

# 2025

# MENTAL HEALTH AND

# SUBSTANCE ABUSE

# ANNUAL REPORT

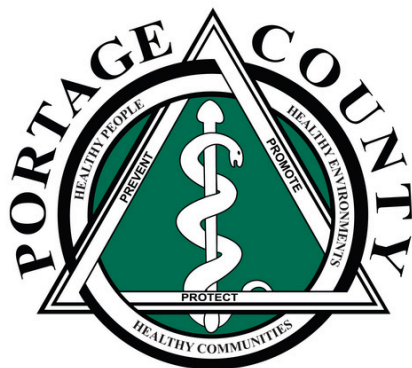
**Report produced by:**

Portage County Combined General Health District

999 East Main Street, Ravenna, Ohio 44266

330-296-9919

[www.portagehealth.net](http://www.portagehealth.net)



**HEALTH DISTRICT**



# OVERVIEW

In 2025, Portage County Health District (PCHD) and University Hospitals embarked on a Community Health Assessment (CHA) process, engaging over 35 community partners, including Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County (MHRB), Kent City Health Department (KCHD), Axess Family Services, Townhall II, PARTA, and Portage County School Districts.

Following the CHA, these community stakeholders participated in the community health improvement process using CHA data to determine community priorities with accompanying strategies. Mental Health, Substance Use, and Addiction was determined to be a priority in the 2026–2028 Portage County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), along with Chronic Disease and Family, Pregnancy, Infant, & Child Health.

The objective of this report is to inform education and outreach efforts by Portage County stakeholders by summarizing trends in morbidity and mortality related to mental health and substance use. Any questions about the contents of this report can be directed to Olivia Artman, Portage County Health District Epidemiologist (Phone: 330–296–9919 Extension 152).

2024

2025

<i>Emergency department visits for unintentional overdoses</i>	204	212
<i>Portage resident Overdose deaths, Ohio Vital Stats</i>	27	17
<i>Portage resident Overdose deaths coroner's report</i>	26	21
<i>Emergency department visits for self harm, suicidal ideation or suicide attempts</i>	955	869
<i>Portage resident Suicide deaths, Ohio Vital Stats</i>	21	21
<i>Portage resident suicide deaths coroner's report</i>	19	16

# RESOURCES

Agency	Phone number	Website	Resources provided
Suicide & Crisis Lifeline	988	988lifeline.org	Mental health crisis support.
Townhall II	330-678-HELP (4357)	www.townhall2.com	Mental health emergency services, prevention education, counseling, and clinical services.
MHRB	330-673-1756	www.mental-health-recovery.org	Prevention education, comprehensive resource guides for both mental health and addiction.
United Way	211	www.uwportage.org	Help finding mental health or addiction resources.

Agency	Phone number	Website	Resources provided
<p><b>Axess Family Services</b></p>	<p>330-297-7027</p>	<p><a href="http://axessfamilyservices.org">axessfamilyservices.org</a></p>	<p>Individual and family behavioral health services, healthcare, and assistance with housing and transportation needs.</p>
<p><b>Coleman</b></p>	<p>330-673-1347</p>	<p><a href="http://www.colemanservices.org">www.colemanservices.org</a></p>	<p>Mental health crisis support, behavioral assessment and case management, counseling and psychiatry, peer support.</p>



**24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT**

# PROJECT DAWN AND NALOXONE

## **What is Project DAWN?**

Project DAWN (Deaths Avoided With Naloxone) is a network of opioid overdose education and naloxone distribution programs from the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). The Project DAWN program in Portage County is coordinated by Kylee McCracken at PCHD. The goal of the Project DAWN program is to provide access to Narcan as a life-saving resource to anyone who is at risk or anyone who may come in contact with anyone at risk of an opioid overdose. Participants of the Project DAWN program are provided education on an opioid overdose and a Project DAWN kit, which contains two doses of nasal Naloxone, Naloxone use instructions, one pair of nitrile gloves, and a mouth guard in the event that resuscitation is required.

## **What is Naloxone?**

You may have heard Naloxone referred to as Narcan or Evzio, which are brand names under which Naloxone is frequently sold. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) describes Naloxone as, "a drug that can reverse the effects of opioid overdose and can be life-saving if administered in time."

## **Will Naloxone reverse any overdose?**

Unfortunately, no. Naloxone only reverses overdoses of opioids, which are defined by the CDC as, "natural, synthetic, or semi-synthetic chemicals that interact with opioid receptors on nerve cells in the body and brain, and reduce the intensity of pain signals and feelings of pain." Examples of opioids include heroin, fentanyl, oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine, and morphine. Please see the next page for more information.



# Difference Between an Opioid and an Opiate



An **OPIATE** is a drug naturally derived from the opium poppy plant. On the other hand, **OPIOID** is any compound attached to opioid receptors that can be partially or fully synthetic.

- Opiates are a subset of Opioids
- Not all Opioids are Opiates

Opioids**	Opiates
Vicodin Percocet Oxycodone Fentanyl etc.	Opium Morphine Heroin Codeine etc.

\*\*Synonymous with the term “Narcotics”



### **Who should carry Naloxone?**

Anyone who uses opioids, prescribed or not, should carry Naloxone. Additionally, if you have family members, friends, co-workers, clients, or interact with anyone who uses opioids you should always carry Naloxone in case of an overdose. As a reminder, some opioids are prescribed by doctors for pain management. Even when taken as directed, opioids can still cause an overdose.

### **How can I get a Project Dawn kit?**

There are several ways to obtain a Project DAWN kit in Portage County.

- PCHD: Call Kylee at 330-296-9919, ext. 129 to schedule a individual or group training, after which a kit will be distributed.
- Portage County Health District Mail Order: Go to <https://portagehealth.net/our-programs/health-education-and-promotion/project-dawn-narcan/>
- Townhall II: Call 330-678-3006 to schedule an appointment.
- KCHD: Call 330-968-7555 to schedule an appointment.

### **Interested in becoming a Project DAWN Distribution Agency?**

PCHD provides trainings to agencies/organizations that are interested in becoming a Narcan distributor (someone who trains others to properly use Narcan and distributes Project DAWN kits). PCHD will supply the resources needed to provide the educational component of Project DAWN program and the Project DAWN kits.



# 2025 PROJECT DAWN DISTRIBUTION

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec
<i>Doses of Naloxone administered by EMS</i>	38	75	38	40
<i>Project DAWN kits distributed by PCHD</i>	447	643	730	402
<i>Reversals reported by law enforcement</i>	4	0	2	0
<i>Reversals reported by community members</i>	30	65	18	38

Overall, there were 6 reversals reported by law enforcement and 151 reported by the community.



# YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION GRANT

## **About the grant**

In March, 2024, PCHD was awarded a multi-year grant to address the issue of youth suicide in our community. The grant is administered through ODH using funds from the CDC.

## **Grant objective**

By September 14, 2027, PCHD, MHRB, Townhall II, and the Portage County Suicide Coalition will reduce the annual suicide mortality among Portage County youth ages 10-24.

## **Portage Suicide Prevention Coalition**

The Portage Suicide Prevention Coalition is an interdisciplinary group of community agencies working to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health, eliminate suicide attempts and deaths in Portage County, and support individuals that have lost loved ones to suicide. Meetings are held every other month at MHRB in Kent. Members of the public are welcome to join the coalition.

## **2025 Highlights**

- 6 meetings of the Portage Suicide Prevention Coalition
- 4,149 middle and high school students received Signs of Suicide educational programming
- 32 healthcare providers trained in Question, Persuade, Refer



# EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS

Number of Portage County residents who visited an emergency room for an unintentional overdose or self harm/suicidal ideation/suicide attempt. This data was extracted from the Epicenter surveillance system on January 3, 2025.

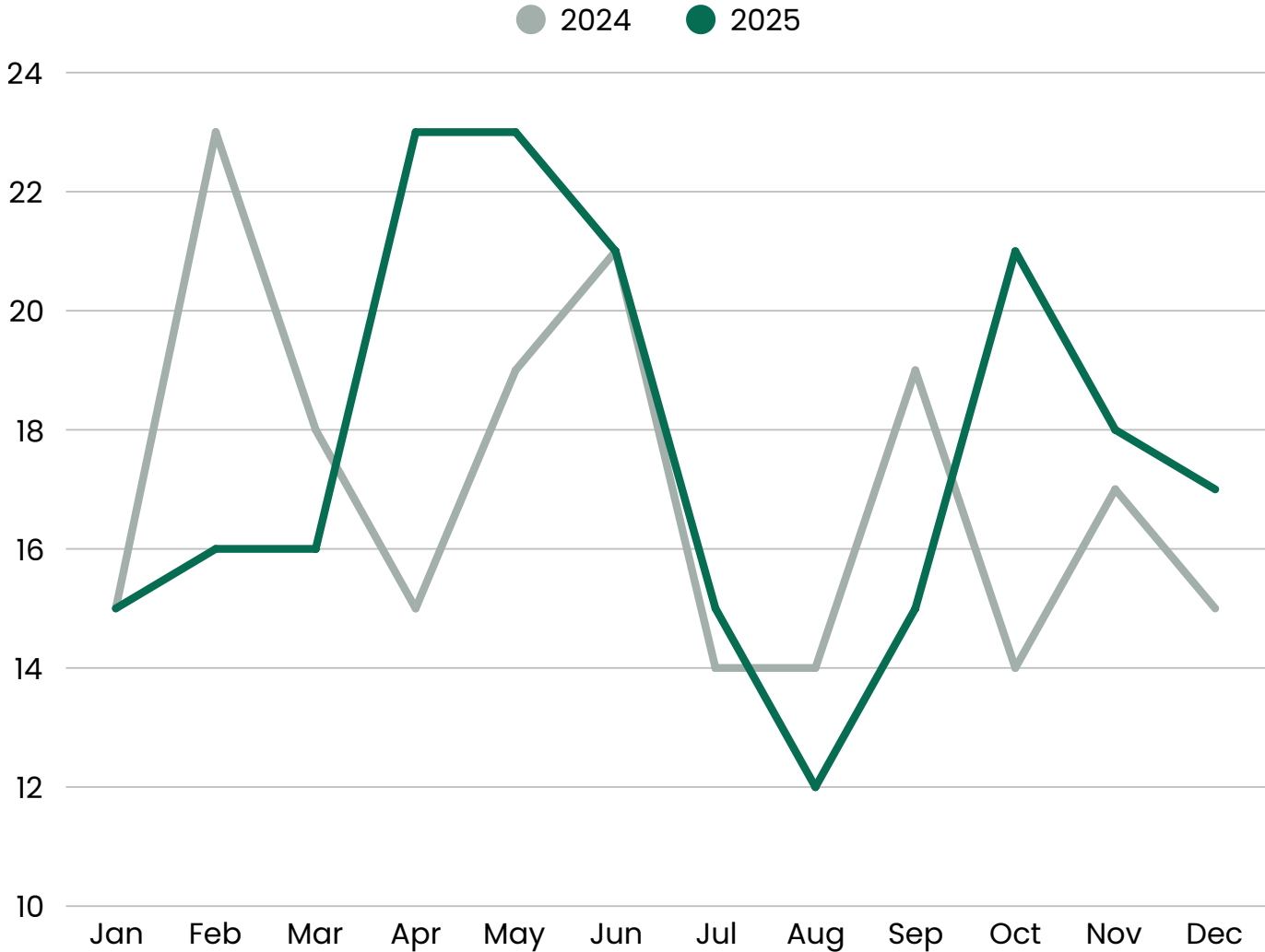
The data regarding overdoses was obtained by using the “charts” function in Epicenter and selecting the “suspected drug overdose” variable. Not all Emergency Department visits categorized as overdoses are the result of illicit substances. Some are the result of accidental double-dosing of medications, adverse reactions to medications, accidental mixing of incompatible over-the-counter medicines, and concerns about poison exposure.

Overdose visit data was intended to capture only accidental overdoses. For that reason, the data was manually filtered to eliminate any visits that indicated the following:

- SH/Self Harm
- SI/Suicidal Ideation
- SA/Suicide Attempt
- Intentional overdose
- Pink/PINK/“Pink slip”

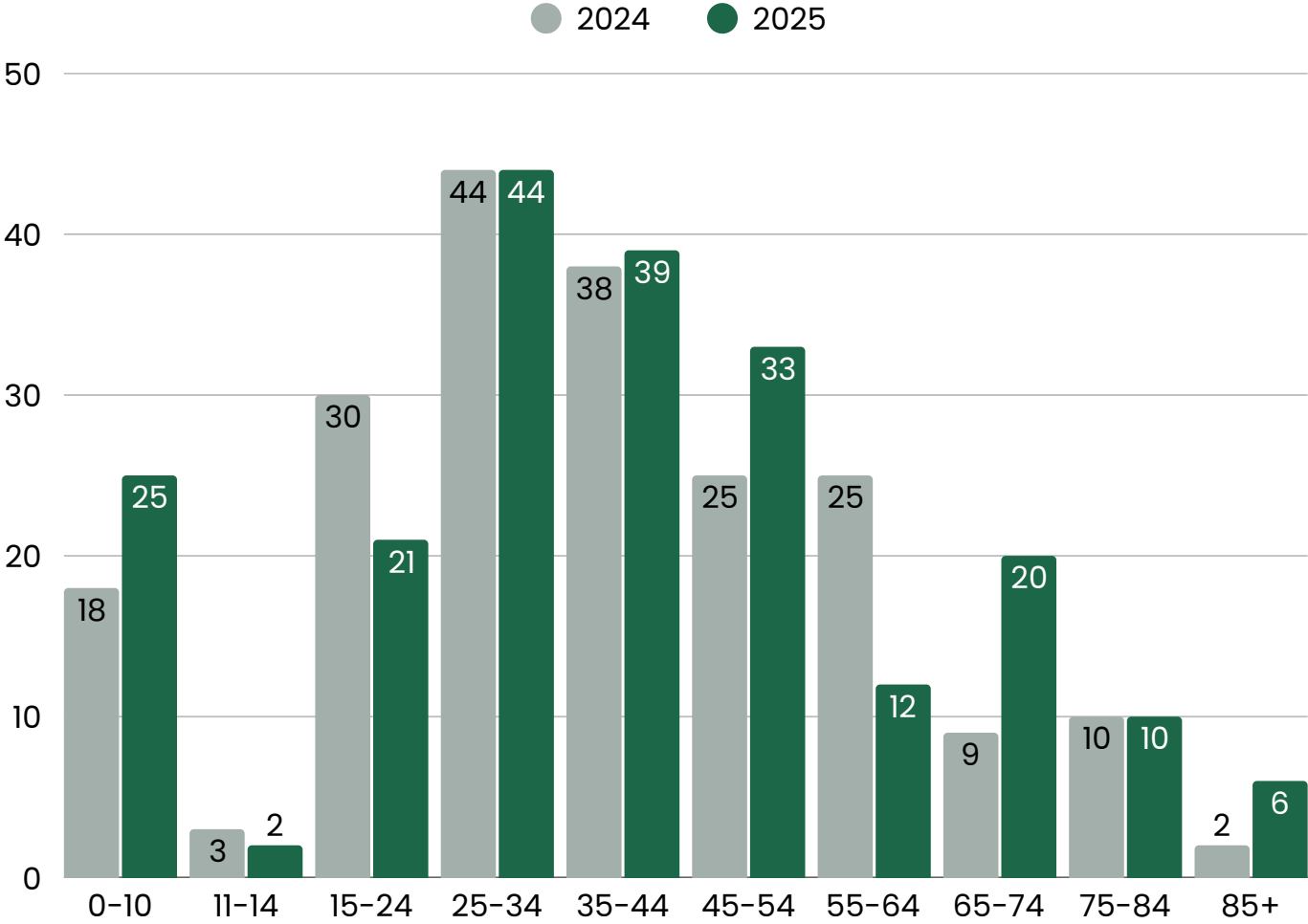
The data regarding self harm/suicidal ideation/suicide attempts was also obtained by using the “charts” function in Epicenter, selecting the “self harm” and “suicidal ideation” variables. All visits for suicide attempts were captured under one or both of those variables. After extraction, no filtering was needed.

# Monthly Emergency Department Visits for Unintentional Overdoses



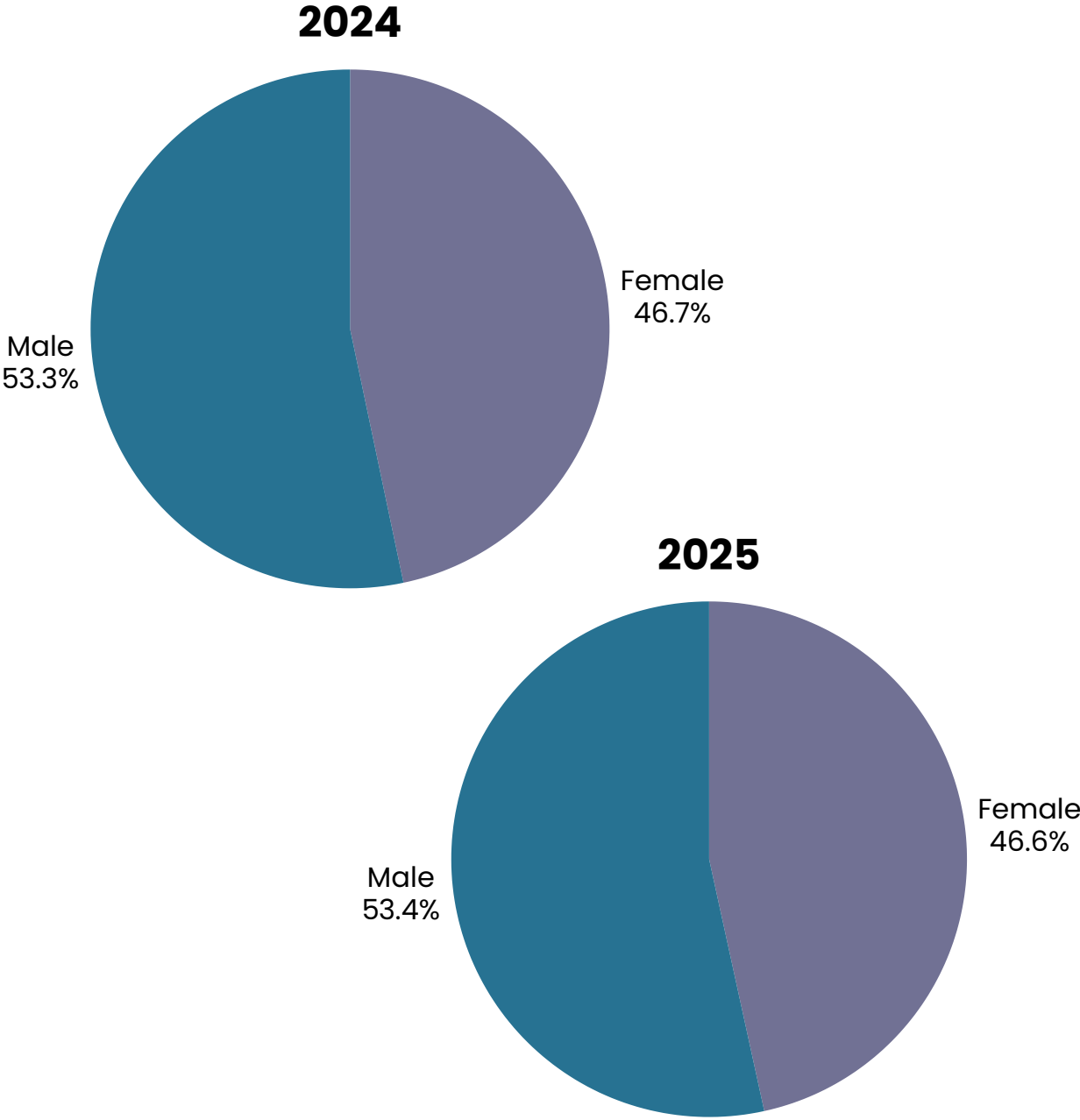
A chart showing the number of visits by Portage County residents to any emergency room each month for an unintentional overdose. The grey line indicates visits from 2024, and the dark green line indicates visits from 2025. For both years, monthly visits appear to increase and decrease in a cyclical manner. Specifically, in 2025, there is a very sharp decrease in visits from May to August, then a sharp increase following that and ending in October. The reason behind these cyclical trends is unknown.

# Emergency Department Visits for Unintentional Overdoses by Age Group



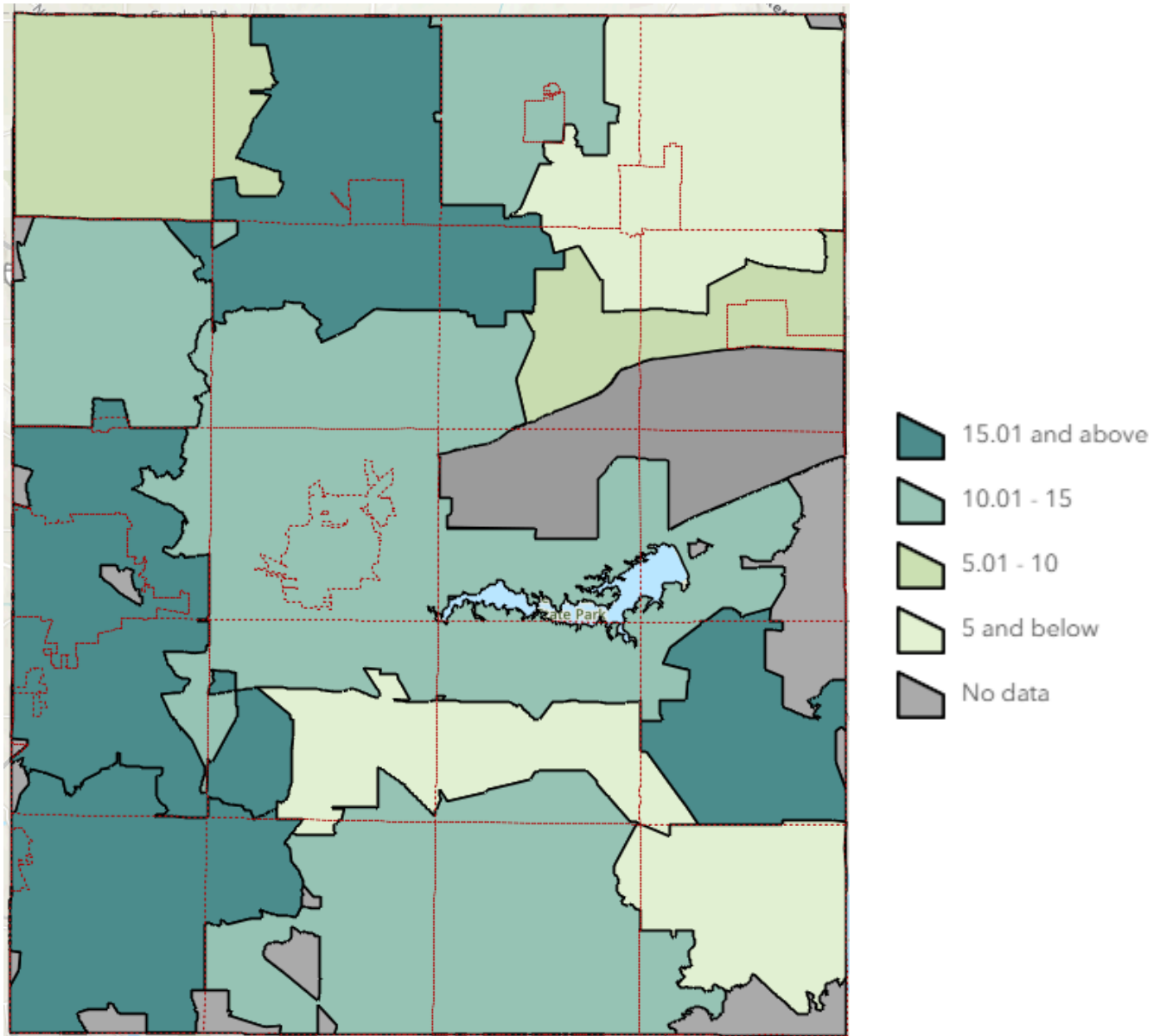
A chart showing the number of visits by Portage County residents of various age groups to any emergency room for an unintentional overdose. The grey bars indicate visits from 2024, and the dark green bars indicate visits from 2025. The largest changes from 2024 to 2025 are seen in the following age groups: 10 and younger, 15-24, 45-54, 55-64, and 65-74. Middle-aged adults (25-54) had the highest number of visits in 2025. This group also had a high number of overdose deaths in 2025. The 10 years old and younger group also had a high number of visits. Accidental ingestions by children will be addressed in Portage County's new 2026-2028 CHIP.

# Emergency Department Visits for Unintentional Overdoses by Sex



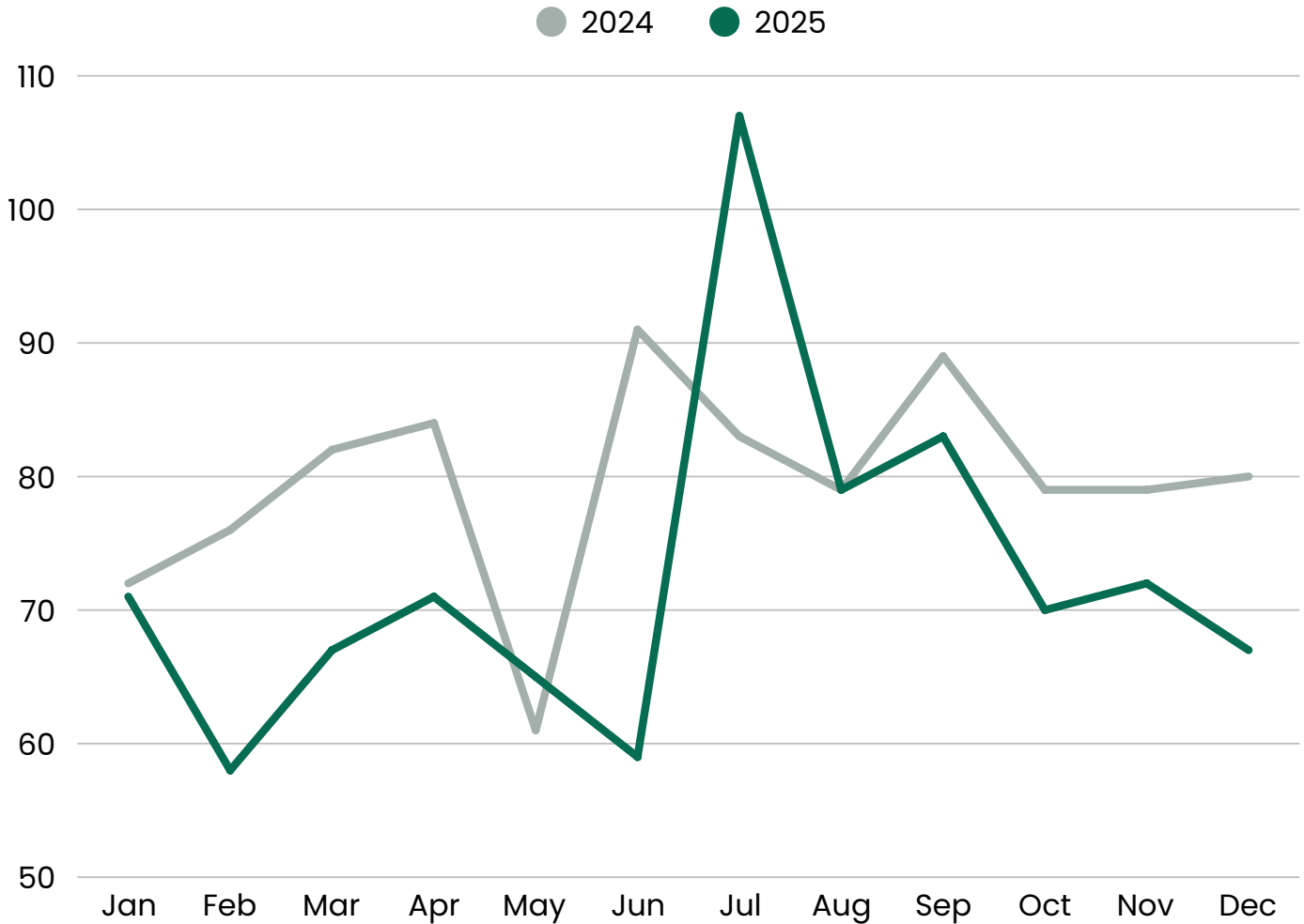
In both 2024 and 2025, slightly more males than females visited emergency departments for unintentional overdoses. There was very little change in the proportion of visits by each sex from 2024 to 2025.

## Emergency Department Visit Rates for Unintentional Overdoses by Zipcode



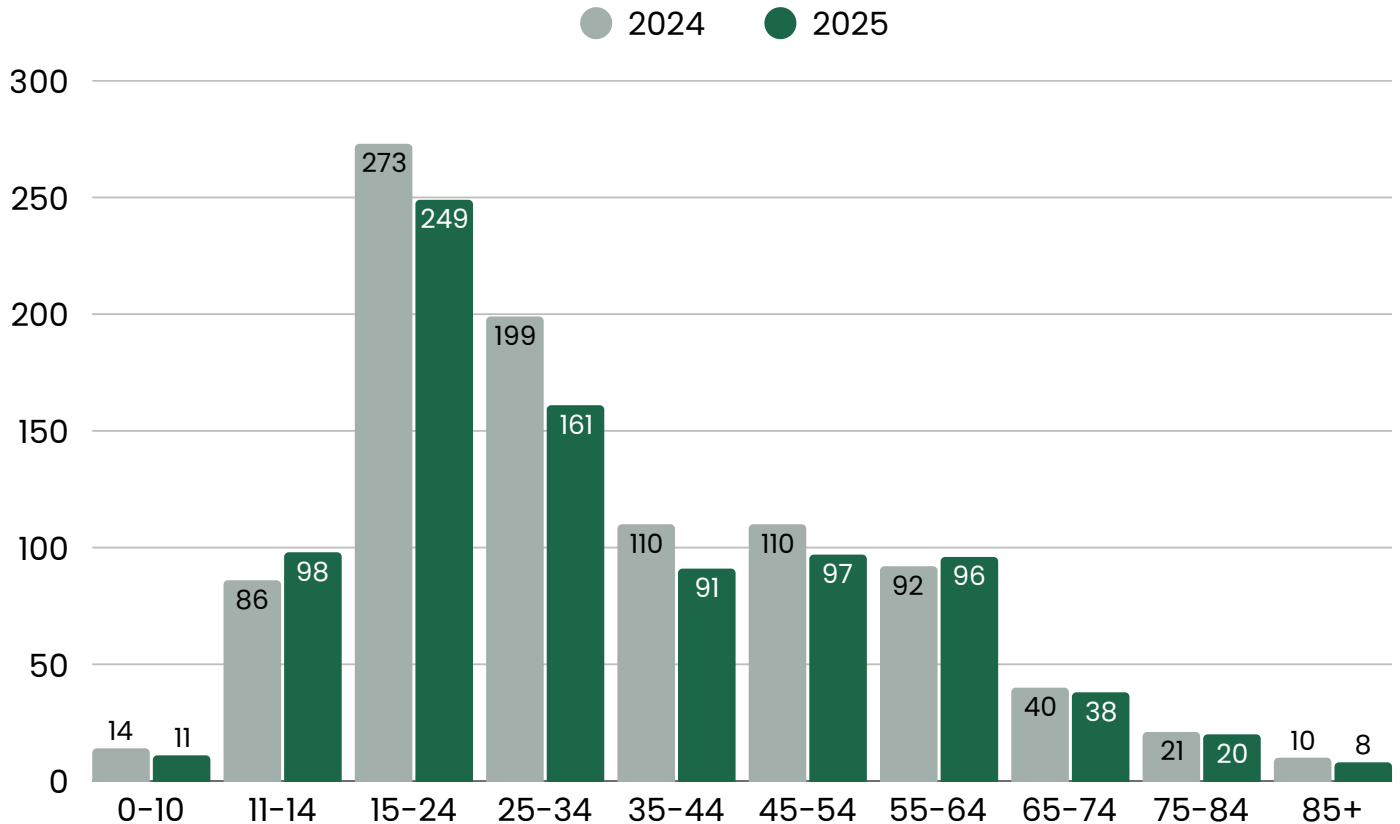
A map displaying the rate (per 10,000 people) of visits to any emergency department for unintentional overdose by residents of each zipcode in 2025. The zipcodes with the highest number of visits to emergency departments for unintentional overdoses could be targeted for substance use education and outreach in 2026.

## Monthly Emergency Department Visits for Mental Health Complaints



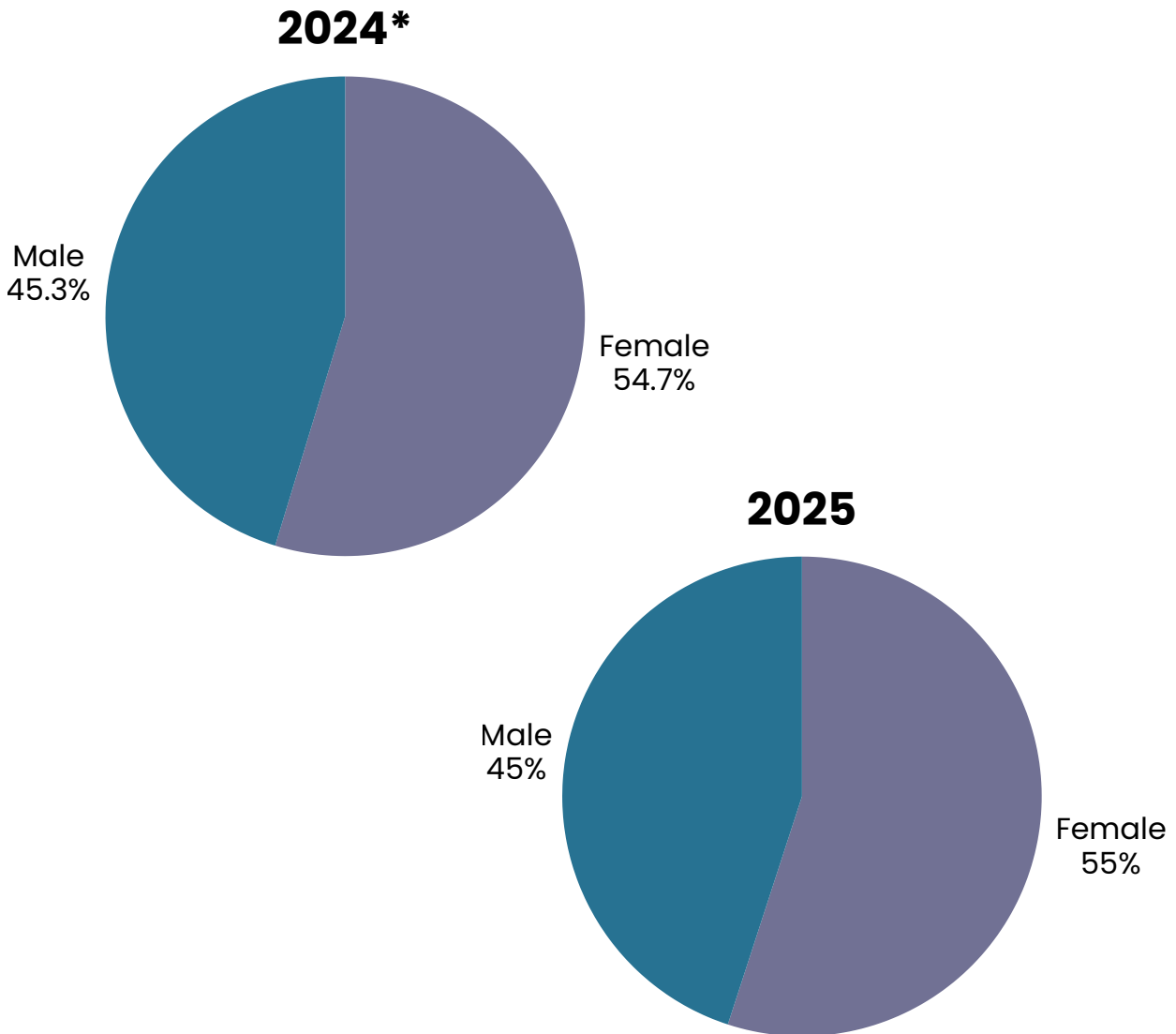
A chart showing the monthly number of visits by Portage County residents to any emergency room for self harm, suicidal ideation, or a suicide attempt. The grey line indicates visits from 2024, and the dark green line indicates visits from 2025. For both years, but especially during 2025, visit numbers are highest during spring and summer. People may assume mental health is worse in the winter due to lack of sunlight. However, the data shown here do not support that idea. Make sure to check in with your loved ones about their mental health all year long, not just during the winter.

## Emergency Department Visits for Mental Health Complaints by Age Group



A chart showing the number of visits by Portage County residents of various age groups to any emergency room for self harm, suicidal ideation, or a suicide attempt. The grey bars indicate visits from 2024, and the dark green bars indicate visits from 2025. The trend was similar across both years - adolescents and young adults (ages 15-34) visited emergency rooms for suicide-related concerns more frequently than other age groups. For information on how PCHD is working with community partners to address the issue of youth suicide, see the "Youth Suicide Prevention Grant" section of this report. Additionally, there were quite a few visits reported for the 35-44, 45-54, and 55-64 age groups. This group, especially men in this age group, accounted for many of the suicide deaths in 2025. Addressing social isolation and reducing the stigma surrounding mental health in middle-aged adult males will be important to reducing the number of emergency department visits for mental health issues in future years.

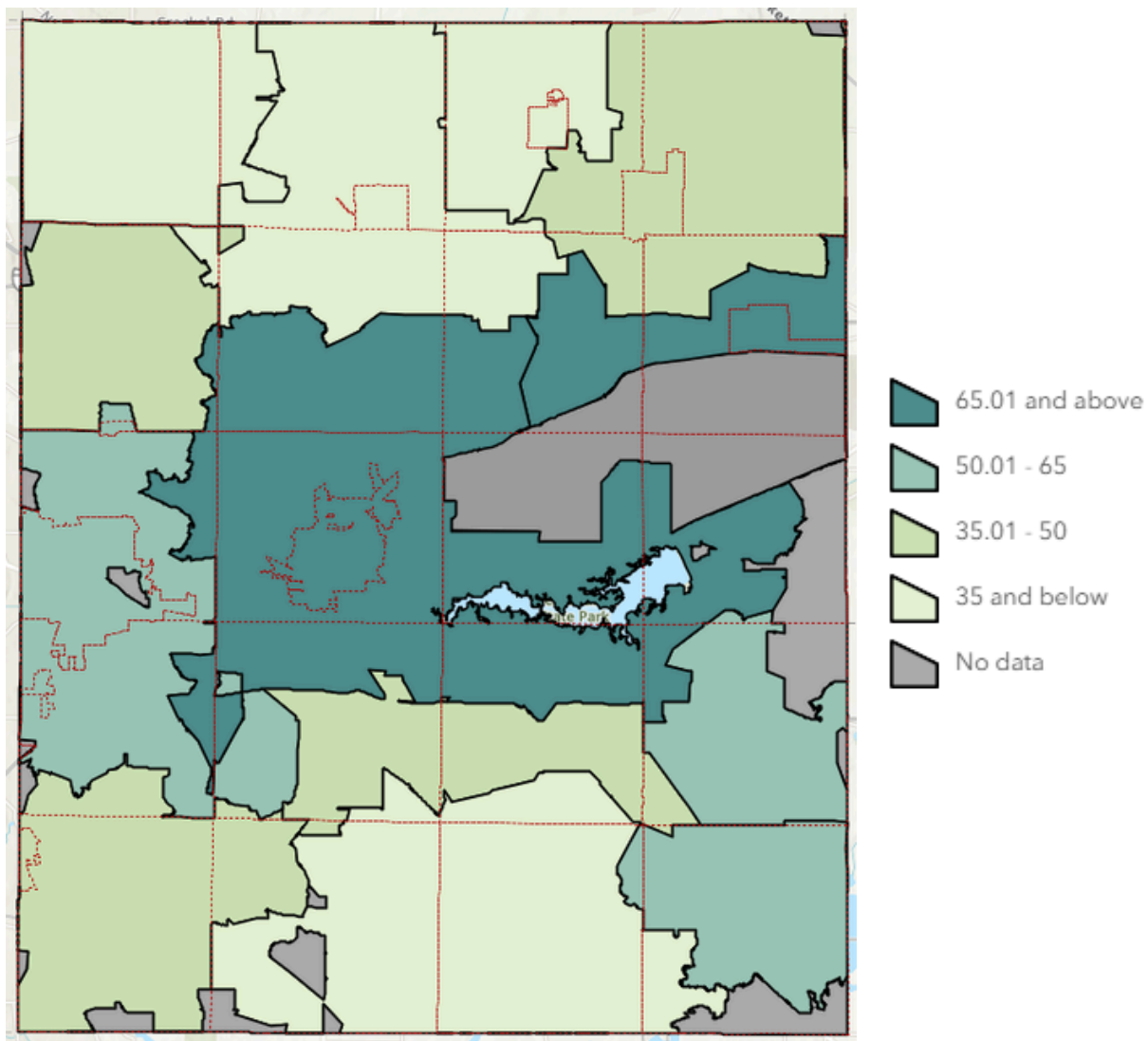
## Emergency Department Visits for Mental Health Complaint by Sex



*\*Not shown: In 2024, one individual for which sex was not reported visited an emergency department for a suicide-related concern.*

In both 2024 and 2025, slightly more females than males visited emergency departments for self harm, suicidal ideation, or a suicide attempt. There was very little change in the proportion of visits by each sex from 2024 to 2025.

## Emergency Department Visit Rates for Suicide-related concerns by Zipcode



A map displaying the rate (per 10,000 people) of visits to an emergency department for self-harm, suicidal ideation or a suicide attempt by residents of each zip code in 2025. This rate is highest for zipcodes 44266 and 44288, which correspond to Ravenna and Windham respectively. Areas within these zipcode have been designated by ODH as having a high social vulnerability index (SVI). According to ODH, high SVI scores correspond to a decreased "... ability to prevent human suffering and financial loss in a disaster." In other words, many individuals living in these two zipcodes face persistent stressors that can heavily influence mental wellbeing, such as living in poverty, living with a disability, or housing stress. It will be beneficial to address these underlying issues by connecting Ravenna and Windham residents with needed medical or housing services.

# VITAL STATISTICS DATA

The following pages of this report contain information about Portage County resident deaths by suicide (ICD codes X60–X84) or overdose (ICD codes X40–X44). The data reported in this section is from the DataOhio platform, and it is derived from death certificates filed with the State of Ohio. Only deaths of Portage County residents are included in this section, regardless of where the deaths occurred.

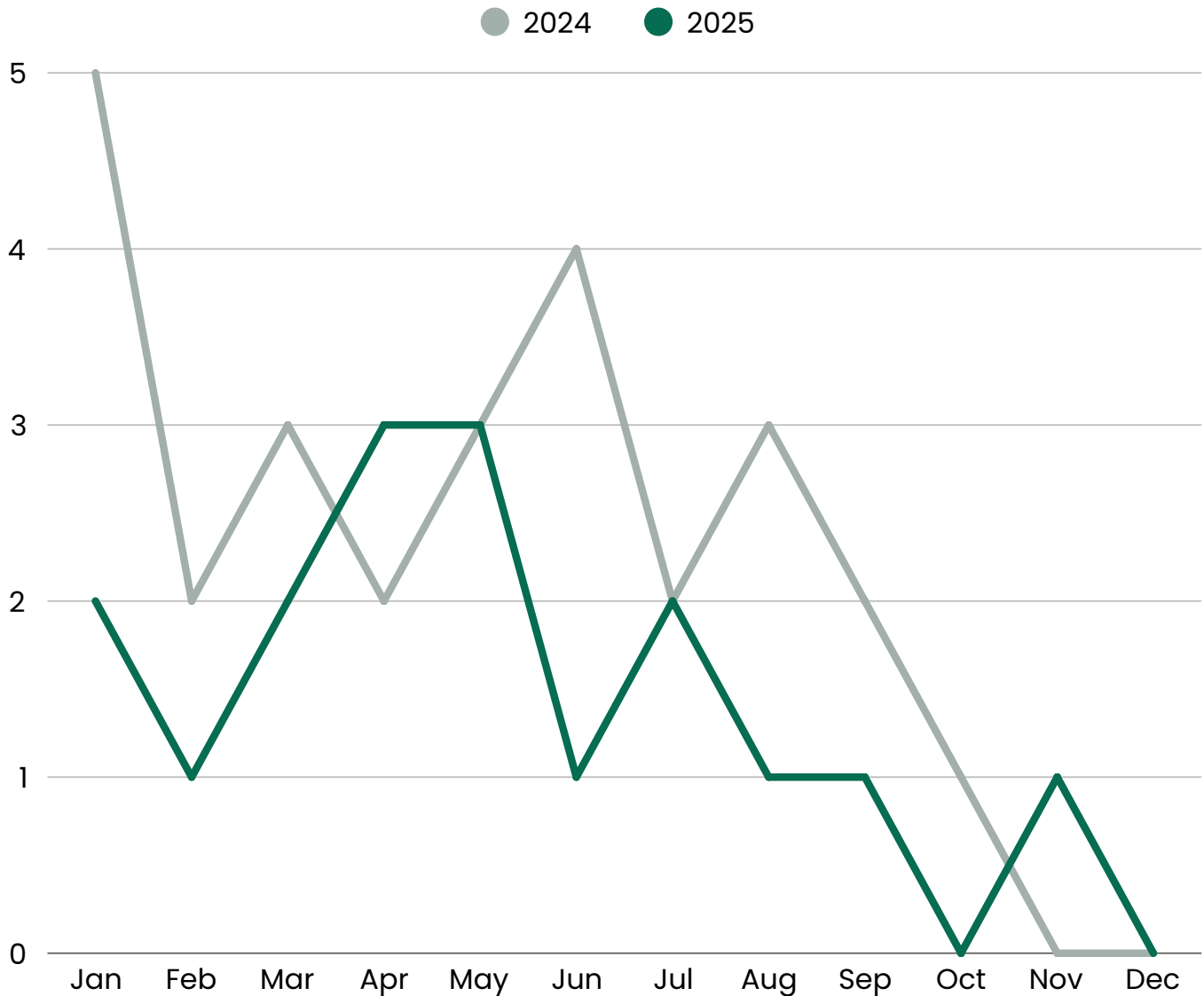
The overdose deaths reported in this section of the report are limited to non-alcohol, toxicity deaths only. In other words, individuals that died due to a car crash while driving under the influence, or individuals who died from alcohol poisoning are not reported as overdose deaths in this section.

Some figure captions in this section of the report reference a 2020 editorial published in the American Journal of Men’s Health by Benita Chatmon (Assistant Dean for Clinical Nursing Education, School of Nursing, LSU) entitled “Males and Mental Health Stigma.” The full citation for the editorial is below:

*Chatmon BN. Males and Mental Health Stigma. Am J Mens Health. 2020 Jul-Aug;14(4):1557988320949322. doi: 10.1177/1557988320949322. PMID: 32812501; PMCID: PMC7444121.*

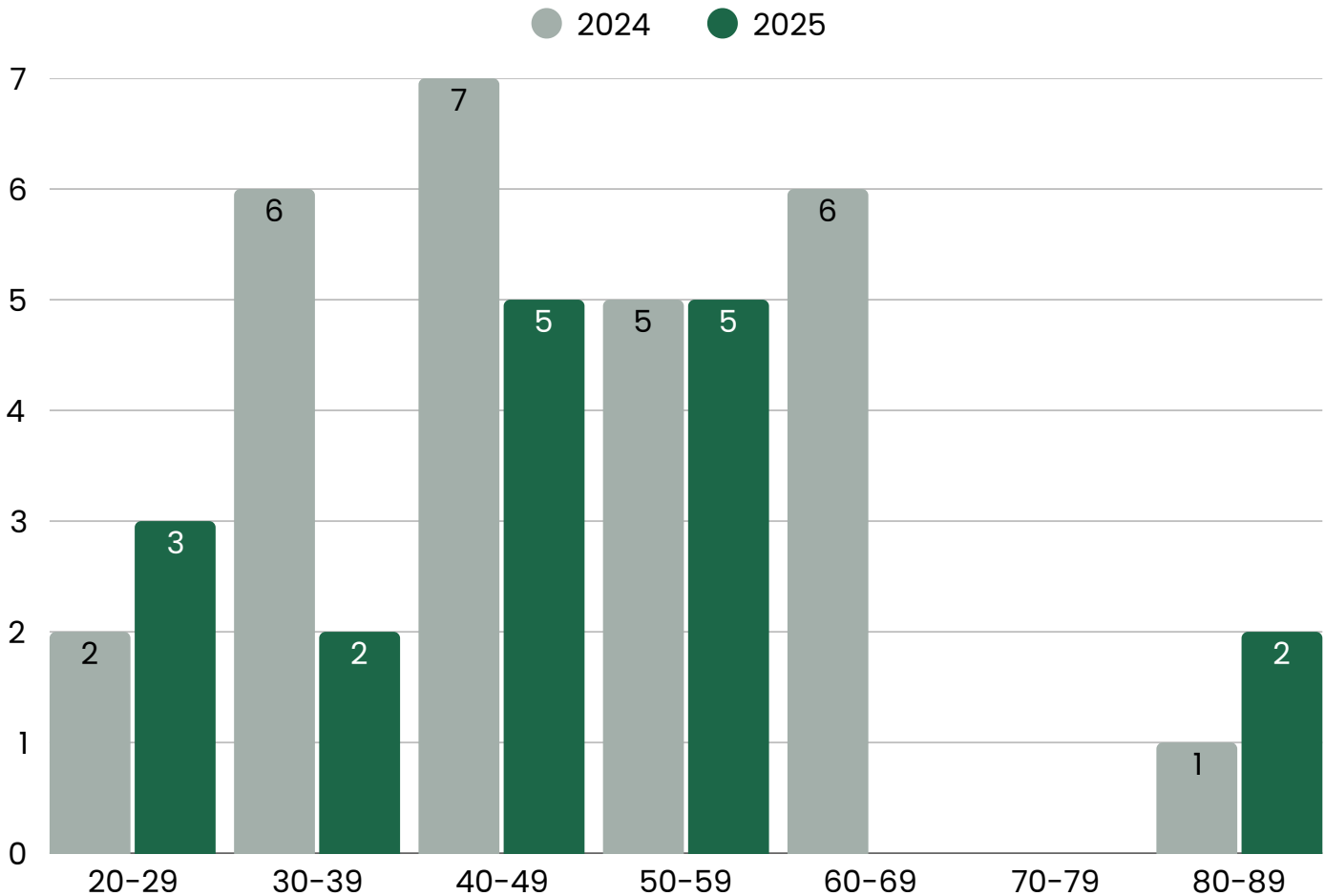
Disclaimer: “Overdose death” is a subjective term. The Portage County Coroner’s office and the Ohio Department of Health’s Bureau of Vital Statistics define an overdose death differently. Furthermore, their reports differ in scope. This is reflected in the variable estimates of the number of suicide and overdose deaths between the two datasets.

# Monthly Overdose Deaths



A chart showing monthly Portage County resident deaths due to overdoses. The grey lines indicate deaths from 2024, and the dark green lines indicate deaths from 2025. The decrease in overdose deaths from 2024 to 2025 is noticeable when examining this chart. Overdose deaths have been decreasing across all of Ohio over the past few years, probably due, in large part, to harm reduction efforts. Harm reduction activities were extensively pursued by PCHD and other Portage County community agencies during the 2023-2025 CHIP cycle. Clearly, these measures are helping to positively impact our community.

## Overdose Deaths by Age Group



A chart showing deaths due to overdoses of Portage County residents in various age groups. The grey bars indicate deaths from 2024, and the dark green bars indicate deaths from 2025. Overdose deaths decreased in almost all age groups from 2024 to 2025; the largest decrease was in the 60-69 age group, which had 6 overdose deaths in 2024 and none in 2025. Overdose deaths unfortunately increased slightly in the 20-29 and 80-89 age groups. In 2025, most individuals who died of overdoses were middle-aged adults 40 to 59 years old. The reason for this is not clear. Naloxone and fentanyl test strips have become more accessible than ever in the last few years. There can be stigma attached to carrying these items. However, the risk of opioid overdose is present even when using prescription opioids, or taking something “harmless” from an unknown source. Carrying naloxone or test strips is a great way to keep yourself, and others around you, safe.

## Overdose Deaths by Sex and Race

Demographic Category	2024	2025
<i>Female</i>	4	8
<i>Male</i>	23	9
<i>Single race, white</i>	25	16
<i>Multiracial or not white</i>	2	1

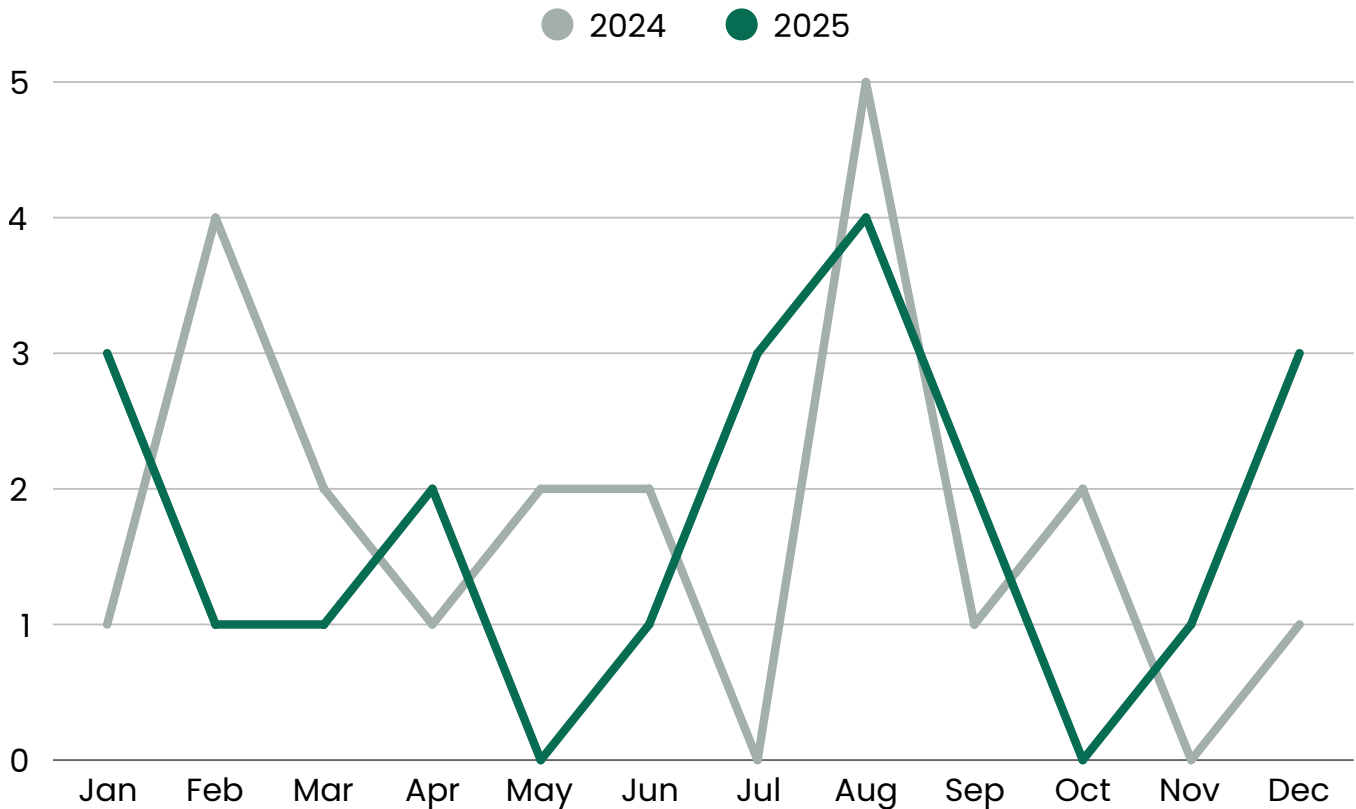
A table showing overdose deaths of Portage County residents, categorized by sex and racial group. In 2024, more men died from overdoses than women; in fact, in 2024 approximately 85% of decedents were male. As stated by Chatmon (2020), “men are two to three times more likely to misuse drugs than women.” Chatmon continues on to state that statistics like these, “reinforce the notion that males are less likely to seek help and more likely than women to turn to dangerous, unhealthy behaviors.” However, the numbers of men and women who died from overdoses in 2025 were almost equal; this is a dramatic shift without a clear explanation. In the last two years, many more white individuals have died from overdoses in much higher numbers compared to multiracial or non-white individuals. Approximately 95% of Portage County residents identify as “white, alone” on the United States census. Thus, overdose deaths of members in the racial groups specified above are fairly proportional to the racial makeup of Portage County.

## Substances Involved in Overdose Deaths

Substance	2024	2025
<i>Benzodiazepines</i>	2	1
<i>Cocaine</i>	7	5
<i>Ethanol</i>	4	2
<i>Fentanyl or analogues</i>	17	7
<i>Methamphetamine</i>	5	6
<i>Prescription opiates (including methadone)</i>	22	12
<i>Other synthetic narcotic</i>	17	7

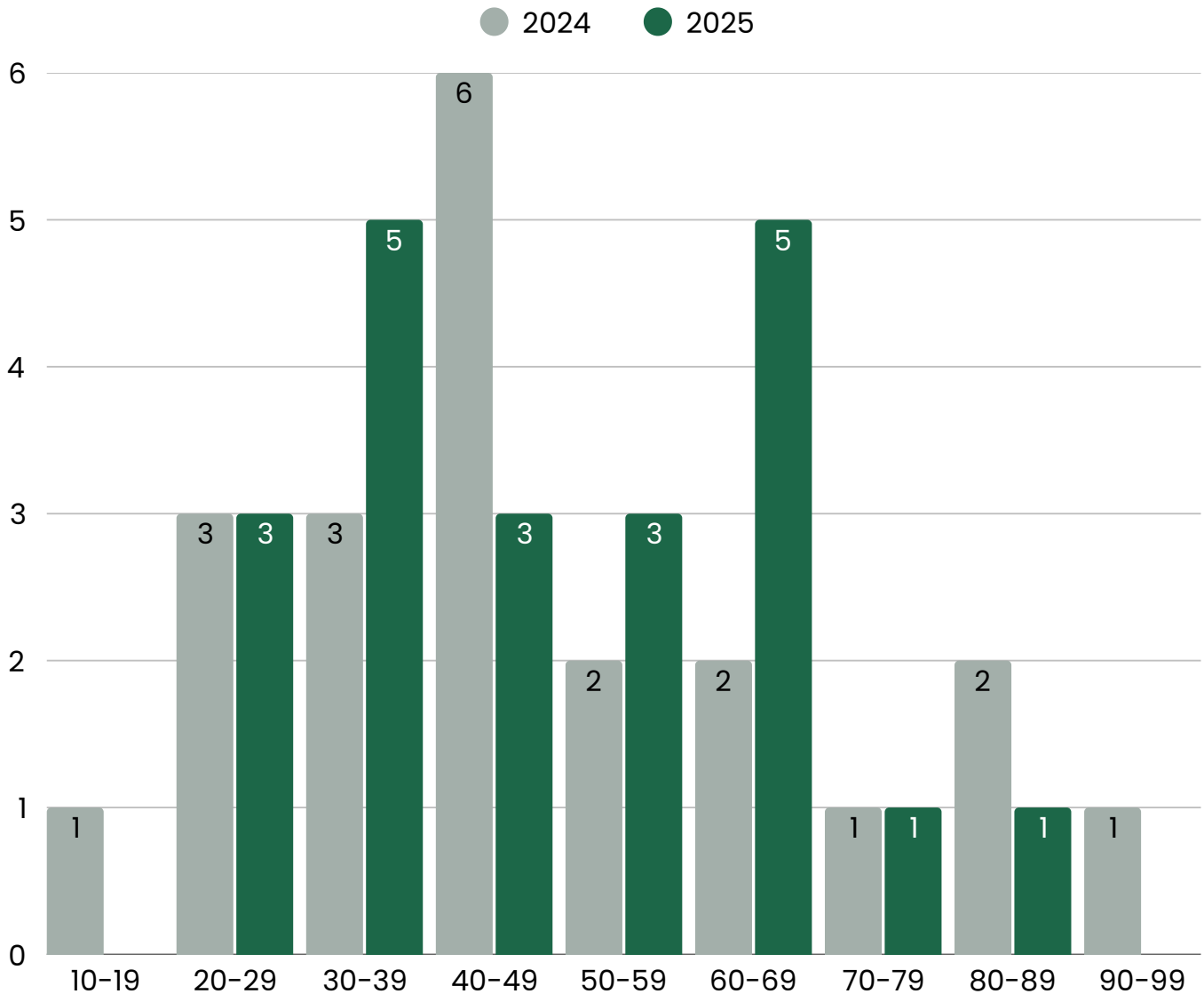
A table showing the number of overdose deaths in which a given substance was involved. Many overdose deaths involved multiple substances. As explained earlier in this report, fentanyl, opiates and narcotics are all opioids. That said, in both 2024 and 2025, most overdose deaths involved opioids. Opioid overdoses can be reversed by naloxone. This is why it is so vital to have naloxone readily available if you or someone you love uses opioids, including prescribed medications. For more information on how to obtain naloxone, see the Project DAWN section of this report.

# Monthly Suicide Deaths



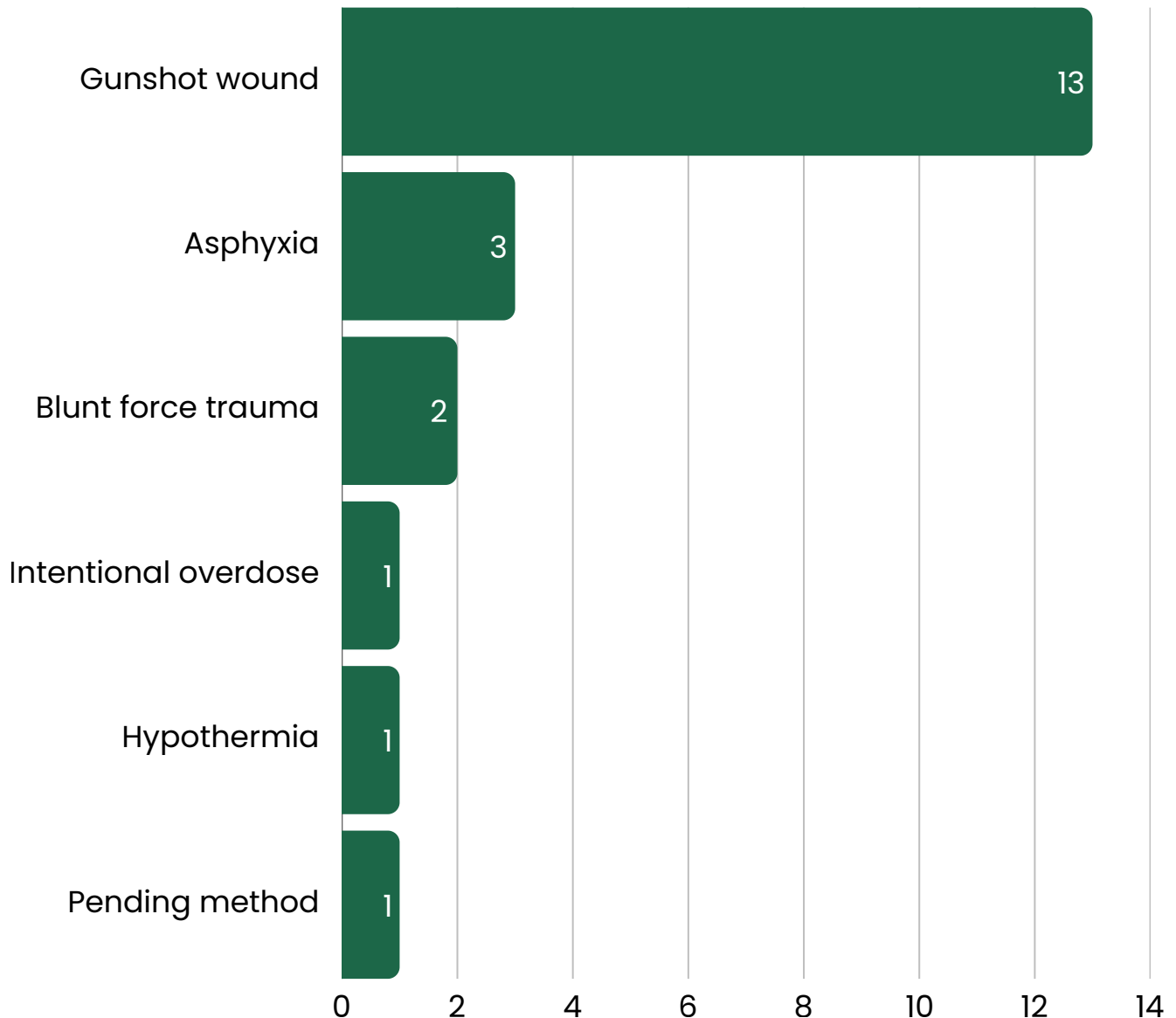
A chart showing monthly deaths by suicide of Portage County residents. The grey line indicates deaths from 2024, and the dark green line indicates deaths from 2025. There is no apparent trend of suicide deaths over time based on this graph. In fact, the number of deaths seems sporadic from month to month. For example, in 2025 there were no suicide deaths in October; but there were four death in just the month prior, which was the highest number of suicide deaths in a single month during 2025. As with emergency visit data for suicide-related concerns, this information demonstrates that mental health crises are not predictable based on the time of year. It is a good idea to observe your loved ones all year long for signs of mental distress, not just during “especially difficult times,” such as holidays or winter months.

# Suicide Deaths by Age Group



A chart showing deaths by suicide of Portage County residents belonging to different age groups. The grey bars indicate deaths from 2024, and the dark green bars indicate deaths from 2025. Unfortunately, some age groups saw more suicide deaths in 2025 than in 2024, like the 30-39, 50-59, and 60-69 age groups. On a positive note, the 40-49 age group showed a decrease in suicide deaths from 2024 to 2025, and the 10-19 age group had zero suicide deaths this past year. No age group stands out as having markedly more suicide deaths than others in 2025.

## Suicide Deaths by Method



A bar chart displaying the number of suicide deaths resulting from the given methods. By far, firearms are the most common means of suicide deaths. For that reason, several Portage County agencies, including PCHD, distributed gun locks in 2025. Locking up firearms is an important step in ensuring they are not used by a loved one to harm themselves. If you need gun locks, you can contact PCHD, MHRB or KCHD.

## Suicide Deaths by Race and Sex

Demographic Category	2024	2025
<i>Female</i>	2	2
<i>Male</i>	19	19
<i>Single race, white</i>	19	21
<i>Multiracial or not white</i>	2	0

A table showing deaths by suicide of Portage County residents, categorized by sex and racial group. A majority of Portage County residents who died by suicide in 2024 and 2025 were men. Chamon (2020) writes, “depression and suicide are ranked as a leading cause of death among men.” She also points out that men die by suicide at a rate four times higher than women. Portage County shows a different statistic for the last two years: men die by suicide at a rate almost ten times higher than women. Given our that Portage County has a much smaller sample size compared to an entire state or country, this information should be considered with acknowledgment of its limitations. As discussed earlier in this report, approximately 95% of Portage County residents identify as “white, alone” on the United States census. As with overdose deaths, deaths by suicide of members in the racial groups specified above are fairly proportional to the racial makeup of Portage County.

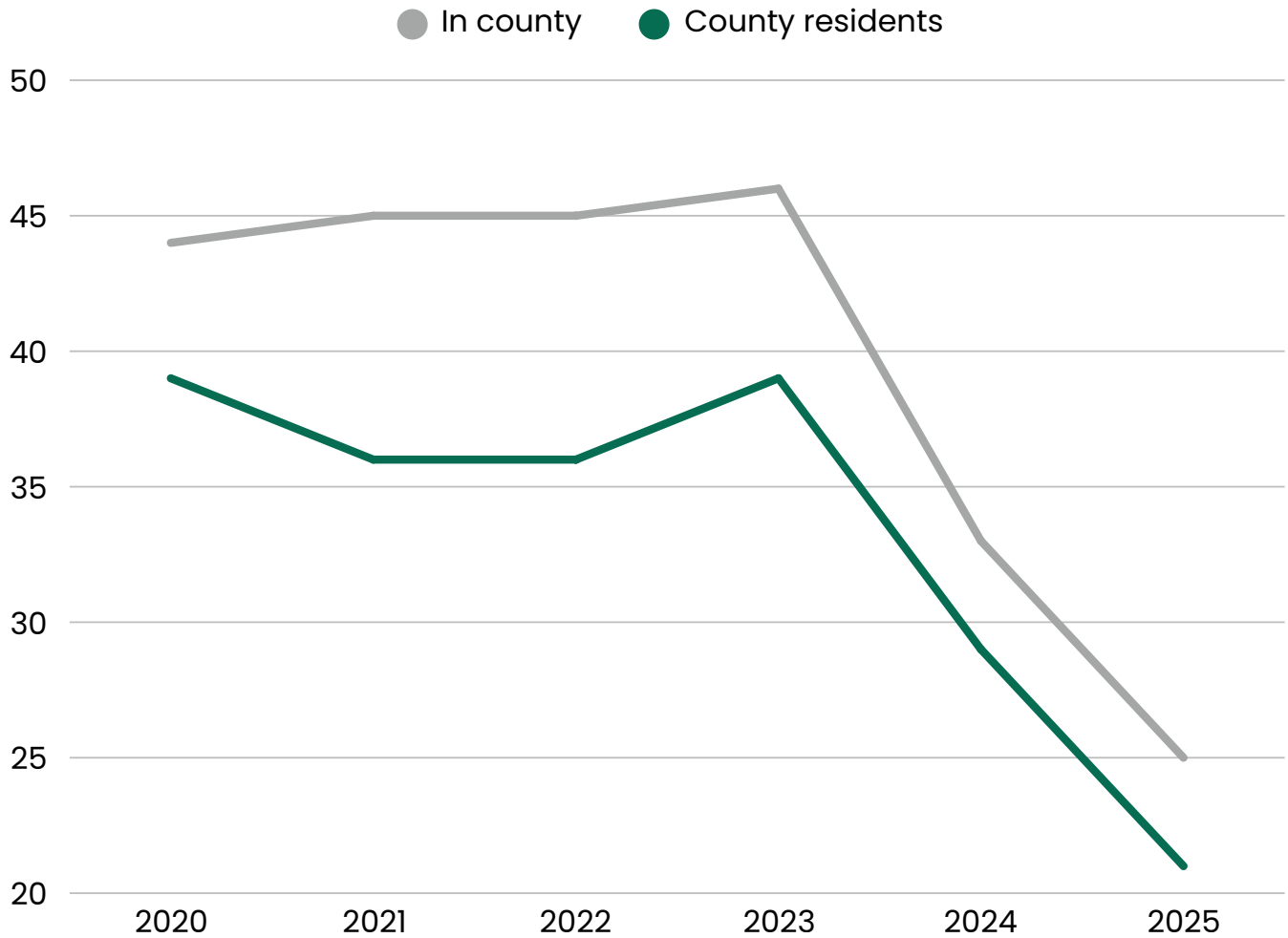
# CORONER'S REPORT DATA

The following pages of this report summarize information obtained from the Portage County Coroner's report. PCHD thanks the Coroner's office and MHRB for providing this valuable data source.

The Coroner's office signs death certificates for individuals pronounced dead in Portage County, and as such, the Coroner's report contains overdose and suicide deaths that occurred in Portage County regardless of the individual's place of residence. Deaths that occurred within Portage County are shown below in grey. Deaths of Portage County residents that occurred within Portage County are shown below in green.

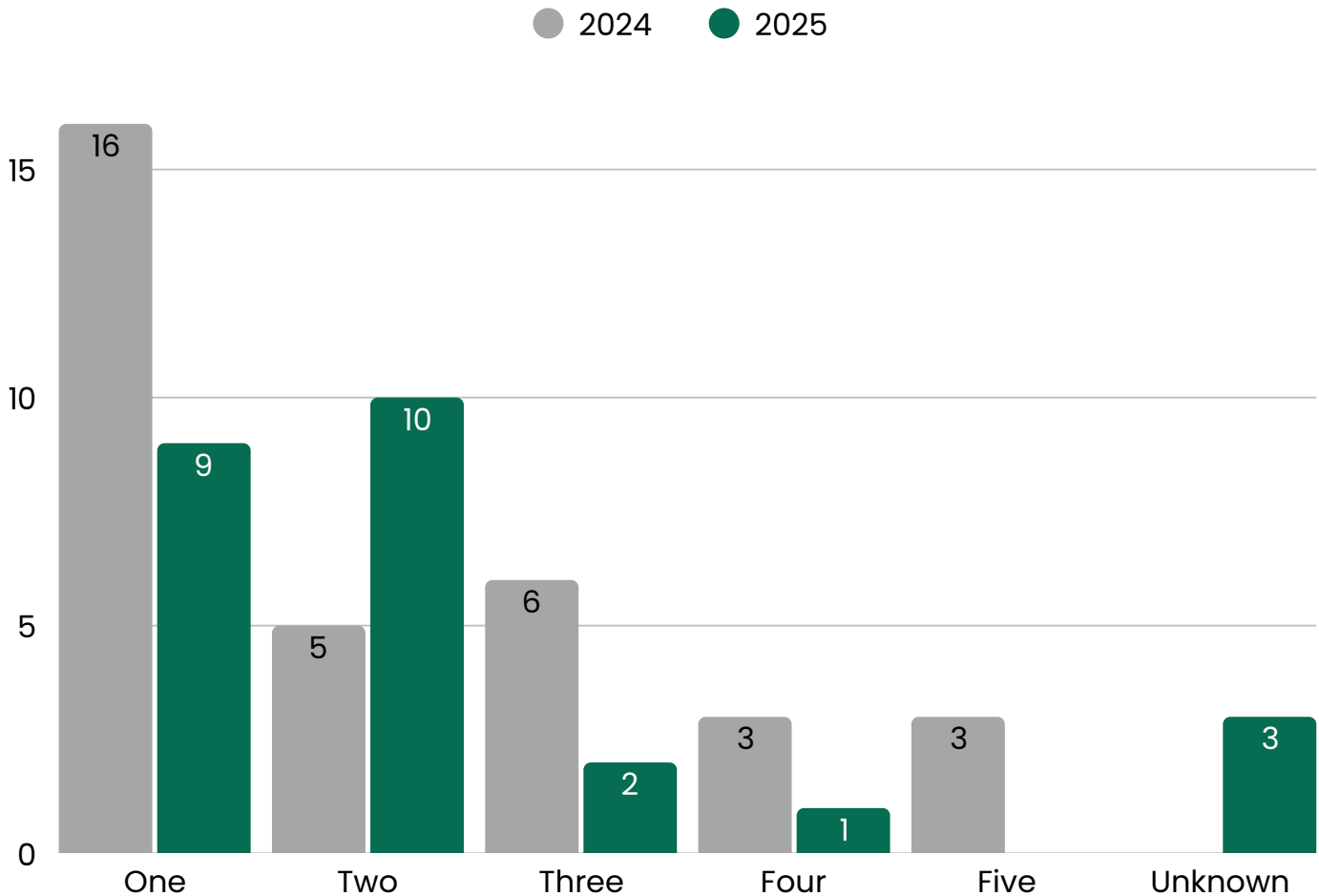
Disclaimer: "Overdose death" is a subjective term. The Portage County Coroner's office and the Ohio Department of Health's Bureau of Vital Statistics define an overdose death differently. Furthermore, their reports differ in scope. This is reflected in the variable estimates of the number of suicide and overdose deaths between the two datasets.

## Annual Overdose Deaths 2020-2025



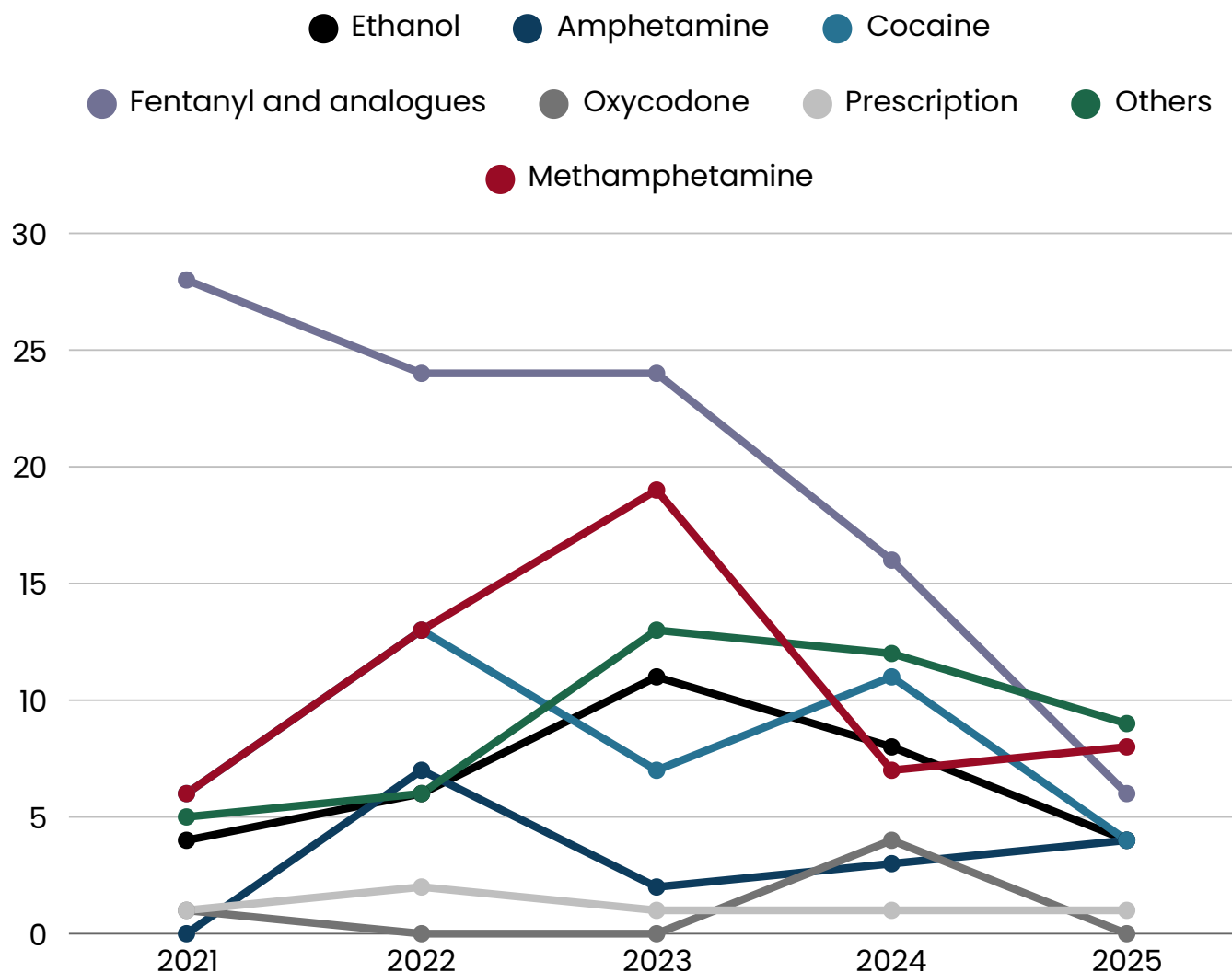
A chart showing overdose deaths from 2020-2025. Deaths that occurred within Portage County are shown in grey, and deaths of Portage County residents that occurred within Portage County are shown in green. Because many people use drugs at or near the location where the drugs were purchased, it is not unusual for individuals to overdose outside their county of residence. In 2025, Portage County experienced the lowest number of overdose deaths in the last six years. This may be the result of the aforementioned naloxone distribution efforts by several community agencies, including PCHD.

# Number of Substances Involved in Overdose Deaths



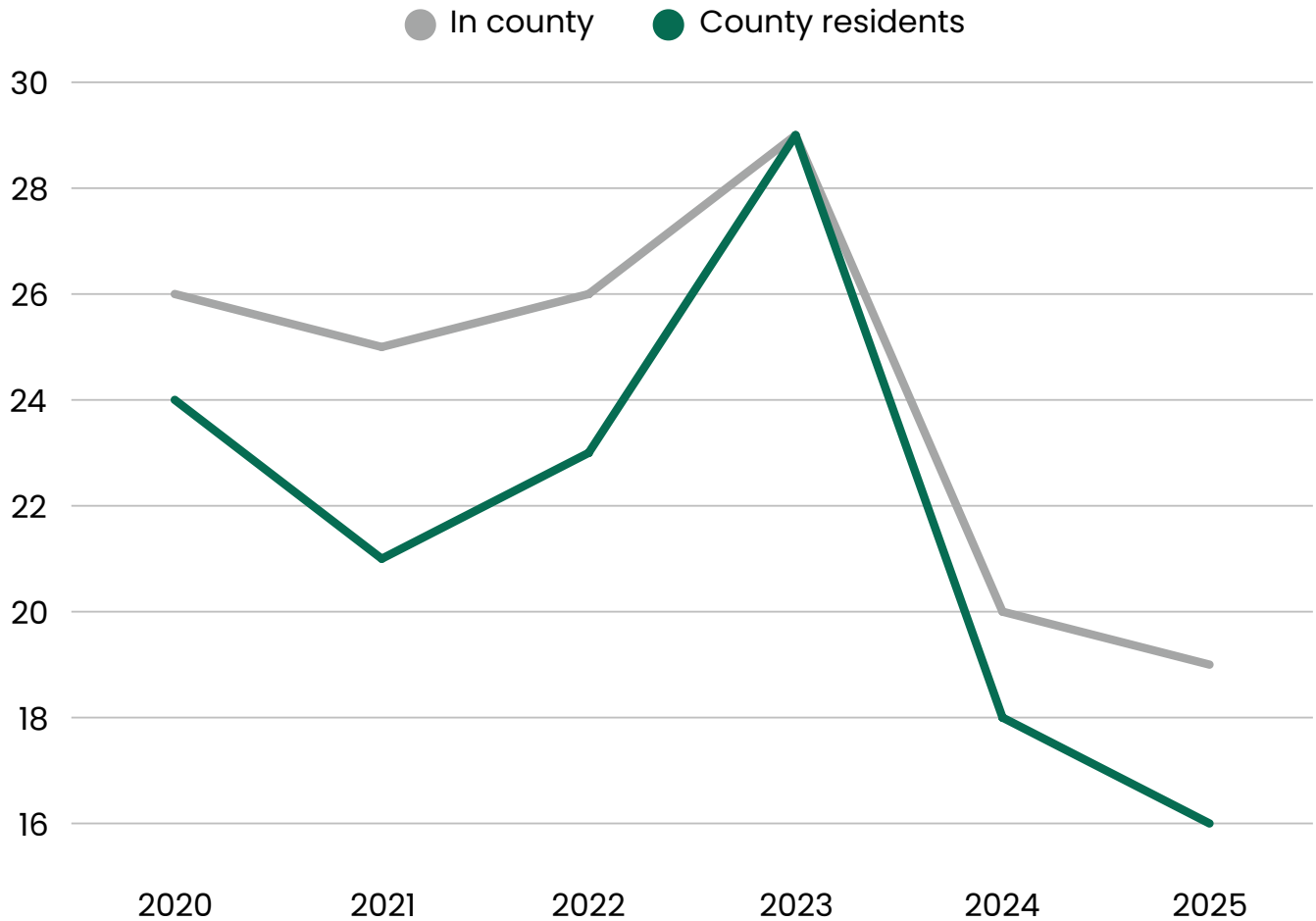
A chart showing the number of substances involved in overdose deaths. The grey bars indicate deaths from 2024, and the dark green bars indicate deaths from 2025. In 2024, the majority of overdose deaths involved one substance. In 2025, the number of overdose deaths involving one substance was almost equal to the number of deaths involving two substances. According to the CDC, “mixing drugs is never safe because the effects from combining drugs may be stronger and more unpredictable than one drug alone, and even deadly.” Furthermore, “mixing stimulants and depressants doesn’t balance or cancel them out. In fact, the results of combining drugs are unpredictable, often modifying or even masking the effects of one or both drugs. This may trick you into thinking that the drugs are not affecting you, making it easier to overdose.” For over-the-counter or prescription medications, read the labels very carefully and only take them as instructed to avoid drug interactions. If you have questions about what drugs can be taken together safely, make sure to ask your Primary Care Provider or pharmacist.

## 5-year trends: Substances Involved in Overdose Deaths



A chart showing the number of overdose deaths over the last five years that involved a given substance. One critical change is the decrease in fentanyl use among decedents; in 2025, methamphetamines were more commonly used by individuals who died from overdoses more frequently than fentanyl for the first time in the last five years. Another trend to note is the increase in the use of substances labeled “other” by decedents. In fact, in 2025, these “other substances” were the most commonly reported in individuals who died of overdoses, even more than fentanyl and methamphetamines. These “other substances” included methanol, cannabinoids, methadone, inhalants and xylezine.

## Annual Suicide Deaths 2020–2025



A chart showing deaths by suicide from 2020–2025. Deaths that occurred within Portage County are shown in grey, and deaths of Portage County residents that occurred within Portage County are shown in green. In 2023, there were slightly more deaths to suicide than in the previous years. However, there was a sharp decrease in the number of suicide deaths in 2024. There was a further decrease of suicide deaths from 2024 to 2025. Encouragingly, 2025 had the lowest number of suicide deaths in the last six years. There have been initiatives by several Portage County community agencies to address mental health, and specifically suicide, over the last few years. Signs of Suicide training, QPR training, gun lock distribution, sextortion trainings and more. We hope that that the decrease in deaths by suicide are the result of these efforts.