



Pennsylvania  
Department of Health

11/12/25

# The State of Rural Health in Pennsylvania

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Secretary of Health

Northern Tier Regional Rural Health Summit

# Outline

1. Review Department of Health (DOH) roles
2. Explore health indicators for participating counties and compare them to PA
3. Review themes from community health needs assessments done by health systems in the region
4. Discuss DOH's work to improve rural health in PA

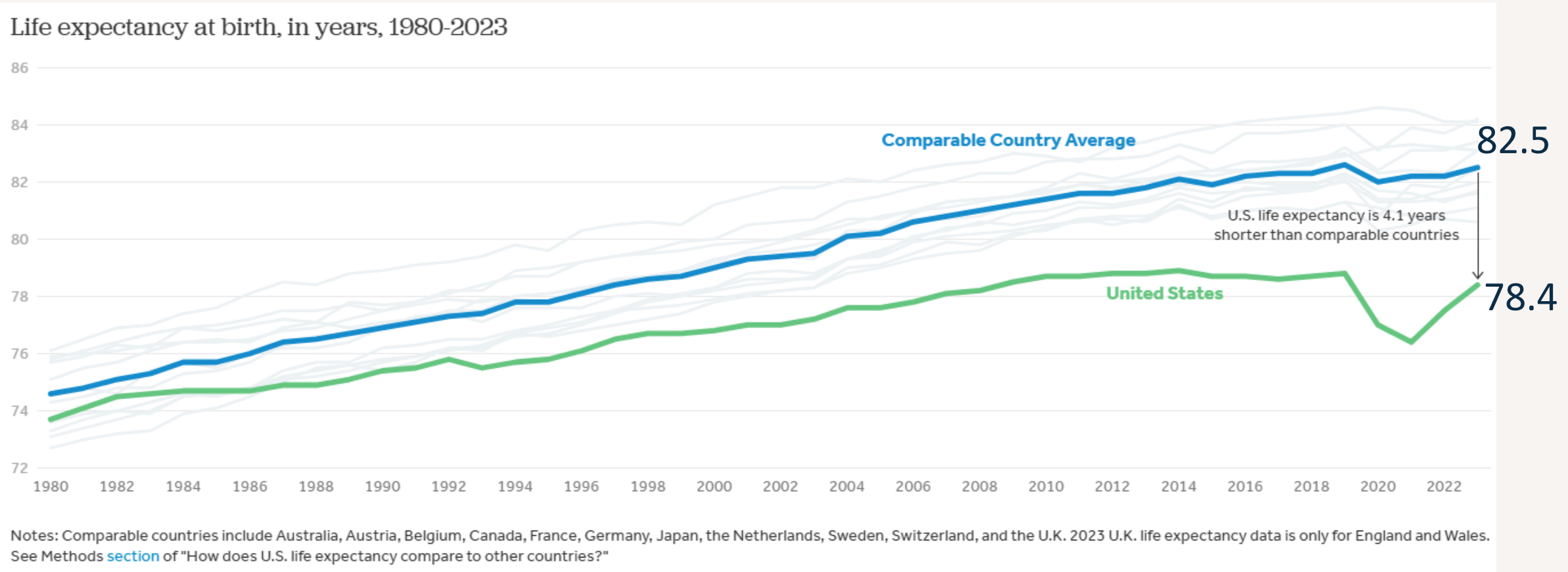


# Roles of DOH

- Study the distribution and causes of disease (epidemiology)
- Support healthy behaviors and disease prevention
- Prevent and respond to outbreaks and health emergencies
- Provide safety net clinical services (e.g., state health centers)
- Assure safe delivery of quality health care (e.g., regulations)
- Coordinate emergency medical services (EMS)
- Provide Vital Records services (birth, death and fetal)
- Direct Medical Marijuana Program



# Life Expectancy: US vs. comparable countries



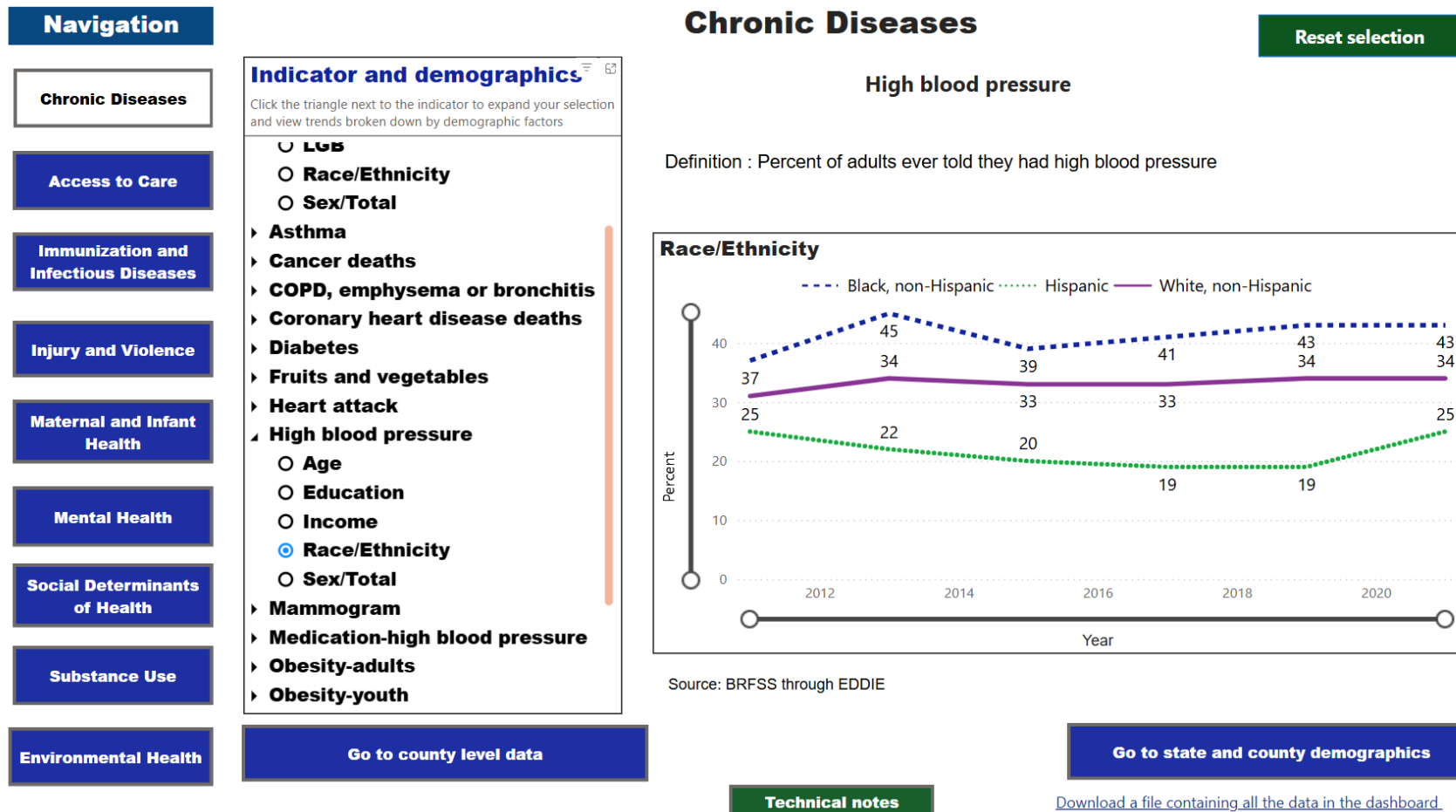
Source: KFF analysis of CDC, OECD, Australian Bureau of Statistics, German Federal Statistical Office, Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, Statistics Canada, and U.K. Office for National Statistics data • [Get the data](#) • [PNG](#)

Peterson-KFF  
**Health System Tracker**



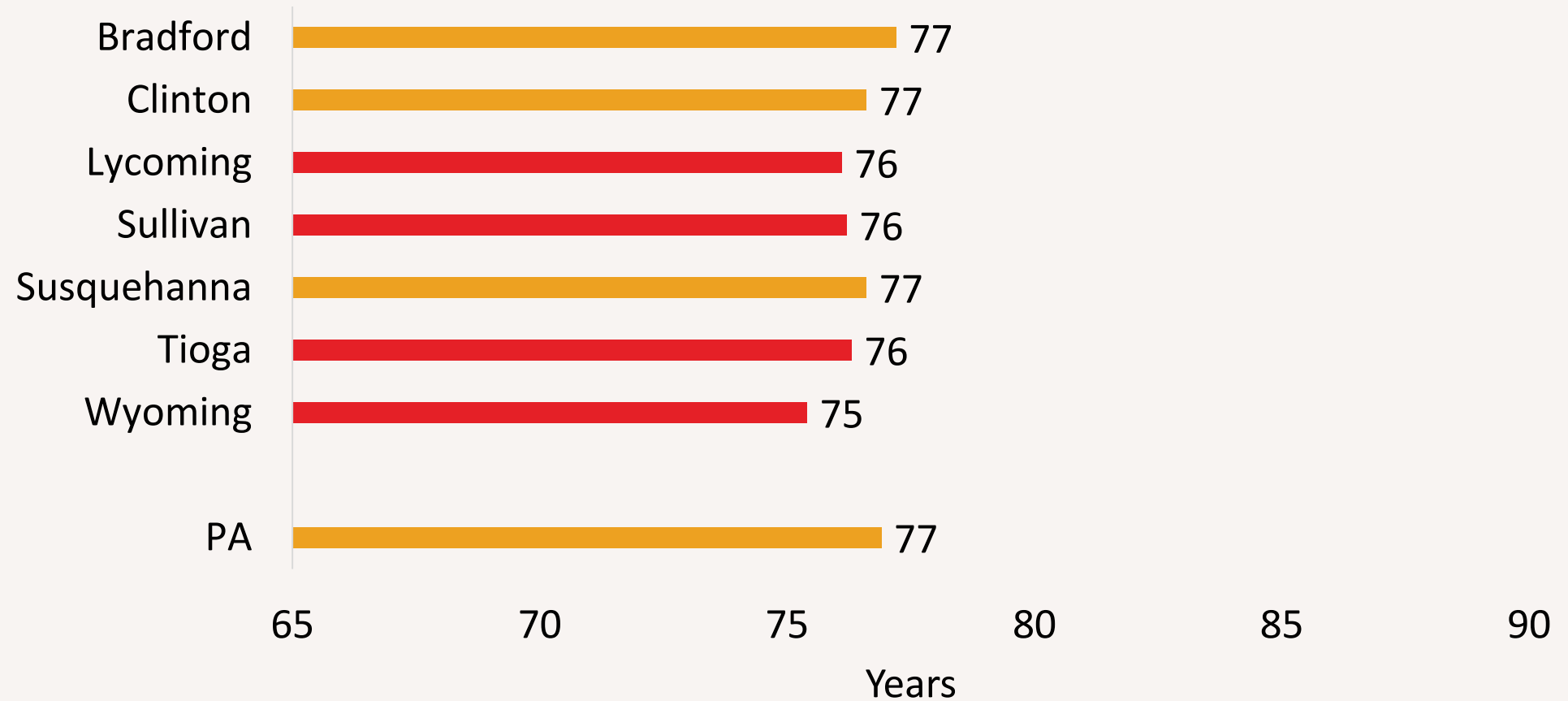


# State Health Assessment (SHA) provides picture of health across PA



# Regional Health Indicators

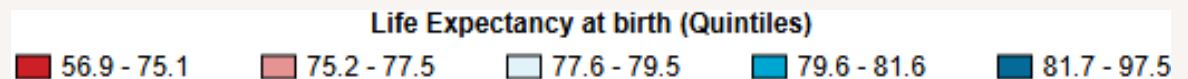
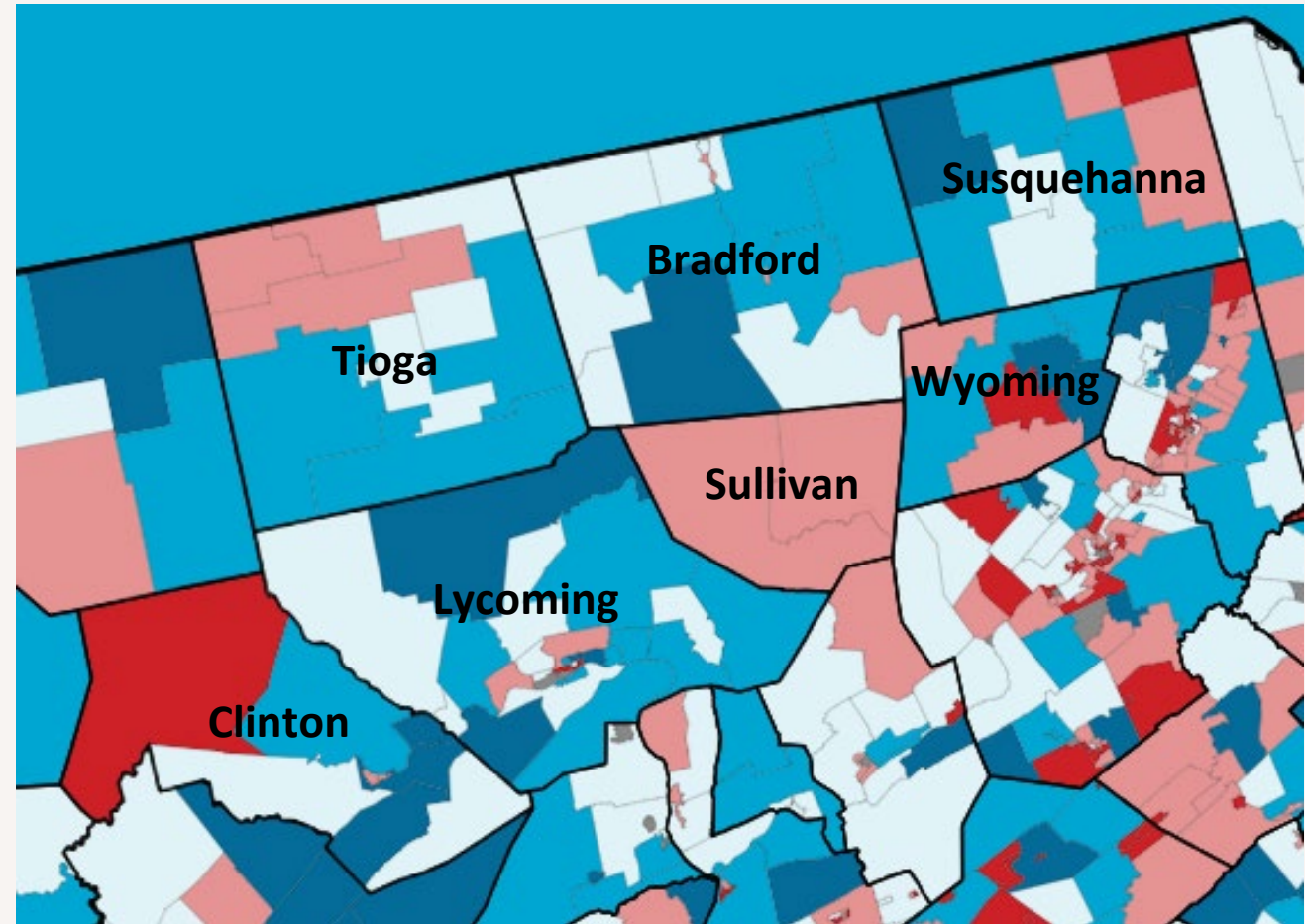
# Life expectancy by county varies little in this region



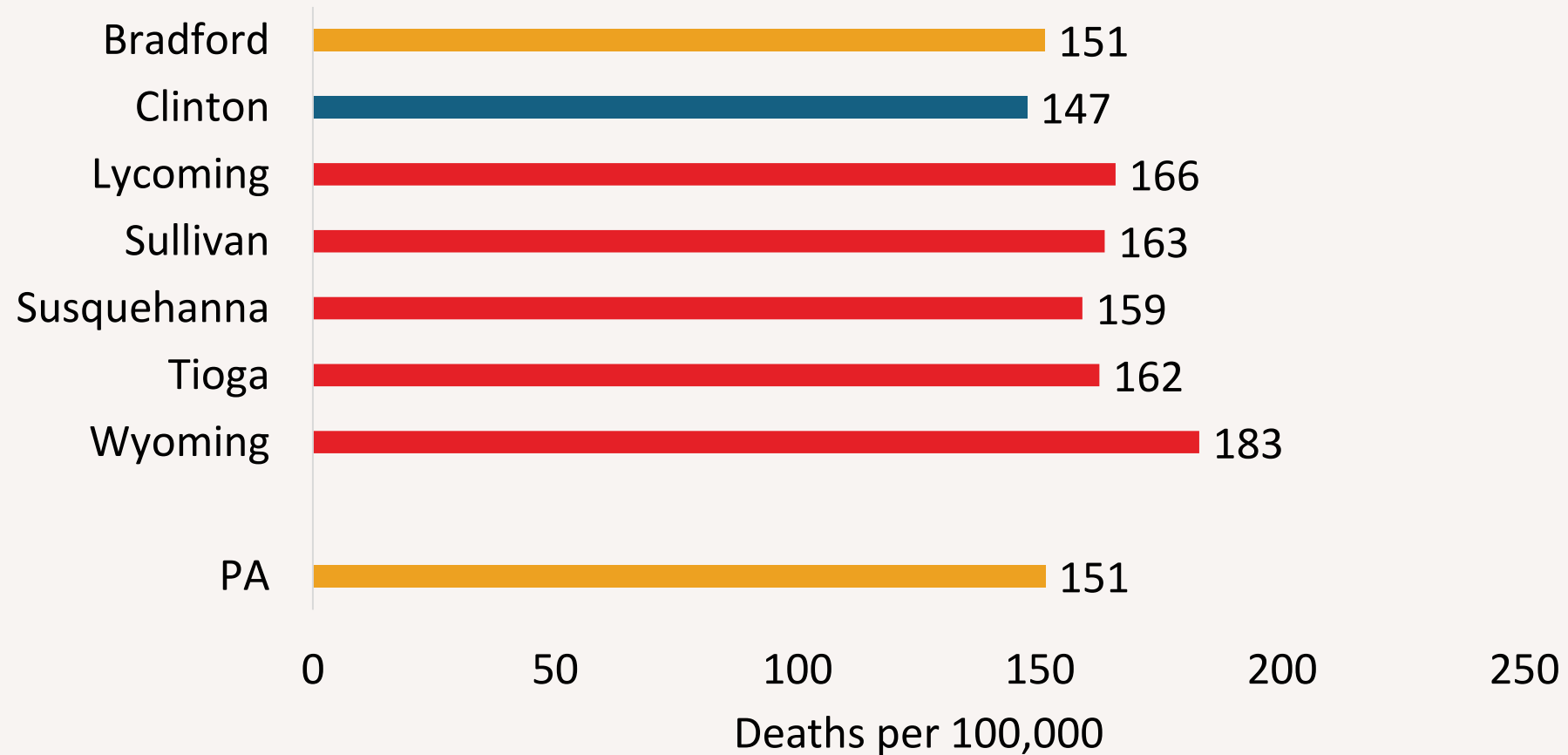


# Differences by census tract more pronounced

Range of LE by  
census tract:  
71–84 years



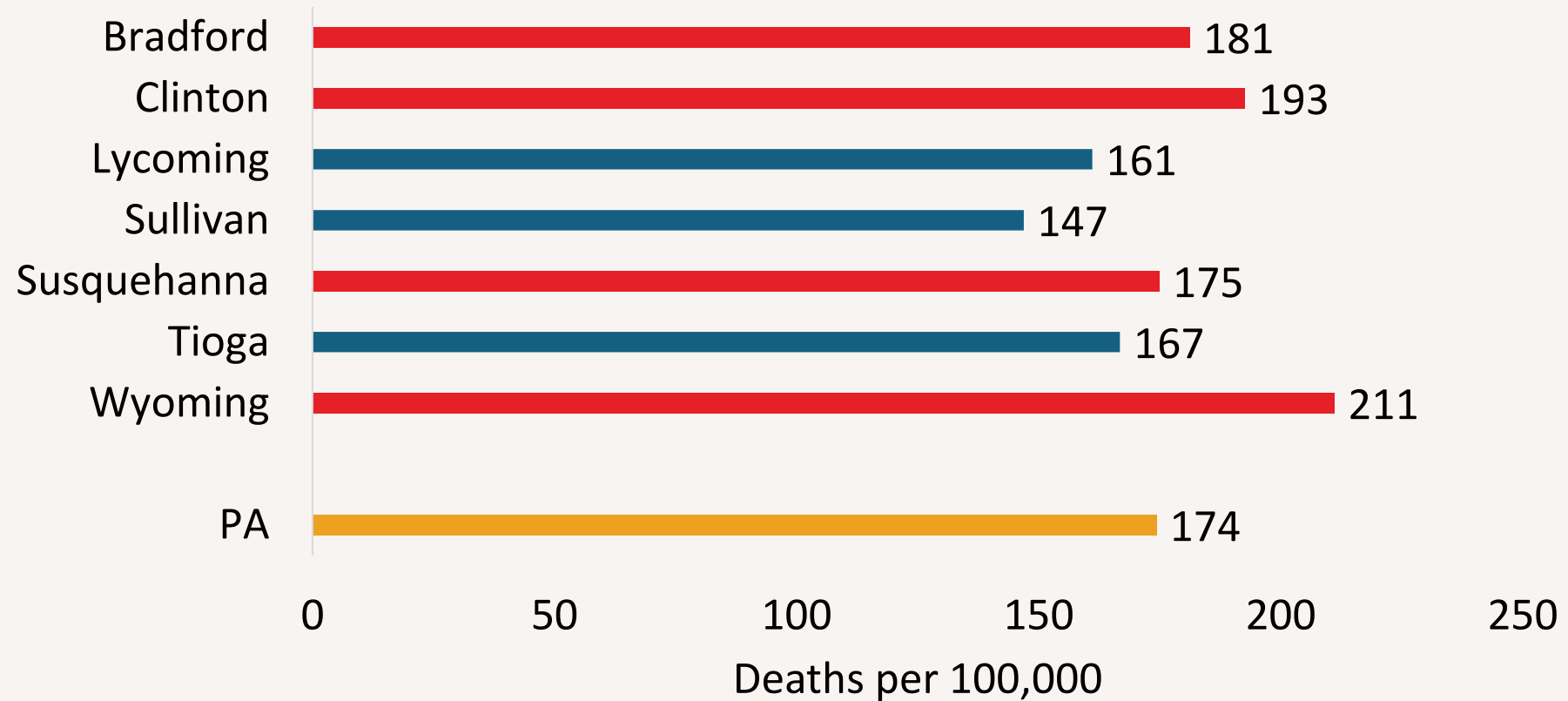
# Cancer deaths per 100,000 people, 2019–2023\*



\*Age-adjusted

Source: [DOH County Health Profiles](#) 10

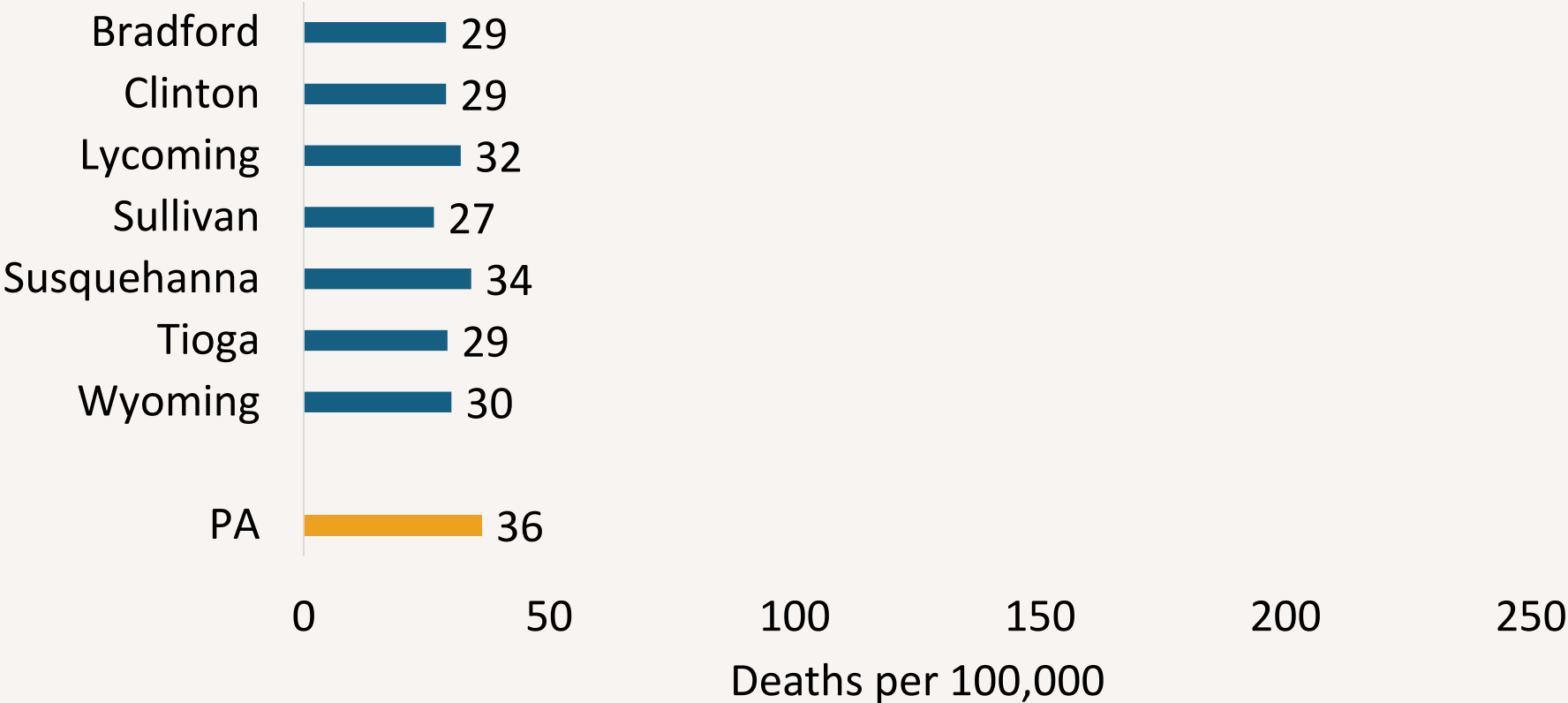
# Cardiovascular deaths per 100,000 people, 2019–2023\*



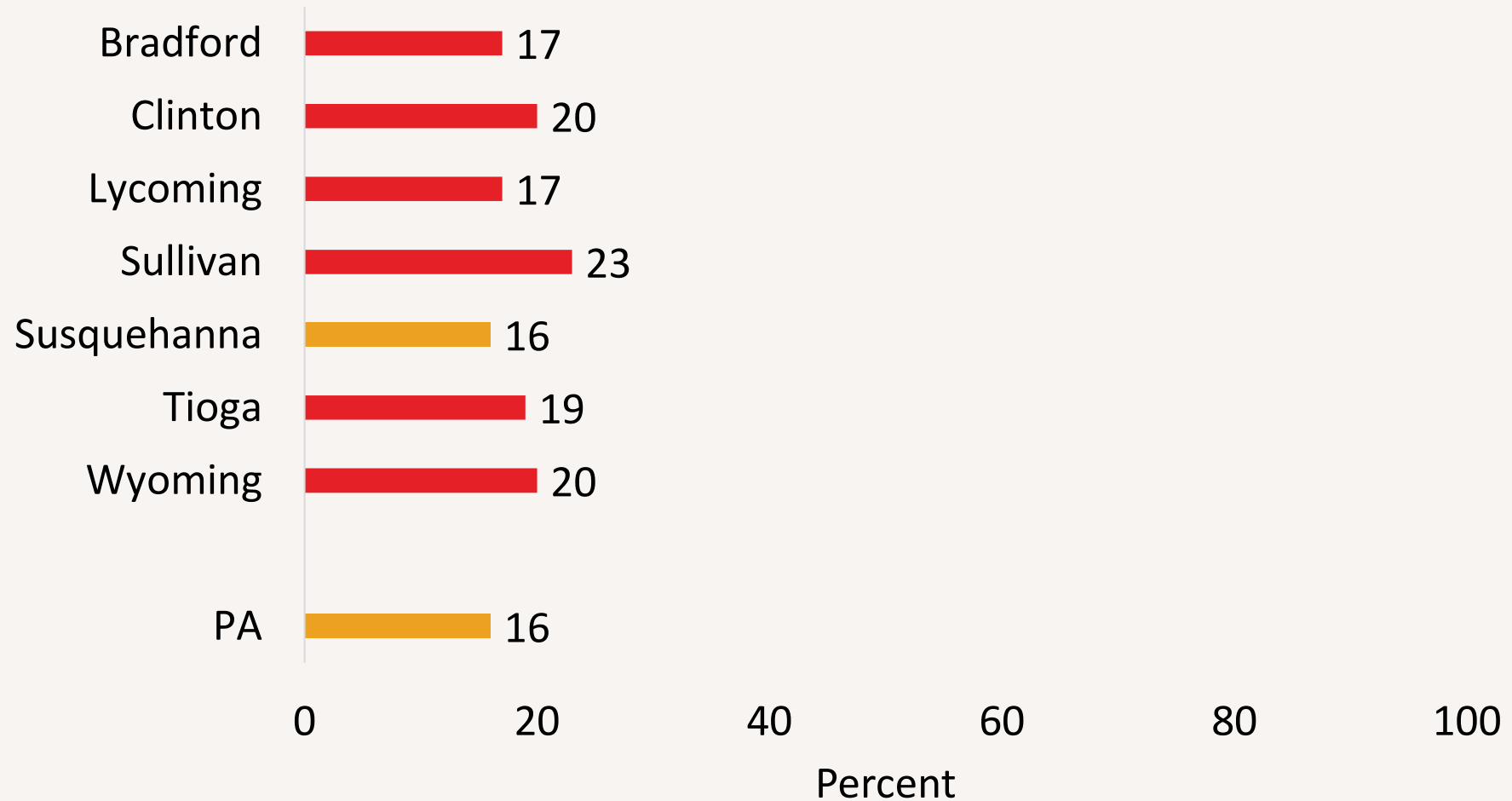
\*Age-adjusted

Source: [DOH County Health Profiles](#)

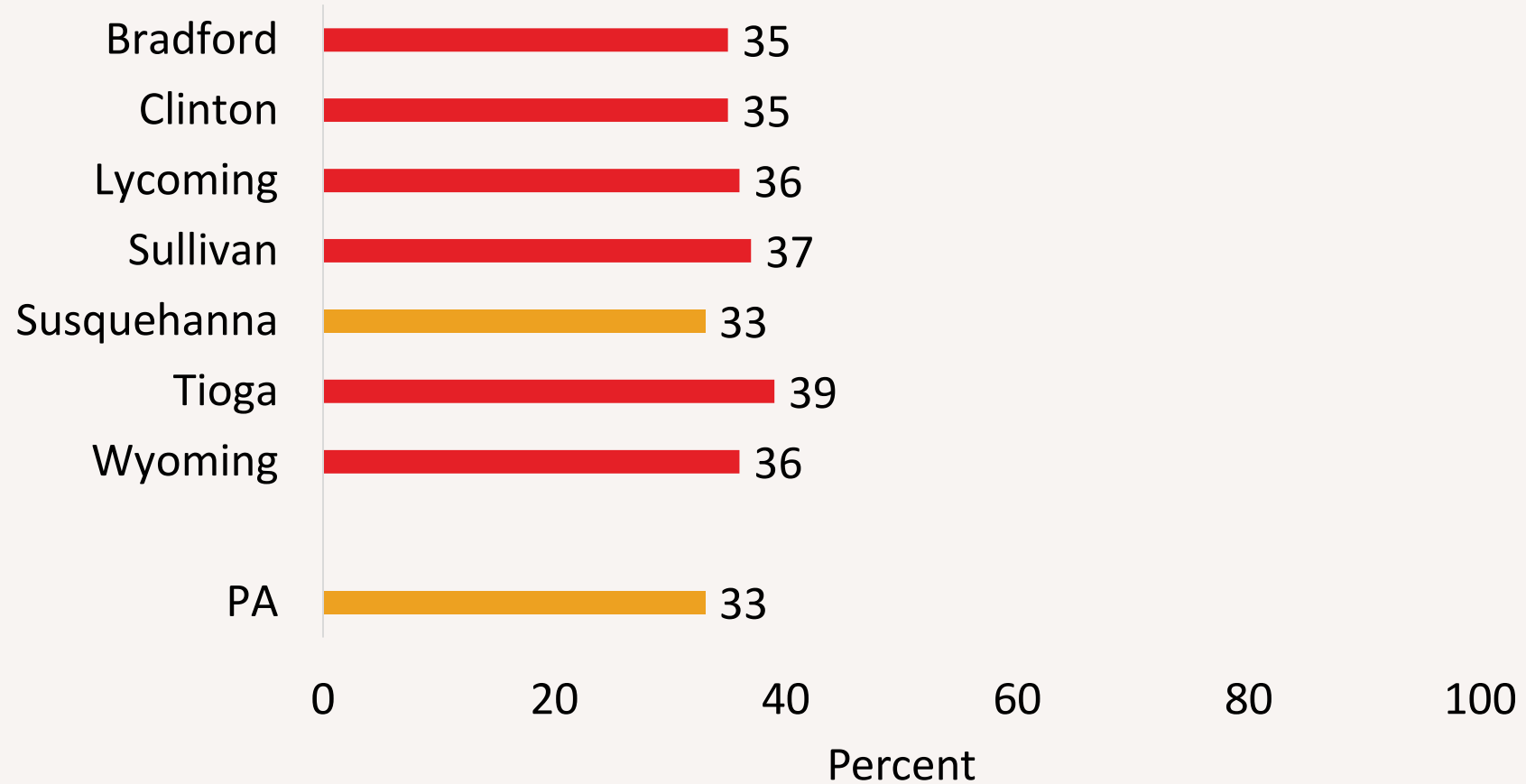
# Cerebrovascular deaths per 100,000 people, 2019–2023\*



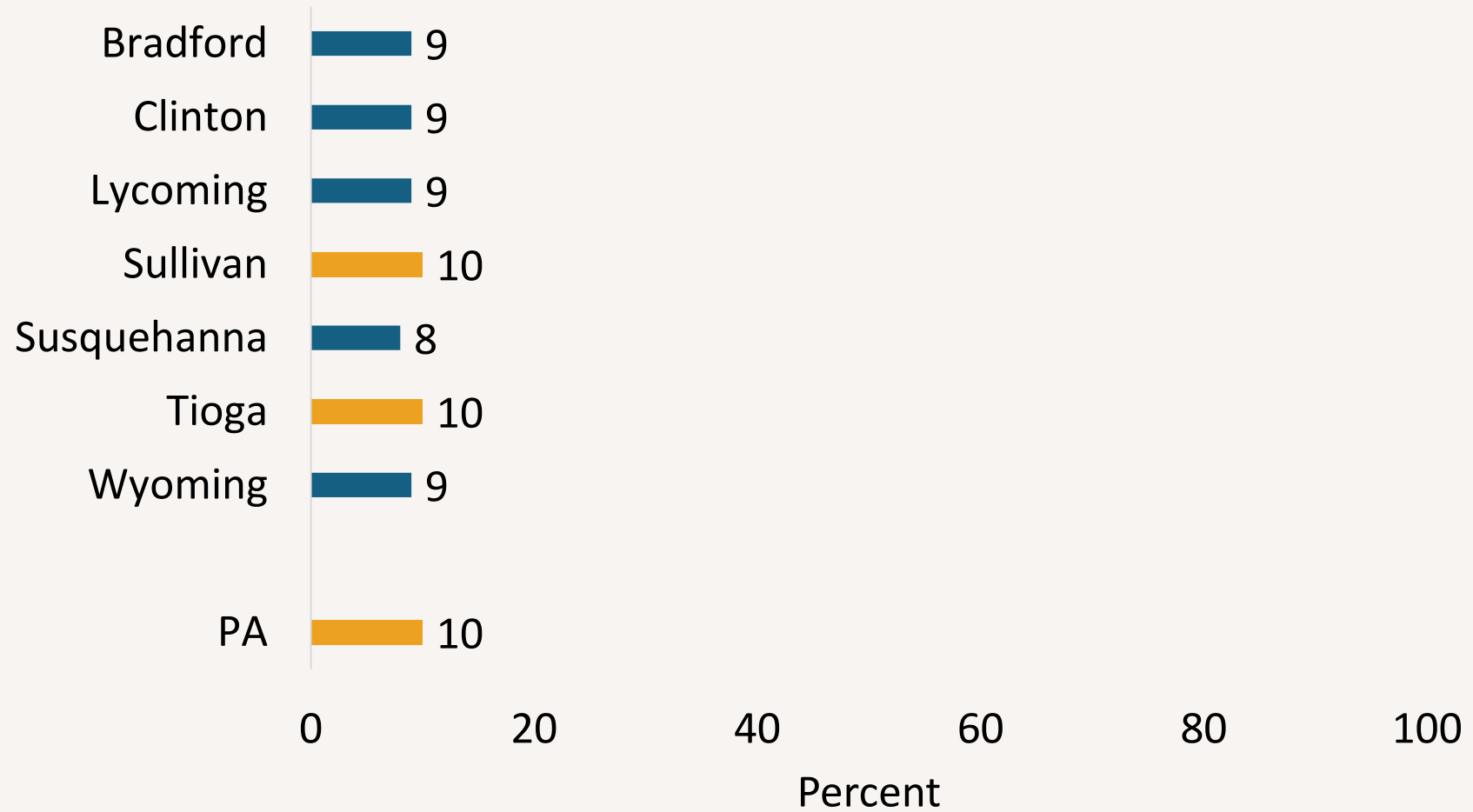
# Cigarette smoking prevalence among adults, 2022



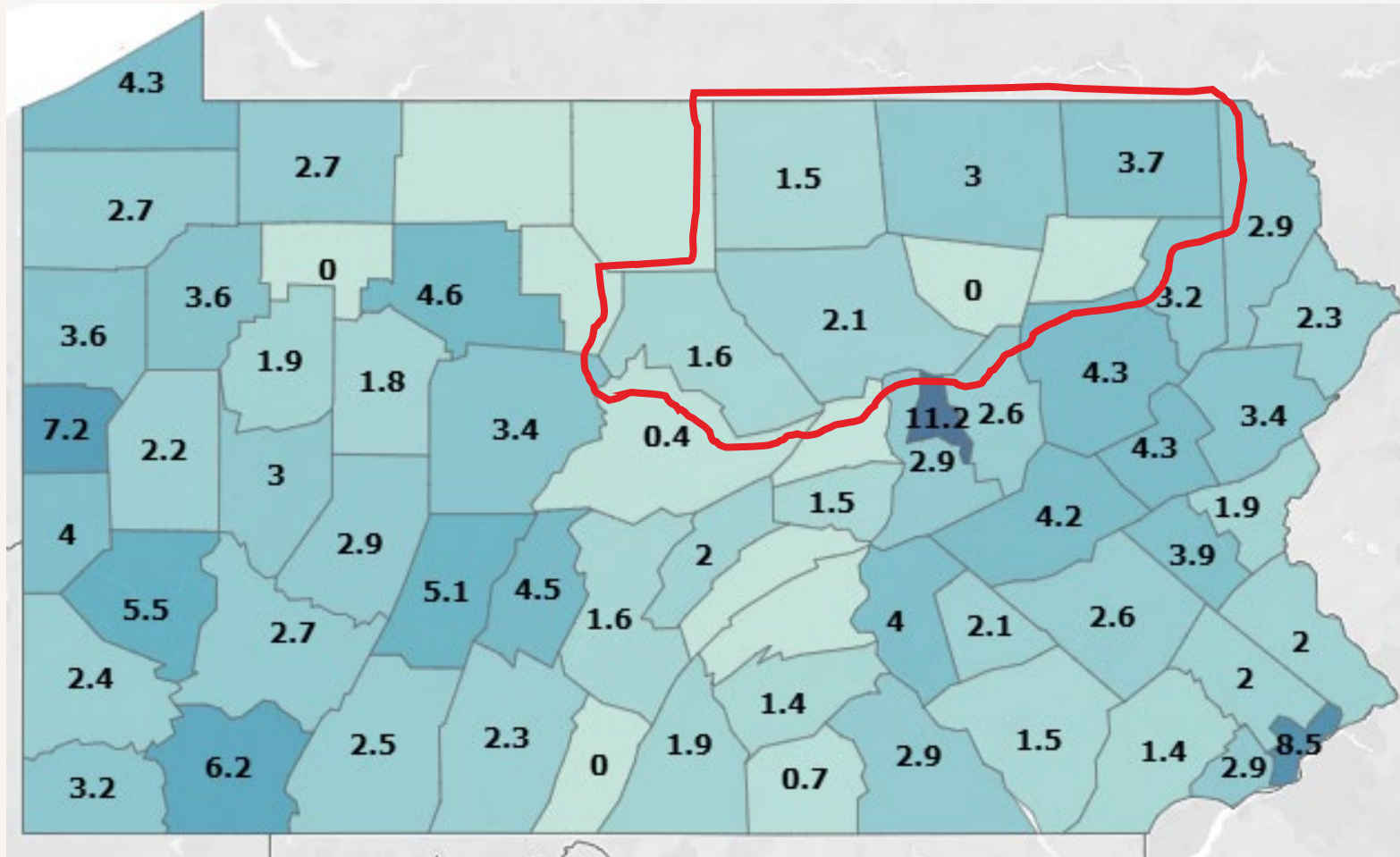
# Obesity prevalence among adults, 2022



# Diabetes prevalence among adults, 2022



# Drug overdose deaths per 10,000 people, 2023

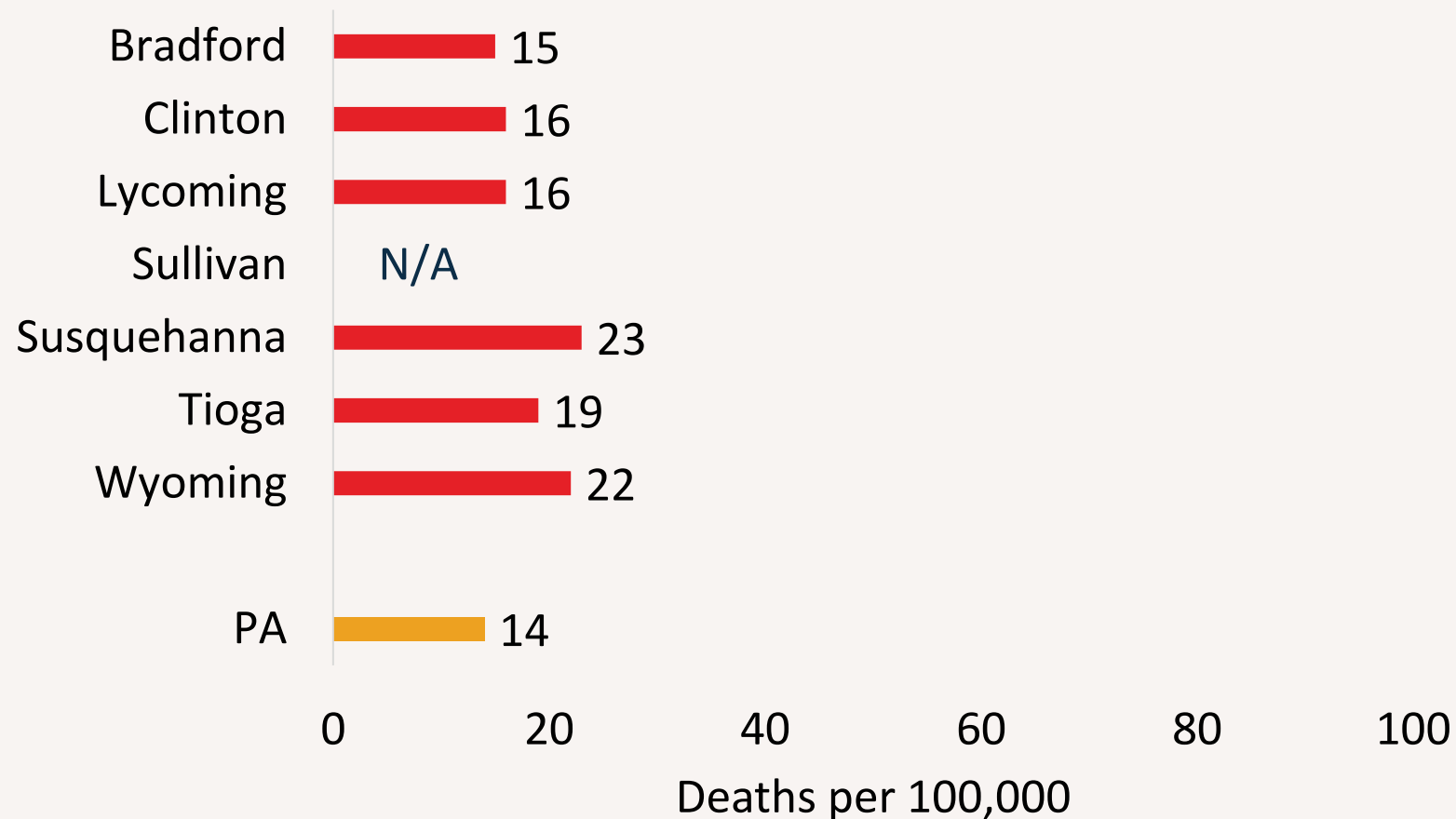


PA average:  
3.6 deaths per  
10,000 people

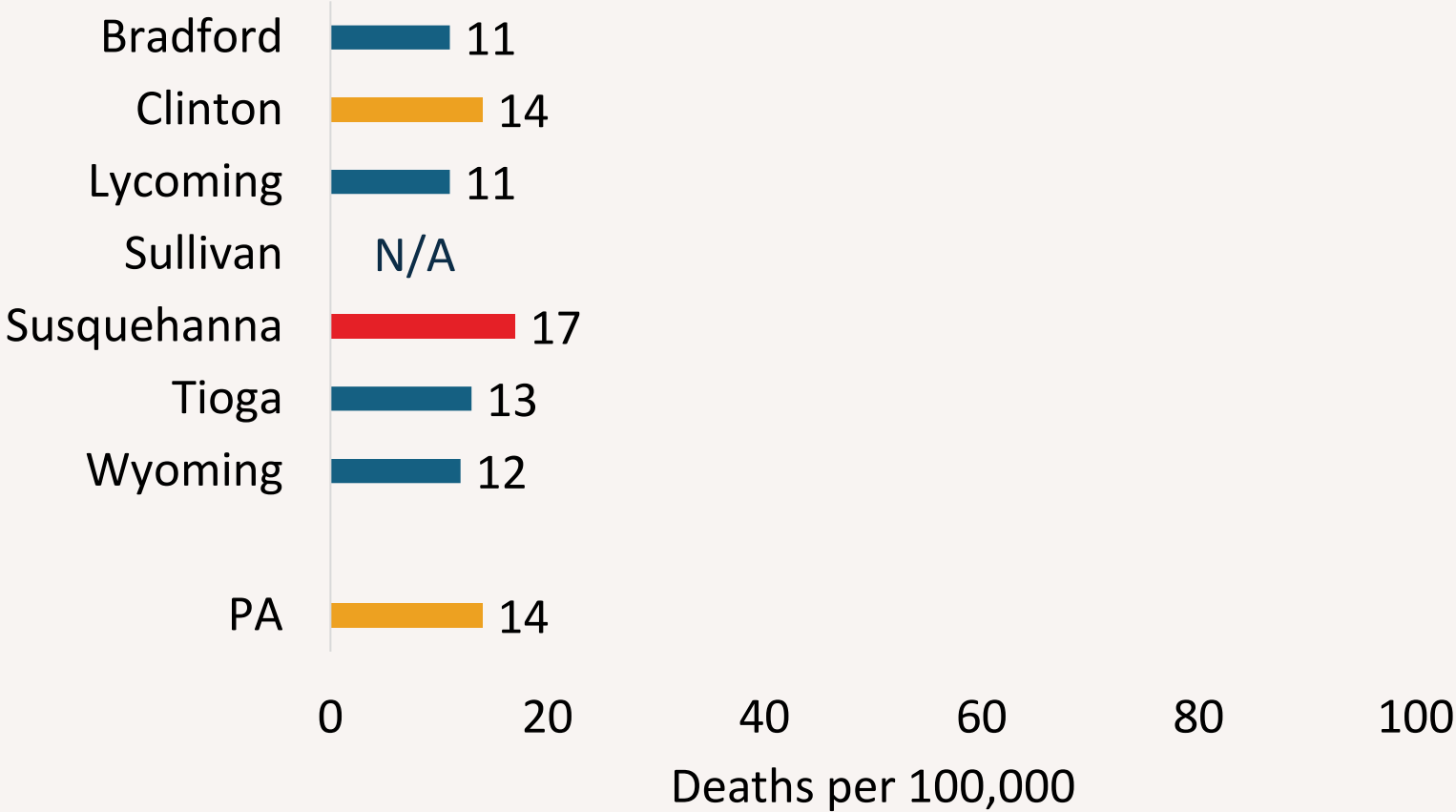




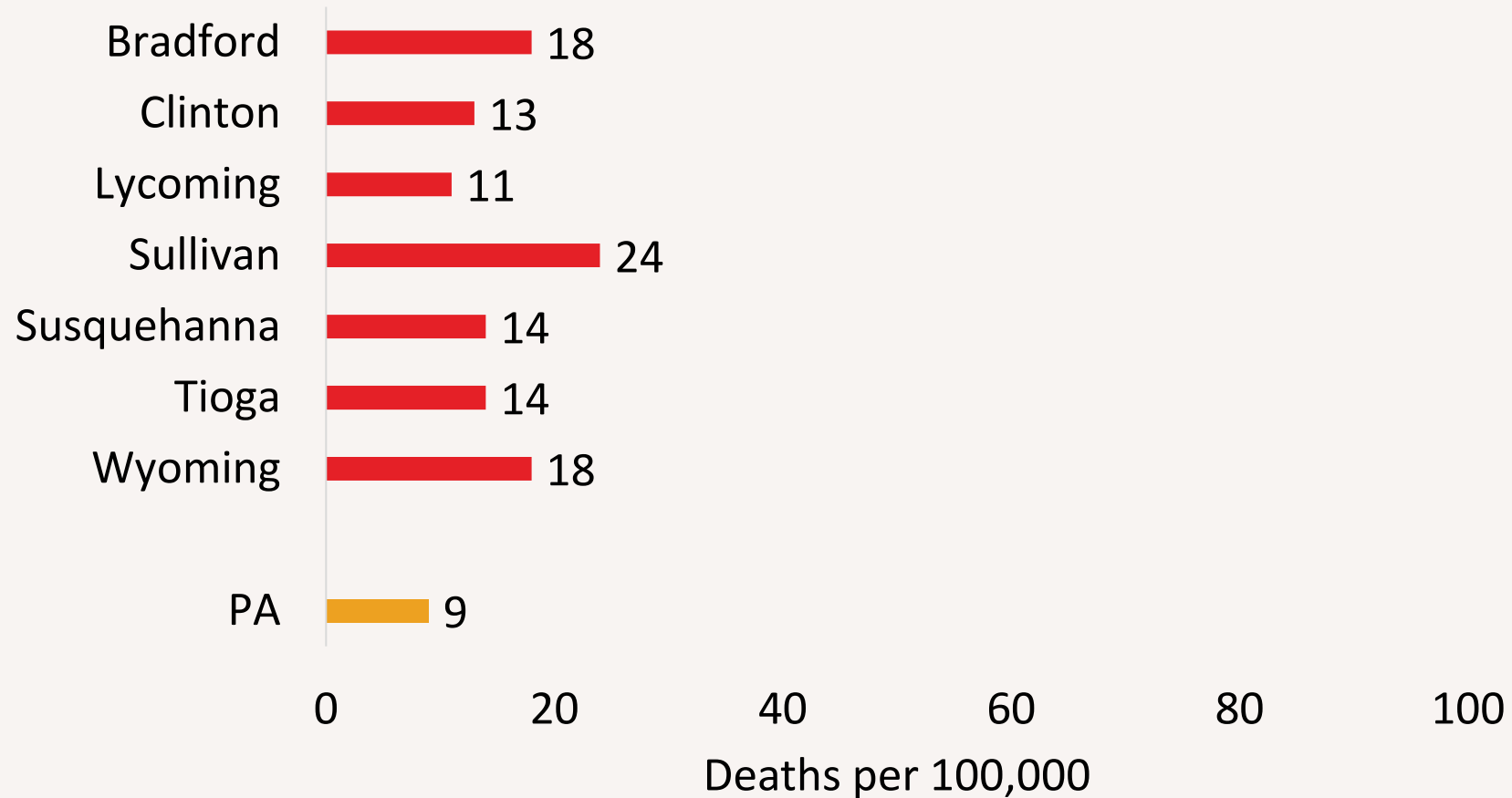
# Suicides per 100,000 people, 2018–2022\*



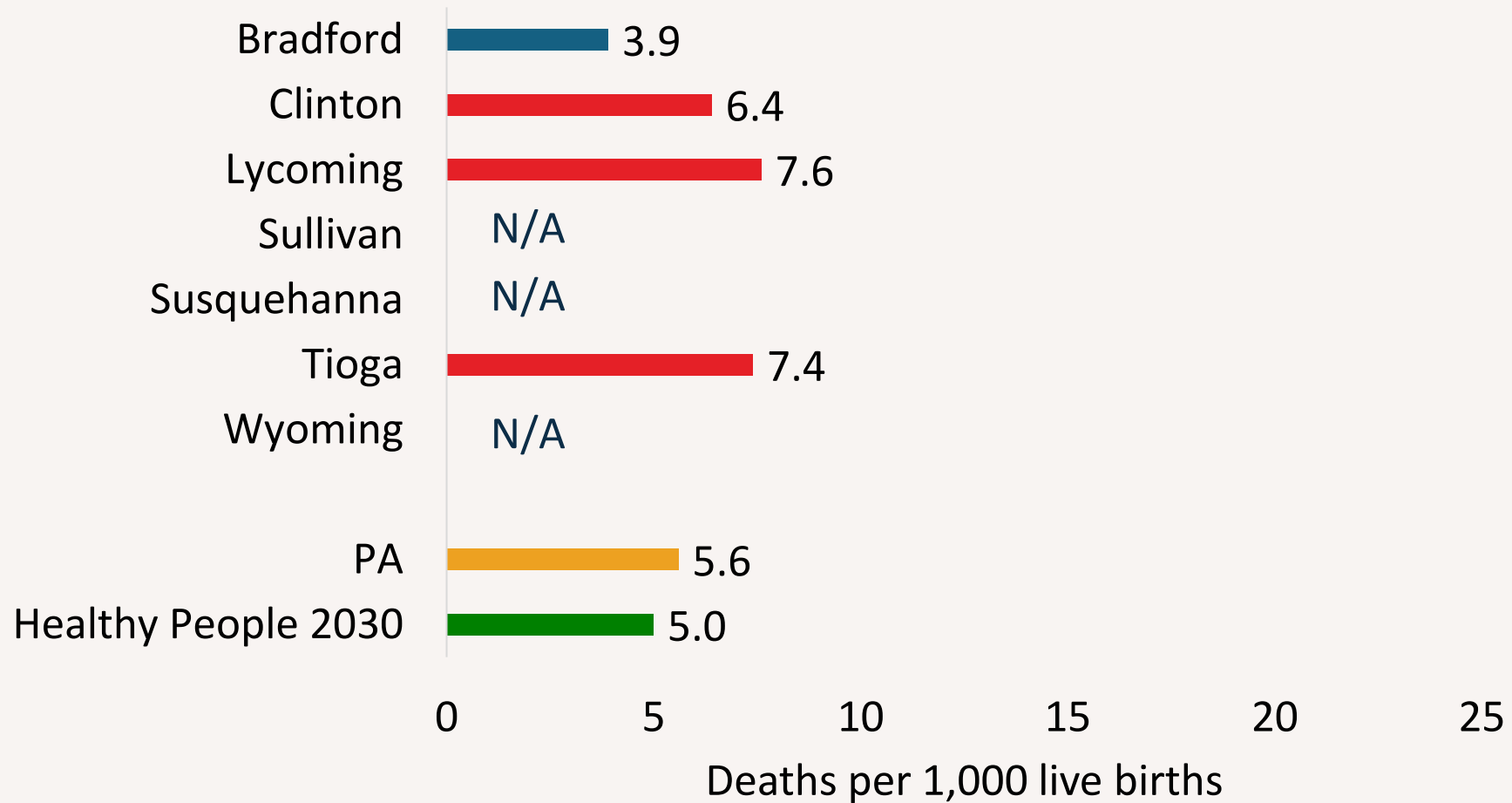
# Firearm deaths per 100,000 people, 2018–2022



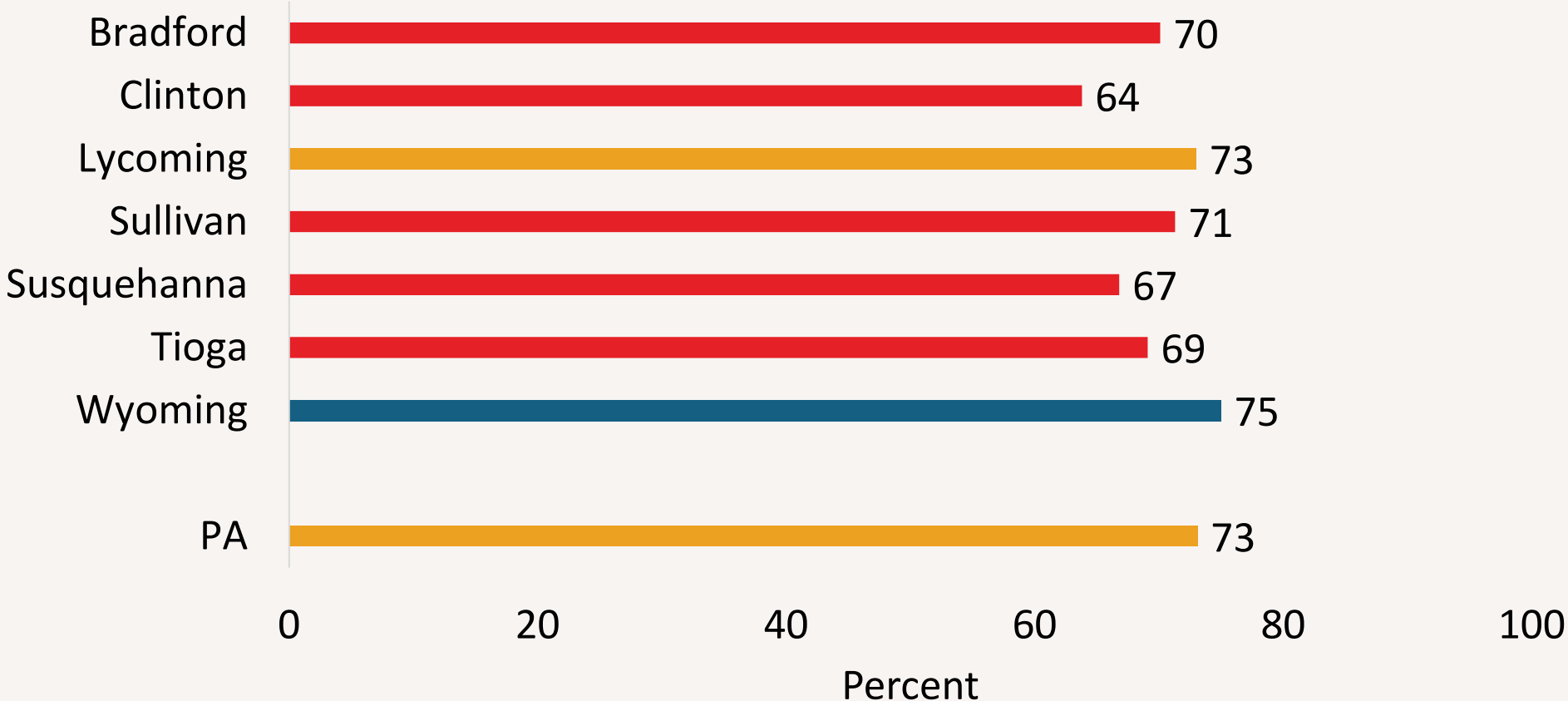
# Motor vehicle crash deaths per 100,000 people, 2016–2022



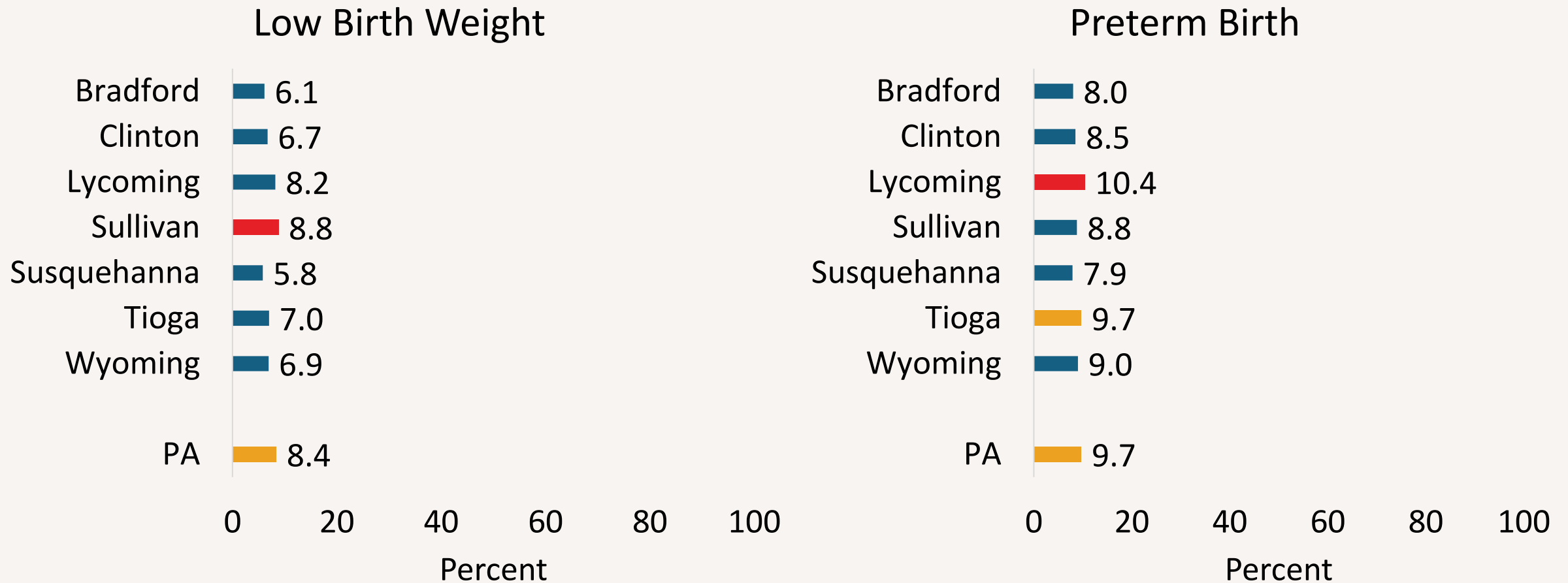
# Infant deaths per 1,000 live births, 2019–2023



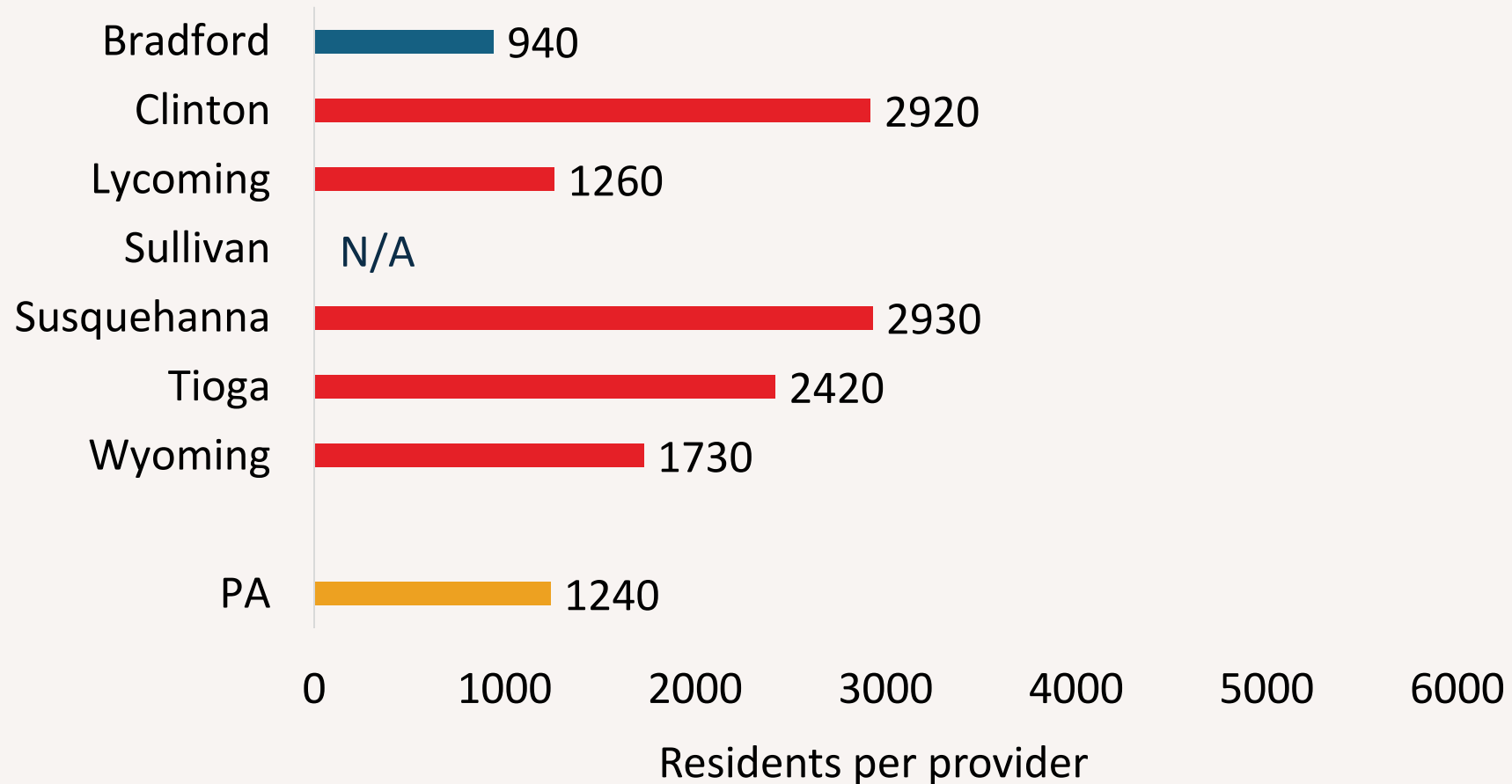
# Prenatal care in 1<sup>st</sup> trimester, 2019–2023



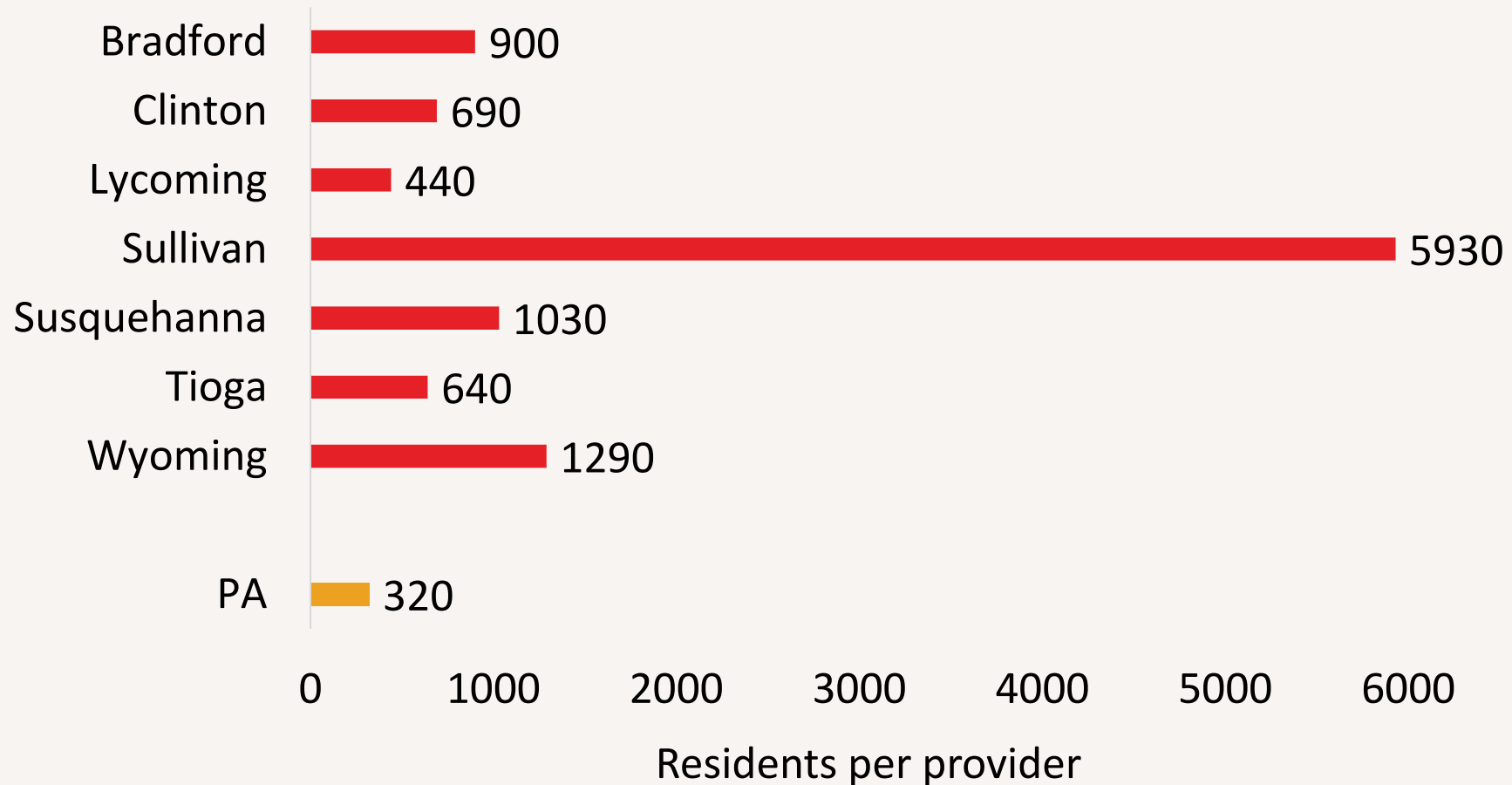
# Birth statistics, 2019–2023



# Resident to primary care provider ratio, 2022

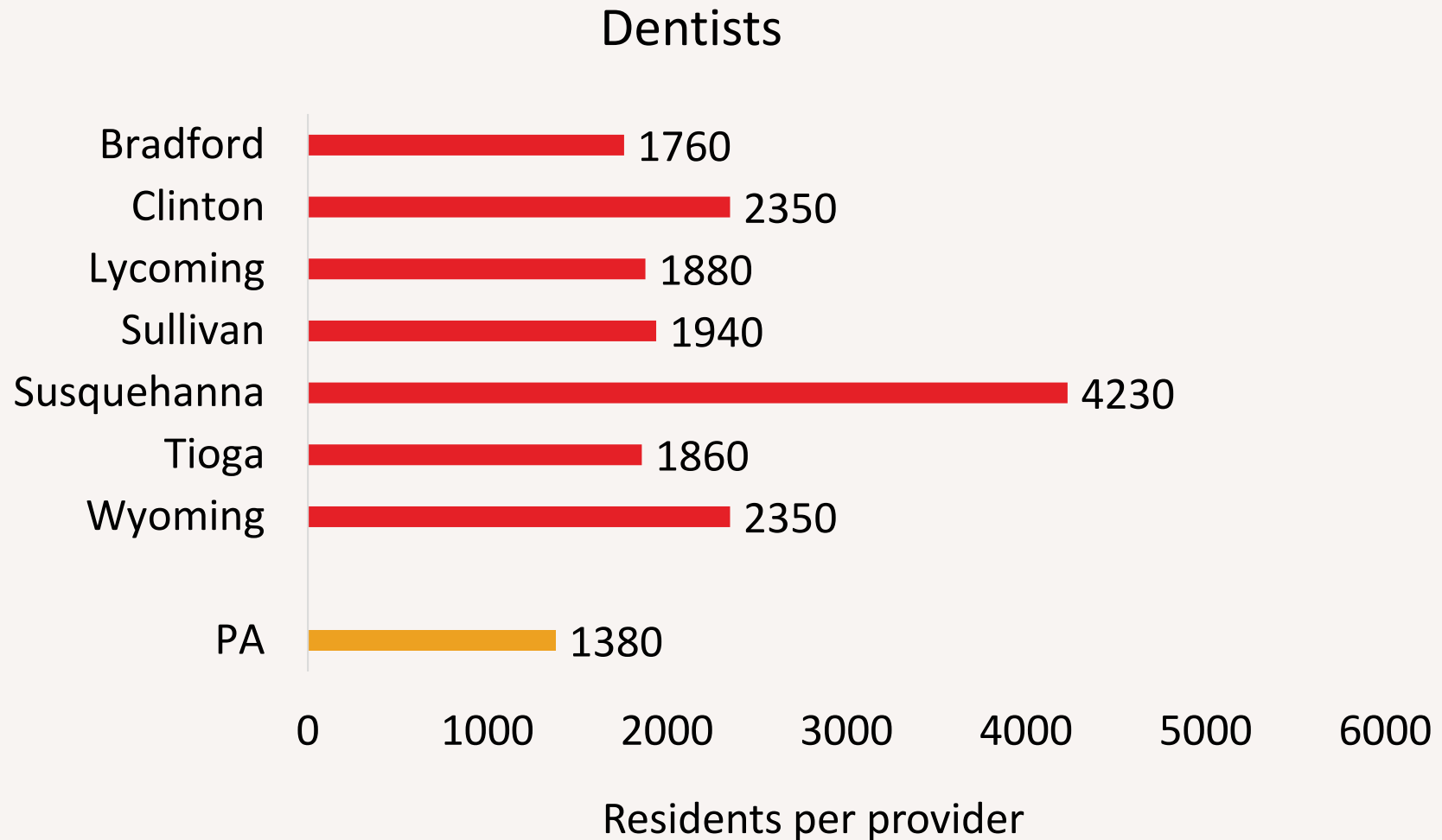


# Resident to behavioral health provider ratio, 2025





# Resident to dentist ratio, 2023



# Key takeaways from health indicators



# Community health needs assessments

Health System	Community Health Priorities	Year
Barnes-Kasson County Hospital	Expanding specialty care, workforce development, <b>behavioral health</b>	<a href="#">2025</a>
Bucktail Medical Center	<b>Cancer</b> , physical activity and nutrition, <b>chronic diseases</b> , infectious diseases, <b>behavioral health</b>	<a href="#">2022</a>
Endless Mountains Health Systems	<b>Obesity and diabetes</b> , <b>mental well-being</b>	<a href="#">2022</a>
Geisinger Jersey Shore and Muncy	Access to care, <b>chronic disease prevention and management</b> , <b>mental health</b> and substance use	<a href="#">2024</a>
Guthrie Robert Packer Hospital	<b>Mental health</b> , <b>heart disease and stroke</b>	<a href="#">2025</a>
Guthrie Troy Community Hospital	<b>Cancer</b> , <b>heart disease and stroke</b>	<a href="#">2025</a>
UPMC Muncy, Wellsboro, and Williamsport	<b>Behavioral health</b> , prevention and community-wide healthy living	<a href="#">2025</a>



# Rural health challenges in PA

Workforce

Financial  
models

EMS

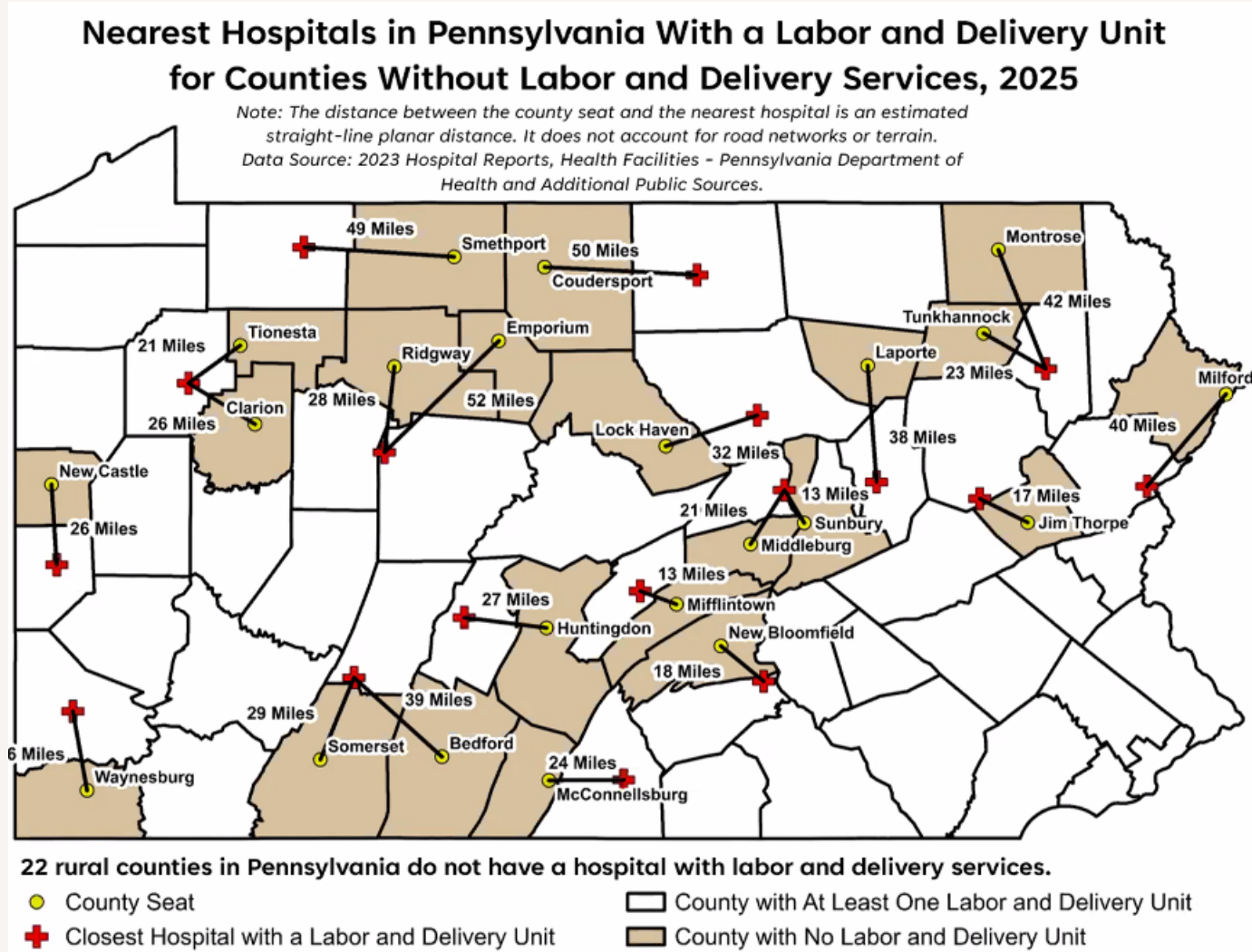
Opioid  
epidemic

Behavioral  
health

Distance to  
care

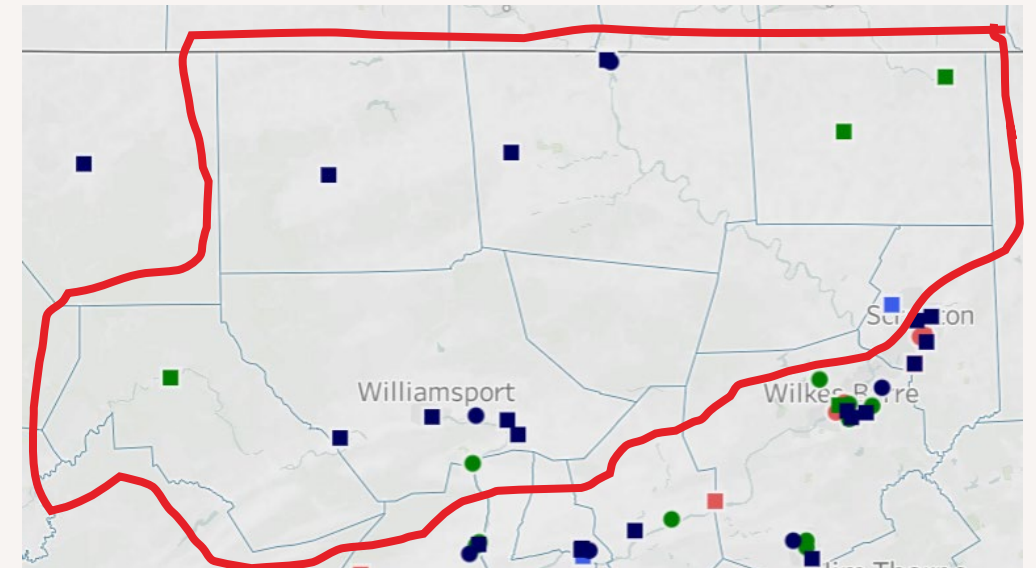


# Maternity Care Deserts Scattered Across PA



# Addressing rural health needs in PA

- Rural Health Transformation Program
- Regional rural health care summits
- [DOH Primary Care Office](#)
- EMS workforce
- Hospital regulations and flexibilities
- Work with RHRCA on payment models





# State Health Centers

- **Bradford County:** 142 Colonial Dr, Towanda, PA, 18848
- **Clinton County:** 300 Bellefonte Ave, Suite 100, Lock Haven, PA, 17745
- **Lycoming County:** 1000 Commerce Park Dr, Suite 109, Williamsport, PA, 17701
- **Sullivan County:** covered by Bradford Co.
- **Susquehanna County:** 157 Spruce St, Suite 2, Montrose, PA, 18801
- **Tioga County:** 44 Plaza Ln, Wellsboro, PA, 16901
- **Wyoming County:** 608 Hunter Hwy, Suite #2, Tunkhannock, PA, 18657



# DOH Resources

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





# Conclusions

- Health indicators indicate that this regions health outcomes often lagged the state average
- DOH plays critical role in advancing health across Commonwealth
- DOH efforts to improve rural health include
  - Workforce initiatives
  - Improving maternal and child health
  - Modernizing and improving flexibility in health care regulations
- Takes all of us working together to develop effective and lasting solutions



# Thank you



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