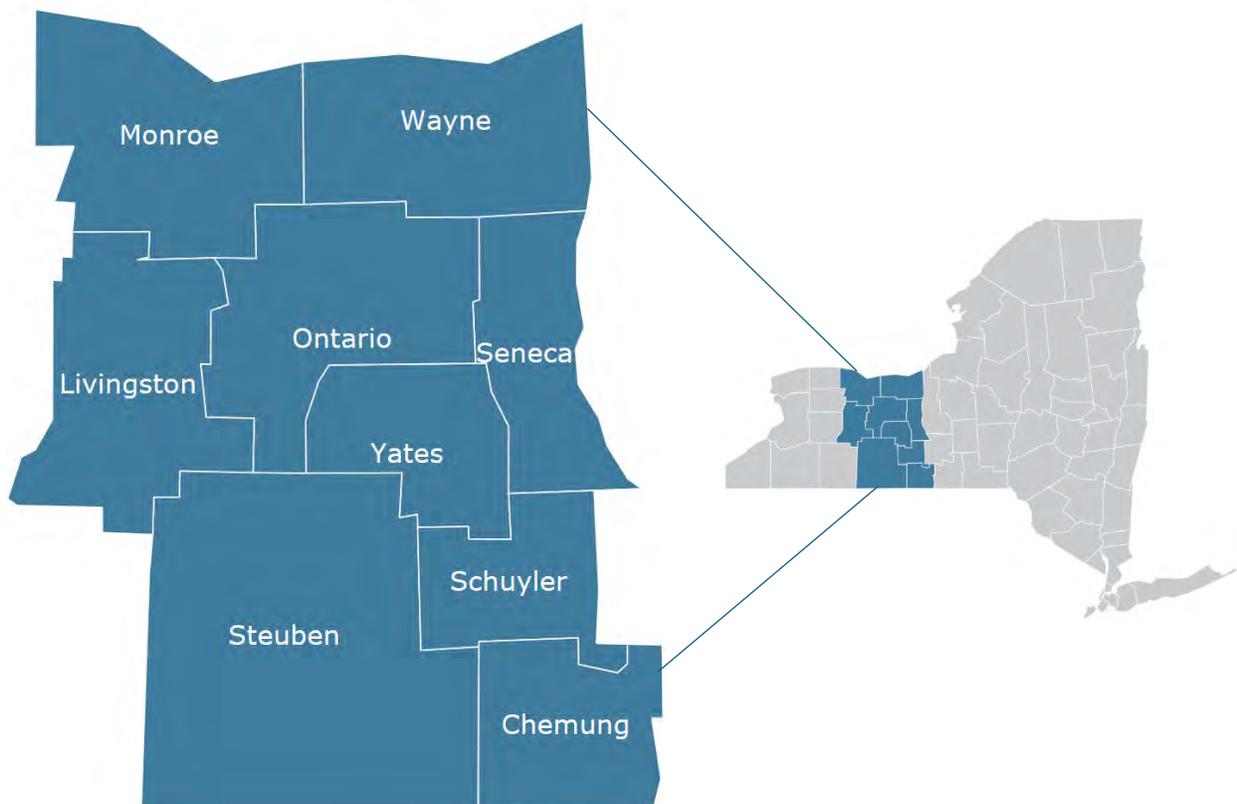
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Community Health Assessment Demographics

Finger Lakes Region

Located in the Western half of New York State, the Finger Lakes Region includes nine counties: Chemung, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne and Yates Counties (Map 1). The region is home to both rural and urban communities that provide recreational activities that include hiking, skiing, and access to water sports, wineries, museums and historical sites. Larger cities, such as the City of Rochester in Monroe County, the Cities of Canandaigua and Geneva in Ontario County, and the City of Elmira in Chemung County attract visitors of all ages to the region. Despite these assets, the region experiences health related issues and illnesses just like many other communities. The following assessment will take a closer look at the health and well-being of residents of the Finger Lakes Region as it relates to the New York State Prevention Agenda and its goals and objectives.

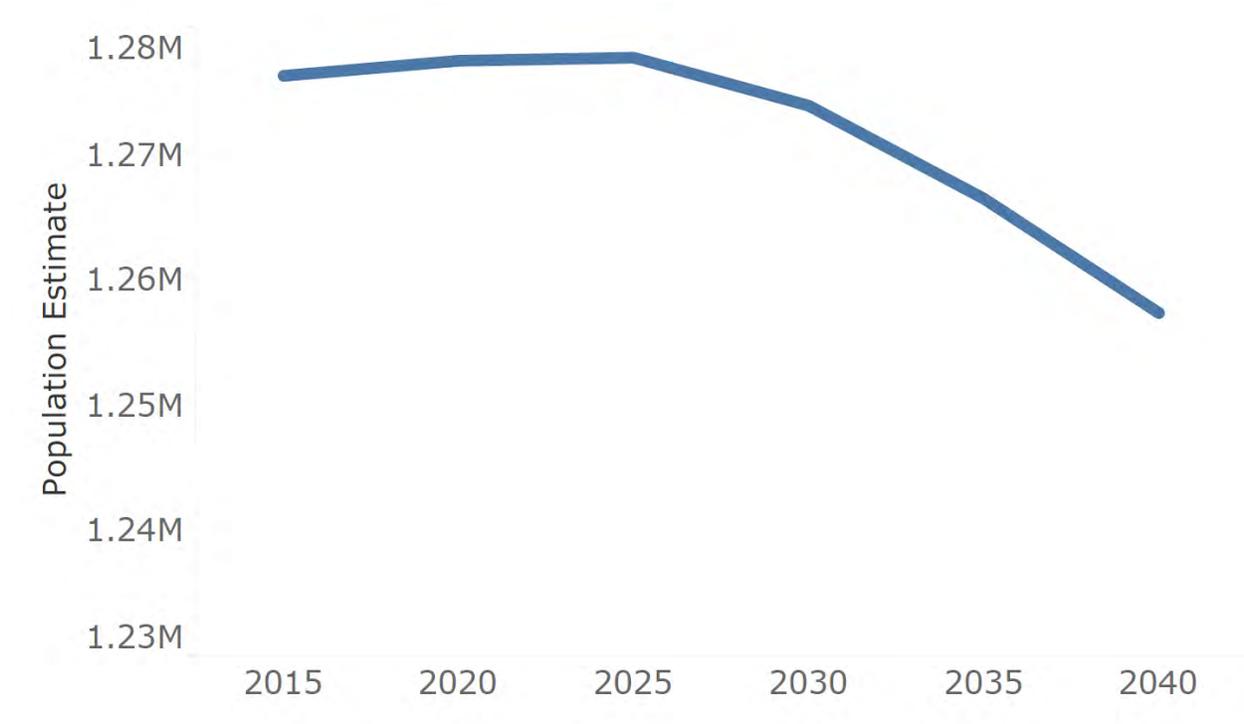
Map 1: The Finger Lakes Region



Population Estimates

There are 1.28 million people living in the Finger Lakes Region, an overall estimate which has not changed significantly over the past several years. Estimates projecting into the year 2040 demonstrate a slight decrease in the population by 1.4% or 18,000 residents (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Population Projections by Year, Finger Lakes Region¹



Source: Cornell University Program on Applied Demographics

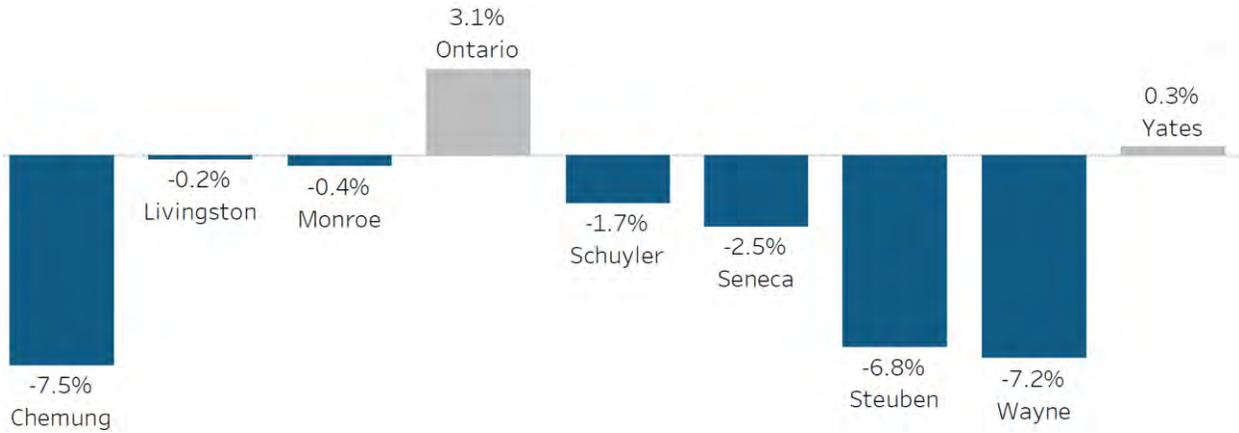
Stratified by county, see Figure 2, are the projections over the next twenty years. For the vast majority of counties, we see a decrease in population estimates to varying extents. Some of the largest changes expected are in Chemung, Steuben and Wayne Counties with those counties anticipated to lose nearly 7-7.5% of their populations.

In contrast, there is an anticipated increase in Ontario County’s population (3%) over the next two decades. This may be attributed an American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) report issued in 2018 that indicated that the City of Canandaigua was voted one of the top places in the U.S. to live and retire in.²

¹ Source: Cornell University Program on Applied Demographics

² Source: AARP the Magazine, AARP’s 10 Best Places to Live for Under \$40,000 a Year

Figure 2: Percent change in population from 2020 to 2040

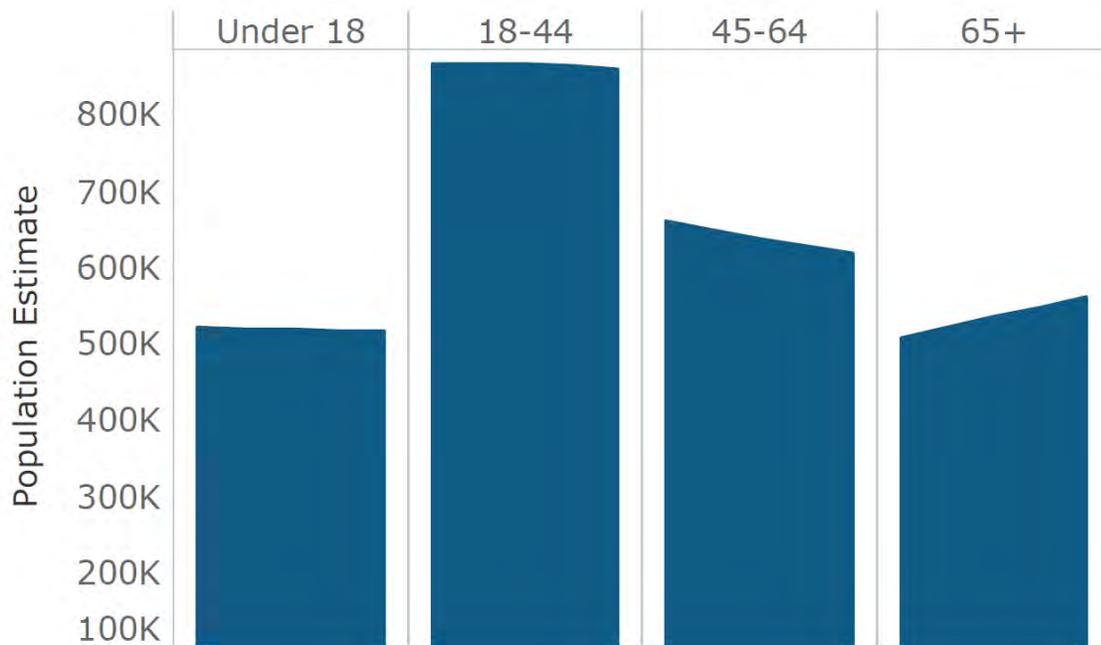


Source: Cornell University Program on Applied Demographics

Age Group

Over the next five years, Cornell University projects an 11% increase in the 65+ population in the region (Figure 3). This increase in the aging population, coupled with a transition to in-home care for the elderly, will place a greater demand for geriatric and chronic disease management on the healthcare community than there has been in years past. These findings are similar across all counties in the region and should be accounted for when planning for future healthcare workforce needs.

Figure 3: Population Projections by Age Group, Finger Lakes Region

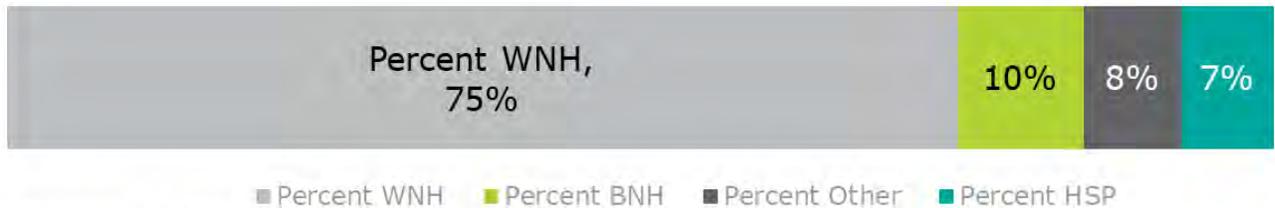


Source: Cornell University Program on Applied Demographics, 2020-2025

Race/Ethnicity

Three quarters of the Finger Lakes Region population is White Non-Hispanic. Ten percent are Black Non-Hispanic, followed by eight percent 'Other' and seven percent Hispanic (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Race/Ethnicity Population Estimates

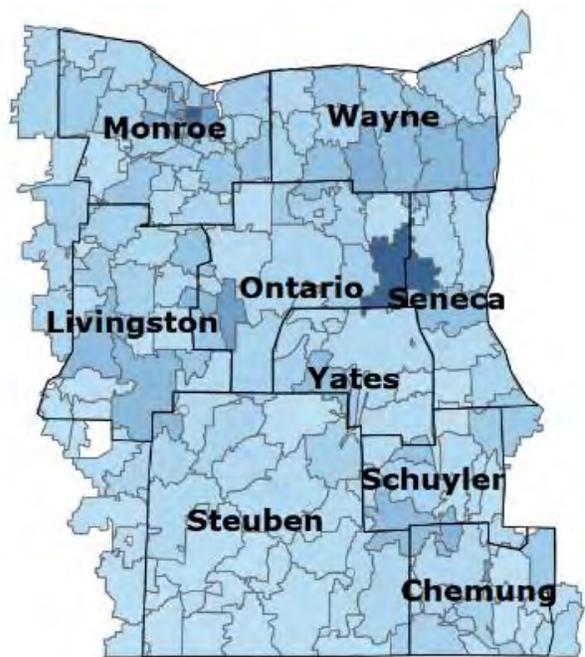


Source: US Census Bureau 2020

Diversity increases in larger cities in the Finger Lakes, including in Rochester (Monroe County), Geneva (Ontario and Seneca Counties), Dansville (Livingston County) and Elmira (Chemung County). Map 2 depicts the percent of each ZIP code’s population that are Black Non-Hispanic and Map 3 depicts the percentage of each ZIP code’s population that are Hispanic.

Map 2: Black Non-Hispanic Population by ZIP Code (Percent of Population)

Map 3: Hispanic Population by ZIP Code (Percent of Population)



Source: US Census Bureau 2020

Migrant farm workers

The 2017 Census of Agriculture reported that, at some point during 2017, there were almost 25,000 workers on farms in the Finger Lakes region. One-third of the workers were unpaid and probably represented family members or coop workers. The vast majority (16,607) were paid workers, but not necessarily in full time or permanent positions. One half of the paid workers were either contract migrant workers or, if on the payroll, worked less than 150 days during the year. Almost 3,000 migrant workers were reported by Wayne County farms. This is the highest in the region followed by Yates County (536 migrant workers reported in 2017).

Almost 20% of the region’s farms contracted with migrant farm workers. Because migrant farm workers move from job to job depending on the season, a single migrant worker may be counted by multiple farms, therefore the total number of migrant workers is potentially an over count of individuals (Table 1).

Table 1: Farms and Hired Workers

County	Farms with Hired Workers	Farms with Migrant Workers	Hired Farm Labor*		Migrant Workers **	Unpaid Workers
			Total	Work <150 days		
Chemung	90	1	258	150	(D) [†]	438
Livingston	148	12	844	298	131	840
Monroe	148	20	1,120	619	256	664
Ontario	223	22	1,283	682	293	670
Schuyler	105	9	527	356	85	461
Seneca	173	21	760	483	248	850
Steuben	333	20	1,479	892	151	2,041
Wayne	264	126	4,169	3,046	2,924	879
Yates	281	52	1,543	1,147	536	1,136
Total Finger Lakes Region	1,765	283	11,983	7,673	4,624	7,979

*Hired Farm labor does not include contract/migrant workers
 **Migrant farm workers are workers whose employment requires travel that prevents the worker from returning to his or her permanent place of residence the same day
 *** Unpaid workers includes agricultural workers not on the payroll who performed activities or work on a farm or ranch.
 Source: US Department of Agriculture, 2017 Census of Agriculture
 † Suppressed to avoid disclosing data for individual farms

A 2007 study conducted in New York found that “poverty, frequent mobility, low literacy, language and cultural barriers impede farmworkers’ access to primary

health care”.³ There are several organizations which provide services to the migrant population, including local federally qualified health centers and health departments. However, even though the services are available, seasonal workers have limited time to seek care and, because so many move frequently, follow-up visits or ongoing care for chronic conditions are often intermittent. This may impact some of the health outcomes data explored later in this report.

Amish/Mennonite

The Amish and Mennonite population are a unique asset to the Finger Lakes Region and constitute a significant portion of the farming industry in several communities. Finding accurate and up-to-date data on Amish and Mennonite populations and their health outcomes can be a challenge, especially at the county level. This population often does not respond to surveys such as those conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. However, Elizabethtown College Amish Studies, The Young Center, collects data on annual population estimates. In New York State, the center identified 59 settlements and 167 districts in the state which amounts to an estimated 21,725 Amish people.⁴ The report also states that in the Finger Lakes Region, there are an estimated 3,455 Amish persons with larger subsets located in Jasper and Woodhill, Steuben County, and Romulus and Ovid, Seneca County.⁵

However, these estimates do not include the Mennonite population. Local Mennonite churches also collect information on their members and may share this information with trusted public health officials. The Groffdale Conference Mennonites (Old Order Mennonites), for instance, release an annual map of its congregation. Groffdale Conference Mennonite families span the area between Canandaigua and Seneca Lakes (Yates County) and from Geneva (Ontario and Seneca County) all the way down to Reading, NY (Schuyler County). In 2018, the church reported a total of 697 Groffdale Conference Mennonite households throughout Yates, Ontario, Schuyler and Steuben Counties, the majority of whom reside in Yates County. Important to note, however, is that these data do not include the Crystal Valley Mennonite and Horning Order groups- two additional congregations that are found in the region.

Cultural practices of Amish and Mennonites must be considered when reviewing data and planning health initiatives. It is customary in Amish and Mennonite cultures to practice natural and homeopathic medicine when it comes to family planning, preventative and dental care, vaccinations, etc. Late entrance into

³ Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers, Health Care access and HIV/AIDS in this Population, Statewide AIDS Services Delivery Consortium and Advisory Group, May 2007

⁴ “Amish Population, 2021.” Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, Elizabethtown College. <http://groups.etown.edu/amishstudies/statistics/population-2021/>

⁵ Amish Population in the United States by State and County, 2021. Statistics were compiled by Edsel Burdge, Jr., Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, Elizabethtown College, in cooperation with Joseph F. Donnermeyer, School of Environment and Natural Resources, The Ohio State University, and with assistance from David Luthy, Heritage Historical Library, Aylmer, Ontario.

prenatal care and home births are common occurrences. Children attend school through eighth grade and learn farming and other trades throughout childhood and adolescence, creating the potential for unintentional and farm-related injuries. Bikes and horse drawn buggies are common forms of transportation and, combined with speeding motor vehicles on rural roads, can create the potential for traffic accidents. Health-related decisions are often based on the attitudes, beliefs and practices of church leadership. These factors, along with anticipated growth in this population, create unique challenges for Public Health practitioners. However, **research has shown that “in health matters, the Amish are pragmatists. When approached with facts by individuals whom they trust and when immunization [and other care] is easy to obtain, most Amish are willing to be immunized. Knowledge of the Amish culture, flexibility and diligence on the part of the health personnel generally leads to high compliance rates.”**⁶

American Indian and Alaska Native population

In 2020 just over 2,400 residents of the Finger Lakes Region identified themselves as American Indian and Alaska Native alone. However, it is important to note that this estimate does not include residents who identify as multiple races.⁷ The majority of American Indian and Alaska Natives in the Finger Lakes Region live in Monroe County (54%) followed by Steuben, Chemung and Ontario County (8% for all three).

A fact sheet released by the Indian Health Service (IHS) in 2019 stated that American Indians and Alaska Natives die sooner and at higher rates than other Americans in several different categories including, but not limited to, “chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, diabetes mellitus, chronic lower respiratory disease, unintentional injuries, assault/homicide and intentional self-harm/suicide.” The IHS report also indicated that American Indian and Alaska Native residents have a life expectancy of nearly 5.5 years less than all other races in the United States.⁸

These health disparities exist for a number of different reasons but largely correlate back to inadequate educational opportunities, disproportionate rates of poverty, discrimination in the delivery of health services, and the impact of historical intergenerational trauma of experiencing centuries of racial discrimination.⁹ The inequity in health outcomes shown in Table 2 speak to the dire need for improved health data collection and surveillance. The imbalance of funding for the Indian Health Service (it is noted in reports that funding for the Indian Health Services (IHS) and Native American health care have historically and continue to be

⁶ Gertrude Enders Huntington, Chapter 9 Health Care, The Amish and the State, Donald B Kraybill editor

⁷ Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020.

⁸ Indian Health Services, Indian Health Disparities, 2019

⁹ US Commission on Civil Rights, Broken Promises: Continuing Federal Funding Shortfall for Native Americans, 2018

inequitable and unequal in comparison to other federal health care program) has resulted in an unmet need for adequate medical and public health services for the American Indian and Alaska Native population. The combination of all of these factors has a direct effect on health outcomes, including the incidence of disease and mortality.⁷

*Table 2: Age Adjusted Mortality Disparity Rate per 100,000 Population by Race/Ethnicity***

	American Indian and Alaska Native (AI /AN) (2009-2011)	U.S. All Races (2010)	Ratio: AI /AN to US All Races
All Causes	999.1	747.0	1.3
Alcohol-induced	50.5	7.6	6.6
Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	42.9	9.4	4.6
Diabetes mellitus (diabetes)	66	20.8	3.2
Accidents (unintentional injuries)*	93.7	38	2.5
Assault (homicide)	11.4	5.4	2.1
Influenza and pneumonia	26.6	15.1	1.8
Drug-induced	23.4	12.9	1.8
Intentional self-harm (suicide)	20.4	12.1	1.7
Septicemia	17.3	10.6	1.6
Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome (kidney disease)	22.4	15.3	1.5

*Unintentional injuries include motor vehicle crashes

**Causes shown are only those with a ratio greater than 1.5. Please see direct source for complete list.

NOTE: Rates are adjusted to compensate for misreporting of American Indian and Alaska Native race on state death certificates. American Indian and Alaska Native age-adjusted death rate columns present data for the 3-year period specified. US All Races columns present data for a one-year period. Rates are based on American Indian and Alaska Native Alone; 2019 census with bridged-race categories.

Source: [Indian Health Service, Indian Health Disparities Report, 2009-2011](#)

Refugee populations

The refugee population is a unique population which requires specific and attentive care. In recent years, Rochester (Monroe County) has opened its doors to a number of refugees, reaching a peak in 2016 of over 1,100 resettlements in the county (Figure 5). Prior to 2017, resettlement rates in the greater Rochester area had been among the highest in New York, just behind Utica and Buffalo. Federal refugee policies enacted over the past several years, coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic, have greatly impacted the number of recent resettlements. It will take several years to rebuild the infrastructure and reestablish the historical rates that were seen in the past decade.

Figure 5: Number of Refugee Resettlements, Monroe County



Source: Catholic Family Center

Table 3 shows that the majority of those that are foreign-born living in the Finger Lakes Region have become naturalized US Citizens (57%). The naturalization rate varies by county, from as low as 43 percent in Steuben County to 70 percent in Wayne County. Residents coming from other countries may face significant **challenges in adapting to the United States'** disease prevention and treatment culture and, as such, should be cared for and tended to in a way that is respectful of and collaborative with the customs and beliefs of their heritage.

Table 3: Foreign-Born Population Estimates and Naturalization Rate by County

	Foreign-born population	Percent Naturalized U.S. citizen	Percent Not a U.S. citizen
Chemung	2,567	54	46
Livingston	2,277	44	56
Monroe	64,681	58	42
Ontario	4,134	52	48
Schuyler	327	61	39
Seneca	875	58	42
Steuben	3,094	43	57
Wayne	2,698	70	31
Yates	519	57	43

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

George Mason University Institute for Immigration Research reports 31% of **Rochester’s immigrants have immigrated in the last decade (since 2010)**. The majority of those immigrants are Jamaican (10%) followed by Cuban (7%), Chinese (6%) and Dominican (6%).¹⁰ Providing care for refugee individuals and families can be a challenging and unique experience. Research has documented several challenges providing refugees healthcare, including the basic needs such as English education, orientation to the United States Healthcare System, and the need for cultural sensitivity on the part of providers and interpreters or case managers.¹¹

Household languages

Providers of all types (medical, social service, etc.) should be aware of language and cultural differences when working with patients/clients. Being respectful of a **person’s cultural practices is important to building a trusting and positive** relationship. A system where health providers are culturally responsive can help improve patient health outcomes and quality of care. In addition, it can help to eliminate disparities in outcomes.¹² The majority of residents in the Finger Lakes Region speak English, but a small percentage speak limited English (<1.5% of total

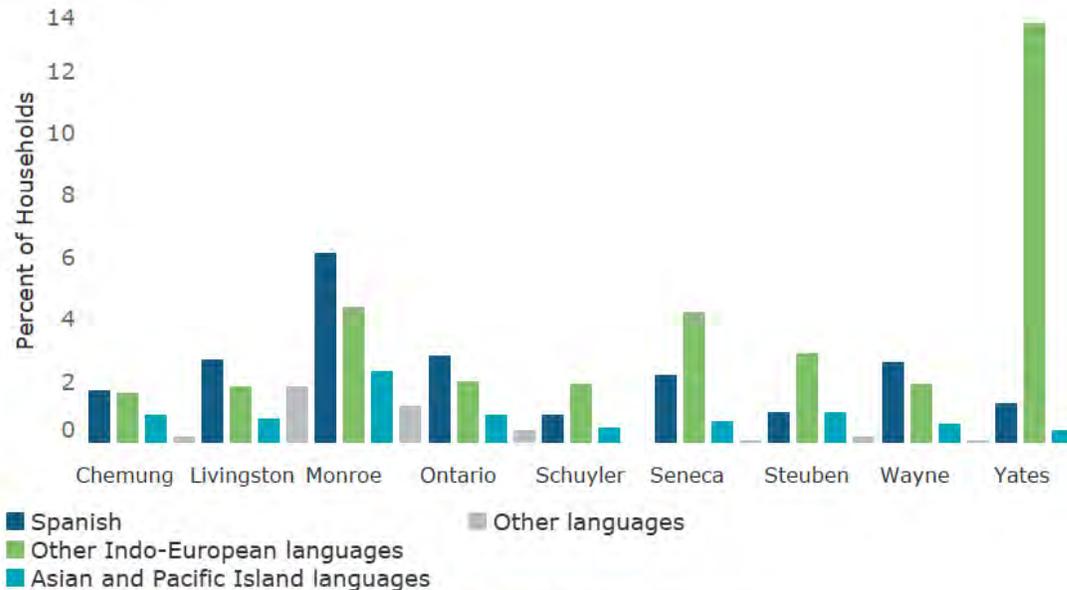
¹⁰ Source: George Mason University Institute for Immigration Research, Immigration Data on Demand (iDod) Report, 2018

¹¹ Kotovicz F, Getzin A, Vo T. Challenges of refugee health care: perspectives of medical interpreters, case managers, and pharmacists. J Patient Cent Res Rev. 2018; 5: 28-35. doi: 10.17294/2330-0698.1577

¹² Source: Health Policy Institute at Georgetown University, “Cultural Competence in Health Care: Is it important for people with chronic conditions?”

population per county). Other languages frequently spoken in homes include Spanish, Asian and Pacific Island languages, and other Indo-European languages (Figure 6). In Yates County, it is likely the large percent of Other Indo-European languages can be attributed to the Amish and Mennonite populations.

Figure 6: Percent of Households Speaking a Language Other than English



Source: US Census Bureau 2015 - 2019 5 Year Estimates

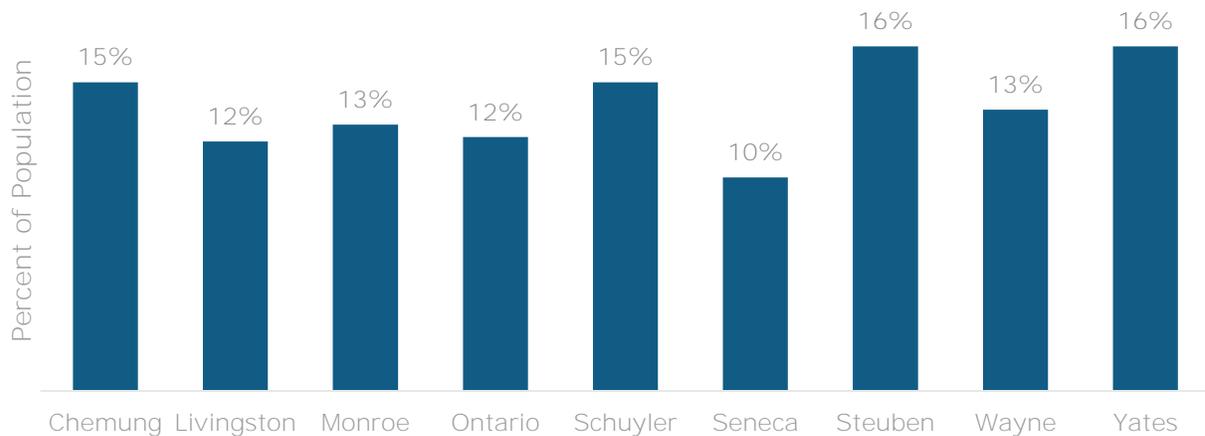
Disability

Those living with any form of disability (physical, activity or daily functioning impairments) are at greater risk for development of chronic conditions, including obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Creating a built environment that helps eliminate structural barriers and building a culture of inclusion helps to reduce disparities in health outcomes for the disabled. Doing so requires support from a variety of change initiatives such as policy, system and environmental changes.

In the Finger Lakes Region, an average of 13.5% of residents are living with a disability. The rates range from 10% in Seneca County to 16% in Steuben and Yates County (Figure 7).¹³

¹³ Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey

Figure 7: Disability Rate by County, Total Population



Source: US Census Bureau 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

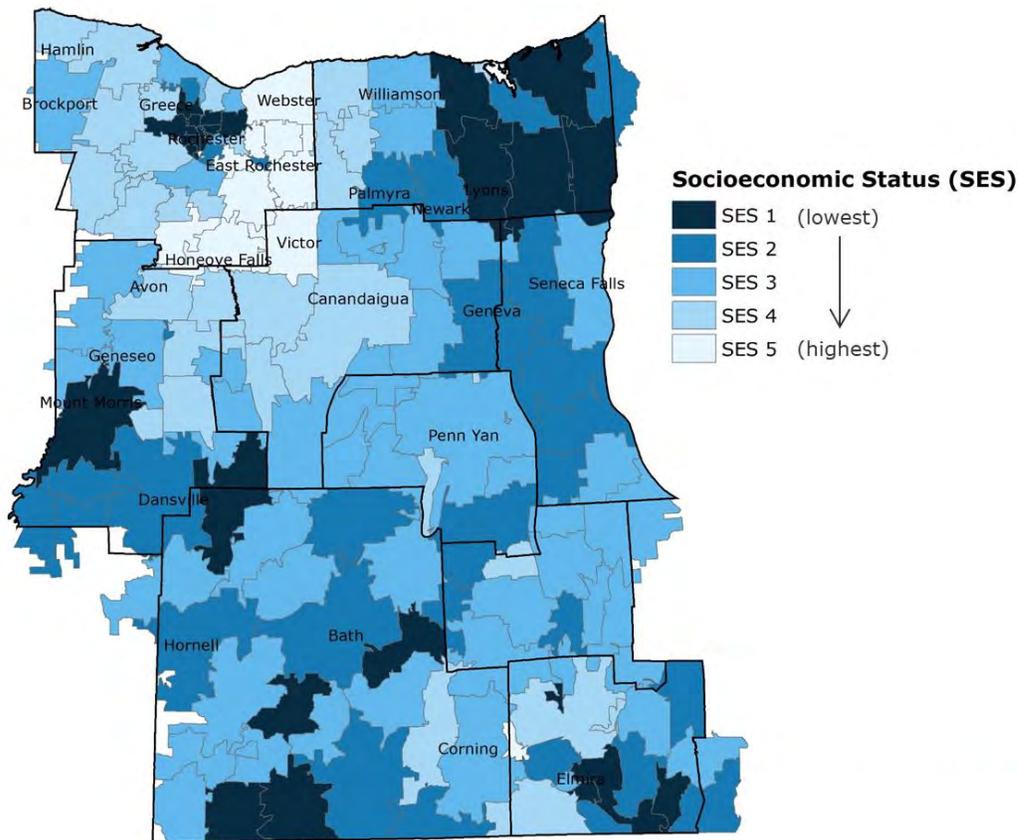
Poverty

Socioeconomic status¹⁴ **affects several areas of a person’s life, including their health status.** Data have revealed that low-income families are less likely to receive timely preventative services or have an established regular healthcare provider when compared to families with higher incomes. Map 4 reveals the socioeconomic status by ZIP codes in the Finger Lakes Region. Note that almost half of Wayne County was found to be in the two lowest socioeconomic quintiles in the region, yet pockets of poverty exist throughout the nine counties such as Elmira (Chemung County), Dansville and southern Steuben County and Mount Morris (Livingston County).

One of the factors influencing socioeconomic status is income, largely driven by employment status. Having a job may afford a person the ability to maintain safe and adequate housing, purchase healthy foods, remain up to date on health visits, and more. The 2019 American Community Survey estimates 27% of Finger Lakes **Region residents have received a Bachelor’s degree or higher, which has increased** since 2011 (24%). The prevalence of higher educational attainment in those over the age of 25 is highest in Monroe and Ontario Counties, at 39 and 36 percent, respectively.

¹⁴ **Common Ground Health’s estimation of socioeconomic status is developed by ZIP Code** U.S. Census and American Community Survey data. It is based on the average income, average level of education, occupation composition, average value of housing stock, age of the housing stock, a measure of population crowding, percentage of renter-occupied housing, percent of persons paying more the 35% of their income on housing, and percent of children living in single parent households.

Map 4: Socioeconomic Status in the Finger Lakes Region



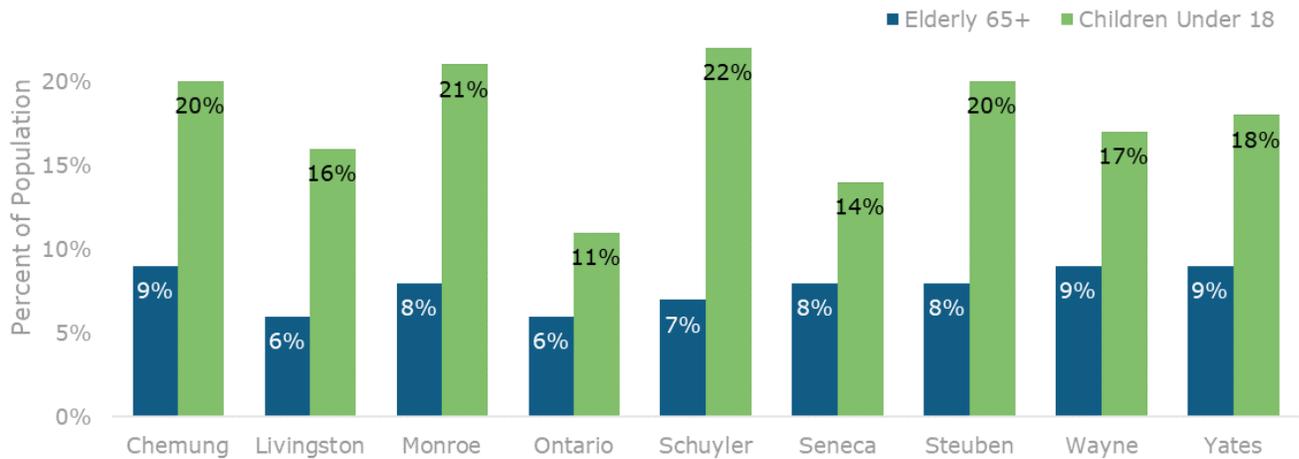
Source: Data provided by US Census Bureau, Analysis completed by Common Ground Health

Of particular concern are vulnerable populations, such as the elderly living in poverty and youth living in poverty (Figure 8). Research has shown that children living in poverty are more likely to have poor academic achievement, drop out of high school, and are more likely to be unemployed later in life. In addition, children living in poverty are more likely to experience economic hardship in adult years and are more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system than children who never experienced poverty first hand.¹⁵

Additional concerns are about the elderly population, aged 65+, who are living in poverty. The demographic is known to live on a fixed income, relying upon Social Security, savings and/or pension plans to support all of their needs. Elderly women are more likely to report living in poverty, or living in higher rates of poverty, as a result of lower retirement incomes due to a variety of reasons, including lower lifetime earnings, time taken off for caregiving, occupational segregation and other issues.

¹⁵ The State of America’s Children, 2020 Child Poverty

Figure 8: Percent of Population Living in Poverty, Age Group Stratification



Source: US Census Bureau 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

Regardless of age group, when stratified by race/ethnicity, poverty rates are even higher for minority populations (Table 4).¹⁶ Black Non-Hispanic and Hispanic persons live in poverty at more than three times the rate of White Non-Hispanics. When considering all of the implications poverty has on health discussed above – decreased access to health care, less likelihood to receive timely preventative care, less likelihood of higher education, etc. – it is no wonder we see disparities in health outcomes by race and ethnicity.

Table 4: Percent of Population Living in Poverty by Race/Ethnicity, Finger Lakes Region

White Non-Hispanic	Black Non-Hispanic	Hispanic
9%	32%	30%

Source: US Census Bureau 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

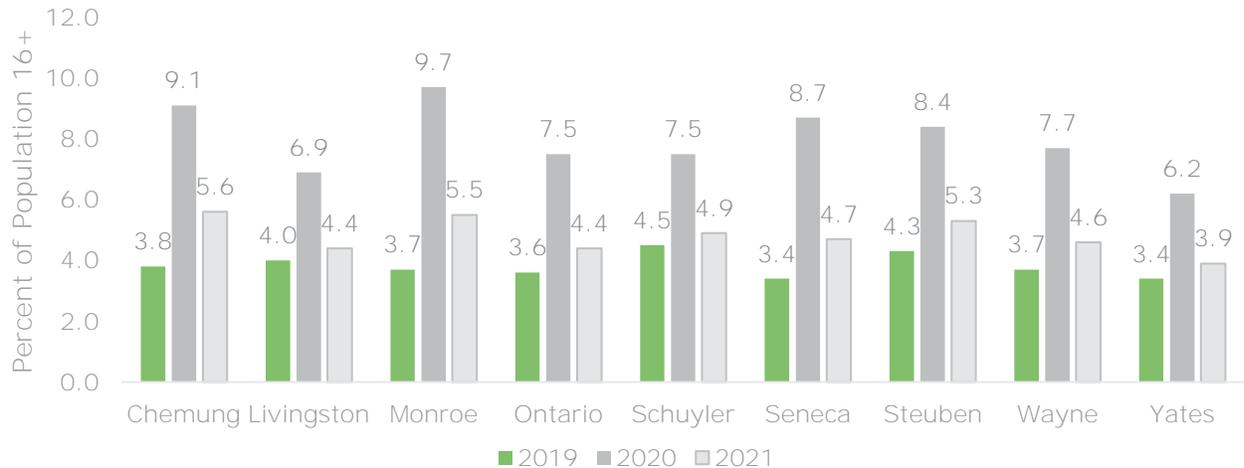
Unemployment

Unemployment rates have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The economy experienced a significant downturn due to the closing of businesses and schools. Many residents became unemployed with these closures. Those with positions that allowed for it worked remotely from home. All were placed in a variety of difficult situations, including managing personal needs, navigating **childcare, overseeing their children’s remote learning, and managing adult caregiving responsibilities.** The pandemic generated a significant amount of unemployment which is only just beginning to recuperate one year later. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, three industry sectors most exposed to shut downs included restaurants and bars, travel and transportation, and entertainment. For some counties, such as Livingston and Schuyler, the unemployment rate is

¹⁶ Source: National Council on Aging including data from Social Security Administration, National Institute on Retirement Security and Bureau of Labor Statistics

similar to pre-pandemic estimates but for others, like Chemung, Steuben and Monroe County, there are still significant concerns (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Unemployment Rates by County



Source: NYS Department of Labor, 2019-2021

Over the next ten years, Rochester Works, an employment and training organization, reports a projected decline in construction, retail and leisure and hospitality employment. The report also indicates a job loss rate disproportionately impacting women and people of color.¹⁷

Health insurance status

Health insurance helps individuals access the care that they need. Similar to populations who experience low socioeconomic status, the uninsured are less likely to receive or seek preventative care such as health screenings, are less likely to have an established regular healthcare provider, and are more likely to use the emergency room for services that could have been provided in a primary care provider setting. Since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, the rate of uninsured individuals in the Finger Lakes Region has decreased in the past six years from 11% to 5% of residents.

This is a step in the right direction, but access to health insurance is not the only barrier to health care. Underinsured individuals, or those who have high deductibles that affect their ability to access healthcare, are also a real concern. Transportation, lack of provider availability (including difficulty scheduling with providers) and cost (i.e. cost of care, time away from work, and childcare) were repeatedly identified as barriers and top concerns in *My Health Story 2018* survey responses and are areas that provide opportunities for improvement. Anecdotally, we know that the COVID-

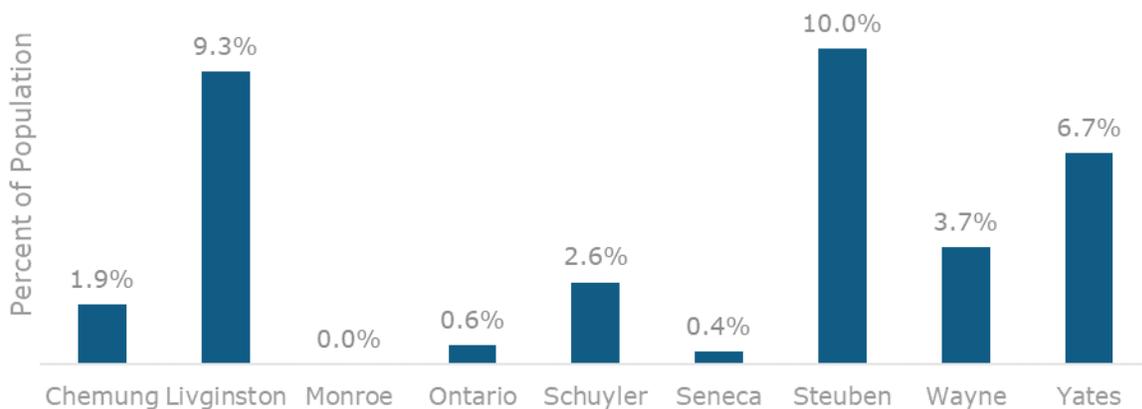
¹⁷ Rochester Works, COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery Watch, Monroe County and the Finger Lakes (Revised 9/28/2021).

19 pandemic has exacerbated these concerns and resulted in patients delaying preventative care needs due to office closures or delays in elective procedures. The impact this has had on reopening in the Finger Lakes and other communities across the State have resulted in longer wait times and insufficient office hours or availability to meet the demand of the delayed care.

Broadband access

Nearly thirty years ago, access to personal home internet access was a novelty available only to a small portion of New York State residents. Today, access to reliable high-speed internet is considered a necessity by many. It is utilized in ways that help residents communicate and connect with each other and find new and effective ways to work, learn and play. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, availability of broadband access at home was elevated to a new level of necessity with remote learning, work, and accessibility to healthcare options like telehealth being heavily utilized. While New York State overall has great accessibility to broadband, there are portions of the state, and specifically within the Finger Lakes Region, that are at a disadvantage because their access is inadequate, unreliable, or unavailable. The Office of the State Comptroller estimates that eight percent of the Finger Lakes Region and Southern Tier do not have broadband accessibility.¹⁸ Steuben (10% of county population) and Livingston (9.3% of county population) Counties are the top 6th and 7th, respectively, in the state for those without broadband accessibility (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Percentage of Population without Broadband Available in their Area, 2021



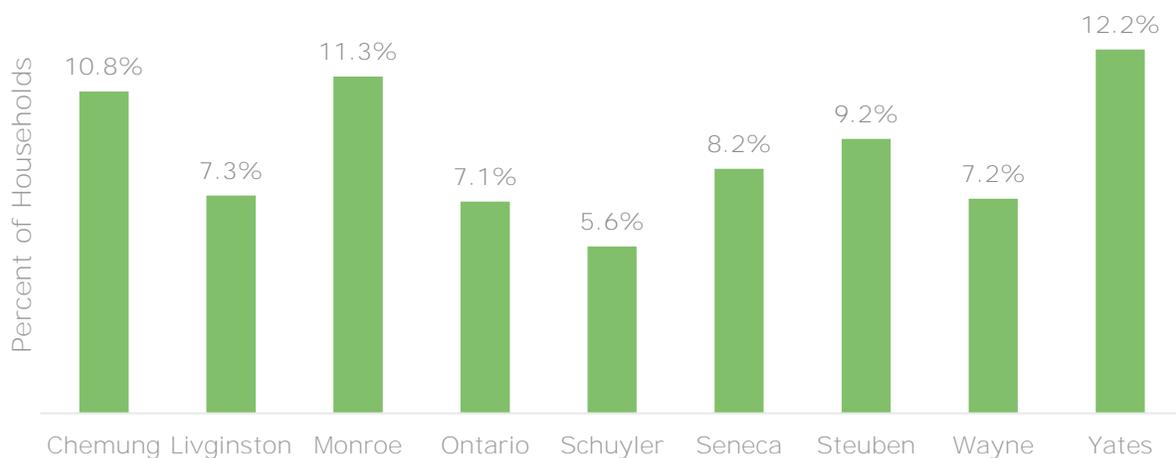
Source: Office of the State Comptroller

¹⁸ Office of the State Comptroller analysis of Federal Communications Commissions, *Fourteenth Broadband Deployment Report* January 19, 2021. Data are based on a 25/3 Mbps standard relied on by the Federal Communications Commission.

Transportation

Access to a personal vehicle can affect **an individual's** overall health status in a number of ways. Unreliable, inconsistent or inconvenient transportation (either personal vehicle, medical taxis or public transportation) can cause strain on the ability to access health care services. This could result in missed or delayed health care appointments, leading to increased health expenditures and overall poorer health outcomes. Figure 11 demonstrates the percent of **each county's** households in the Finger Lakes Region with no vehicle access. Larger cities, such as Rochester in Monroe County and Elmira in Chemung County have higher percentages of their households with no vehicle access (20% of households or more). In addition, Yates County has a high percentage of no vehicle access households due to the higher percentage of Amish/Mennonites who predominantly rely on horse and buggy for their transportation needs.

Figure 11: Percent of Households with No Vehicle Access

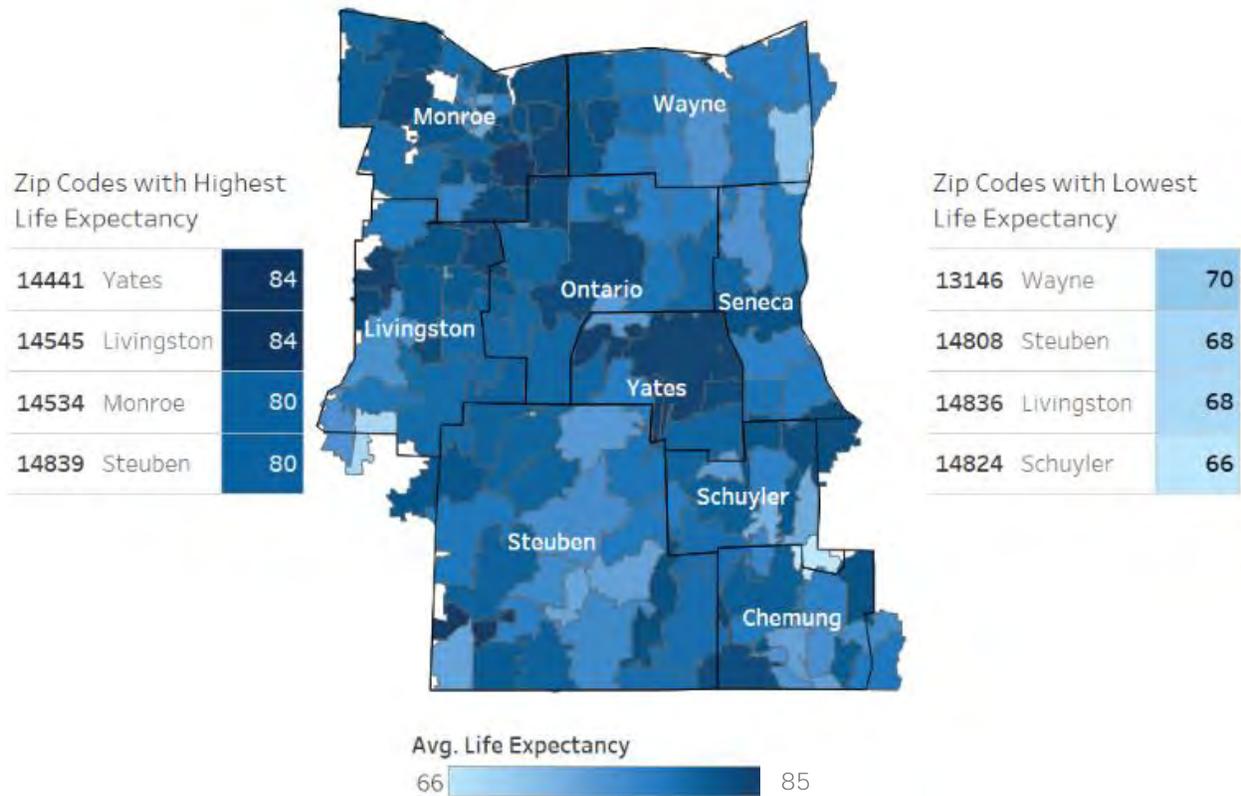


Source: US Census Bureau 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

Life Expectancy

Genetics are not the only indicator of **an individual's** life expectancy. Demographic factors such as socioeconomic status, employment, income, education and economic well-being, the quality of and accessibility to health systems and services, and personal health behaviors all impact one ultimate measure of health: life expectancy. Stratified by ZIP code, the Finger Lakes Region has life expectancy estimates that range from 66 to 85 years of life. Map 5 shows the life expectancy estimates at birth by ZIP code and highlights the ZIP codes with the highest and lowest life expectancy estimates in the region.

Map 5: Life Expectancy by Zip Code



Source: New York State Department of Health Vital Statistics, 2014-2016

Leading Causes of Death

The top two leading causes of death in all nine counties of the Finger Lakes Region are Cancer and Heart Disease (Table 5). This is consistent with national data from the CDC, which shows the two leading causes of death since 2015 have been Heart Disease and Cancer¹⁹. Chronic lower respiratory disease (CLRD), a disease which causes shortness of breath caused by airway obstruction, most commonly caused by tobacco smoking (including second hand smoke), is also within the top five causes in all nine counties in the region (not pictured).

¹⁹ Ahmad, F. B., & Anderson, R. N. (2021). The leading causes of death in the US for 2020. JAMA, 325(18), 1829-1830.

Table 5: Leading Causes of Death, 2018

	1st	2nd	3rd
Chemung	Heart Disease 208.1 per 100,000	Cancer 167.6 per 100,000	Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases (CLRD) 48.8 per 100,000
Livingston	Cancer 171.8 per 100,000	Heart Disease 124.7 per 100,000	Alzheimer's Disease 59.2 per 100,000
Monroe	Cancer 153.8 per 100,000	Heart Disease 137.1 per 100,000	Unintentional Injury 57.1 per 100,000
Ontario	Cancer 157.9 per 100,000	Heart Disease 138.4 per 100,000	Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases (CLRD) 40.8 per 100,000
Schuyler	Cancer 156.1 per 100,000	Heart Disease 152.8 per 100,000	Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases (CLRD) 88.1 per 100,000
Seneca	Heart Disease 191.3 per 100,000	Cancer 152.2 per 100,000	Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases (CLRD) 55.1 per 100,000
Steuben	Heart Disease 182.3 per 100,000	Cancer 180.6 per 100,000	Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases (CLRD) 63.6 per 100,000
Wayne	Cancer 154.6 per 100,000	Heart Disease 143.8 per 100,000	Unintentional Injury 63.4 per 100,000
Yates	Heart Disease 154.6 per 100,000	Cancer 135.3 per 100,000	Unintentional Injury 66.4 per 100,000

Source: New York State Department of Health Vital Statistics, 2018

Leading Causes of Premature Death

Consistent with the leading causes of death, the top two causes of premature death (death before age 75) in the Finger Lakes Region are Cancer and Heart Disease. Unintentional Injury and Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease (CLRD) are two other leading causes that are consistent across all counties in the region (Table 6).

Table 6: Leading Causes of Premature Death, 2018

	1st	2nd	3rd
Chemung	Cancer 97.0 per 100,000	Heart Disease 90.5 per 100,000	Unintentional Injury 41.8 per 100,000
Livingston	Cancer 103.4 per 100,000	Heart Disease 54.9 per 100,000	Unintentional Injury 44.0 per 100,000
Monroe	Cancer 81.3 per 100,000	Heart Disease 48.4 per 100,000	Unintentional Injury 44.8 per 100,000
Ontario	Cancer 80.8 per 100,000	Heart Disease 53.3 per 100,000	Unintentional Injury 30.2 per 100,000
Schuyler	Cancer 67.3 per 100,000	Heart Disease 39.8 per 100,000	Diabetes 21.6* per 100,000
Seneca	Cancer 84.7 per 100,000	Heart Disease 82.5 per 100,000	Unintentional Injury 36.1 per 100,000
Steuben	Cancer 103.9 per 100,000	Heart Disease 69.7 per 100,000	Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases (CLRD) 24.4 per 100,000
Wayne	Cancer 88.5 per 100,000	Heart Disease 49.9 per 100,000	Unintentional Injury 45.3 per 100,000
Yates	Cancer 79.4 per 100,000	Heart Disease 51.8 per 100,000	Unintentional Injury 58.9 per 100,000

Source: New York State Department of Health Vital Statistics, 2018

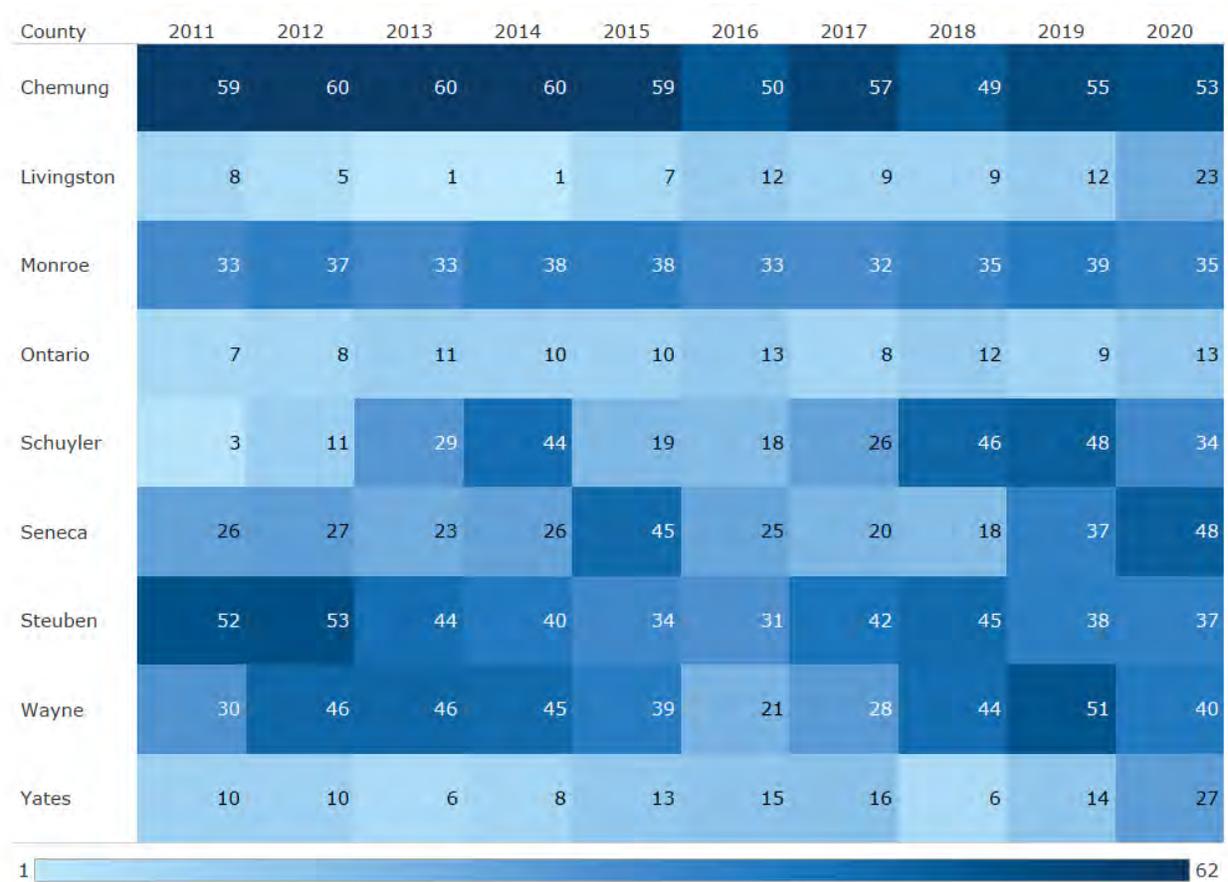
County Health Rankings

By combining all the factors listed above, the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute has created the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, a program that works to improve health outcomes for all and to close the health disparities gap between those with the most and least opportunities for good health.²⁰ By creating this metric/set of metrics, the County Health Rankings give counties in the Finger Lakes Region the opportunity to measure themselves against other counties in New York State and monitor changes over time. Table 7 shows the rank of each county in the Finger Lakes Region from 2011 to 2020. The rankings range from 1 to 62 in the Finger Lakes region, with the lower ranking indicating better performance in measurement of health outcomes. Ontario and Monroe County have shown consistent rankings since 2011. Ontario has an average rank of 10 with its highest being 13 and lowest being 7. Monroe was similar to Ontario in change over time, but with an average rank of 36, a high of 39, and a low of 32. Livingston, Schuyler, Yates County are of some concern, as both had ranks in the top 10 but are now ranked at 23, 34, and 27, respectively.

As the county health rankings model has evolved over the years, new and additional data elements have been factored into the score, which may have impacted these counties. Along with this, most of the counties in the Finger Lakes Region saw their score fall between 2016 and 2017, which coincides with the dramatic worsening of the opioid epidemic in the region. This significantly impacted overall and premature mortality, two major factors in the county health rankings. One county in the region that seen a positive trend is Steuben, which saw a trend of improving rank till 2016 and improvement over the last two years after a slight regression. Overall, they rank 15 places higher in 2020 than in 2011. This is a positive finding.

²⁰ County Health Rankings, <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/about-us>

Table 7: County Health Rankings



Data Source: County Health Rankings. 2011 - 2020, Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

The next section of this report will focus on health outcomes and behaviors that may impact life expectancy estimates and will be stratified by county, ZIP code, race/ethnicity and age group whenever possible or appropriate.

Health Indicators

Prevent Chronic Diseases

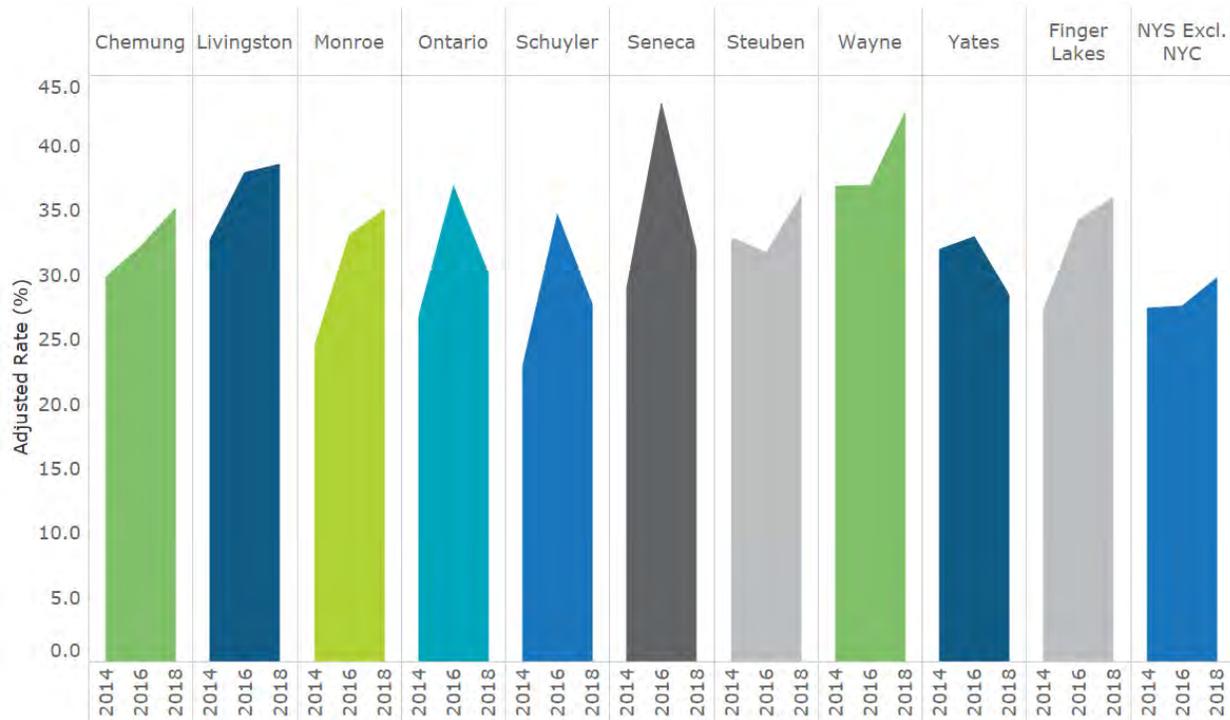
Preventing chronic disease has been a long standing priority area in the nine county Finger Lakes Region. In the past, efforts have largely been focused on reducing illness, disability and death related to hypertension, tobacco use and second hand smoke, along with reducing obesity in children and adults. Obesity is known to lead to long-term health complications and may lead to development of diabetes, hypertension, and premature mortality due to related conditions. This section will focus on exploring data related to chronic diseases in the region.

Obesity

In developing the Prevention Agenda, New York State has identified four focus areas in the Prevent Chronic Disease priority area: Healthy Eating and Food Security, Physical Activity, Tobacco Prevention, and Chronic Disease Preventative Care and Management. In reviewing the data in the Finger Lakes Region, the biggest areas for improvement are around Tobacco Prevention (specifically e-cigarette/vape use) and Chronic Disease Preventative Care and Management. On a smaller scale, Healthy Eating and Food Security are also areas worth noting. There is also a worrisome trend with overall food security in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In looking at the data from 2014, 2016, and 2018, the trends were varied. Chemung, Livingston, Monroe, Steuben, and Wayne all showed a trend of increasing rates of obesity. Ontario, Schuyler, and Seneca showed increases from 2014 to 2016 and then decreases from 2016 to 2018 (Figure 12). Seneca showed the greatest decrease from 2016 to 2018 (12%), which is likely due to their focus on Healthy Eating and Food Security, Tobacco Prevention and Preventative Care and Management of Chronic Diseases to help reduce obesity in the previous improvement plan. Yates County was the only county whose rate of obesity was not higher in 2018 than 2014, with a small reduction from 32% to 28%. Looking at the Finger Lakes Region vs. the state (minus NYC), the rate of obesity and upward trend in the region was higher than the state.

Figure 12: Percent of Adults (18+) who are Obese



Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2013-2014, 2016, & 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Childhood obesity rates in the Finger Lakes Region have also been fairly stable. Figure 13 shows the trend of obesity for students in the area from the Student Weight Data Explorer. **Looking at state trends,** "In New York State, obesity rates are decreasing among elementary school students, but are on the rise among middle and high school students."²¹ For the Finger Lakes Region, the counties that had an overall upward trend saw greater increases in obesity for middle/high school students similar to the overall state trend.

²¹ <https://nyshc.health.ny.gov/web/nyapd/student-weight-data-explorer>

Figure 13: Percent of Students with Obesity in the Finger Lakes Region

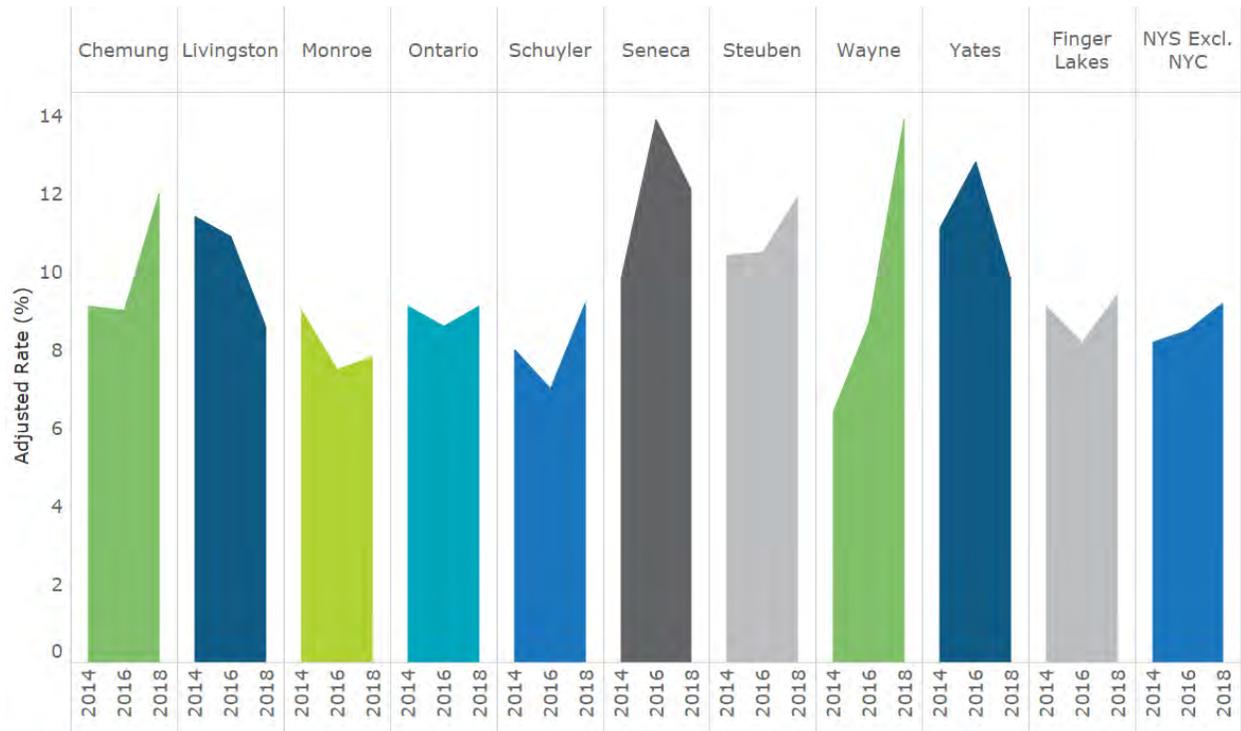


Data Source: NYS DOH, Health Data Connector, 2010 – 2019

Diabetes

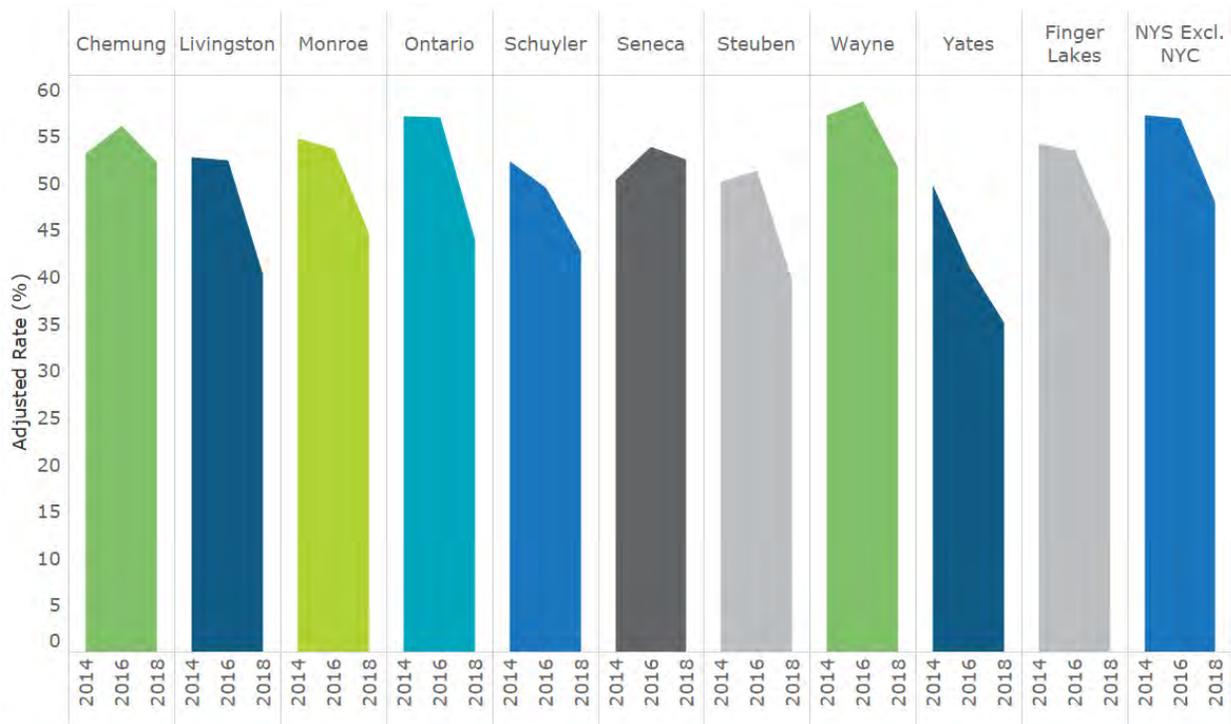
One area that has not seen an improvement is diabetes testing. Rates of diabetes among adults varied in from 2014 to 2018 (Figure 14) and appeared to increase in five counties. In comparing the Finger Lakes Region vs. the state, both the region and state showed a flat trend from 2014 to 2018. However, testing rates decreased from 2014 to 2018 in each of the nine counties (Figure 15) among those 18 years and older. This follows the trend in the Finger Lakes Region and the state. Therefore, the reduction in testing must be considered prior to interpreting the rates of diabetes diagnoses given potential for undiagnosed occurrence of disease.

Figure 14: Adults with Diabetes



Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2013-2014, 2016, & 2018.
 Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Figure 15: Adults (18+) who received Prediabetes/Diabetes Testing



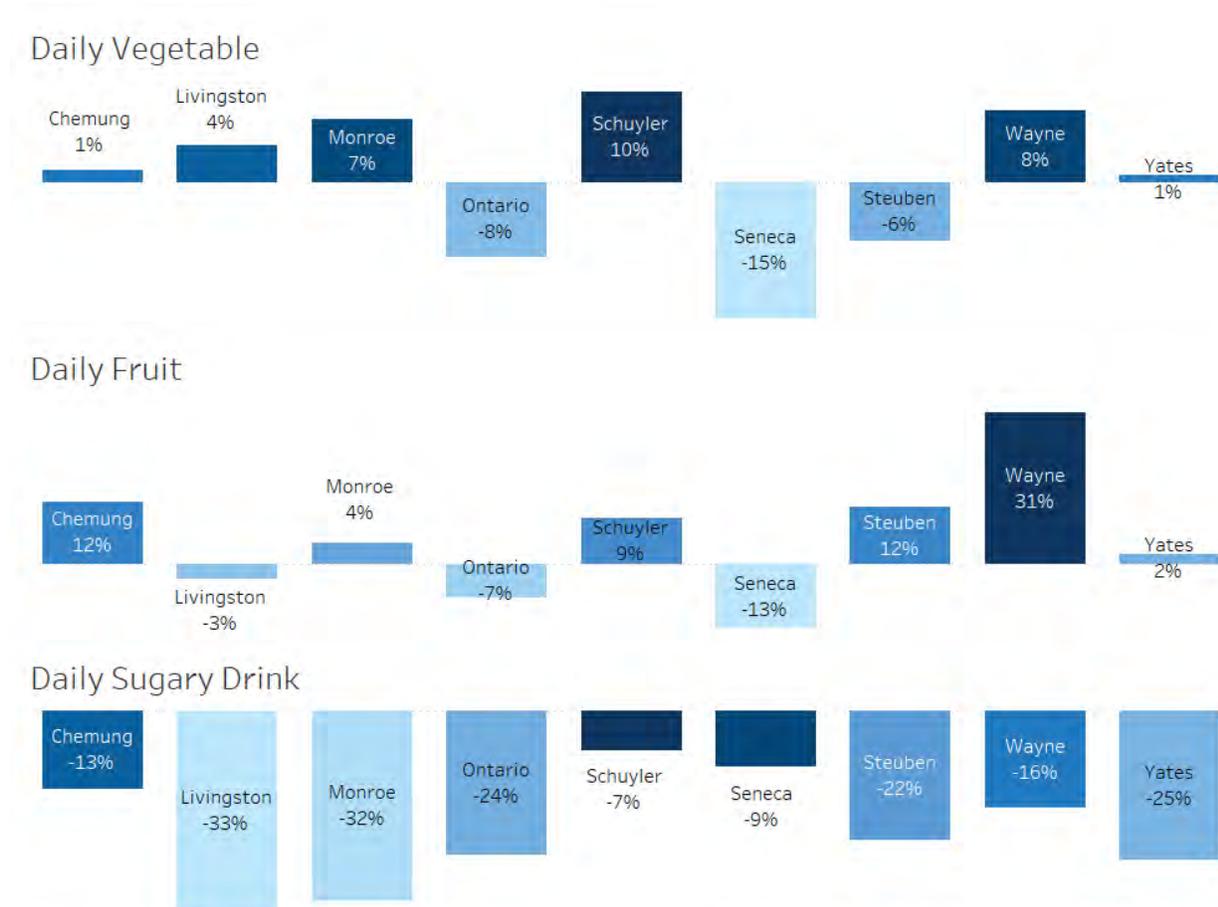
Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2013-2014, 2016, & 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Healthy Eating

With regard to healthy eating, the trends from 2016 to 2018 were mostly positive. Figure 16 shows the percent change in daily fruit, vegetable, and sugary drink consumption. For daily fruit and vegetable consumption, a positive change (shown as a positive number with a darker color) is a promising trend. Six of the nine counties show a positive change in fruit and vegetable consumption.

For sugary drink consumption, a negative change (negative number or lighter color) shows progress. All nine counties in the Finger Lakes Region made progress in this area, with the percent of the population reducing daily consumption of a sugary drink ranging from ~7% to ~33%.

Figure 16: Percent Change of Fruit, Vegetable, and Sugary Drink Consumption



Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2016 & 2018. Analysis..

Healthy eating habits are important when it comes to decreasing the incidence of obesity in children and adults. According to My Health Story 2018 survey data, **9% of the region’s respondents reported the nearest grocery store is 20+ minutes** away, where vehicles are needed to access them. Of note, the majority of residents (75% of respondents) indicated they usually get their fruits and vegetables from a supermarket or grocery store or local grocery store (47%). A substantial amount of residents also utilize local farm stands (39%), farmers markets (29%), or grow their own in their garden (22%), with estimates for all three of these sources being higher in Schuyler, Seneca, Wayne and Yates Counties.

Respondents to the My Health Story 2018 survey were also asked what were the biggest challenges or barriers keeping them from eating healthier. Table 6 reveals barriers reported by residents. The biggest barrier to eating healthier, particularly for those with low income, was that healthy food was too expensive. Other issues which rose to the top were not having enough time and lack of knowledge of how to shop for and prepare the food. This presents an opportunity to help educate and

inform the community on how to shop for and prepare in-season fruits and vegetables, which may help contain costs of eating healthier for the consumer. Not surprisingly, the table also reveals that affordability of healthy food was a larger concern for those of a lower income status. Nearly 60% of those with incomes less than \$25k reported a cost barrier vs. 25% of those over \$75k. Transportation, supplies and equipment, and knowledge of how to cook and prepare foods were also areas predominantly identified by low-income respondents.

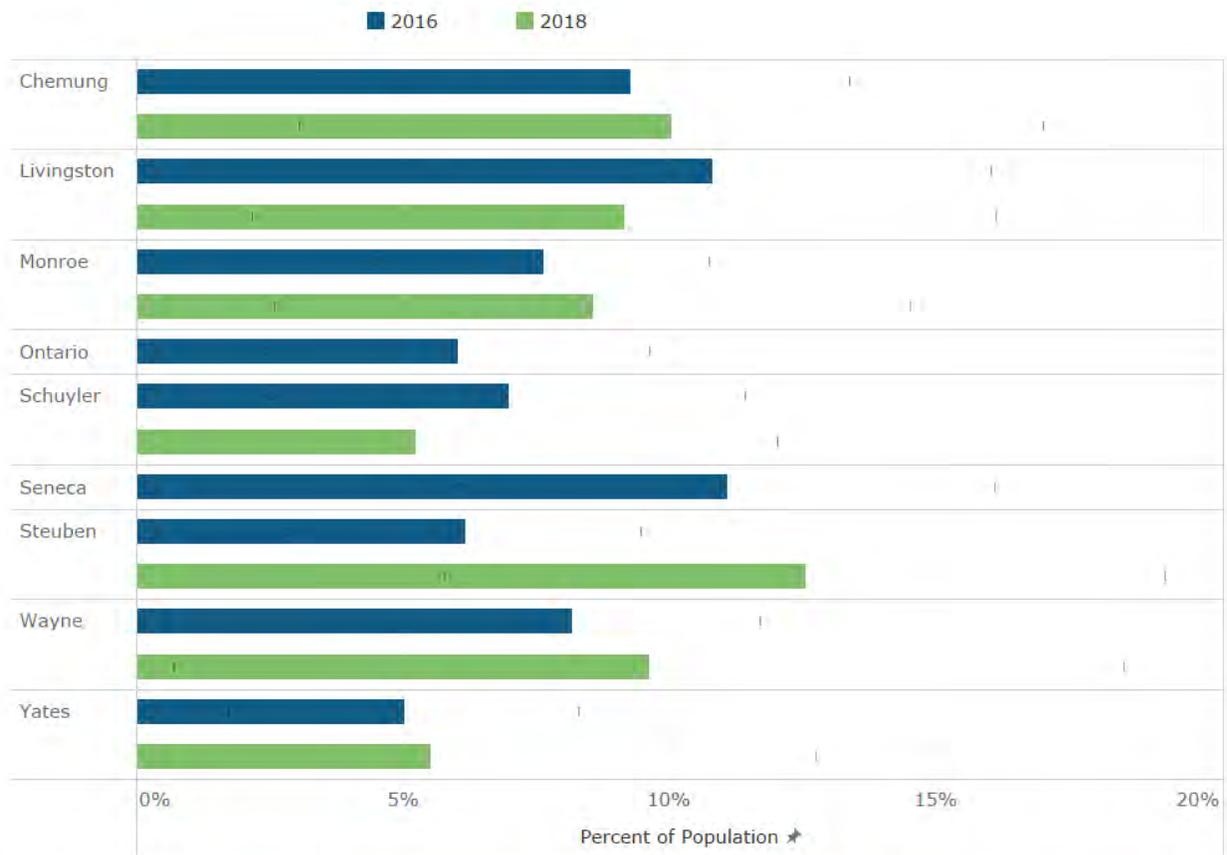
Table 8: Barriers to Healthy Eating

	under \$25K	\$25-50K	\$50-75K	\$75K+
Buying healthy food is too expensive	54%	47%	38%	20%
I don't enjoy the taste of healthy food	5%	7%	10%	8%
I don't have anyplace nearby to buy healthy food	6%	5%	2%	2%
I don't have the supplies and equipment I'd need to cook healthy food	9%	5%	4%	1%
I don't have the time to shop for, and prepare, healthy food	14%	21%	22%	23%
I don't have the transportation to go shopping for healthy food	12%	3%	1%	0%
I don't know how to cook and prepare healthy meals that taste good	11%	15%	14%	10%
I don't want or need to eat healthier than I already do	8%	8%	10%	10%
I really don't have any barriers keeping me from eating healthy food	22%	32%	42%	49%
The others in my household don't eat healthy, and we eat together	9%	10%	12%	12%

Data Source: My Health Story survey 2018. Analysis by Common Ground Health incorporates weighting to reflect demographics of each county and the region.

While the numbers above show some promising trends for people's eating habits, food insecurity is still an issue in the region and contributes to the inability to make healthy eating choices. The following figure (Figure 17) shows the trend of food insecurity in the region with some of the highest rates in Ontario, Steuben and Seneca Counties.

Figure 17: Food Insecurity²²



Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2016 & 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

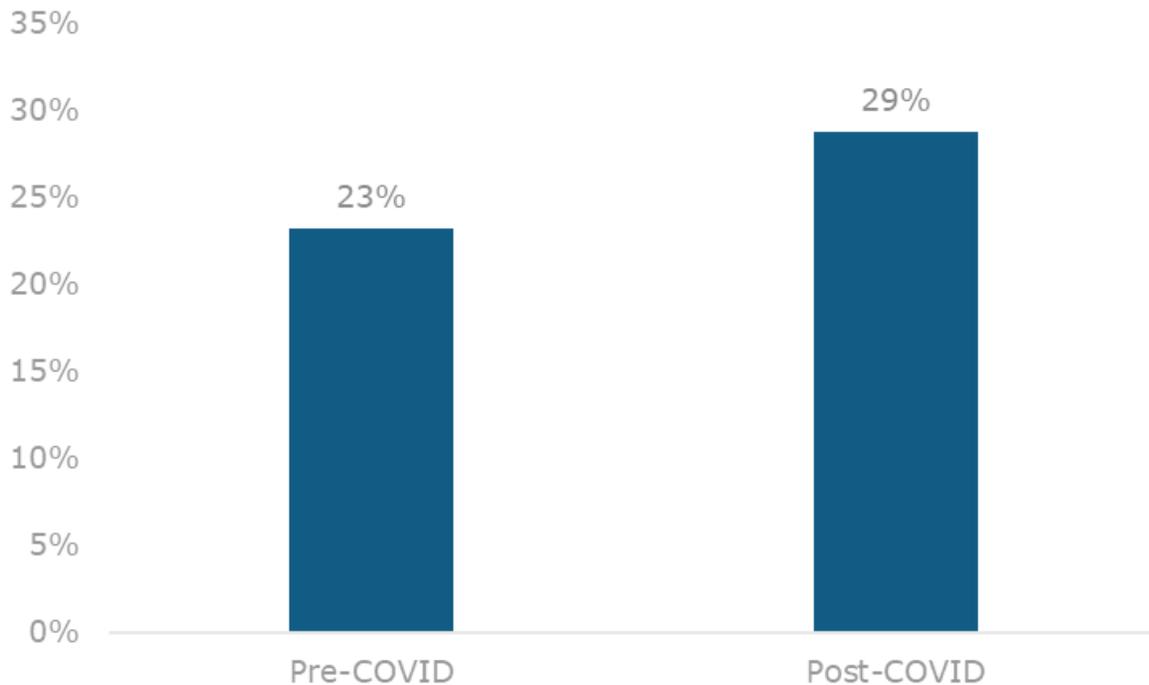
In general the regions rate of food insecurity has been fairly stable, with only Steuben County showing large increases. While it showed a greater than 5% increase in food insecurity over the two year time period, the wide confidence intervals on these rates indicate caution be taken before drawing any strong conclusions from these increases. It does indicate that food insecurity, as it relates to other goals on the Prevention Agenda, should be explored further.

The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted a number of Prevention Agenda focus areas. The following figure (Figure 18) shows the impact COVID-19 has had **on people’s anxiety around having enough food until they had more money to buy more**. In addition to the data below, the survey revealed that almost half (45%) of the respondents know someone struggling with food security as a result of the

²² 2018 Data for Ontario and Seneca County not shown due to large standard error

COVID-19 pandemic. The findings further emphasize the need to address food security concerns in the region.

Figure 18: Percent of Respondents who were worried if our food would run out before we got money to buy more



Data Source: S2AY Rural Health Network Inc, The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Healthy Eating

Physical Activity

While healthy eating is a major component of preventing and managing chronic diseases, so is physical activity and exercise. My Health Story 2018 provided us with data on barriers to being physically active, as shown in Table 9. Similar to the perceived expense of healthy food previously discussed, the affordability of exercise opportunities is noted as a barrier predominantly seen in the lower income population (25% of respondents vs. 7% of high-income respondents). Safety of neighborhoods, support systems, and transportation were three additional measures which appear to be greater concerns for low-income respondents.

Table 9: Barriers to Being Physically Active

	under \$25K	\$25-50K	\$50-75K	\$75K+
I always seem to be too tired to exercise	28%	30%	33%	26%
I can't afford a gym membership or other fitness opportunities	39%	26%	18%	8%
I can't exercise because of a physical limitation or disability	22%	12%	12%	8%
I don't have a safe place nearby to get more exercise	9%	6%	3%	2%
I don't have anyone to exercise with, and don't like to exercise alone	18%	16%	16%	10%
I don't have the time to get more exercise	23%	42%	47%	55%
I don't have transportation to get to places where I could get more exercise	14%	4%	1%	0%
I don't want or need to be more active than I already am	10%	8%	9%	9%
I really don't have any barriers keeping me from being physically active	16%	25%	24%	31%
My life is too complicated to worry about exercise	10%	11%	10%	9%

Data Source: My Health Story survey 2018. Analysis by Common Ground Health incorporates weighting to reflect demographics of each county and the region.

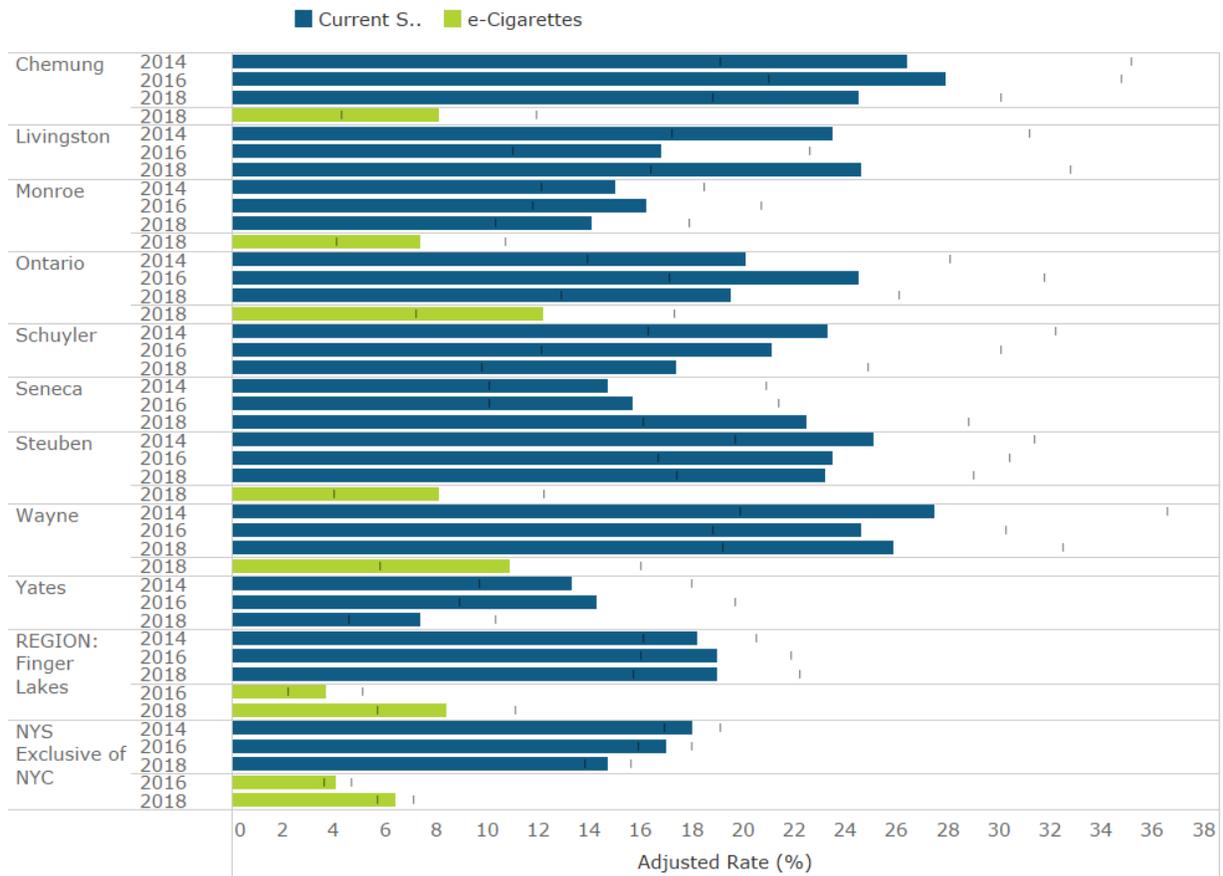
The impact of COVID-19 on people's physical activity has been different based on socio-economic factors. When gyms closed early in the pandemic, those with the means were able to invest in home gyms and many have continued with those habits since gyms have reopened²³. Along with this, many have taken to different outdoor activities, such as running, hiking, biking and walking during COVID.

Tobacco Use

Another area of concern in the chronic disease priority area is tobacco use. In the previous Community Health Assessment, five of the nine counties chose Tobacco Prevention as a focus area. The following figure (Figure 19) shows the trend of cigarette use from 2013-2014 to 2018 and e-cigarette use from 2016 to 2018.

²³ <https://runrepeat.com/fitness-trends>

Figure 19: Percent of Adults (18+) who smoke every day or some days²⁴



Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2013-2014, 2016, & 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

While the rate of cigarette use across all nine counties and the Finger Lakes Region was fairly stable, the increase in e-cigarette use is a cause for concern. The Finger Lakes Region saw a roughly 5% increase in use of e-cigarettes or other vaping products without a corresponding reduction in cigarette use. In comparison to the state data, this was double the increase (2% vs. 5%). This is likely due to the simultaneous use by respondents of both cigarettes and vaping. Reported use of e-cigarettes as well as other nicotine delivery systems (vape pens, JUULs, etc.) have been identified as areas of concern in several of the Finger Lakes Region counties. In 2016, the rates of e-cigarette use were thought by many partners to be higher than what was speculated, likely due to the sparse availability of data. Anecdotal data suggests that many individuals have switched from cigarette to e-cigarette use under the impression that e-cigarettes are “safer.” This perception that vaping is

²⁴ 2016 E-Cigarette Data at the county level, 2018 E-Cigarette Data for Livingston, Schuyler, Seneca, and Yates County not shown due to large standard error

harmless is fallacious and vaping has been shown to impair the development of child and adolescent brains. In addition, unregulated child-friendly chemical flavorings and colorings in the vape liquids may also damage the oral mucosa and airway and increase the risk of developing lung cancer, hypertension, stroke, heart attack and premature mortality.²⁵ The alarming increase in e-cigarette usage in the Finger Lakes provides an opportunity to improve community health. A focus on targeting young adults (18–24) may prove most beneficial as this population is more likely to report e-cigarette usage than any other age group.

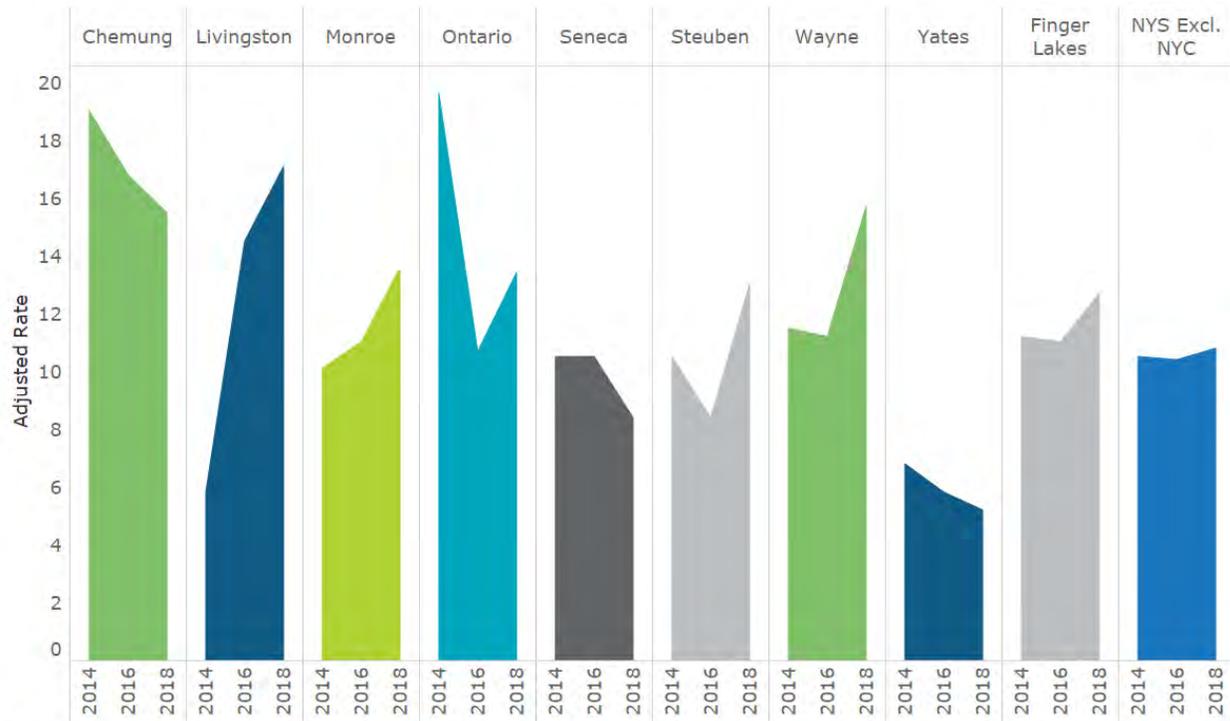
²⁵ Muthumalage, T., Lamb, T., Friedman, M.R. et al. E-cigarette flavored pods induce inflammation, epithelial barrier dysfunction, and DNA damage in lung epithelial cells and monocytes. *Sci Rep* 9, 19035 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-019-51643-6>

Asthma

Another chronic disease that has been monitored through the Community Health Assessments is asthma. In looking at the trend of data across the Finger Lakes Region from 2013-2018, we see variation between the different counties.

Chemung, Seneca, and Yates counties have seen a downward trend, Livingston, Monroe, and Schuyler have seen an upward trend, while Ontario, Steuben, and Wayne have been volatile in that time frame. The Finger Lakes Region and State did not show significant change in the time period. Figure 20 displays this data.

Figure 20: Percent of Population with Asthma

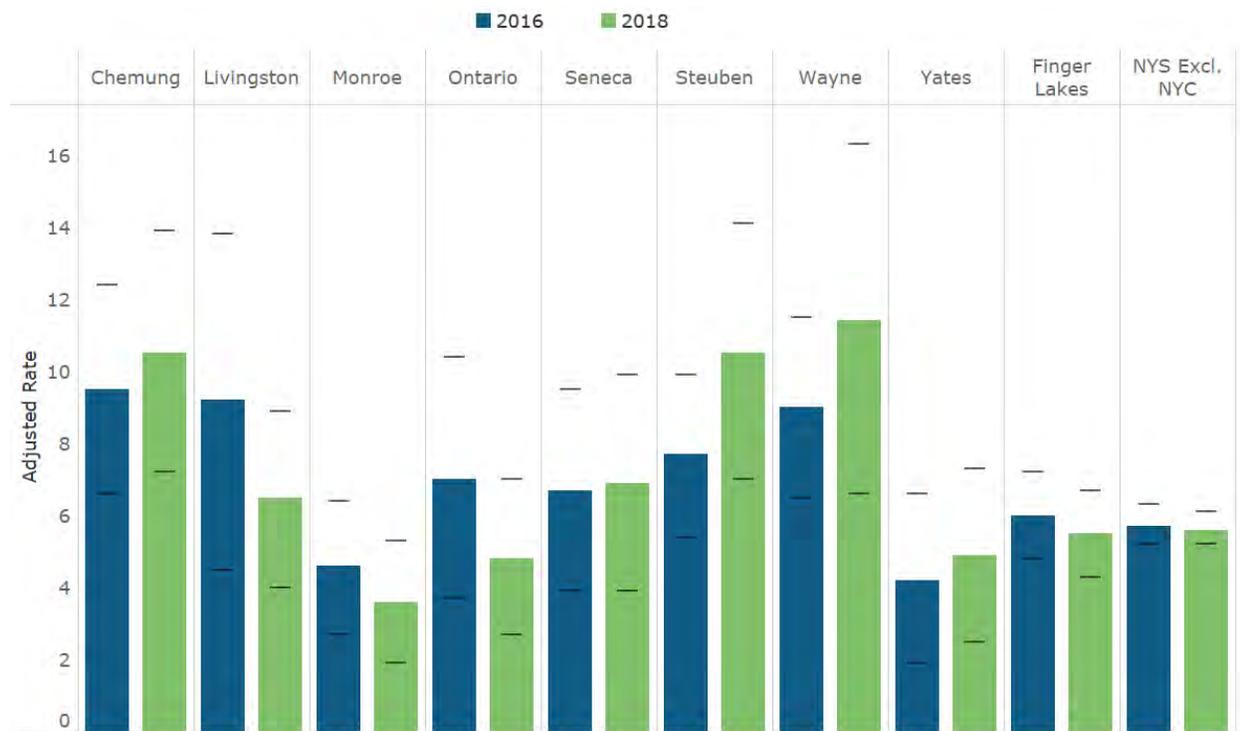


Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2013-2014, 2016, & 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

COPD

Similar to asthma, the prevalence of COPD in the Finger Lakes Region is not showing any clear trends. Looking at the data from 2016 and 2018, the prevalence rate in the different counties, the Finger Lakes Region, and state did not show either positive or negative trends and no county had a change of more than 3% in either direction, as shown in Figure 21.

Figure 21: Percent of Population with COPD



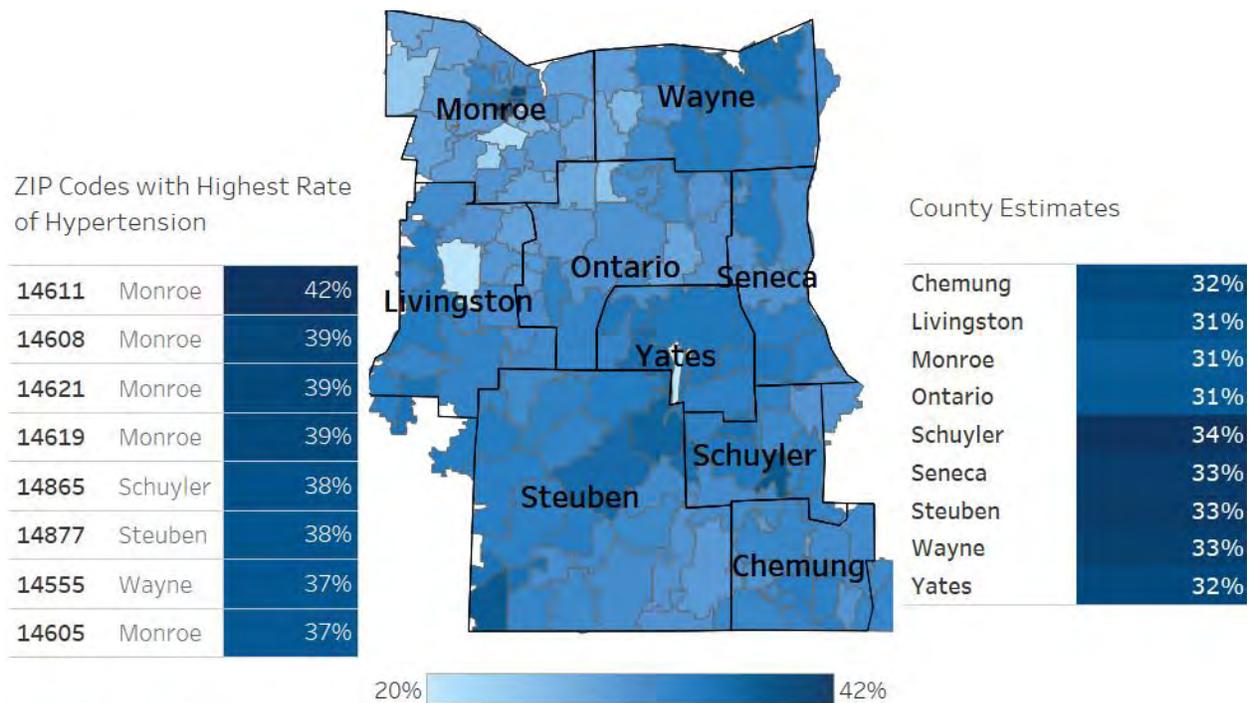
Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2016 & 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Hypertension

And estimated 32% of adults in the Finger Lakes Region have been diagnosed with hypertension. Undiagnosed or mismanaged hypertension can lead to a wealth of poor health outcomes including heart attack, stroke, kidney disease and heart failure. Shown in

Map 6 demonstrates the prevalence of hypertension by ZIP code within the Finger Lakes Region. Rates among the adult population range from 20% in Keuka (Yates County) to 42% in Rochester (Monroe County).

Map 6: Percent of Population with Diagnosed Hypertension

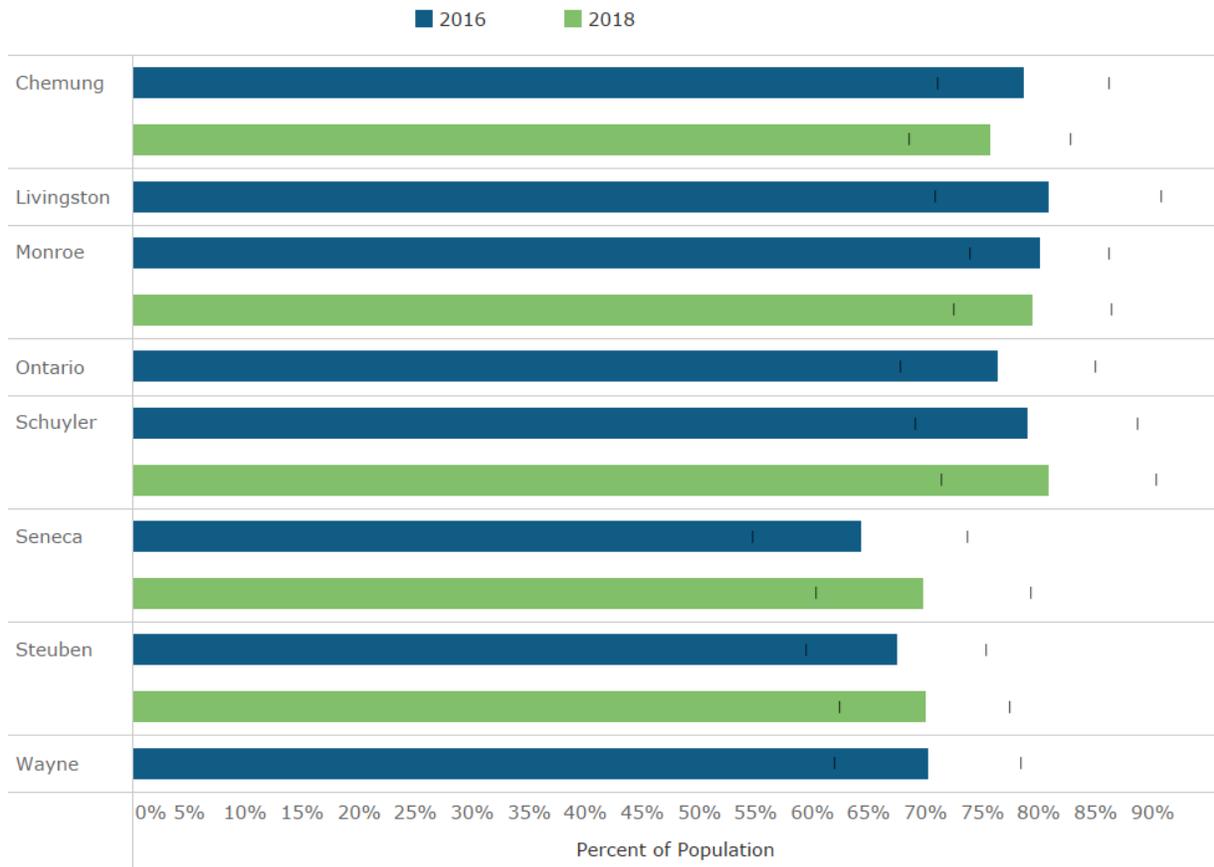


Source: CDC Places, 2018

Cancer Screening

Screening for disease is an important preventative screening tool used to help detect, manage and treat disease in its early stages. One disease area where that is of particular importance is cancer. Across NYS and the Finger Lakes Region, three types of cancer screenings are monitored: Breast, Cervical, and Colorectal. NO data for Cervical Cancer screening could be displayed due to large standard error for the data. Looking at the trend for screenings from 2016 to 2018, all counties had no significant change in their rate of cancer screenings. Figure 22 and Figure 23 show the trend of rates for breast and colorectal cancers, respectively.

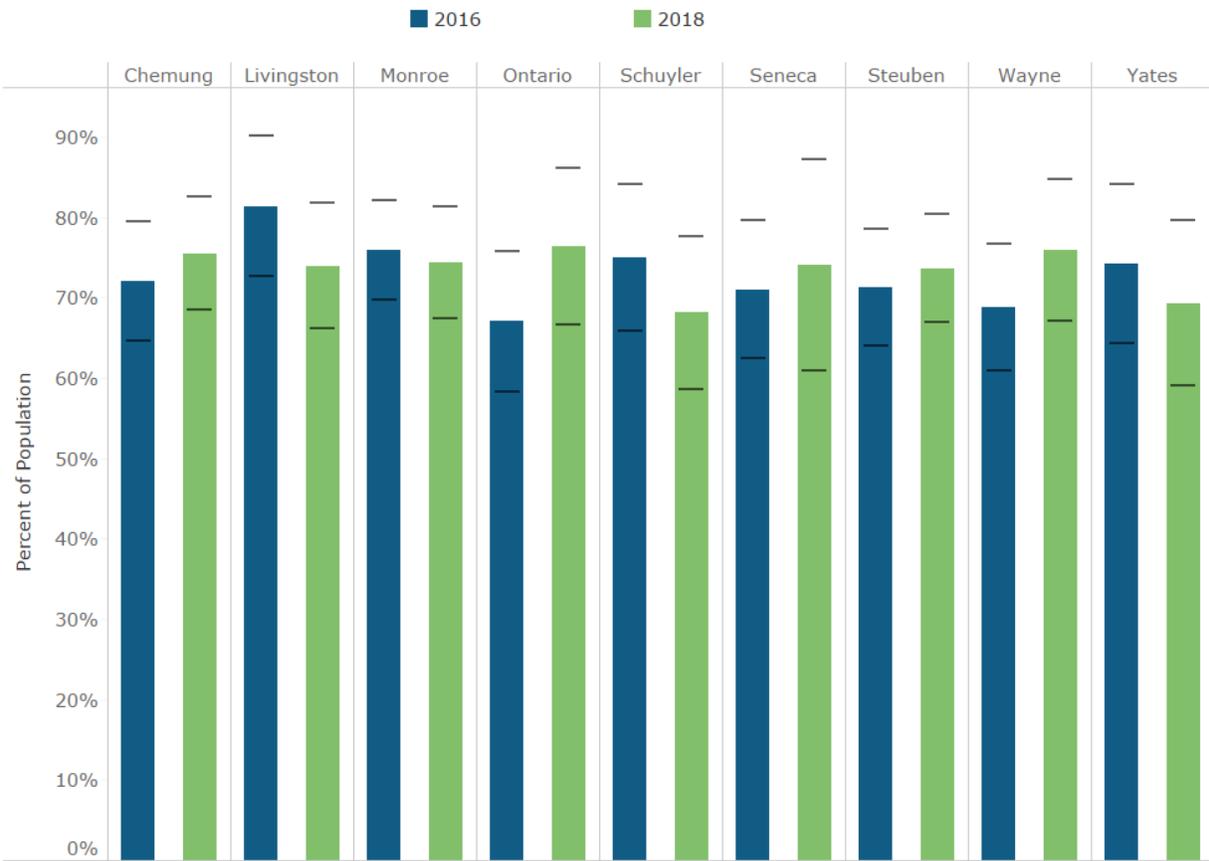
Figure 22: Breast Cancer Screening Rate²⁶



Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2016 & 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

²⁶ 2018 Data for Livingston and Ontario County not shown due to large standard error

Figure 23: Colorectal Cancer Screening Rate

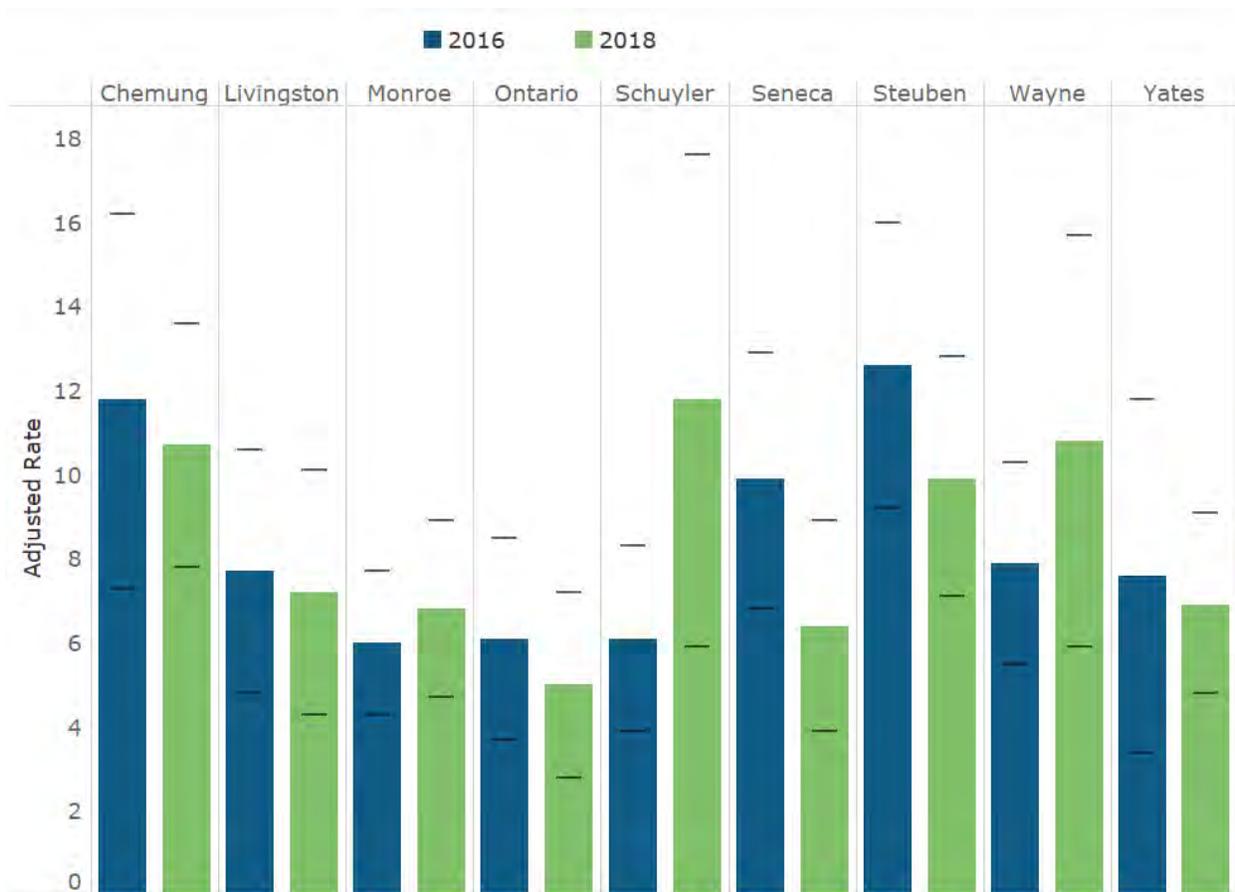


Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2016 & 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Cardiovascular disease

Cardiovascular disease has long been a condition that has negative impacts on our community. Data from the CDC/Vital Statistics shows that cardiovascular disease has been the leading cause of death in the US since 2015²⁷. In the Finger Lakes Region, the rate of cardiovascular disease from 2016 to 2018 was low (<15%), but trends across the region are variable. Most counties have been stable with Schuyler and Wayne showing increases and Seneca and Steuben showing decreases in rates. While these increases may be something to look into, the wide confidence intervals shown in Figure 24 indicate that caution should be taken in drawing any significant conclusions from the data.

Figure 24: Rate of Cardiovascular Disease



Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2016 & 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

²⁷ . Source: National Center for Health Statistics. National Vital Statistics System: mortality statistics (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/deaths.htm>). Data for 2015-2019 are final; data for 2020 are provisional.

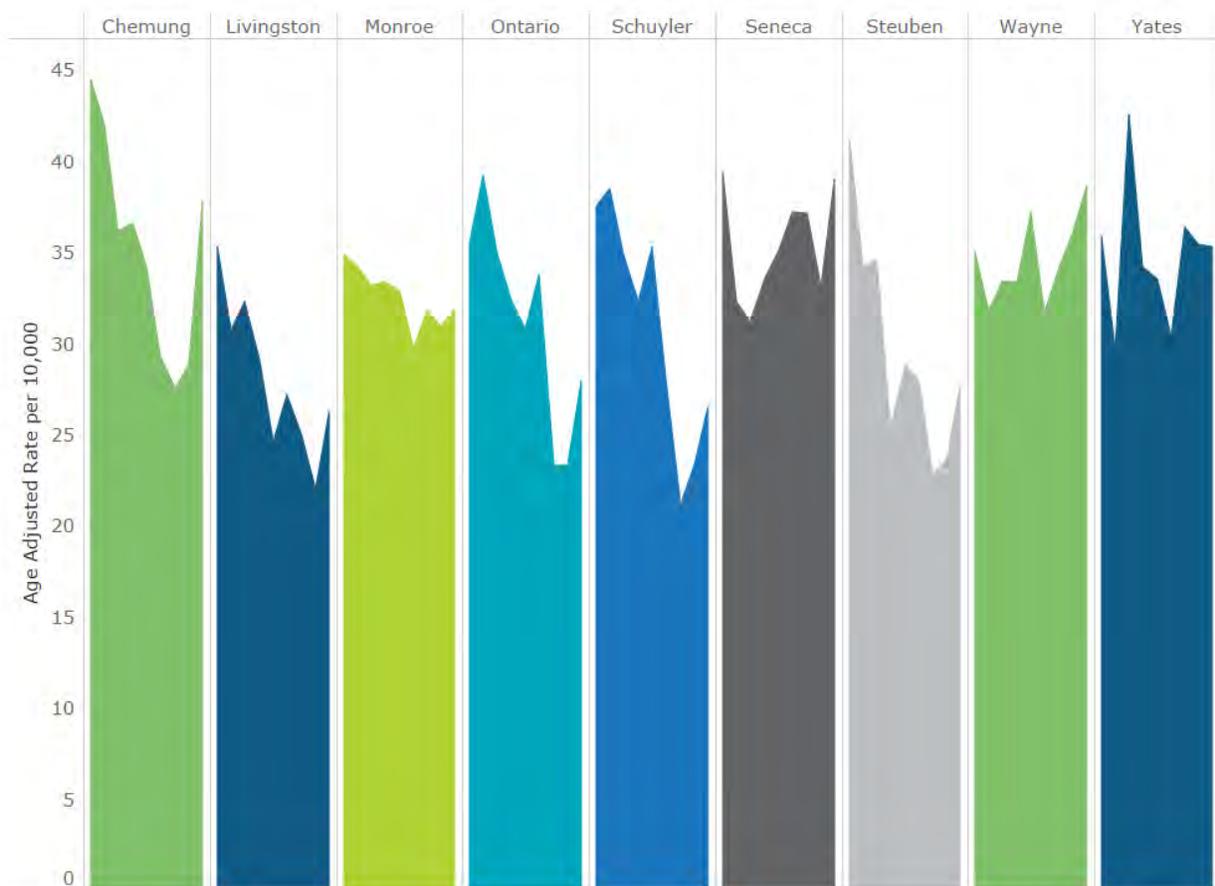
Promote a Healthy and Safe Environment

Healthy and safe environments relate to all dimensions of the physical environment(s) in which we live, work and play that impact health and safety. This includes the air we breathe, the water we drink and utilize for recreational use, interpersonal violence, incidence of injury, and more.

Falls in the 65+ Population

One indicator of a healthy and safe environment are falls in the 65+ population. Between 2009 and 2018, the age-adjusted rate of hospitalizations related to falls has been steady in the region, averaging around 30 per 10,000 as shown in Figure 25. Some communities, such as in Livingston County, have focused on fall prevention in previous health improvement plans. This work appears to be having the desired effect as that county has one of the lowest fall rates in the region.

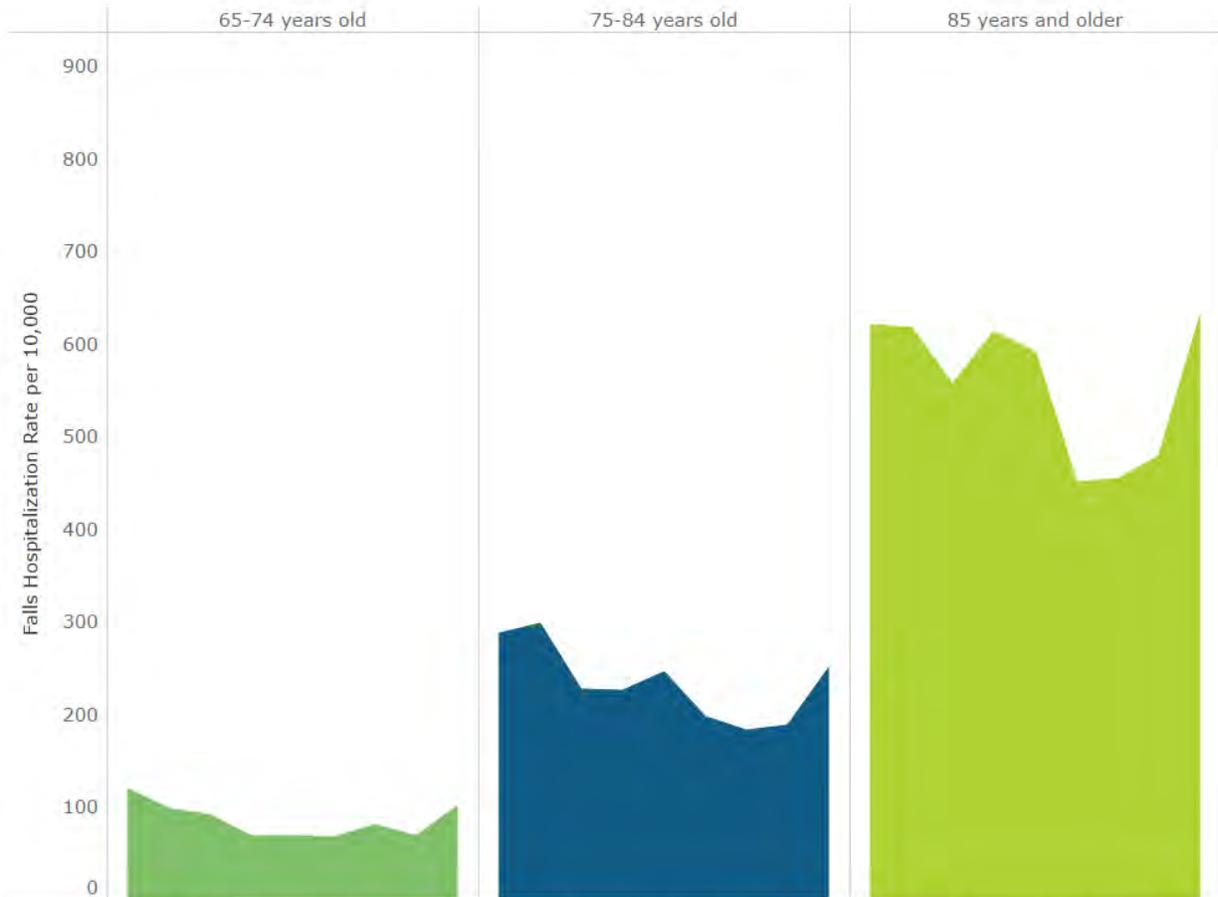
Figure 25: Age Adjusted Rate of Fall Hospitalization



Data Source: NYS DOH, Community Health Indicator Report, Years 2009 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Looking more closely at the geriatric population within Monroe County, we see consistent rates from 2009 – 2018 (Figure 26). Other counties in the Finger Lakes Region follow a similar trend. As the population ages, older individuals will be more likely to have a hospitalization from a fall. While this might indicate a higher rate of falls in older age groups, it is also likely to be driven by the frailty of older populations.

Figure 26: Fall Hospitalization Rate in Monroe County, Ages 65 and Older

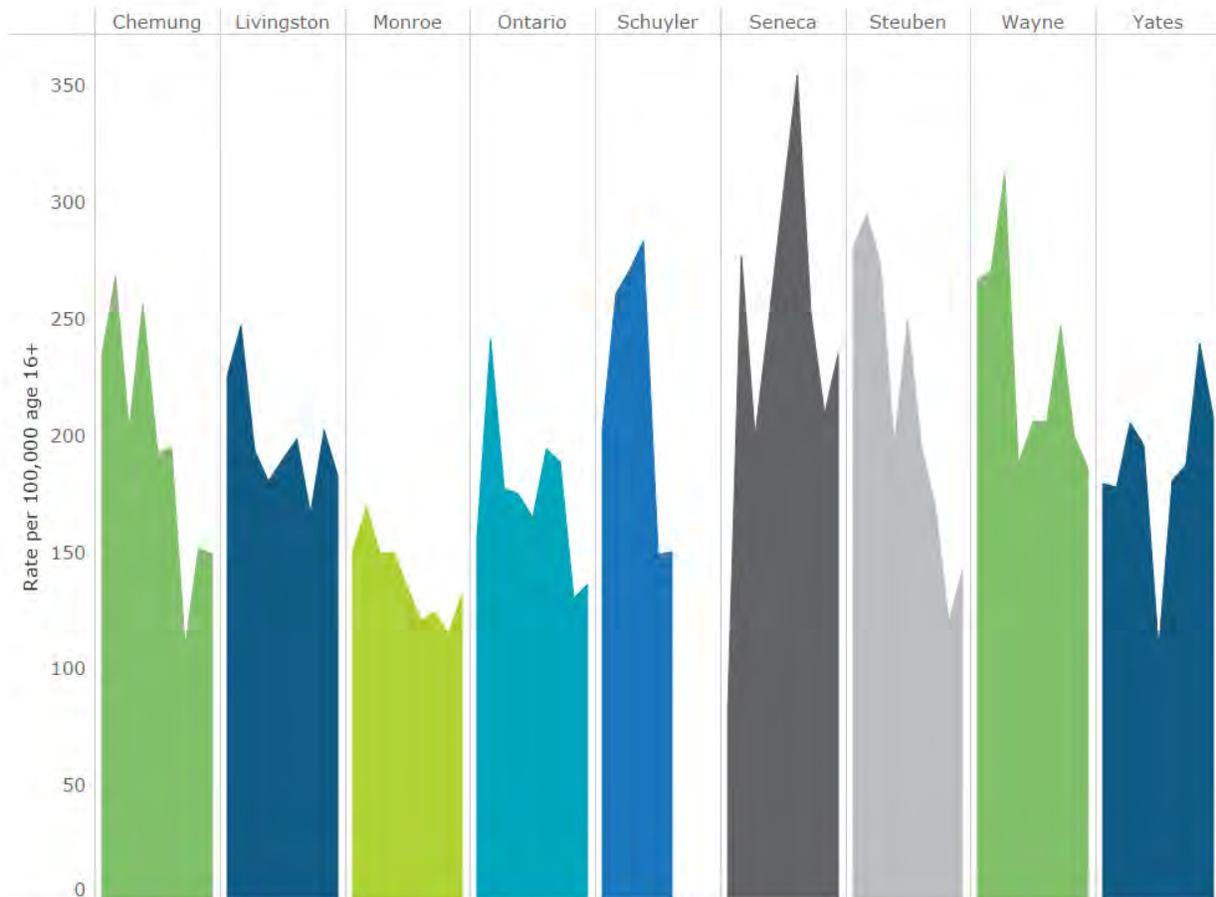


Data Source: NYS DOH, Community Health Indicator Report, Years 2009 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Work Related Hospitalizations

Another indicator of environmental health is work place safety. Fewer injuries and hospitalizations related to work show an increased focus by employers and employees on maintaining a safe environment. In looking at the data from 2009 – 2018, work injury related hospitalization rates are either steady or decreasing across the Finger Lakes Region (Figure 27).

Figure 27: Work Related Hospitalizations per 100,000 - Age 16 and Up



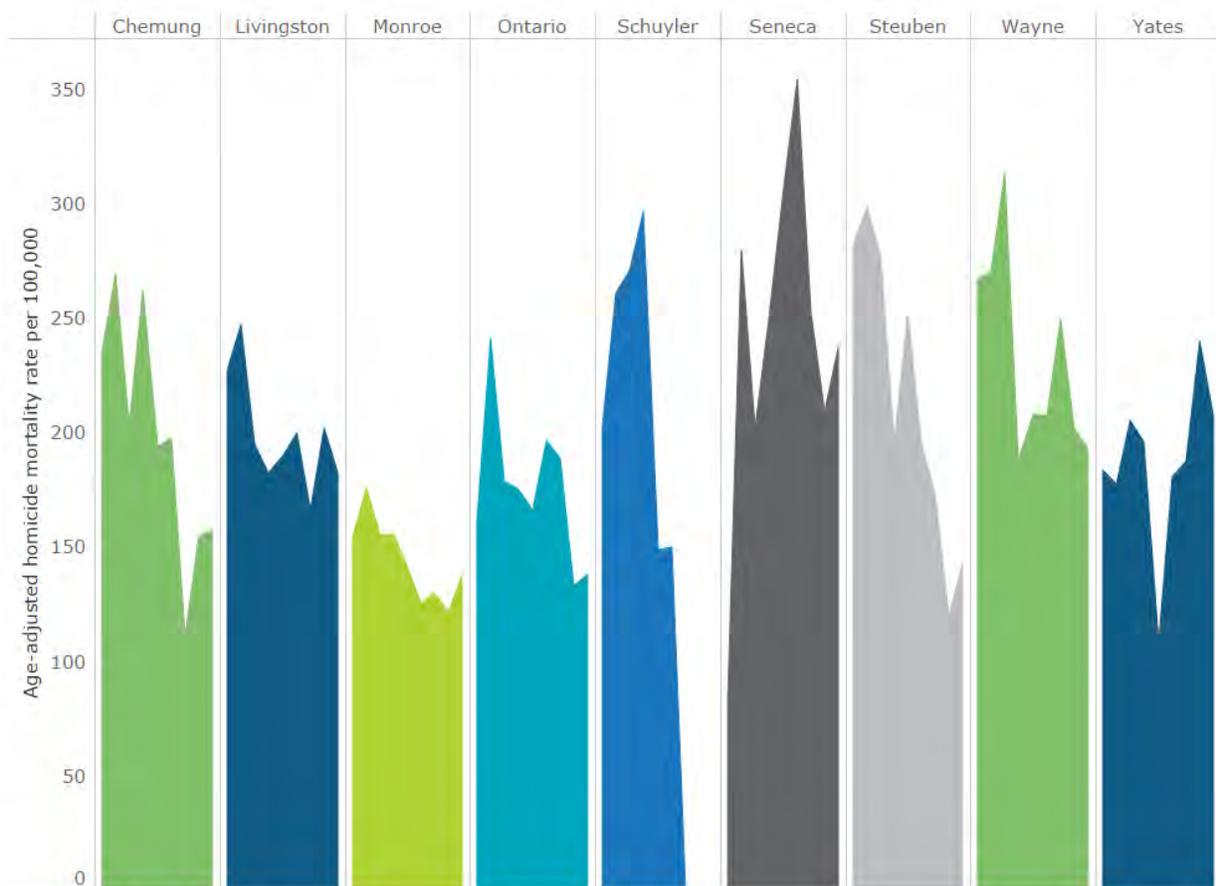
Data Source: NYS DOH, Community Health Indicator Report, Years 2009 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Perceived Neighborhood Safety

The perception of safety **in one’s** neighborhood and home is another indicator of environmental health. Violence in certain neighborhoods has long been a concern and a major factor in reducing the life expectancy of Black men. In addition, the **presence of violence in one’s neighborhood may** increase rates of stress and anxiety among residents, with a corresponding decrease in rates of physical activity and perceived safety. Long-term, this may lead to greater rates of poor emotional well-being, chronic disease and more. Looking at the trends from 2009 – 2017 at the county level, mortality rates per 100,000 are flat or trending slightly downward

(Figure 28). Of note, small numerators and/or denominators may cause arbitrary fluctuations in the results and should be taken into consideration when interpreting the data. While this data is encouraging, the more recent trends from 2018-2021 are not yet reflected in this analysis.

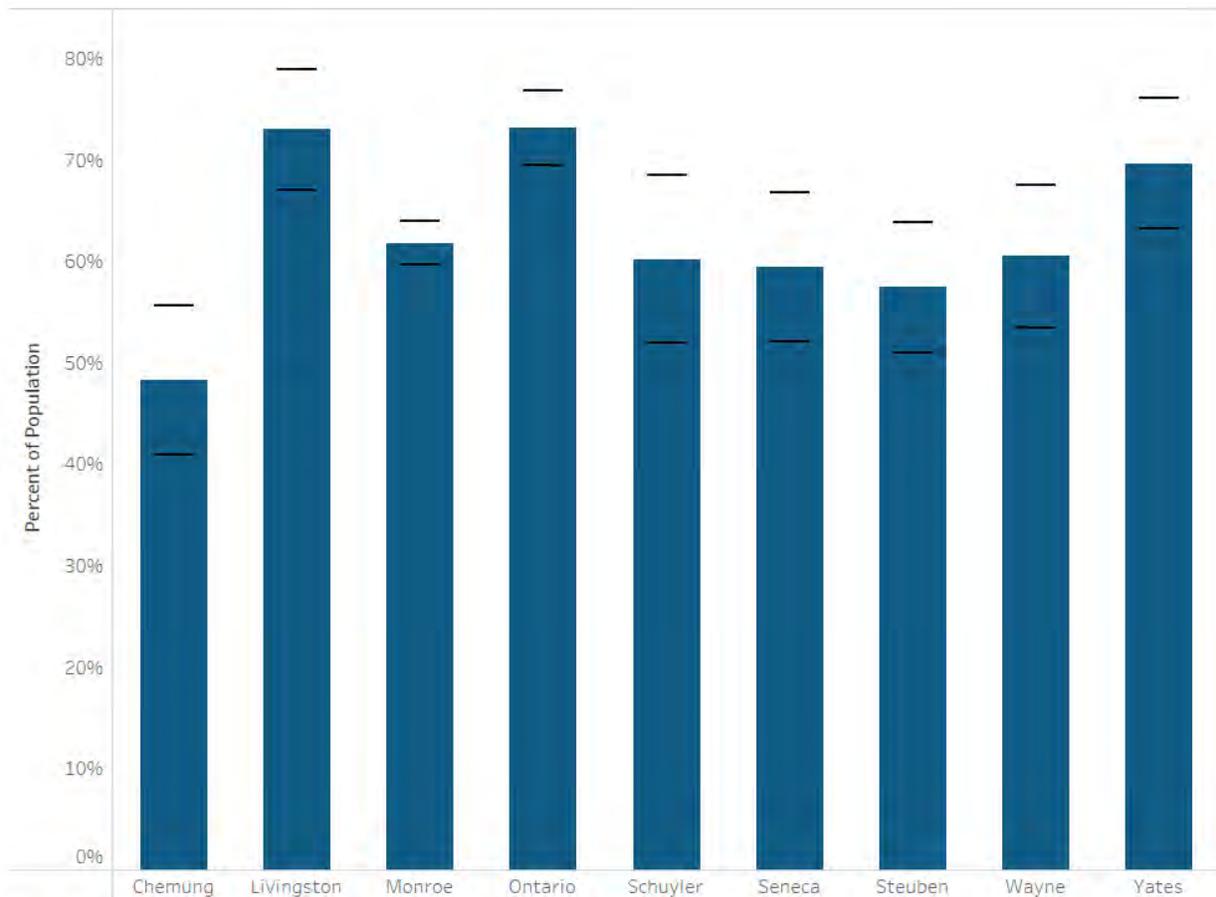
Figure 28: Age Adjusted Homicide Mortality rate per 100,000



Data Source: NYS DOH, Community Health Indicator Report, Years 2009 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Along with static or declining homicide rates, My Health Story offered insight into how people feel about their neighborhoods. In all but one county in the Finger Lakes Region, a majority of respondents (~60%) felt safe in their neighborhoods (Figure 29).

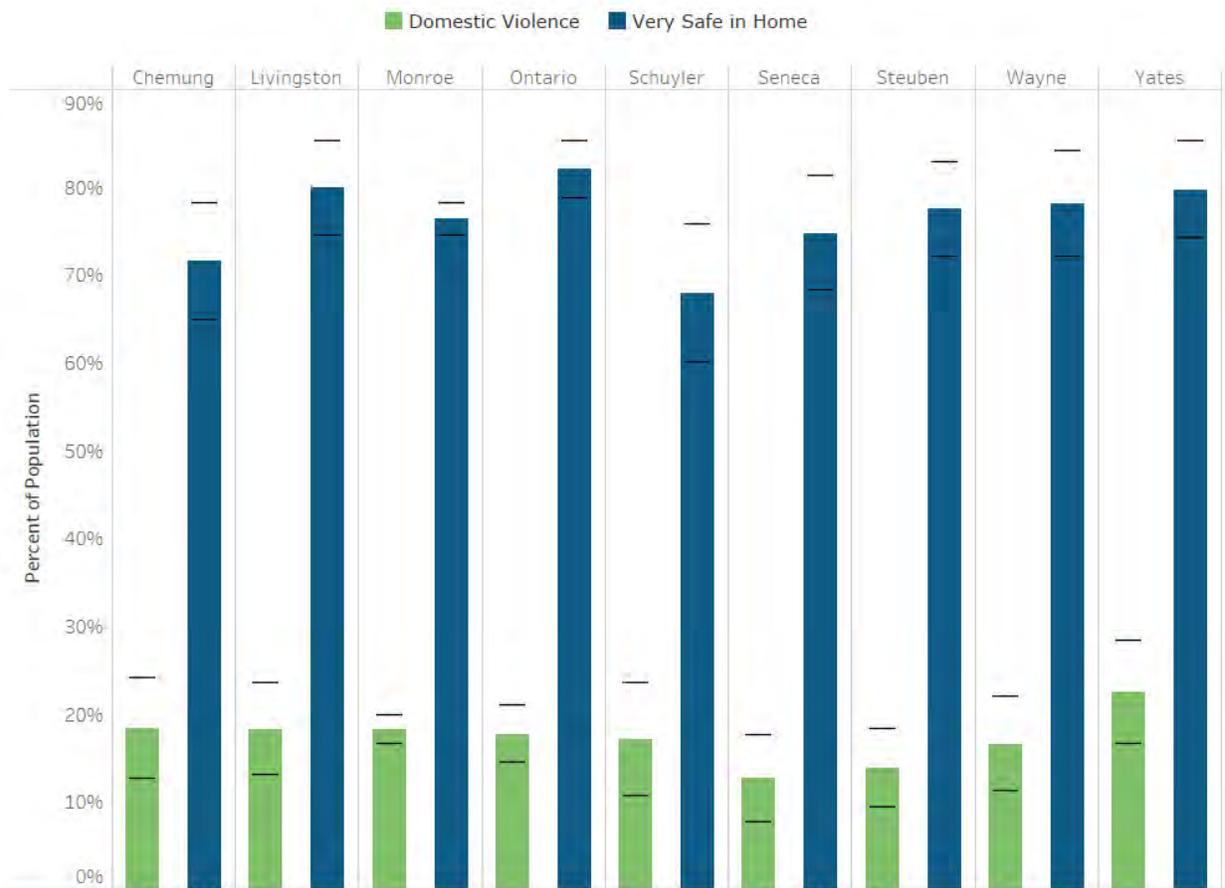
Figure 29: Percent of population reporting feeling very safe in their neighborhood



Data Source: My Health Story survey 2018. Analysis by Common Ground Health incorporates weighting to reflect demographics of each county and the region.

Not only did respondents report feeling safe in their neighborhoods, a large majority (~75%) reported feeling very safe in their homes (Figure 30). This directly correlates to the rate of reported domestic violence, also seen in Figure 31.

Figure 30: Respondent indicators for home safety



Data Source: My Health Story survey 2018. Analysis by Common Ground Health incorporates weighting to reflect demographics of each county and the region.

Promote Women, Infants, and Children

Maternal and pediatric health have been areas of focus for Fingers Lakes Region counties in several past Community Health Assessments. According to **Healthy People 2020**, “improving the well-being of mothers, infants and children is an important public health goal for the United States. Their well-being determines the health of the next generation and can help predict future public health challenges for families, communities and the health care system.”

Total Births

New York State tracks a number of maternal and pediatric well-being metrics including low birth weight, premature births, teen birth and pregnancy rates, and infant/neonate deaths. Overall, since 2007, there has been a steady decrease in the total number of births in the Finger Lakes Region. For the past two 3-year periods (2015-2017 and 2016-2018), total births in the Finger Lakes region have been below 40,000 (Figure 31).

Figure 31: Total Births in the Finger Lakes Region

2007 - 2009	43,099
2008 - 2010	42,642
2009 - 2011	42,282
2010 - 2012	41,877
2011 - 2013	41,459
2012 - 2014	41,302
2013 - 2015	41,074
2014 - 2016	40,474
2015 - 2017	39,788
2016 - 2018	39,244

Source: New York State Perinatal Data Profile, 2007-2018

Prenatal Care

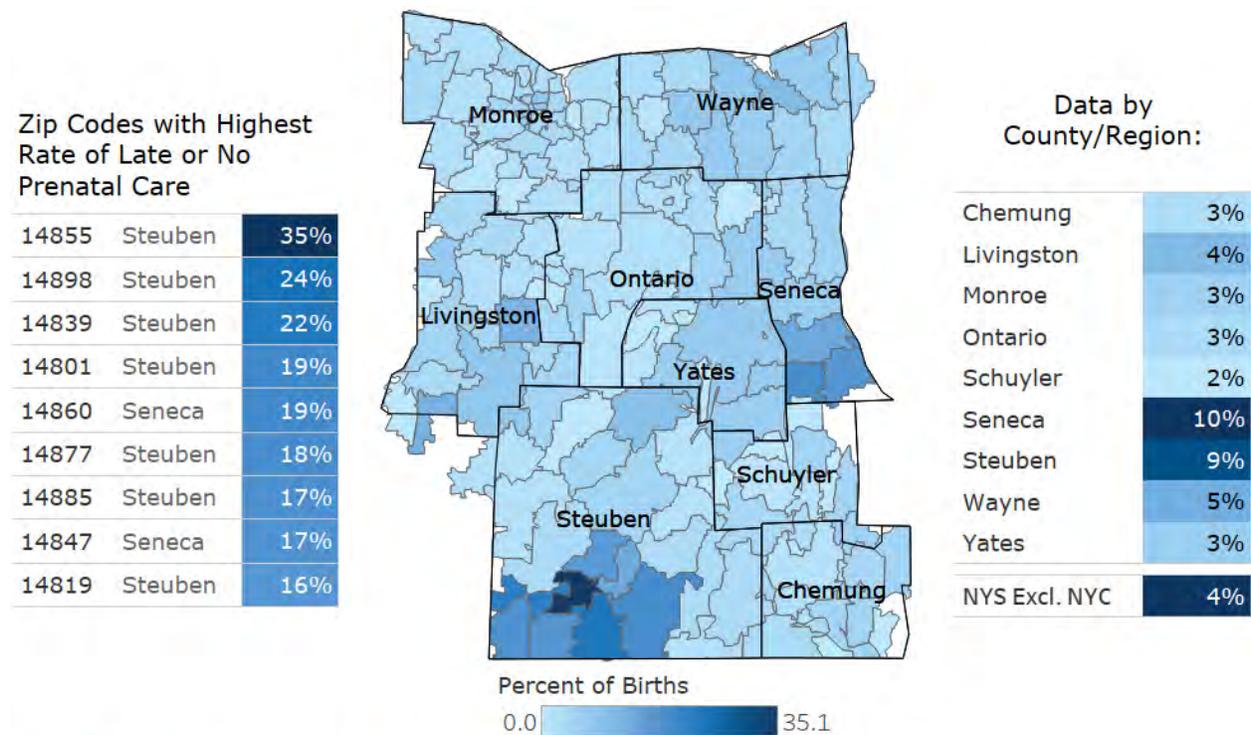
Receiving early and adequate prenatal care is important for ensuring a healthy pregnancy. At these visits, health care providers order vaccinations and tests and help with managing maternal chronic diseases that may have an impact on pregnancy. In addition, health care providers inform women about steps they can take to prevent complications. Ensuring timely prenatal care is obtained can help to lower the incidence of premature birth, low birth weight babies and infant mortality.²⁸

In the Finger Lakes Region, the majority of mothers receive timely prenatal care. However, Map 7 demonstrates the distribution of those receiving late or no prenatal care by ZIP code. ZIP codes with the highest rates of late or no prenatal care are in

²⁸ National Center for Biotechnology Information, [Factors Associated with Lack of Prenatal Care in a Large Municipality](#), 2014

the southern portions of Seneca and Steuben Counties, with nearly 10% of the total births in each of these ZIP codes receiving late or no prenatal care. Zip code 14855 in Jasper, Steuben County, New York had the highest rate of total births with late or no prenatal care, 35%. Of note, there were a total of 74 births that occurred in this ZIP code during the two year time frame. The area is noted to have a large Amish population who traditionally seek natural and homeopathic forms of medicine and would be less likely to seek prenatal care during pregnancy. In addition, this area of Steuben County does not have access to a local obstetrics and gynecology practice. Residents needing care need to travel to Corning or Hornell to access these services.

Map 7: Percent of Births that Received Late or No Prenatal Care



Source: NYS Department of Health Perinatal Data Profile 2016-2018
Late or no prenatal care is defined as care initiated in the third trimester or not at all

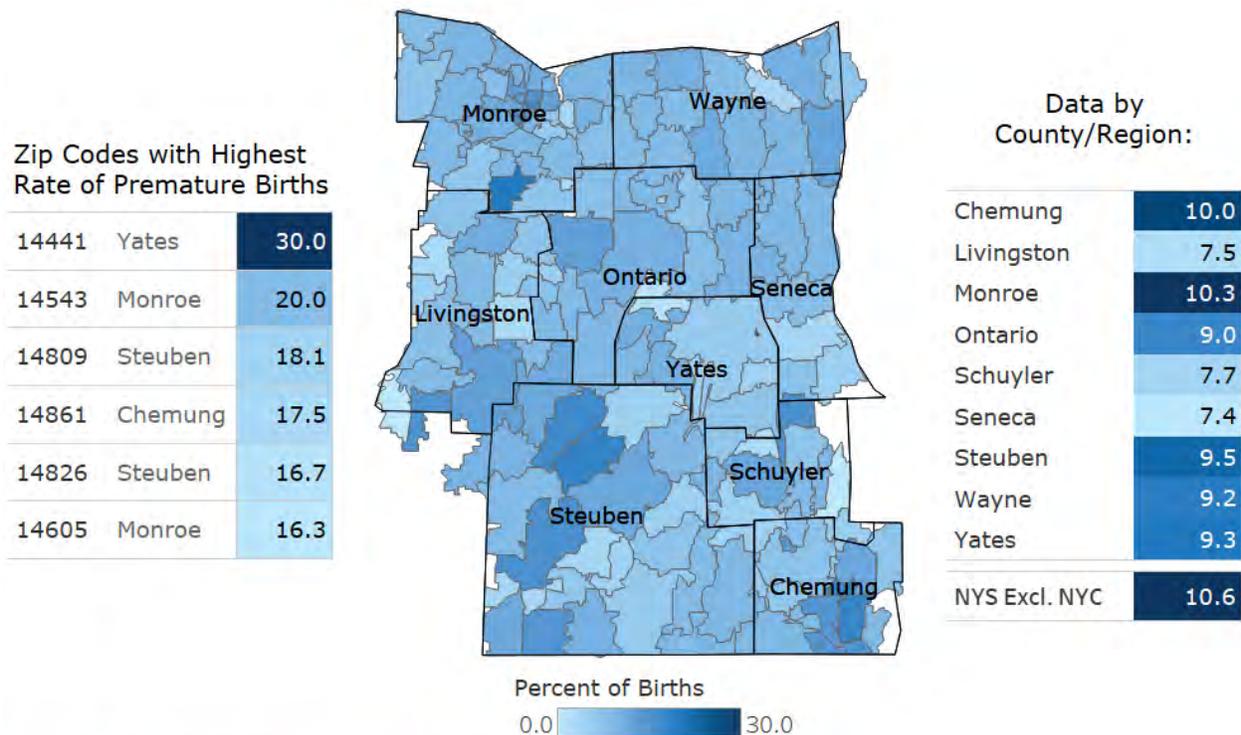
Premature Births

A baby born prematurely (<37 weeks gestation) is at risk for several health complications including jaundice, anemia, apnea, and more. The earlier in pregnancy a baby is born, the more likely it is that the baby will need to spend time in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). Long-term health complications associated with premature birth include intellectual and developmental delays, problems with communicating, getting along with others, and even taking care of

him or herself. Neurological disorder, behavioral problems, and asthma may also occur.²⁹

According to the New York State Department of Health Perinatal Data Reports, there are pockets within each county that have higher rates of premature birth (Map 8). The ZIP code with the highest rate of premature birth is found in Yates County, a county with a large population of Amish/Mennonite which, as discussed in previous sections, likely impacts rates of prenatal care and negative birth outcomes, such as prematurity, low birth weight and infant mortality. In addition, **the county’s population is quite small in comparison to nearby counties** (just 25,000 residents) and small numerators may cause significant fluctuation in the rates. In comparison to New York State, excluding New York City, the Finger Lakes Region ranks favorably.

Map 8: Percent of Births that were Premature



Source: NYS Department of Health Perinatal Data Profile 2016-2018
Premature births are defined as births that occurred before 37 weeks gestation

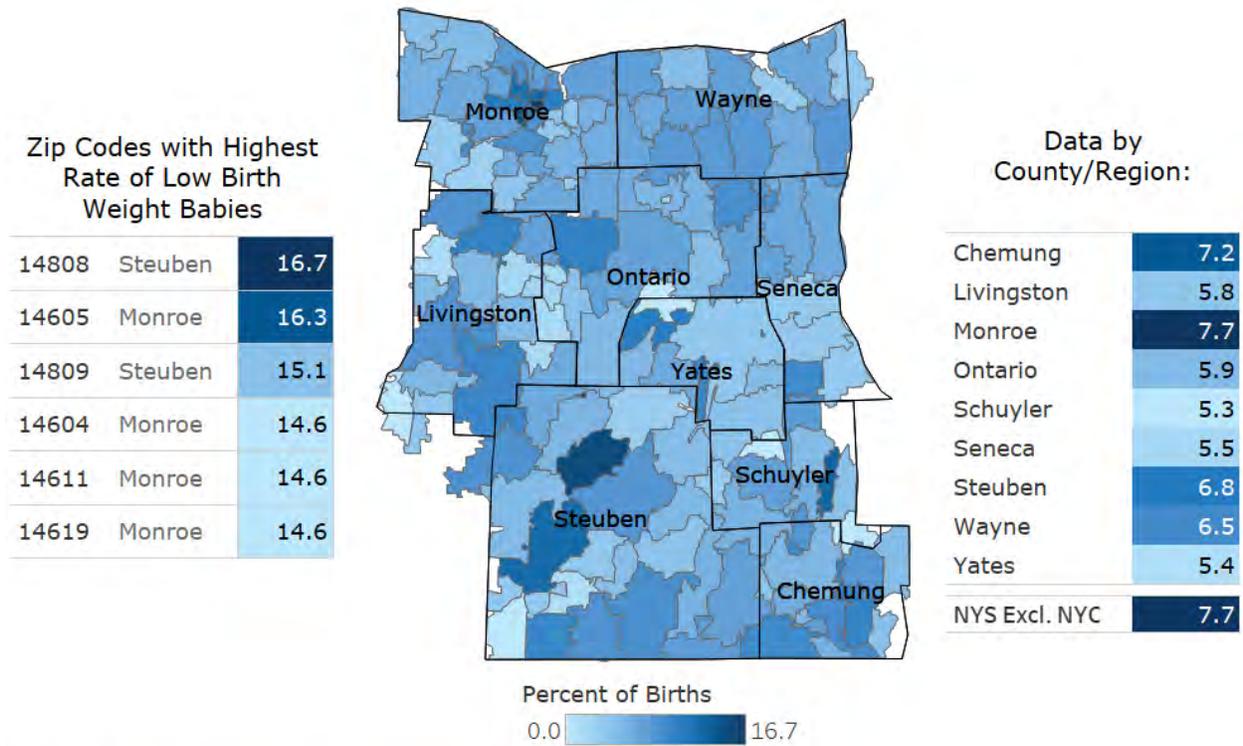
Low Birth Weight Babies

A child born at a low birth weight may suffer a range of health complications at birth. Some of the common issues for a low birth weight newborn include low oxygen levels, breathing complications due to immature lungs, difficulty feeding

²⁹ March of Dimes, Premature Babies and Long-Term Health Effects of Premature Birth, www.marchofdimes.org.

and gaining weight, neurological and gastrointestinal problems, infection, and more. Of note, premature birth is the primary cause of low birth weight.³⁰ In comparison to New York State excluding NYC, the Finger Lakes Region again ranks favorably (Map 9). Within the region, Monroe, Chemung and Steuben Counties have the highest rates of low birth weight.

Map 9: Percent of Births that were Low Birth Weight



Source: NYS Department of Health Perinatal Data Profile 2016-2018
Low Birth Weight is defined as birth weight between 100-2499 grams

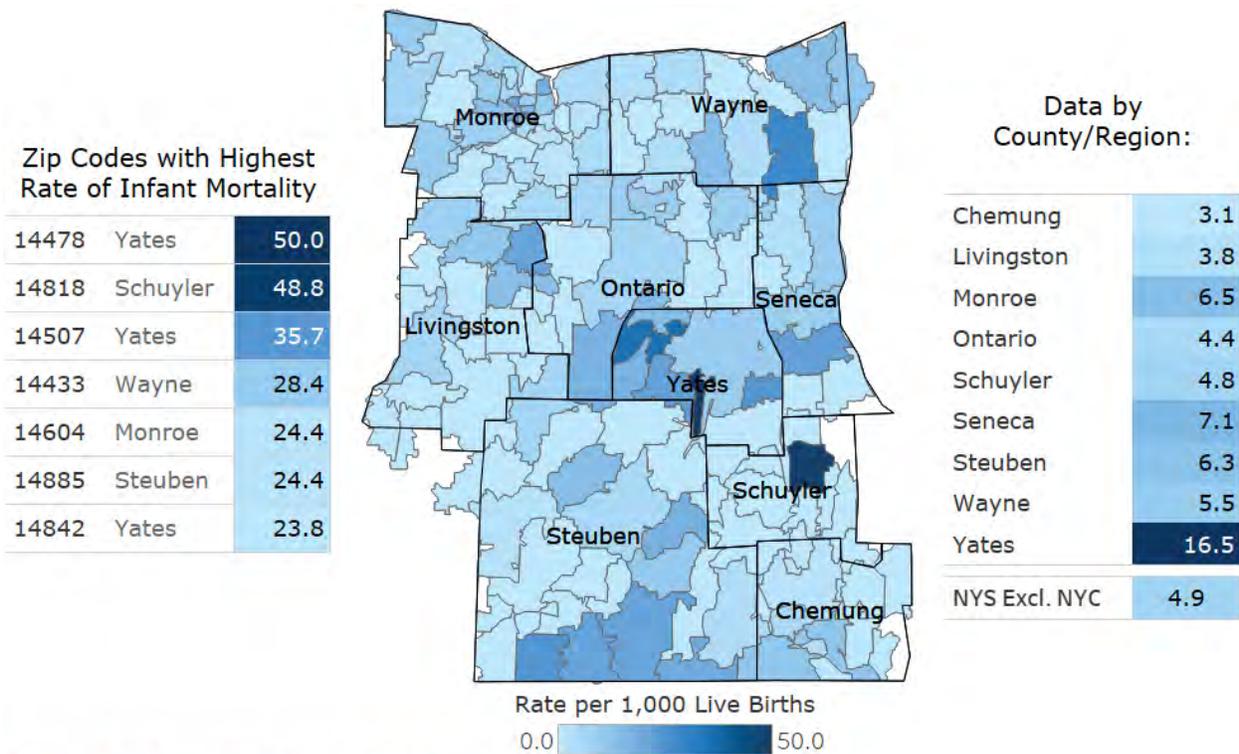
Infant Mortality

Prematurity and its related conditions are the leading cause of infant mortality. Reducing rates of premature birth may have a direct correlation on rates of infant mortality (deaths that occur within the first twelve months). Shown below in Map 10 is a map of infant mortality rates by ZIP code from 2016-2018. Rates are nearly 50 per 1,000 live births in two ZIP codes – one of which is located in Yates and the other in Schuyler County. It is again important to note, however, that both of these counties are relatively small (Yates – 25,000 residents; Schuyler – 18,000 residents) and their small numerators may inadvertently inflate rates. Of note, New

³⁰ Stanford Children’s Health, Low Birthweight

York State has set a goal for the Infant Death Rate (deaths which occur at less than twelve months of age) at 4.0 per 1,000 live births to be achieved by 2020.³¹

Map 10: Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births



Source: NYS Department of Health Perinatal Data Profile 2016-2018
Infant deaths are those that occurred at less than 12 months of age

Teen Pregnancy

Two areas in which we have seen significant decreases over the past decade and a half are teen pregnancy and teen birth rates. The difficulties of raising a child are often amplified for teenage parents as their new responsibilities can conflict with primary and secondary education, employment and other opportunities for personal growth and development. In addition, teenage pregnancy can have a different impact on personal relationships than adult pregnancy and may result in a decrease **in support from family, friends and the child's father figure. Given these challenges,** teen parents tend to experience higher rates of single parenthood, perinatal depression and poverty. Communities are also affected by the long-term health consequences of increased child poverty and maternal depression rates.³² There are higher rates of Child Protective Service involvement and foster care placement for children of teenage pregnancies as well as higher rates of incarceration in the

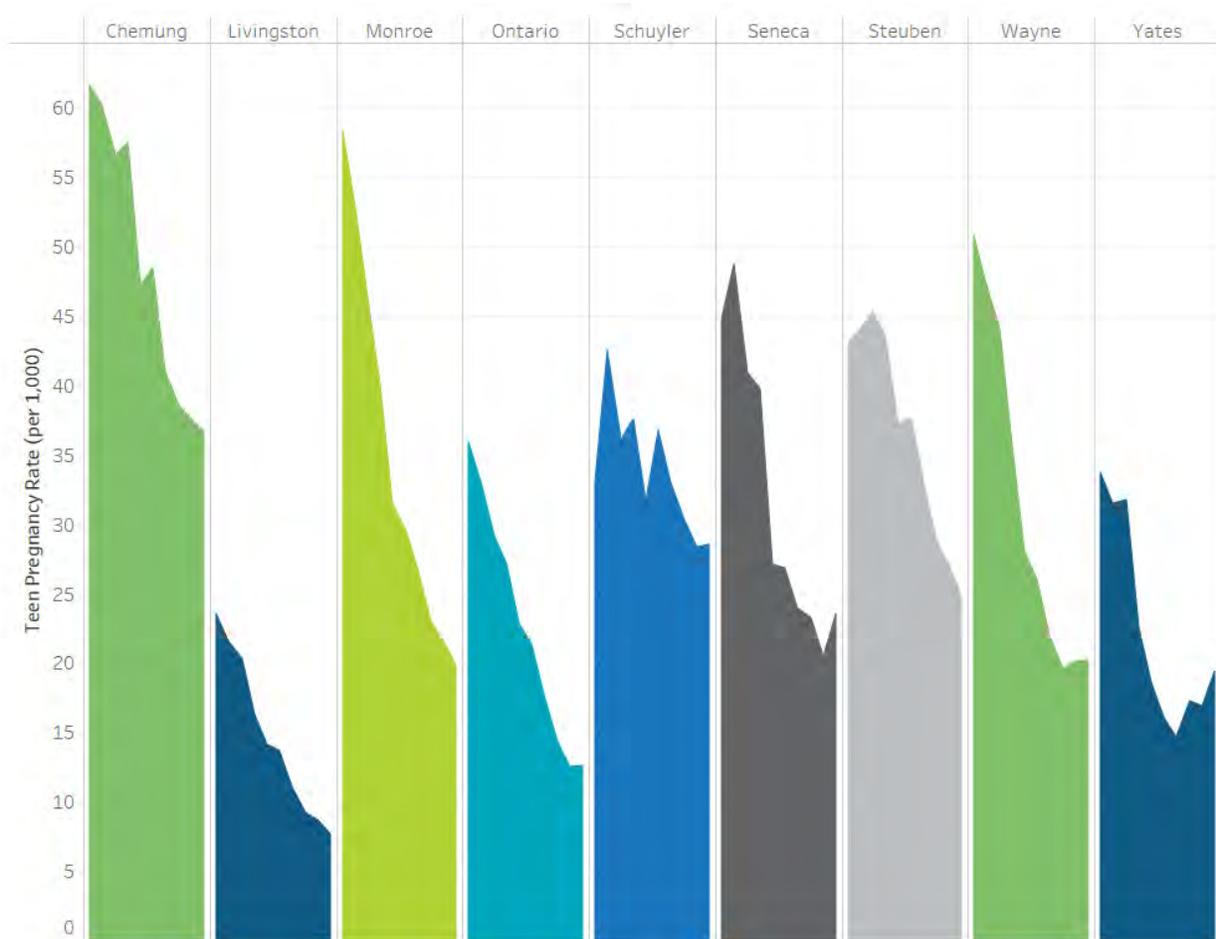
³¹ While this report was created in 2021, data on years 2019 and 2020 are not yet available.

³² The Urban Child Institute, How Adolescent Parenting Affects Children, Families and Communities, 2014

child’s adolescent years.³³ All of these factors may contribute to the prevalence of other health outcomes and demographics (such as single parent households and poverty estimates) listed in this report.

As seen in Figure 32, teen pregnancy rates have decreased significantly in all 9 counties in the Finger Lakes Region. All counties (except Schuyler) have shown a decrease of ~20 pregnancies per 1,000 since 2007. The smaller decrease in Schuyler is likely due to smaller number of total births, as they had about 500 births during the 3-year period compared to other counties that had 1,000 births or more in that same timeframe. The Finger Lakes trend mimics a similar national decrease in teen pregnancy.

Figure 32: Teen Pregnancy Rate per 1,000



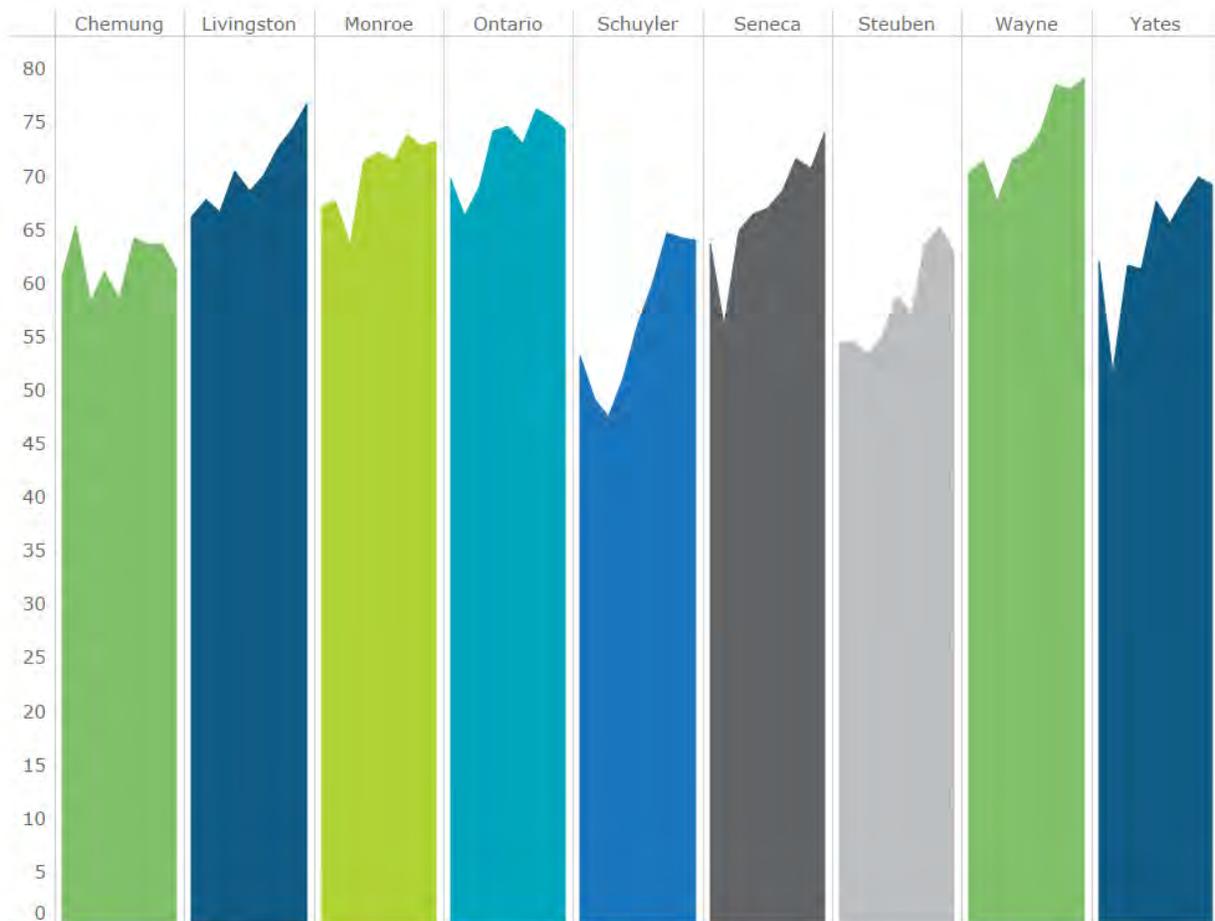
Data Source: New York State Vital Statistics Data, 2007 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

³³ Youth.gov, [Adverse Effects of Teen Pregnancy](#), 2008

Well-Child Visits

As mentioned in previous sections of this report, screening plays an important part in preventing and properly treating diseases. During the first 3 years of life, the tests, screenings, and vaccines being administered are essential in helping children become healthy and successful. With this in mind, children attending the appropriately scheduled well child visits is an important metric to ensure this happens. New York State tracks the percent of children who attend the recommended number of well child visits that are covered by state insurance (Medicaid, managed Medicaid, Child Health Plus, etc.). Figure 33 shows the trend of this percentage across the Finger Lakes Region.

Figure 33: Percentage of children with recommended number of well child visits in government sponsored insurance programs - 2010 - 2018



Data Source: New York State Vital Statistics Data, 2010 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Over the 9 year period shown in the chart, all 9 counties have seen an upward trend in the percent of children receiving their recommended number of well child visits. This is likely due to many counties and providers making maternal and child health a focus for recent community health improvement plans. Along with this, the

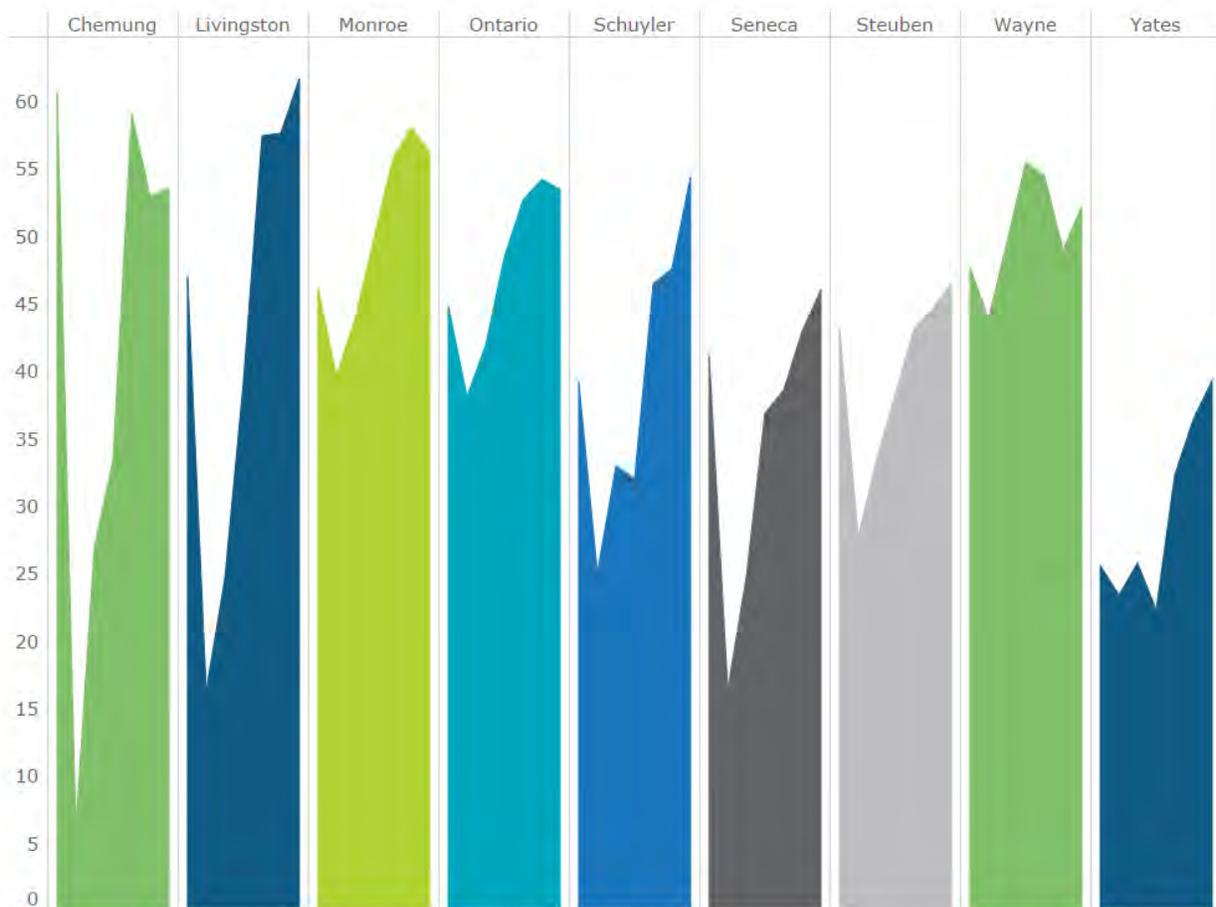
impact of the adoption of telehealth practices in response to COVID-19 will be interesting to monitor with regard to how it impacted this rate in 2020 and beyond.

Blood Lead Level Screening in Children

One important screening that happens during the aforementioned well child visits is **blood level lead screenings**. “Asymptomatic lead poisoning has become more common in children. Blood lead levels of less than 5 µg per dL are associated with impairments in neurocognitive and behavioral development that are irreversible.”³⁴

The recommendation is for children to have at least two screenings in the first 36 months of life. Across the Finger Lakes Region, all 9 counties have been able to show an upward trend of this screening from 2009 to 2018, several hitting their highest rates in 2018, as shown in Figure 34.

Figure 34: Percentage of children with at least two lead screenings by 36 months - 2009 - 2018



Data Source: New York State Vital Statistics Data, 2009 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

³⁴ Mayans, L. (2019). Lead poisoning in children. American family physician, 100(1), 24-30.

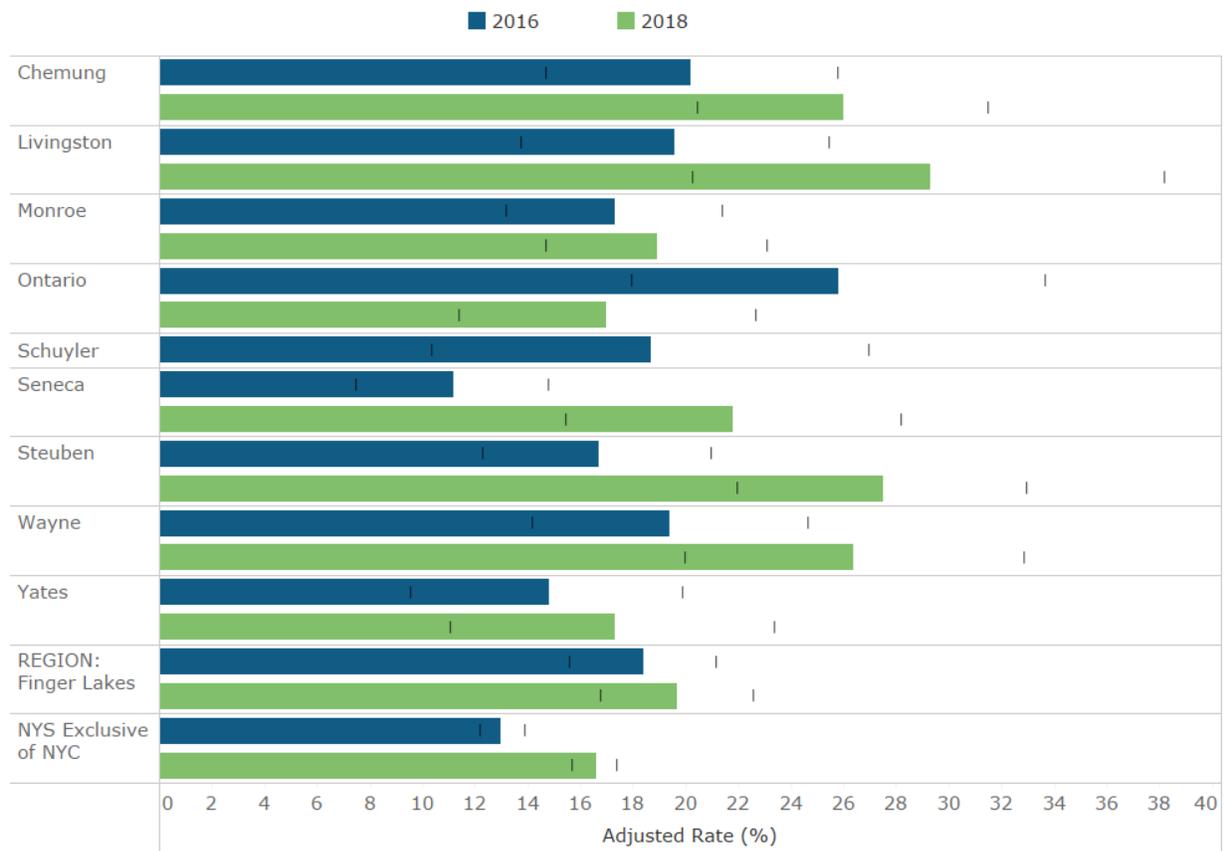
Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders

A rise in the incidence of mental health conditions and substance use disorders has been seen across the nation and region for the past decade. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated the concerns and challenges communities were experiencing in these areas. Increased isolation, loss of loved ones, and a disheartening news cycle were major factors related to the pandemic that contributed to challenges with mental health and well-being.

Mental Health Well-Being

A review of rates of depressive disorders in the Finger Lakes Region from 2016 to 2018 reveals that there has been an increase in the rates in 7 of the 9 counties, as seen in Figure 35. Along with this, the rate in the Finger Lakes Region and Counties were higher than the rate for the state. While one would think an increase in diagnosed depressive disorder is a concerning trend, the opposite might actually be true. Awareness of mental health, the reduction of stigma in certain communities (specifically, men and minorities), and increased access to care may be driving the rates up. Both the reduction of stigma and increased access to care are allowing those who would previously not have received it to get the care they need.

Figure 35: Percent of Population with a Depressive Disorder³⁵

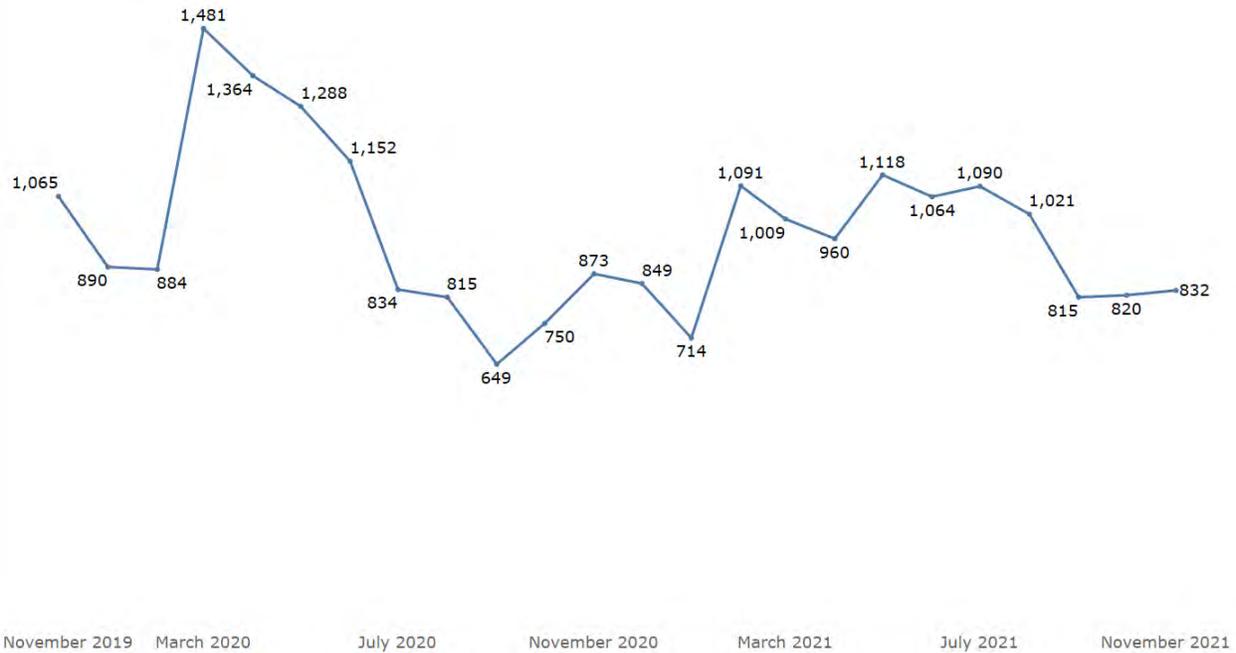


Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2016 & 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

COVID-19 has increased the incidence of depression and anxiety across the globe. Looking at data from 211 Lifeline and 211 Counts, we can see the increase in calls related to mental health at the beginning of the pandemic and a high incidence for most of 2021. Figure 36 shows the trend for the Finger Lakes Region, while Figure 37 shows the type of requests 211 has received related to mental health from 12/2020 to 11/2021.

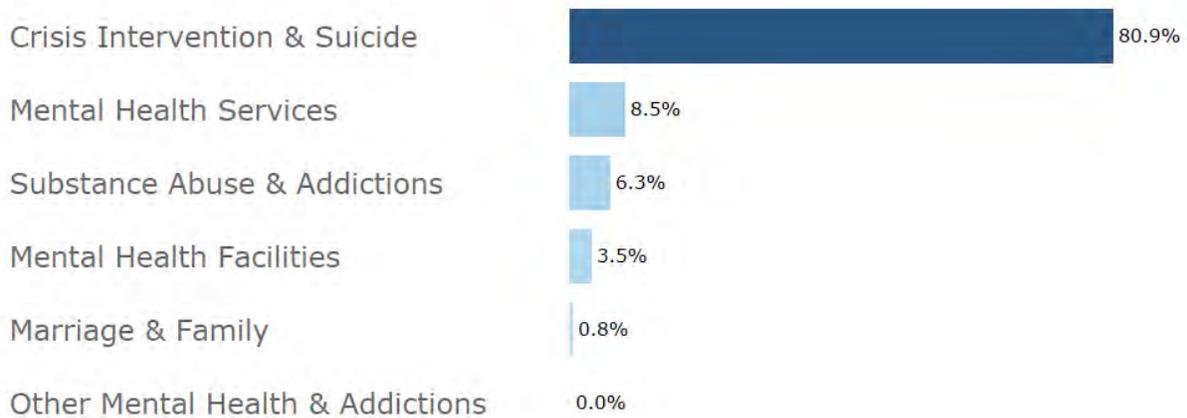
³⁵ 2018 Data for Schuyler County not shown due to large standard error

Figure 36: Trend of 211 Mental Health Calls – Finger Lakes Region



Data Source: 211 Lifeline, 211 Counts, December 2019 to November 2021

Figure 37: Top 211 Mental Health Requests – Finger Lakes Region

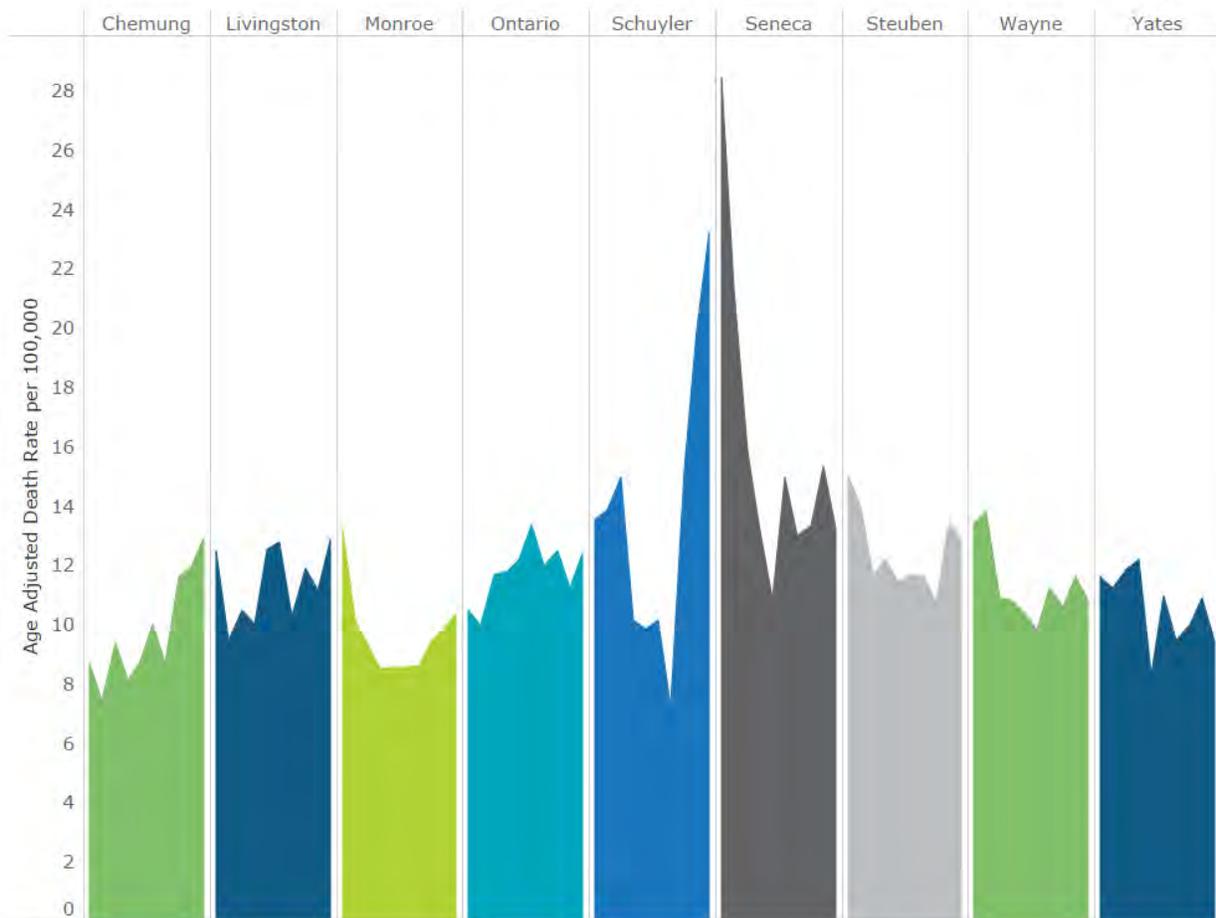


Data Source: 211 Lifeline, 211 Counts, December 2019 to November 2021

Another area of concern related to mental health and well-being is the number of deaths by suicide. A review of the data across the Finger Lakes Region from 2009 – 2018 revealed that the 3-year moving average of the death rates per 100,000 decreased in Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, and Yates counties.

Rates in Chemung, Livingston, Ontario, and Schuyler increased, with Schuyler showing a marked increase in 2018. Monroe County’s rate was relatively flat with a small decrease. Figure 38 shows this data.

Figure 38: Age-Adjusted Suicide Death Rate per 100,000, 3-Year Moving Average



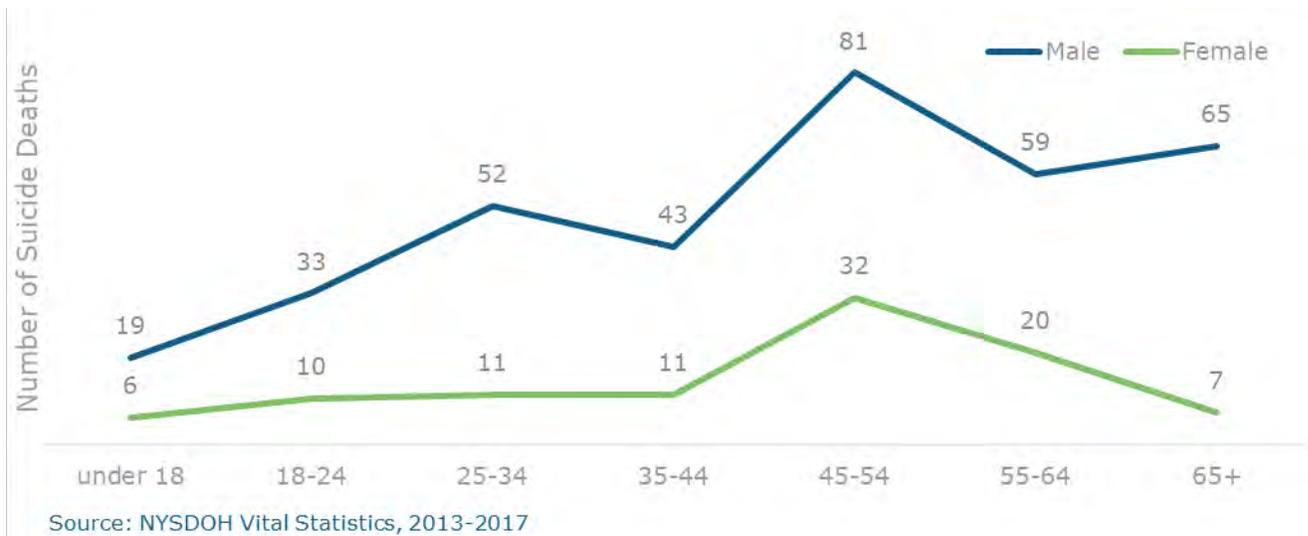
Data Source: New York State Vital Statistics Data, 2009 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

When stratified by age group and sex, the highest rate of suicides in the Finger Lakes Region occurs in the male population, ages 45-54. A similar spike occurs in females for the same age group (Figure 39). These findings are consistent with national statistics. A study completed in 2019 revealed several risk factors for suicidal behaviors common to both genders, including previous mental and substance abuse disorder and exposure to interpersonal violence. Male-specific risk factors included disruptive behavior/conduct problems, feelings of hopelessness, **parental separation or divorce, a friend’s suicidal behavior and access to means.**³⁶

³⁶ Miranda-Mendizabal, A., Castellvi, P., Pares-Badell, O., Alayo, I., Almenara, J., Alonso, I., Alonso, J. (2019). Gender differences in suicidal behavior in adolescents and young adults:

Female-specific risk factors included eating disorders, depressive symptoms and interpersonal problems.

Figure 39: Suicide Rates by Age Group and Gender, Finger Lakes Region

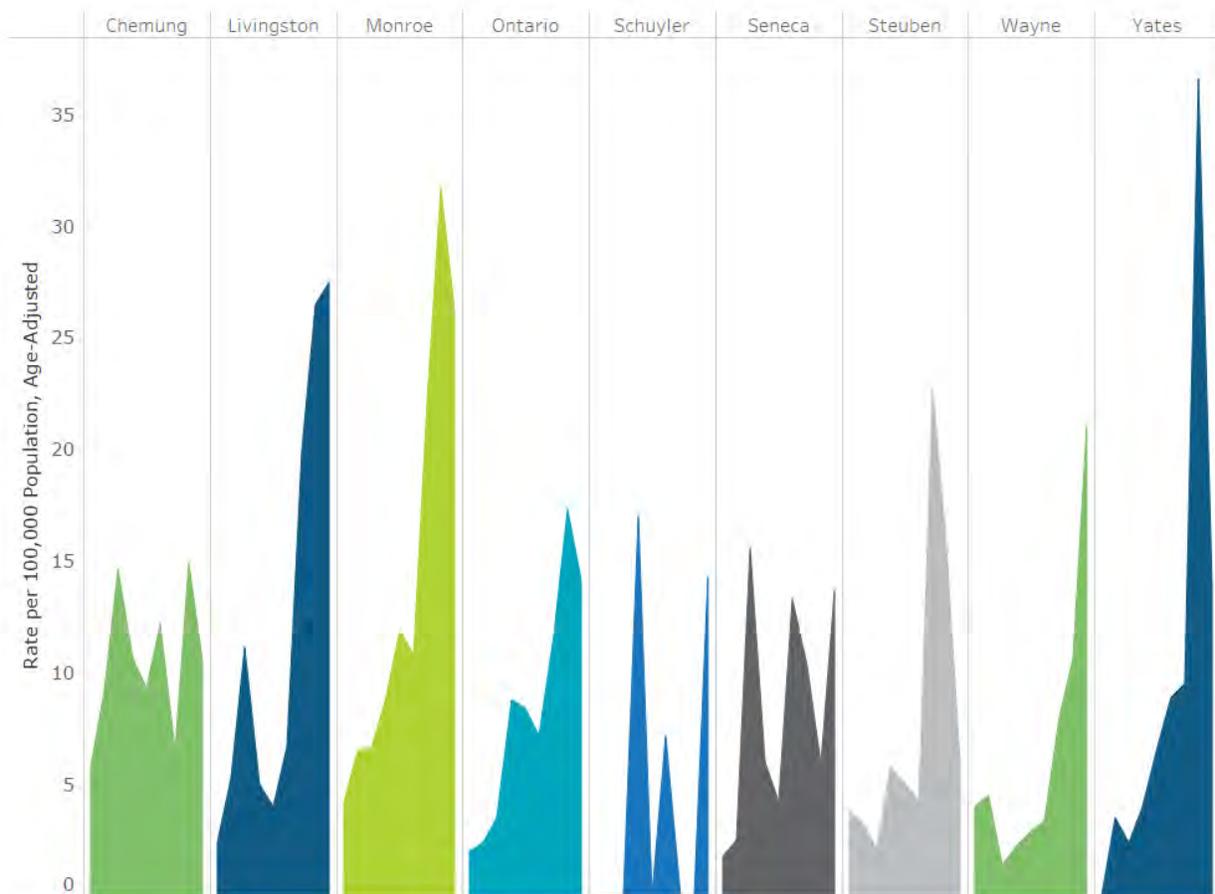


Substance Use Disorders

One area that has received a great deal of attention across the nation and in the Finger Lakes Region is the opioid epidemic. Impacting all races, ethnicities, and socio-economic groups, Opioid Use Disorders have a significant negative impact on health outcomes for those with the condition. While the impact of opioid use disorder on comorbid conditions (mental health, medical conditions) is an area of concern, opioid overdose death rates are a major indicator of the success or failure of interventions. Reviewing the data in Figure 40, there appears to be a peak of overdose deaths in the Finger Lakes Region in 2017 and 2018.

Systematic review and meta-analysis of longitudinal studies. *International Journal of Public Health*, 64(2), 265–283. 10.1007/s00038-018-1196-1.

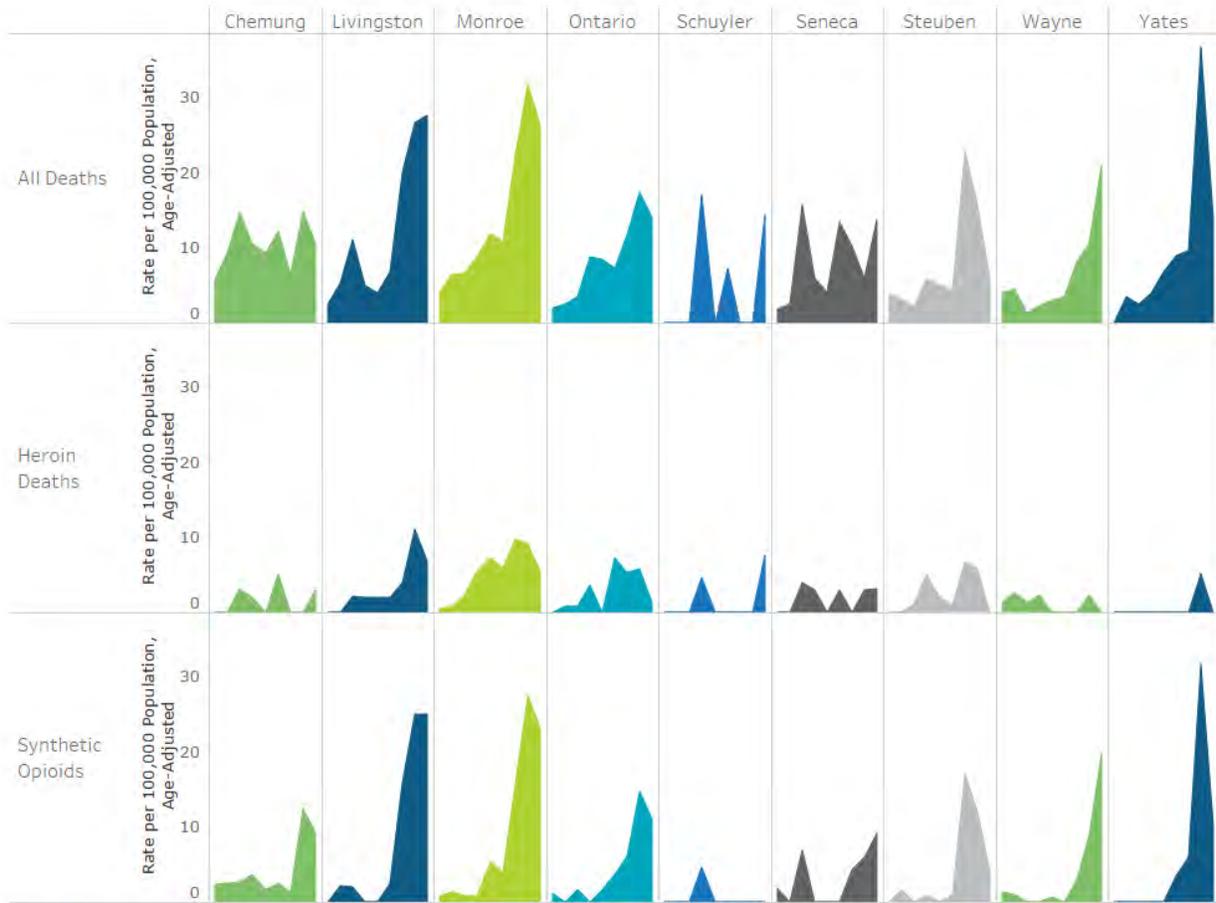
Figure 40: All Opioid Overdose Deaths: Age-Adjusted rate per 100,000



Data Source: Data Source: New York State Vital Statistics Data, 2010 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Looking for reasons for the increase in overdose deaths around 2016 and subsequent decrease around 2018, we can look to other data for correlation. While there was an increase in heroin-related deaths around this time period (Figure 41), the increased prevalence of fentanyl (a synthetic often sold as heroin) was the major driver of the increase in opioid-related deaths. Figure 41 shows the increase in both the overall and synthetic (mostly fentanyl) death rates.

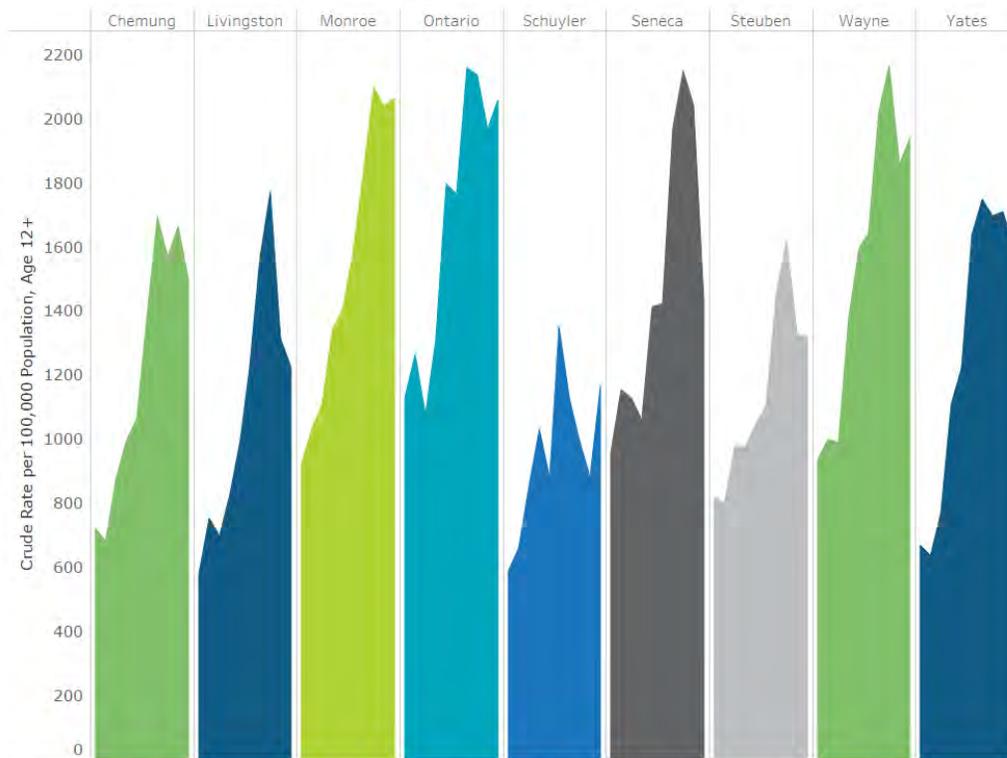
Figure 41: Opioid Overdose Death Comparison



Data Source: New York State Vital Statistics Data, 2010 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Regarding the decrease that started around 2017, this could be correlated to more people entering treatment. As shown in Figure 42, admission rates to OASAS programs doubled across the Finger Lakes Region from 2010 to 2019.

Figure 42: Admissions to OASAS Programs related to Opioids, Age 12+



Data Source: Data Source: New York State Vital Statistics Data, 2010 - 2019. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

One other area reviewed was administration of Naloxone (commonly known as NARCAN) by EMS during this time period. The data shows a decrease in Naloxone treatment by EMS from 2017 – 2019, but there could be a number of factors contributing to this. There has been a great deal of work in communities in the Region to get Naloxone into the hands of opioid users and their loved ones, which may have contributed to a decrease in the need for its use by EMS. Along with this, the increased potency and availability of fentanyl on the streets may have contributed to a decrease in use of Naloxone as an opioid user may have already expired by the time EMS arrived.

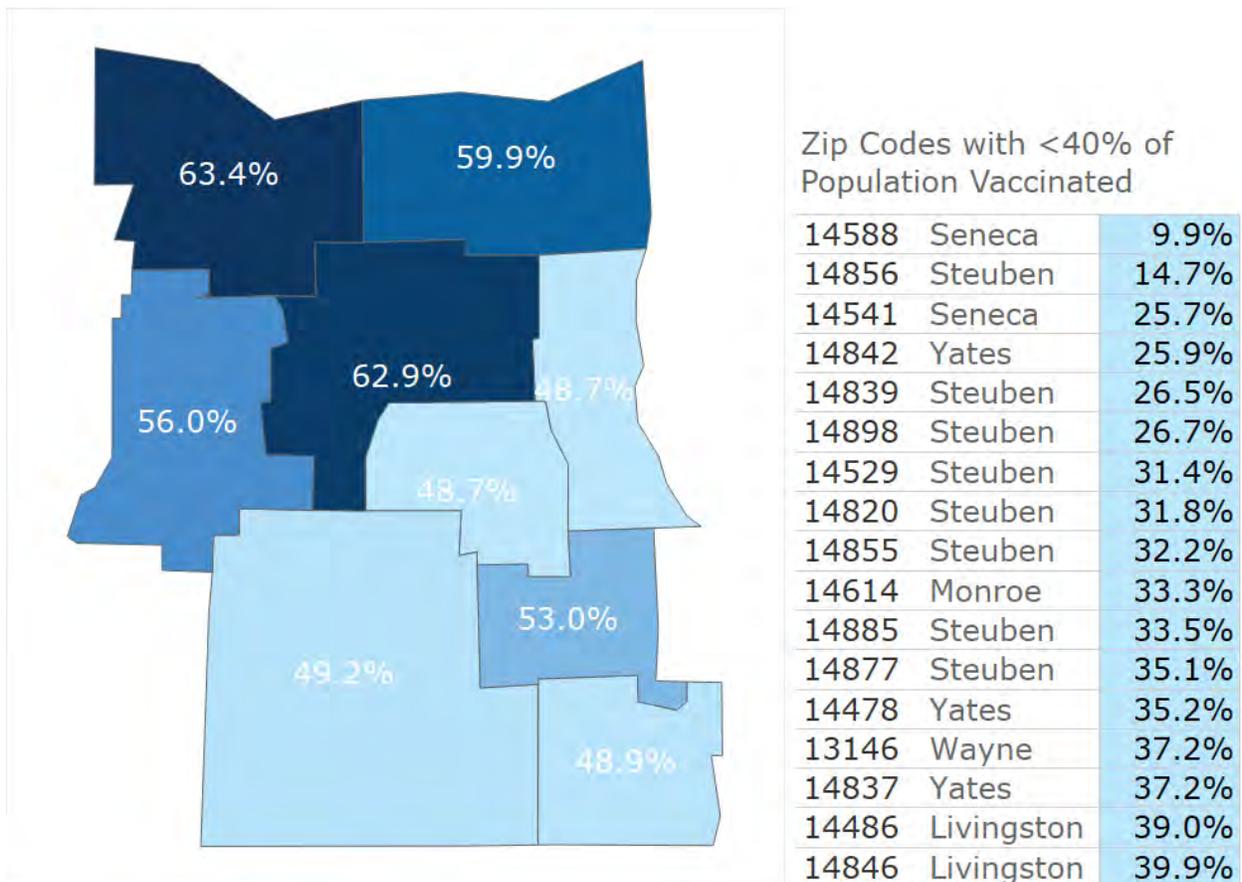
As with most measures reviewed in this assessment, COVID-19 had a negative impact on progress made in this area. Data from Monroe County shows a significant increase in overdose deaths in 2020, with 238 deaths, an all-time high and a 132% increase (181 to 238) from 2019. Along with this, another concerning trend from the Monroe County data is the impact on the Black community. Looking at the data from 2018, 2019, and 2020, the number of opioid-related deaths has more than doubled (25 to 68) and the percent of total deaths has increased ~15% (13% to 27%). Monroe County also reported similar increases for all other races, with deaths doubling (10 to 24) and the percent of all deaths doubling (5% to 10%).

Prevent Communicable Diseases

COVID-19 Pandemic

The past two years have seen our community deal with the COVID-19 Pandemic. The impact of both the disease and vaccination efforts has been very different for different geographic, racial/ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. A number of different interventions were rapidly deployed to combat the disease and ensure as many people as possible were vaccinated. Map 11 shows the overall vaccination rate by county in the Finger Lakes Region. Darker blue counties have a higher vaccination rate, lighter blue counties have a lower one. This percentage shows fully vaccinated persons (either receiving both doses for 2 dose vaccines or 1 dose of J&J's) as a percentage of total population. It does not remove ineligible or recently eligible populations (under 5 years old and 5-11 years old) from the denominator. We expect these rates to improve throughout November and December as more children in the 5-11 age group receive their vaccinations.

Map 11: Percent of Total Population who have completed their COVID-19 Vaccinations

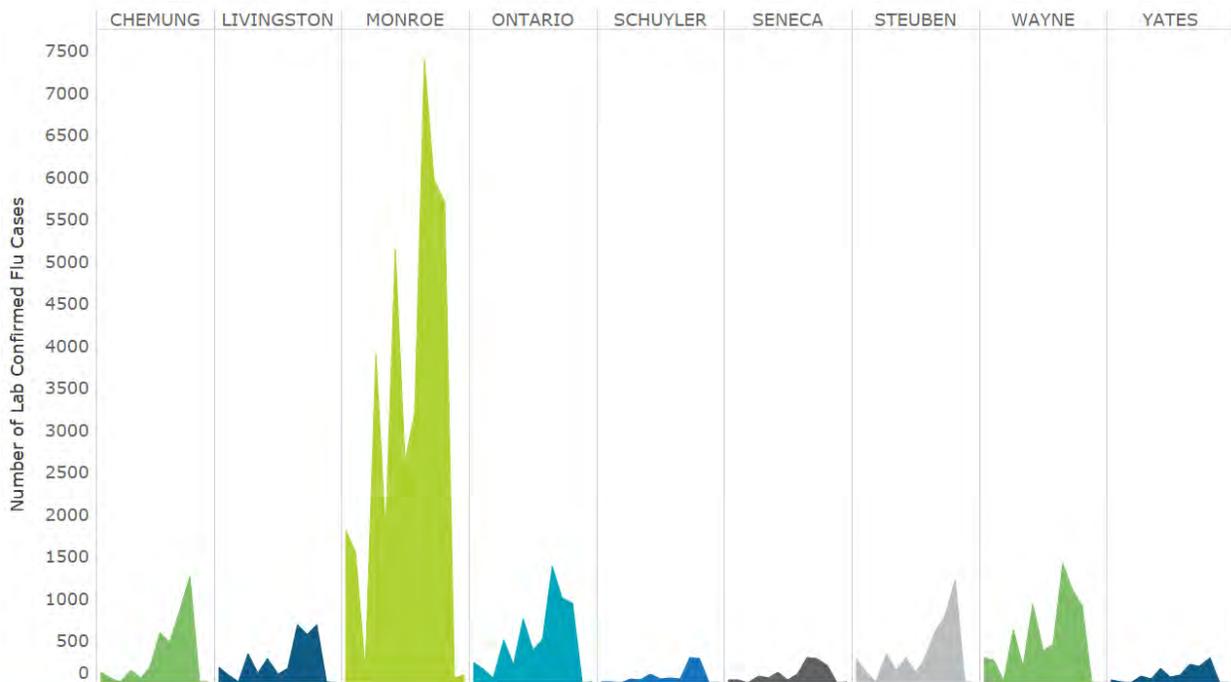


Data Source: NYS DOH, New York State Statewide COVID-19 Vaccination Data by County, 2021.11.08. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Flu

While COVID-19 has impacted our community in ways that were previously unimagined, another similar disease, the flu, has seen a drastic decrease in the past two years. Many of the precautions that were put into place to limit the spread of COVID-19 (masking, social distancing, distance learning for schools, etc.) essentially ended the 2019-2020 flu season and have kept numbers at unprecedented lows during the past two flu seasons (Figure 43). In the 2020-2021 flu season, many of the more rural counties had confirmed cases in the single digits. The precautions and lower flu cases are reassuring, as the number of people reporting they received a flu shot in recent years has been trending down in the Finger Lake Region (Figure 44).

Figure 43: Lab Confirmed Flu Cases



Data Source: NYS DOH - Influenza Activity, Surveillance and Reports, 2009 - 11/2021. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Figure 44: Percent of Persons reporting receiving a Flu Shot



Data Source: Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Bureau of Chronic Evaluation and Research, New York State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Year 2013-2014, 2016, & 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Sexually transmitted infections (STI's) are important preventable communicable diseases to consider. **Gonorrhea, Chlamydia, and HIV are all STI's that New York State** regularly tracks and reports on at community levels. Looking at the data on Gonorrhea cases in the Finger Lakes Region, there appeared to be a spike in 2015/2016, with rates staying higher in the following years in Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, and Wayne Counties (Figure 45). This could be the result of increased testing or of outbreaks in those areas. It may also be related to the increased incidence of Opioid Use Disorders, as those in active addiction are more likely to engage in risky behaviors.

Figure 45: Gonorrhea case rate per 100,000 Female/Male aged 15- 44



Data Source: NYS DOH, Community Health Indicator Report, Years 2009 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

While there has been an increase in Gonorrhea cases across the Finger Lakes Region, cases of Chlamydia did not see significant change between 2009 and 2018. One area to note with Chlamydia is the prevalence in women vs. men. As seen in Figure 46, the case rate per 100,000 is about double for women compared to the rate for men in all counties in the Finger Lakes Region. This relationship has been seen across the country, as per the CDC³⁷.

³⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/std/chlamydia/stats.htm>

Figure 46: Chlamydia case rate per 100,000 Female/Male aged 15- 44

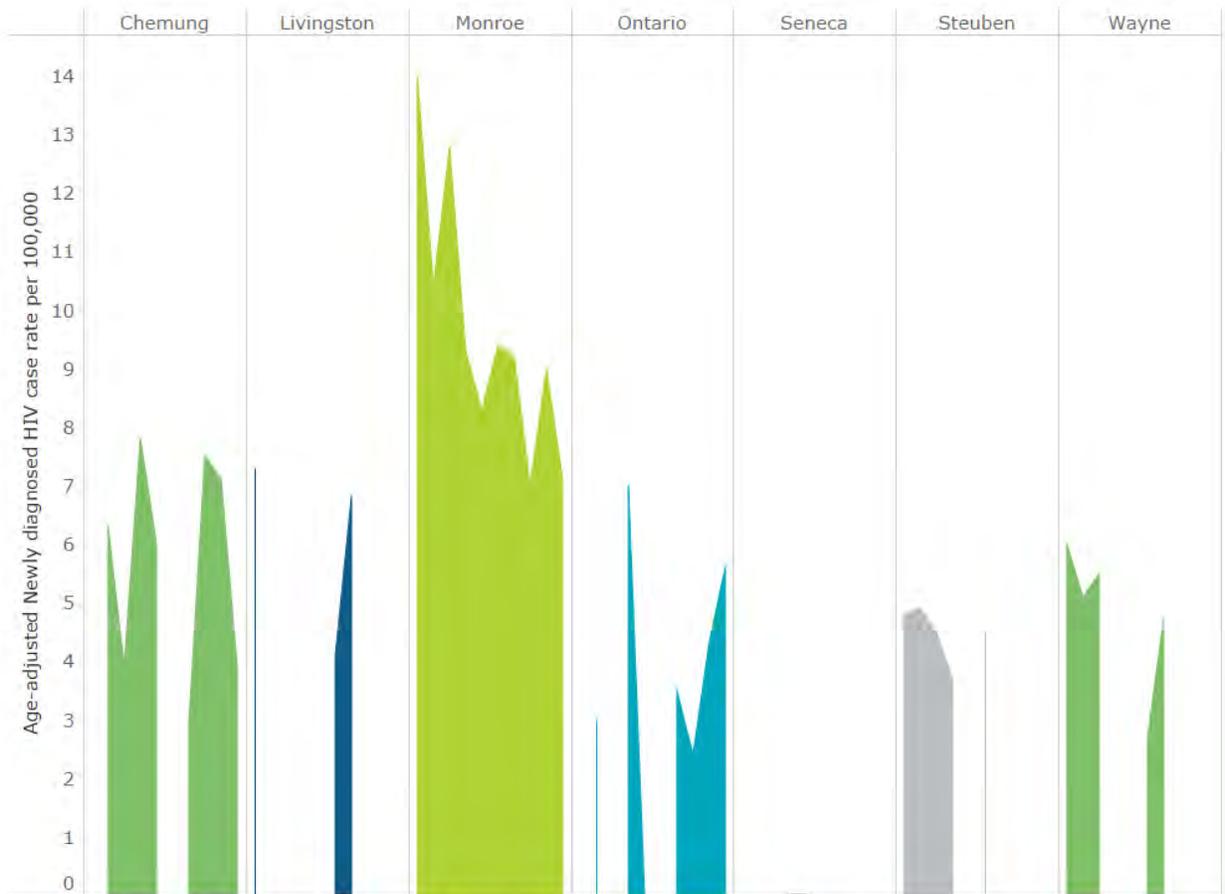


Data Source: NYS DOH, Community Health Indicator Report, Years 2009 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

There have been a number of improvements in the treatment and prevention of HIV since the height of the AIDS epidemic in the 80's and 90's. Since 2009, the rate of new HIV infections in Monroe County has shown a downward trend (Figure 47). Due to small sample sizes in the rest of the counties of the Finger Lakes Region, no trends can be inferred in them. While there were reports of increased new HIV infections in 2020 across the Finger Lakes Region, the rate of these new infections per 100,000 did not significantly change. In Monroe County, there were 54 cases in 2019 (rate of 7.1) and 74 cases in 2020 (rate of 9.7), which is still lower than the historical rates seen from 2009-2011 (14.0, 10.4, and 12.8, respectively). Monitoring of these rates and looking for root causes of the increase in new diagnoses would be beneficial, as there are interventions that can be put into place to help reduce new infections. One factor contributing to the 2020 increase in the rates of new HIV infections was COVID-19, as limited in-person medical services and concerns about health/safety may have prevented people in high risk groups

(IV drug users, sex workers) from accessing services which may have helped them prevent HIV infection.

Figure 47: Age-adjusted Newly Diagnosed HIV cases rate per 100,000



Data Source: NYS DOH, Community Health Indicator Report, Years 2009 - 2018. Analysis Completed by Common Ground Health

Summary of Key Findings

The Finger Lakes region will experience an increase in the number of seniors over the next several years, despite projections for an overall population slight decline. Projections indicate an 11% increase in the 65+ population over the next five years, which necessitates an increase in capacity for healthcare and social services. Several unique populations including migrant farm workers, Amish/Mennonite, Native American and Alaska Natives and refugees, to name a few, exist in the region and pose challenges to collecting and interpreting the data and health statistics under review. The unique characteristics of each of these populations are discussed in detail in the report. In addition to these populations and their distinctive needs, there are additional demographic factors which may impact health outcomes and status in any particular county including:

***Age:** Variances in age can impact a community's health status. Older adults require more frequent medical check-ins, are more prone to illness, falls and unintentional injuries, and often experience more co-morbid conditions than younger adults and children. In addition, aging adults may not have access to a vehicle and rely on family, friends or public transportation for accessing basic needs and medical appointments. The strain of caring for an elderly adult may also negatively affect the caregiver. A community with higher rates of elderly adults may have worse reported health outcomes than a younger community.*

***Poverty:** Low income residents are more likely to experience a breadth of health issues not seen as often among wealthier residents. For example, lower socioeconomic status is linked to higher incidence of chronic disease, shorter life expectancy, and lower rates of good social, emotional and physical health. Low income may also force a person to choose between basic needs (such as housing, food, clothing, etc.) and preventative medical care. Often, and not surprisingly, the person will choose the basic need over preventative medical care. A community with higher rates of impoverished residents is likely to have worse health outcomes than wealthier communities.*

***Education:** Education levels have been known to be a predictor of life expectancy. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that adults aged 25 without a high school diploma can expect to die nine years sooner than college graduates. Persons who attain higher education levels are more likely to seek health care, preventative care services, and earn higher wages. A more educated community may, therefore, have better health outcomes than a less educated community.*

***Environment:** Physical and perceived safety of environments play a role in a person's health status. Urban, rural and suburban environments all have varying levels of air pollution, motor vehicle traffic, environmental noise, availability of green and blue spaces, incidence of crime, violence and injuries, and more that impact health. Safe environments that are free of potential hazards may increase a*

person's ability to access health services, engage in physical activity, access healthy foods, and more. In addition, access to quality and affordable housing is imperative to ensuring basic needs are met. Housing structures that are safe, clean, up to code and affordable help to improve community health. When incomes are consumed on rent or mortgages, residents may lack funds for preventative care services, medications, and healthy foods. Additionally, outdated, substandard housing puts tenants at risk for asthma and lead poisoning (especially children).

When interpreting the data shared below, consideration should be made as to how the characteristics of each county, including the factors listed above, may influence the health statistics.

Chronic Disease

Chronic disease has been a longstanding priority area for many of the counties in the Finger Lakes Region in years past. Focus areas including healthy eating and food security, physical activity, tobacco prevention and chronic disease preventative care and management are all areas of concern in the region to varying extents. In the past, efforts in the region have largely been focused on reducing illness, disability and death related to hypertension, tobacco use and second hand smoke along with reducing obesity in children and adults. In general, the areas for improvement in the Finger Lakes Region revolve around tobacco prevention (specifically e-cigarette/vaping) and chronic disease preventative care and management. On a smaller scale, healthy eating and food security are also areas worth noting. Important to note, however, is that current data do not necessarily include the impact COVID-19 has had on access to healthy foods and therefore may actually be a larger area of concern than what is depicted in the data.

Healthy and Safe Environment

A healthy and safe environment may relate to a number of different aspects such as the air we breathe, the water we drink and utilize for recreational use, incidence of interpersonal violence, injuries and more. In light of the growing aging population in the region, it is important to ensure safe home environments free from fall-inducing obstacles. Fall prevention techniques such as balance programs have been popular in the region and have demonstrated an improvement in rates of falls in the 65+ for several counties. In addition, work related hospitalizations have steadily decreased over the years. While the majority of residents in each county (75%) indicate feeling safe in their homes, there are some communities with proportionately higher rates of domestic violence and/or homicide mortality that have lower rates of perceived home/neighborhood safety.

Maternal and Child Health

Maternal and child health is an important topic area as ensuring their well-being can have long-lasting health impacts on the health of the next generation. Overall, total births in the region are declining which is likely in part due to several factors- a decrease in teen pregnancy rates and greater education around contraceptive

options to interrupt any unwanted pregnancies for women of any age from occurring. The rate of early entrance into prenatal care varies across counties and is lowest in areas with high Amish and Mennonite populations and those with low access to obstetric and gynecological providers. In a positive finding, the rate of children receiving the recommended well-child visits and blood lead screenings have increased across all counties in the last ten years which will aid in early detection of disease or developmental delays which can be treated and managed at an early stage.

Mental Well-Being and Substance Use Disorders

Mental well-being and substance use disorders have been topics of concern for a number of reasons that relate to the opioid epidemic. Also of concern is the **pandemic's impact (including isolation, loss of loved ones and disheartening news cycles)** on individuals of all ages. The majority of the data reviewed, unfortunately, did not include the impact the pandemic has had, yet we know anecdotally and have heard from mental hygiene department representatives and 211 call monitoring that the need has only intensified. Data from 2016 and 2018 indicate an increase in diagnosis of depressive disorders for all nine of the Finger Lakes Region counties. However, it is important to note that an increase in diagnosis is not the only piece of the puzzle- an increase in diagnosis may also indicate an increased awareness of mental health and the reduction of stigma in seeking help. In reality, the data may just be depicting a truer estimate than it has in years past. Suicide mortality was also analyzed and revealed a finding consistent with national estimates- rates of suicide increase for the 45+ age group and are highest among Males than Females. Finally, the rate of opioid overdose deaths have increased over the years, however, as have admissions to OASAS programs.

Communicable Disease

Among the most prominent communicable diseases of note is COVID-19. In recent months, efforts have largely been focused around increasing vaccination rates, particularly in areas where vaccination rates are below 50% of the population (in the Finger Lakes Region, mostly the southern tier counties). This in part may be attributed to general vaccine hesitancy (especially in populations that do not typically seek out vaccinations), but also may be due to a lack of access due to the rural nature of these communities and lack of access to transportation. Sexually transmitted infections, including Gonorrhea and Chlamydia, have increased in the last few years, which may be attributed to an increase in testing or an outbreak in a particular county. It may also be related to the increased incidence of opioid use disorders, as those in active addiction are more likely to engage in risky behaviors. An interesting phenomenon is the disease prevalence difference among men and women. Women are nearly 2x as likely to have a diagnosis of Chlamydia as men.

Next Steps

In the coming months, local health departments, hospitals and community health improvement partners throughout the Finger Lakes Region will consider the major health issues within each of their respective counties and weigh the potential effect of interventions to address those health issues. With support from additional data collected from key partners, participants in the prioritization process will select a minimum of two priority areas to be addressed during the 2022-2024 improvement period.