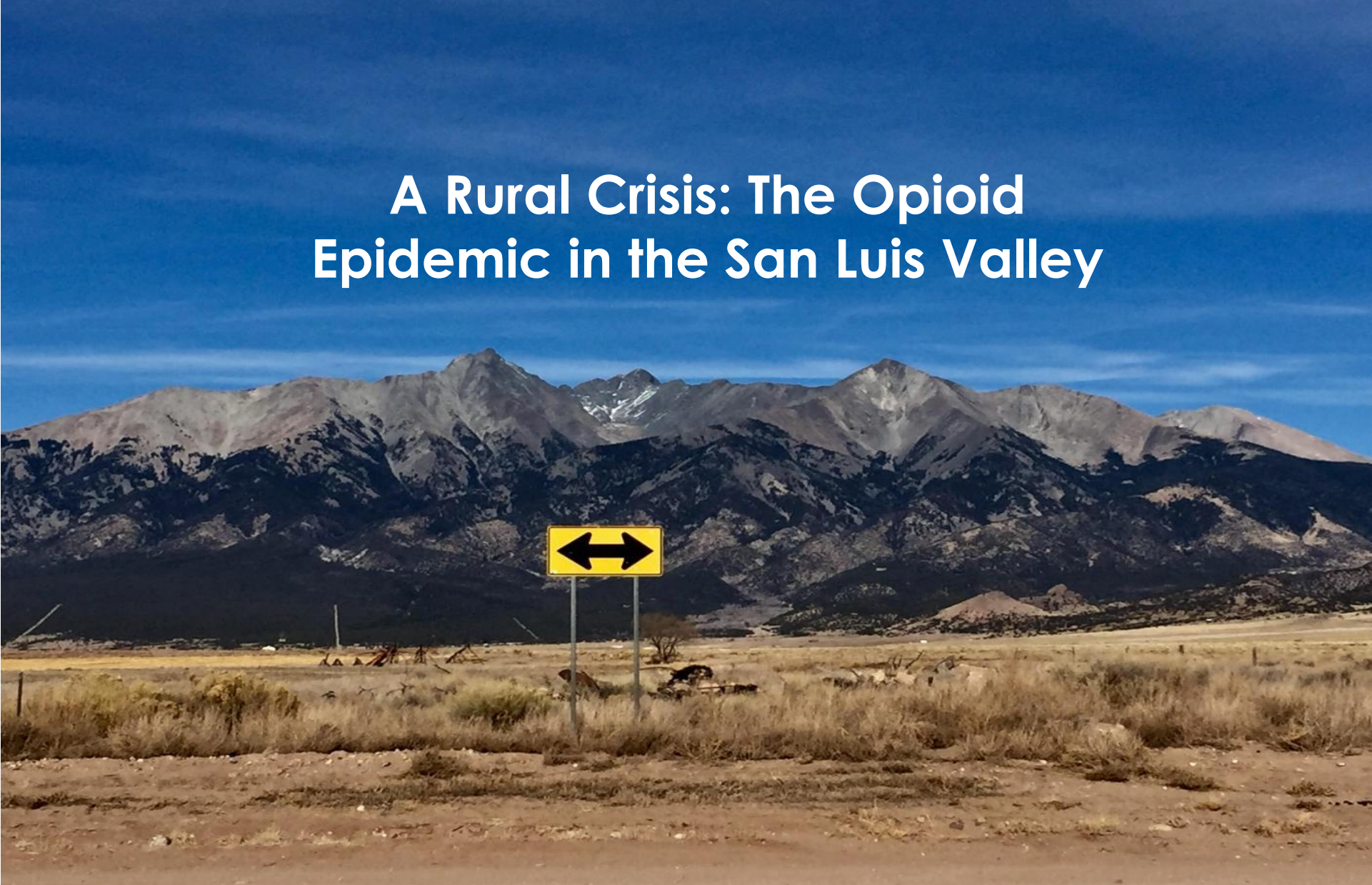


# A Rural Crisis: The Opioid Epidemic in the San Luis Valley



**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.  
*Your Health, Our Priority!*

*We Treat You Like Family*



# Collaborative Approach for Substance Use Disorder in the San Luis Valley

Emelin Martinez, FNP, MSN, MA  
Chief Medical Officer



*We Treat You Like Family*



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG



*We Treat You Like Family*



**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG

# San Luis Valley

Colorado's San Luis Valley thrives on its agricultural background and is nationally known for its potato production. Also flourishing in this high-mountain desert are cool weather crops such as lettuce, spinach, and quinoa.

Agriculture has long been the basis of the economy in the San Luis Valley. Unique in world topography, the elevation of the valley floor is 7,600 feet above sea level. The San Luis Valley is a large, flat intermountain valley that varies from 20 to 50 miles in width and is about 100 miles north to south. All crops are grown with irrigation water whose source is the abundant snow in the surrounding mountains.

*2019 Alamosa Convention & Visitors Bureau*



*We Treat You Like Family*



**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG

# Evolving Markets



shutterstock.com • 666360064



**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



We Treat You Like *Family*



VVHS.ORG



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG



We Treat You Like *Family*



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG





Valle  
Health

Your Health, Our Priority!



Family



VVHS.ORG



You Like Family

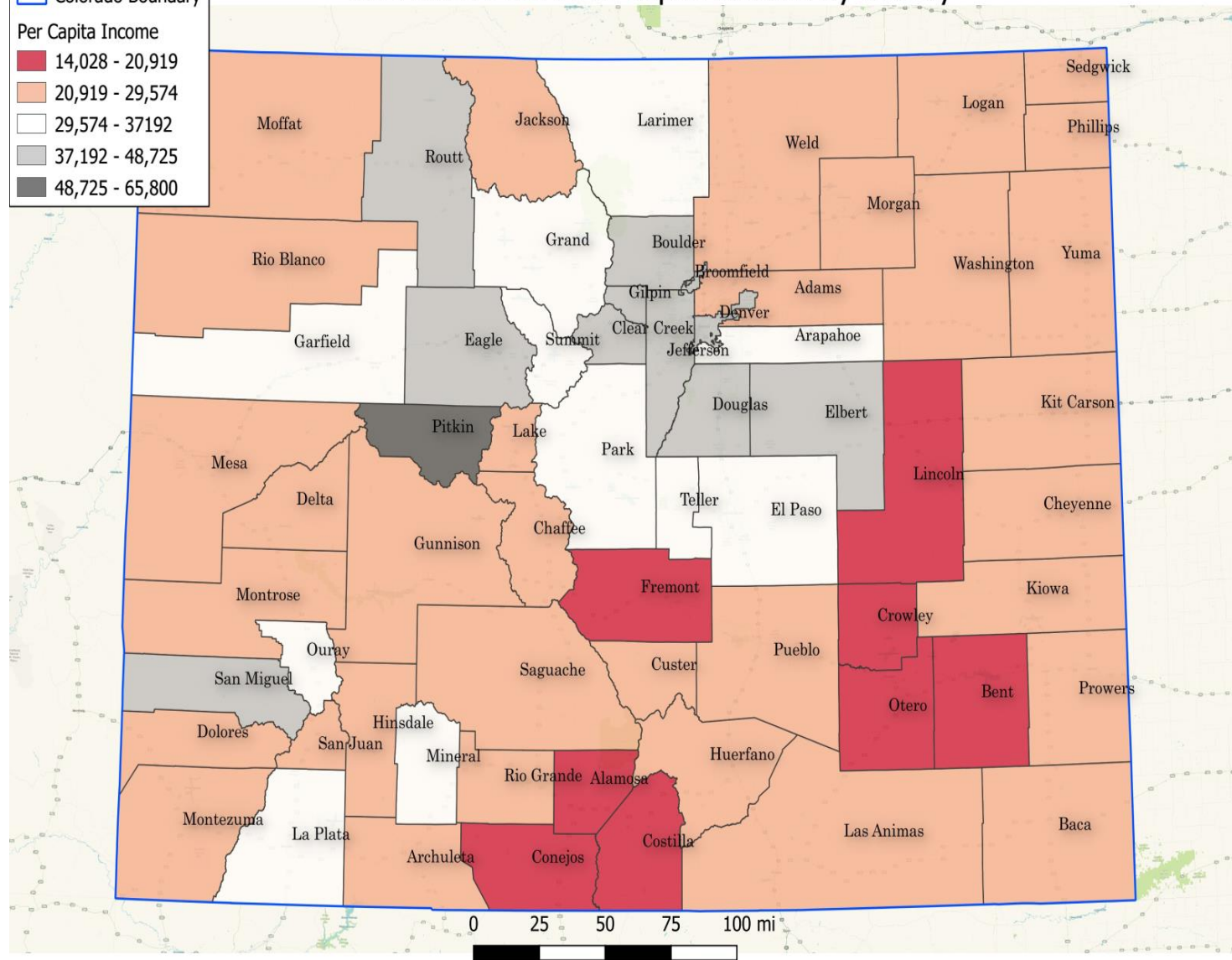
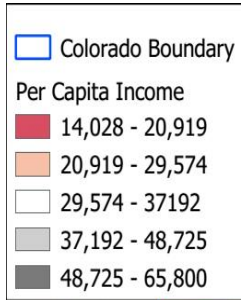


Valley View Health Systems, Inc.  
Your Health, Our Priority!

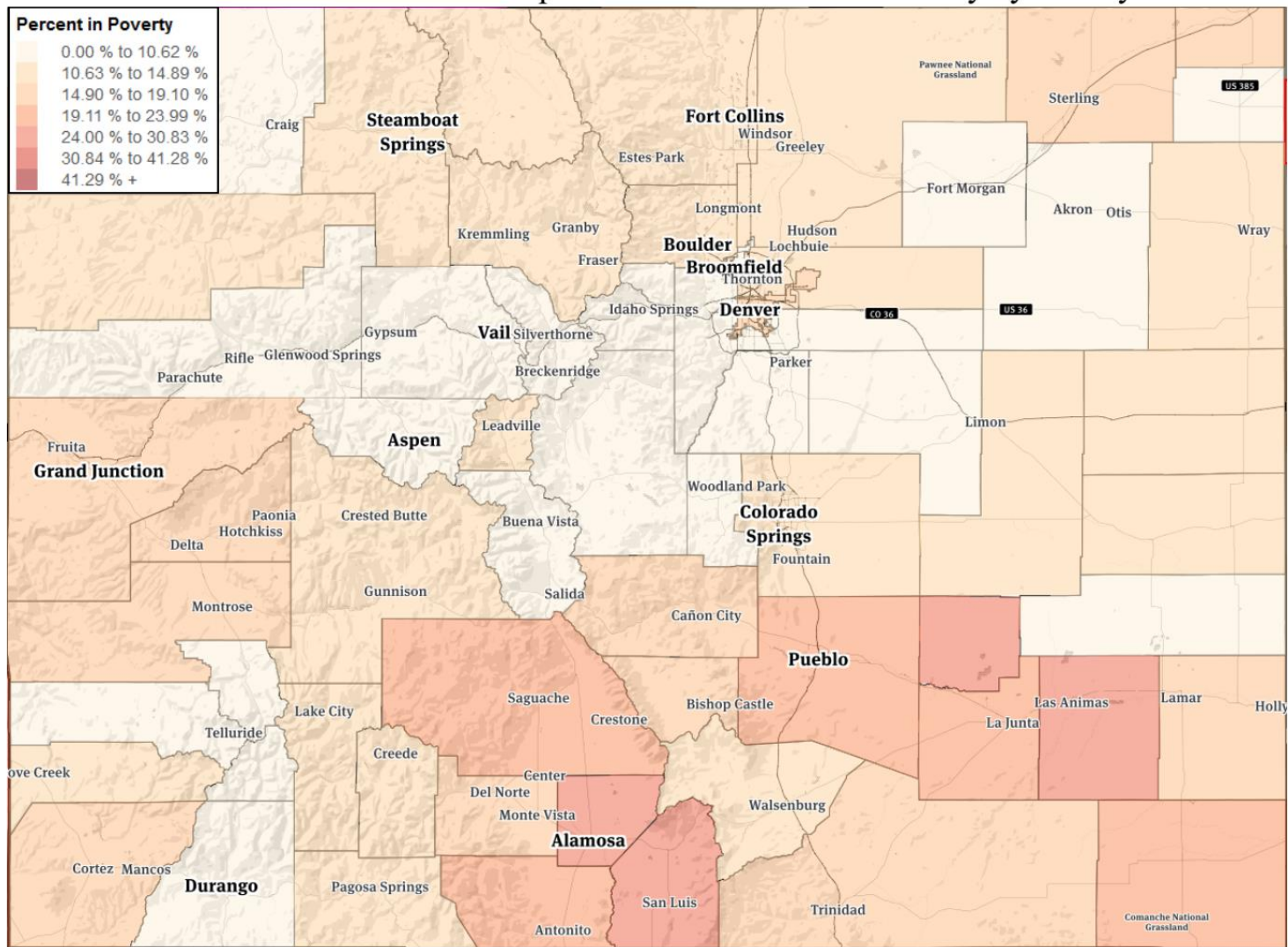


VVHS.ORG

# ACS 2013-2017: Per Capita Income by County



## ACS 2013-2017 Percent of Population Below 150% of Poverty by County



*u Like Family*



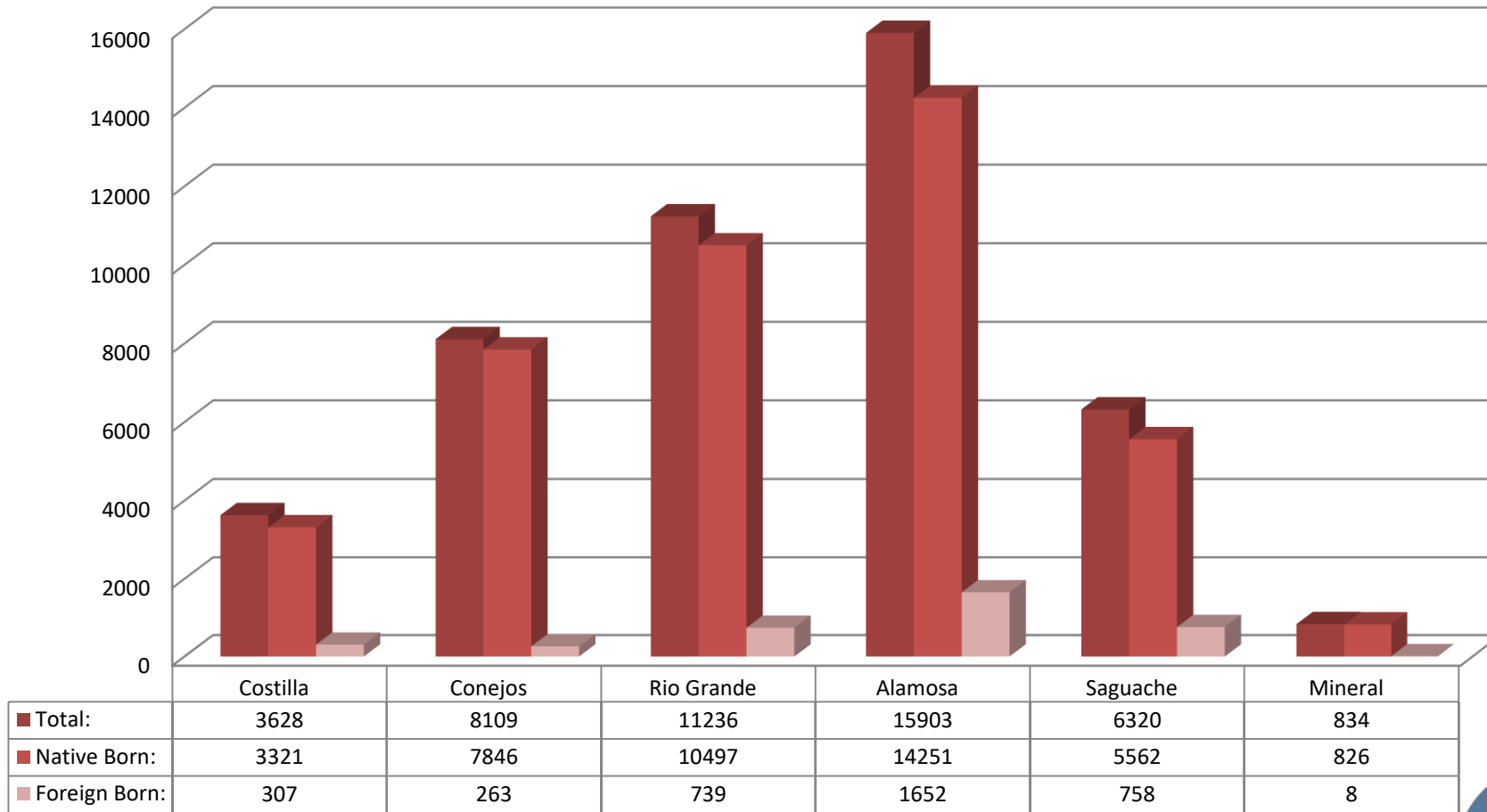
**Valley-wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

*Your Health, Our Priority!*

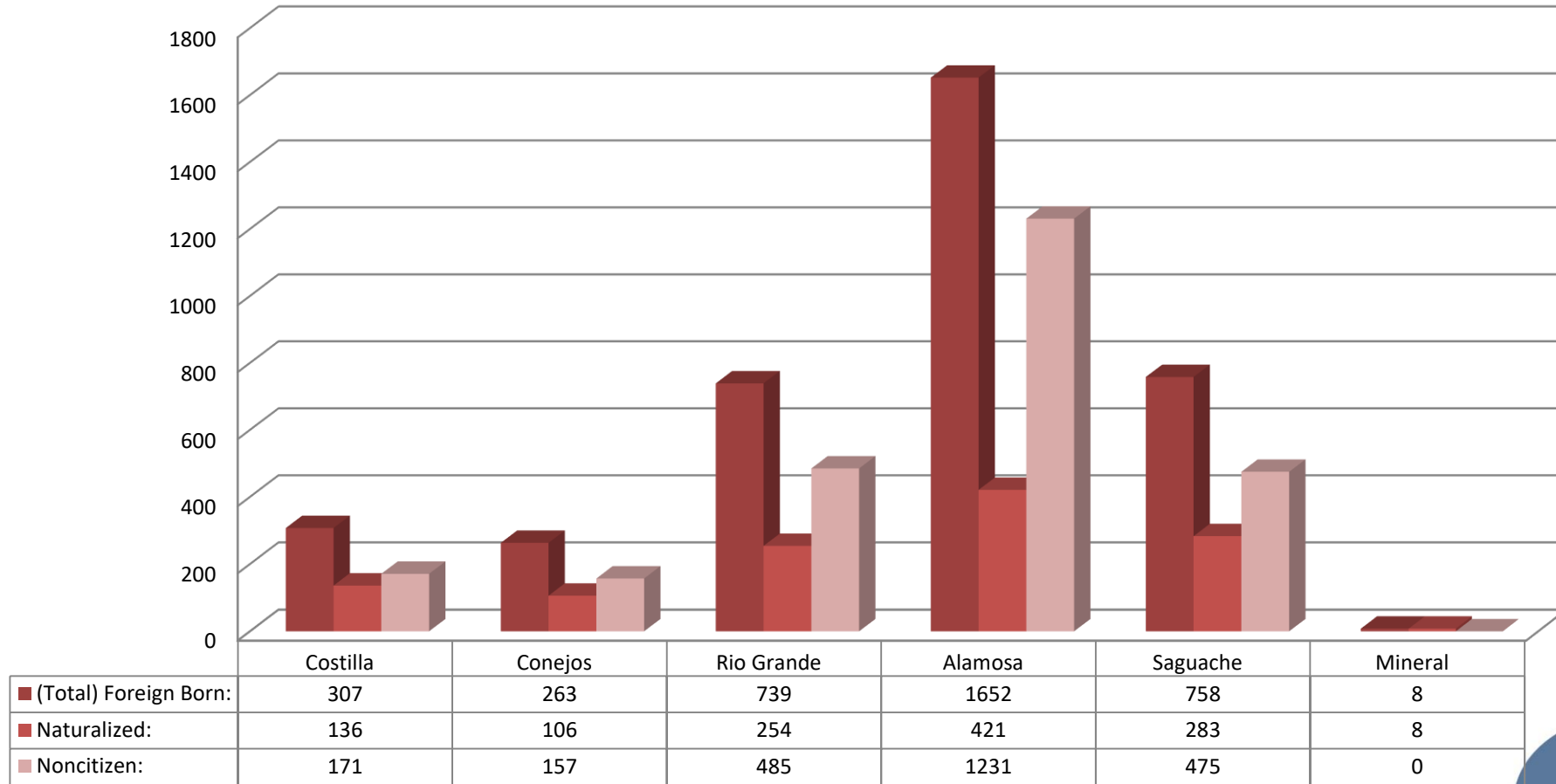


VVHS.ORG

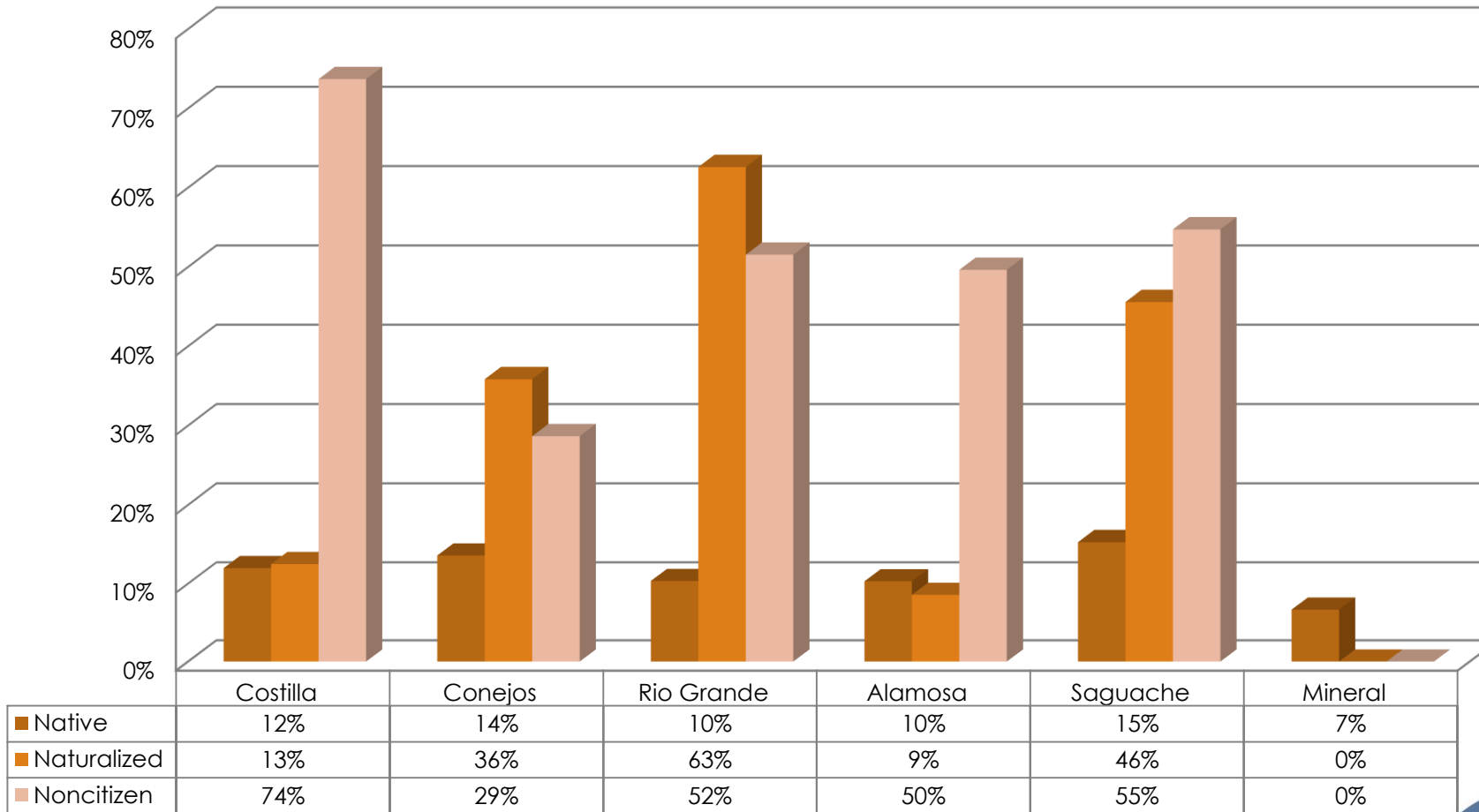
# Total Population per County: Native vs. Foreign Born



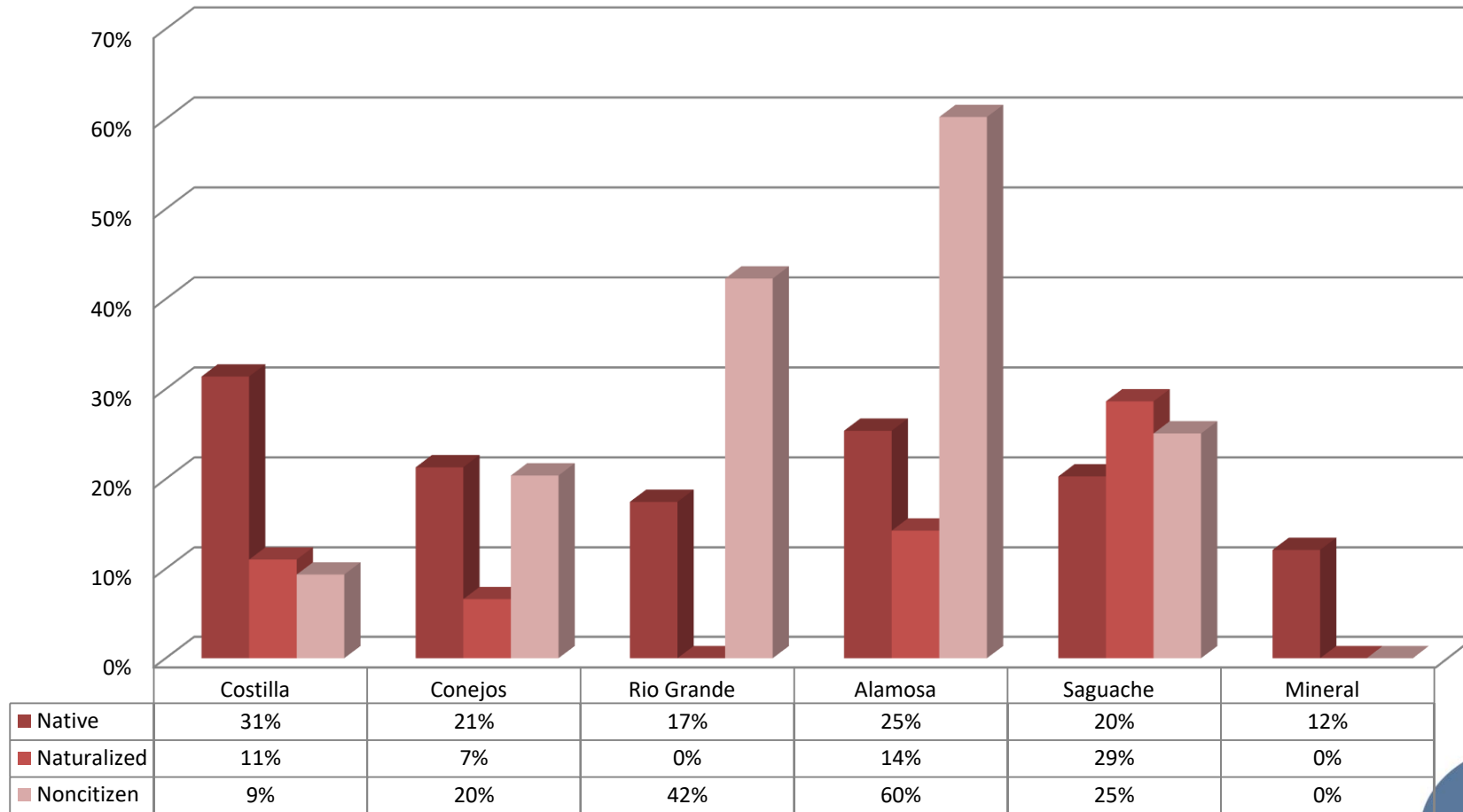
# Count of Foreign Born Residents per County: Naturalized vs. Noncitizen



## Percentage of Subgroup (Native, Naturalized, Noncitizen) With No Health Insurance per County



## Percentage of Subgroup in Poverty by County



*We Treat You Like Family*



**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

*Your Health, Our Priority!*

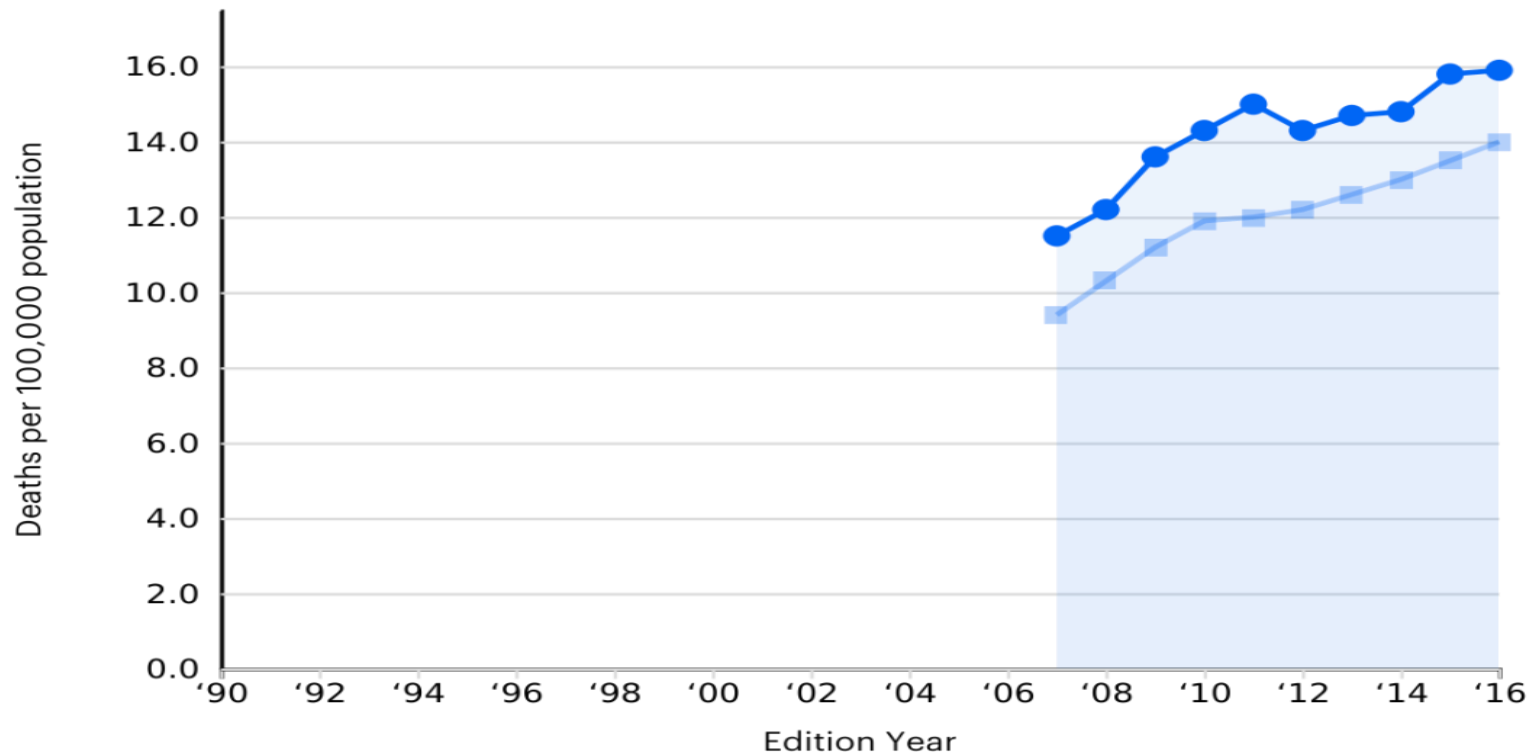


VVHS.ORG



# Drug Deaths: United States vs. Colorado

Trend Drug Deaths, Colorado, United States, 2016 Annual Report



■ Age-adjusted number of deaths due to drug injury of any intent (unintentional, suicide, homicide or undetermined) per 100,000 population

● Colorado

■ United States

**SOURCE:**

• CDC, National Vital Statistics System



*We Treat You Like Family*



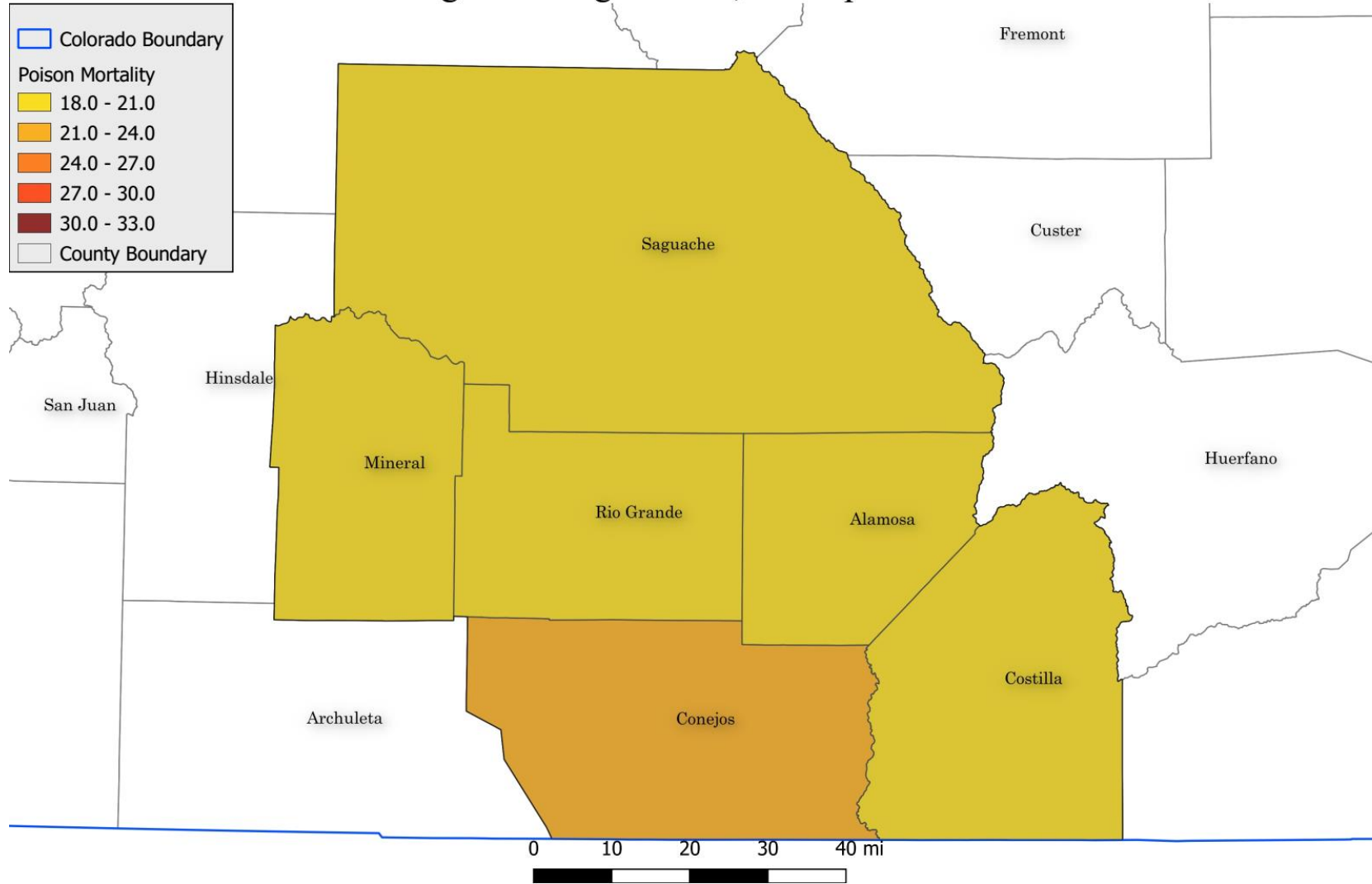
**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG

# National Center for Health Statistics, Age-Adjusted Death Rates For Drug Poisoning Per 100,000 Population: 2012



*We Treat You Like Family*

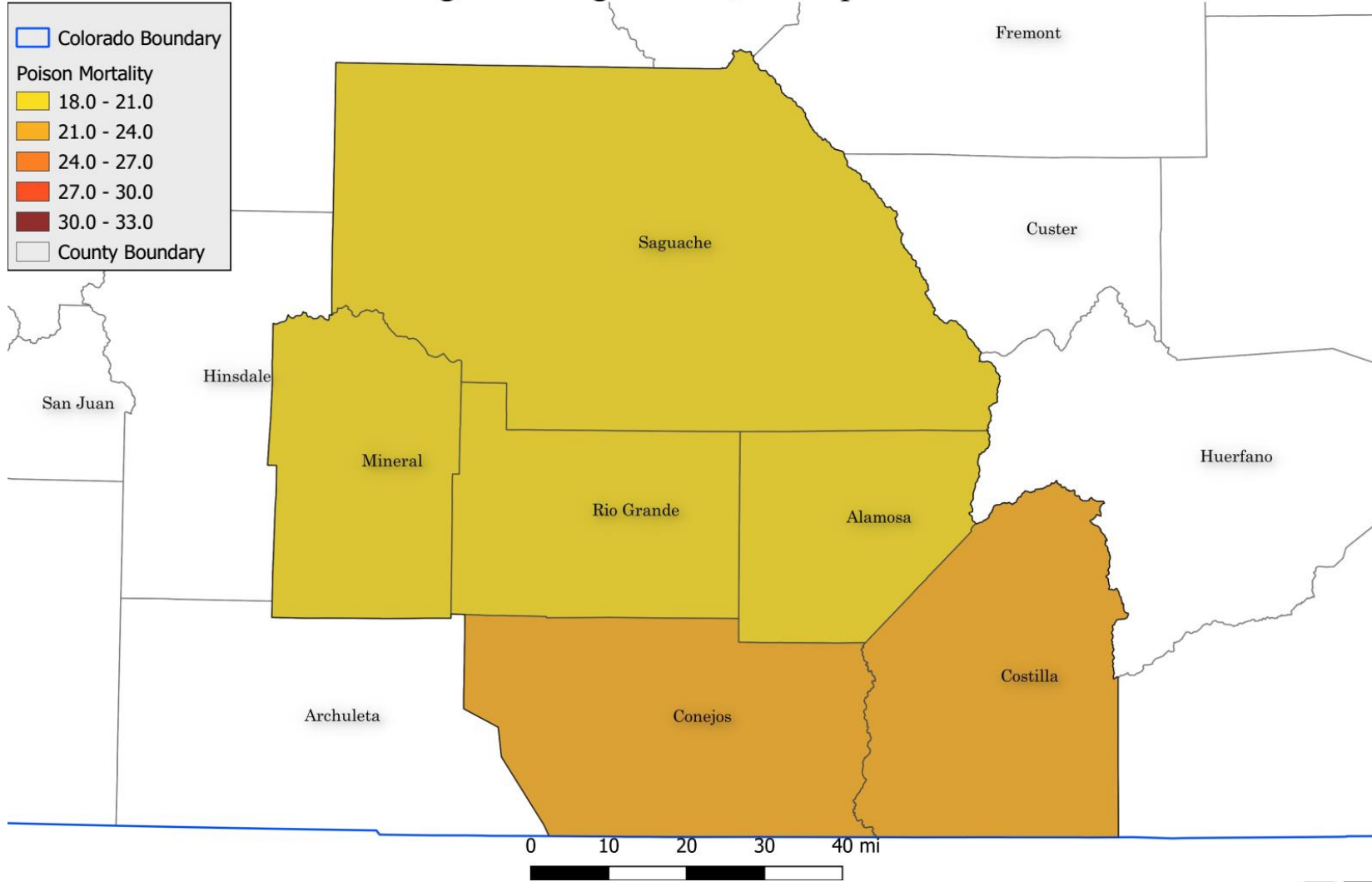


**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.  
*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG

# National Center for Health Statistics, Age-Adjusted Death Rates For Drug Poisoning Per 100,000 Population: 2013



*We Treat You Like Family*

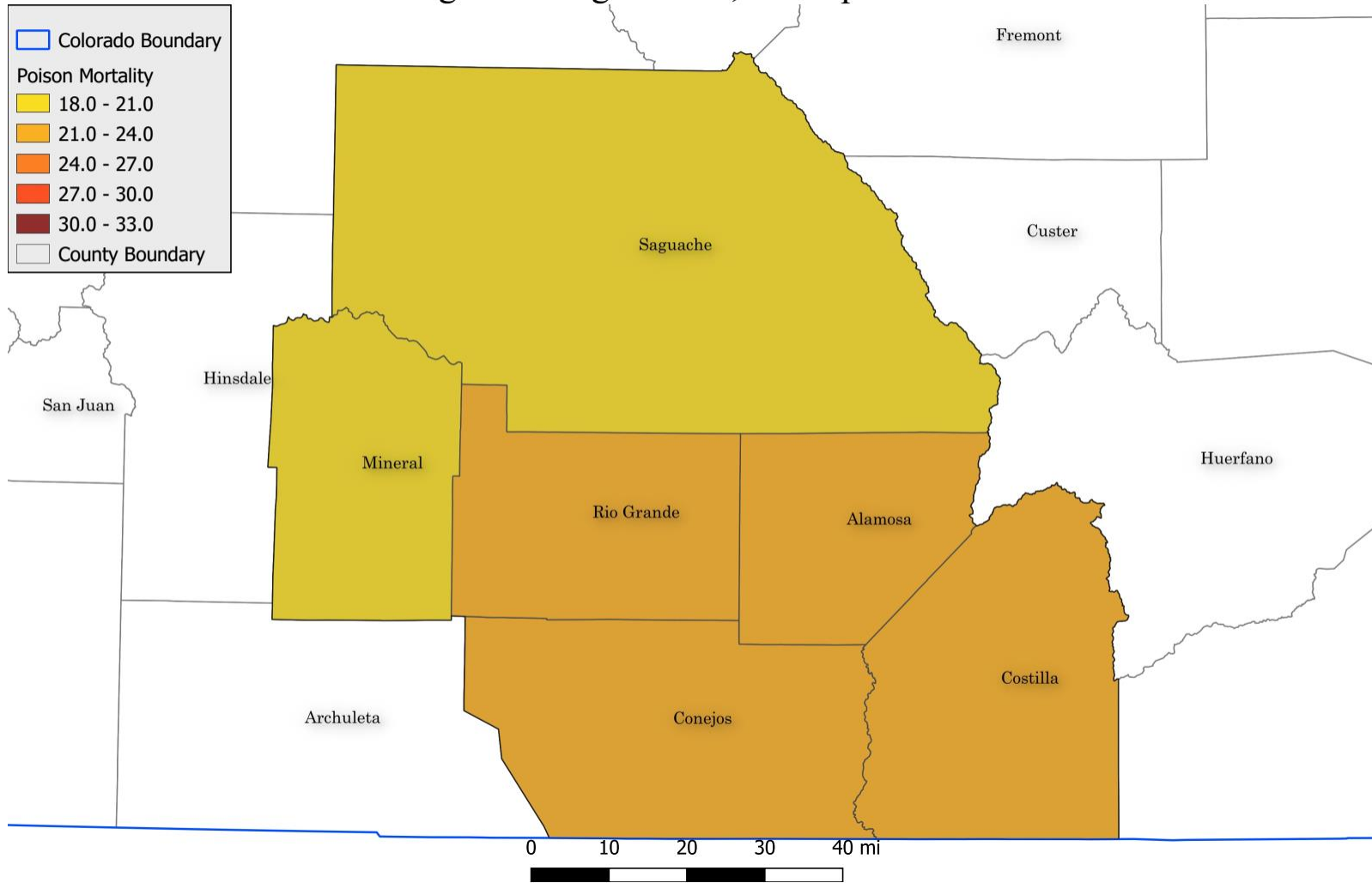


**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.  
*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG

# National Center for Health Statistics, Age-Adjusted Death Rates For Drug Poisoning Per 100,000 Population: 2014

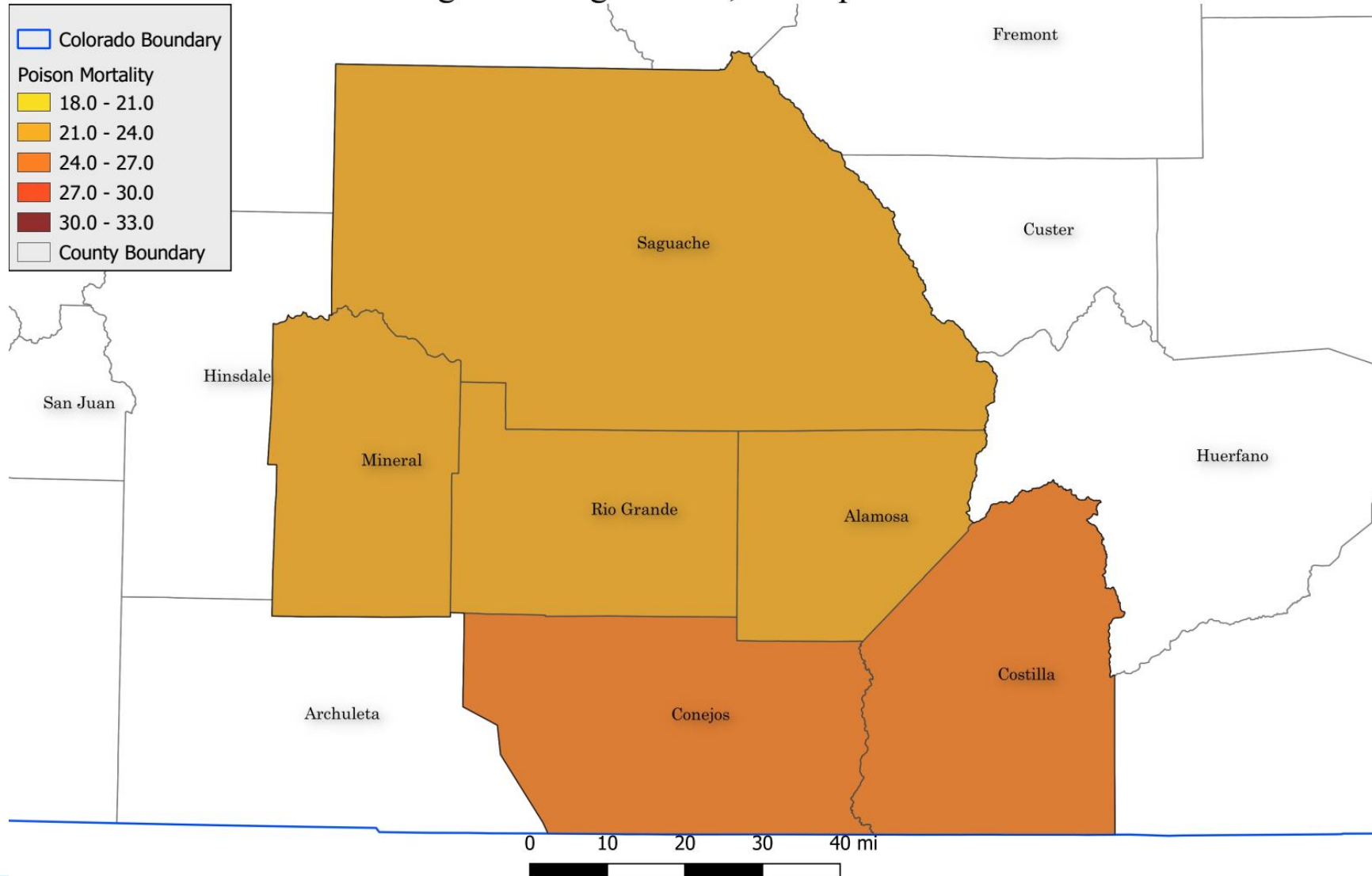


**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.  
*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VWHS.ORG

# National Center for Health Statistics, Age-Adjusted Death Rates For Drug Poisoning Per 100,000 Population: 2015



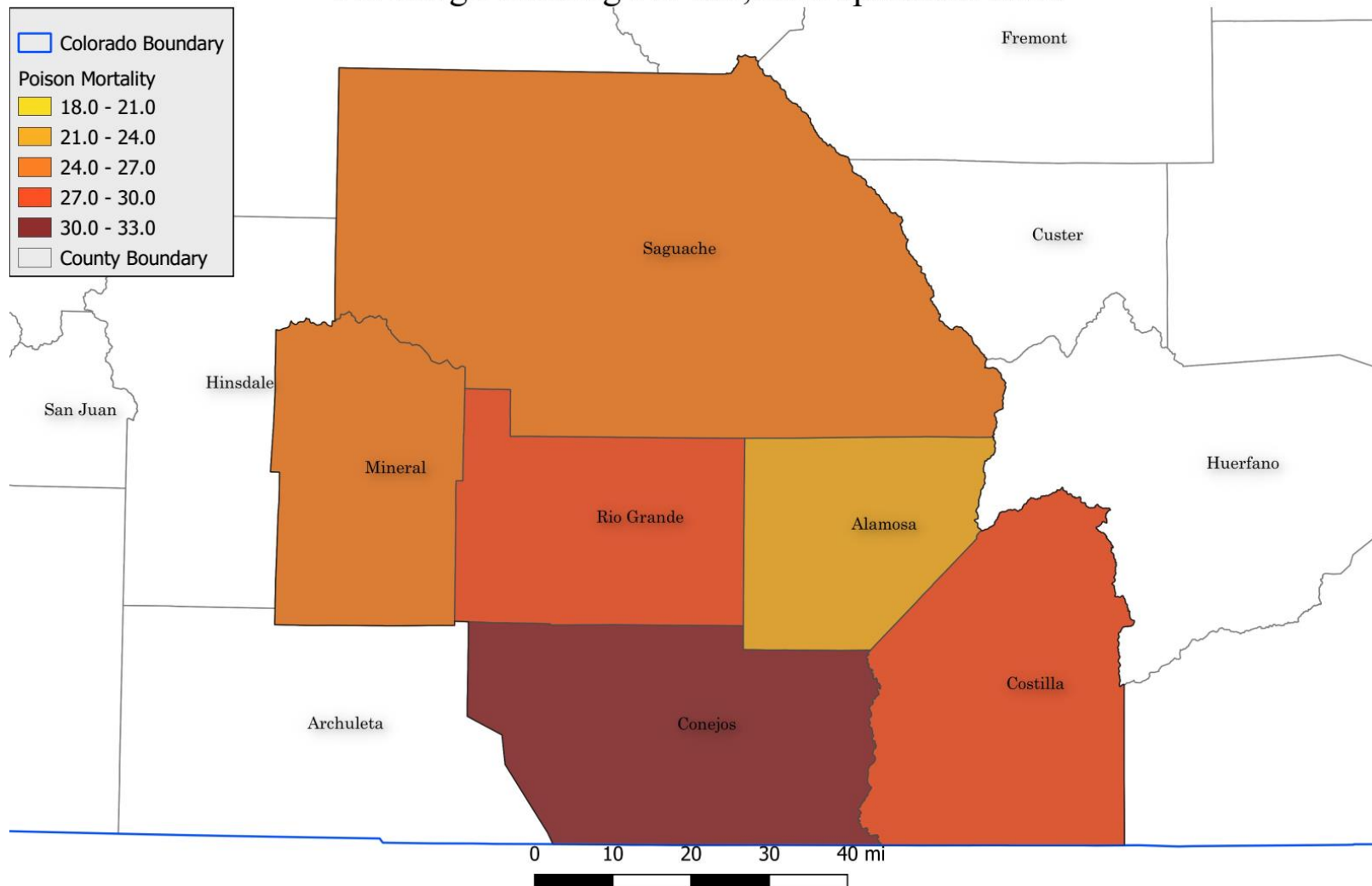
**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.  
*Your Health, Our Priority!*

*We Treat You Like Family*



VVHS.ORG

## National Center for Health Statistics, Age-Adjusted Death Rates For Drug Poisoning Per 100,000 Population: 2016



*We Treat You Like Family*



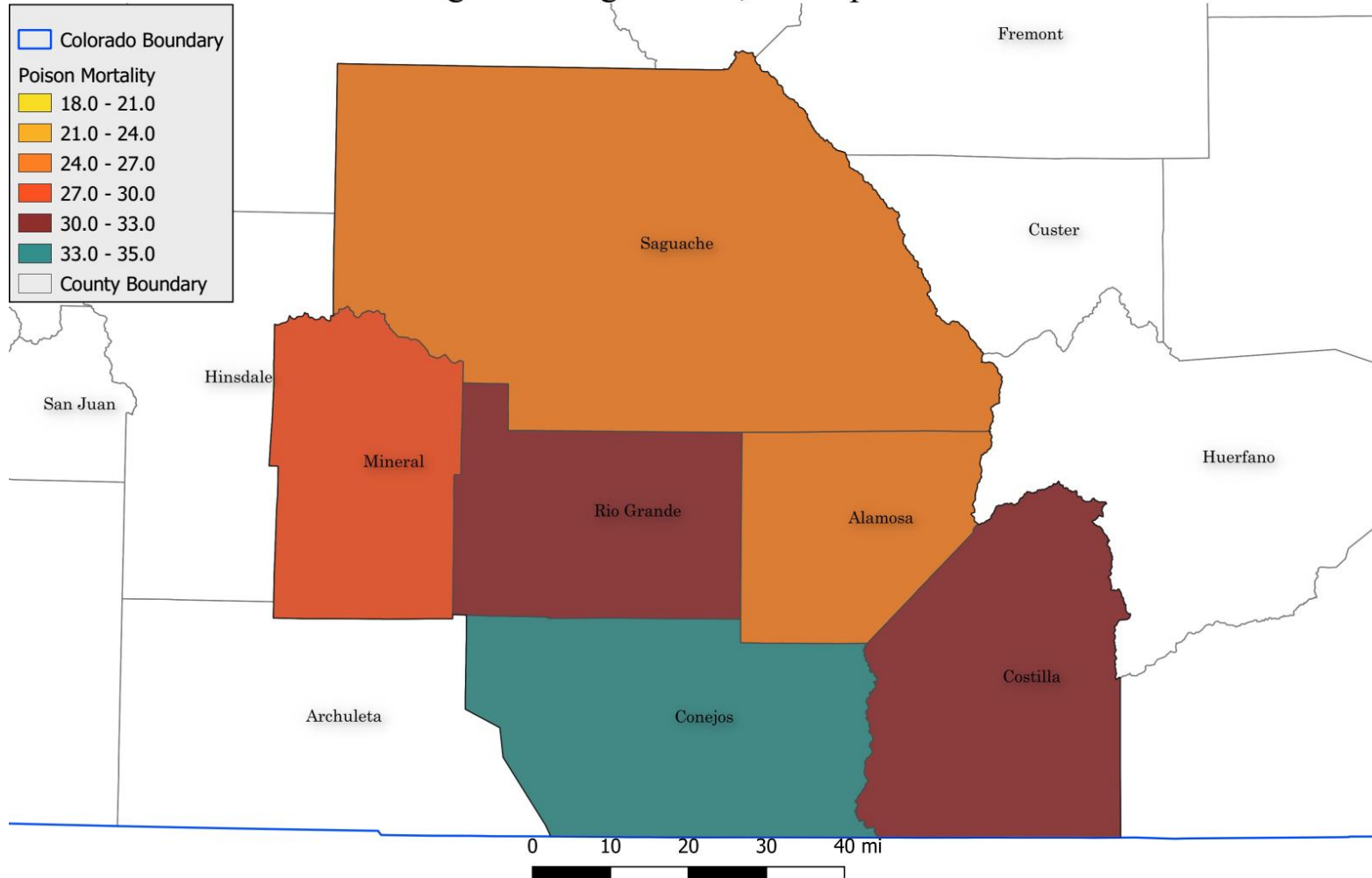
**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

*Your Health, Our Priority!*

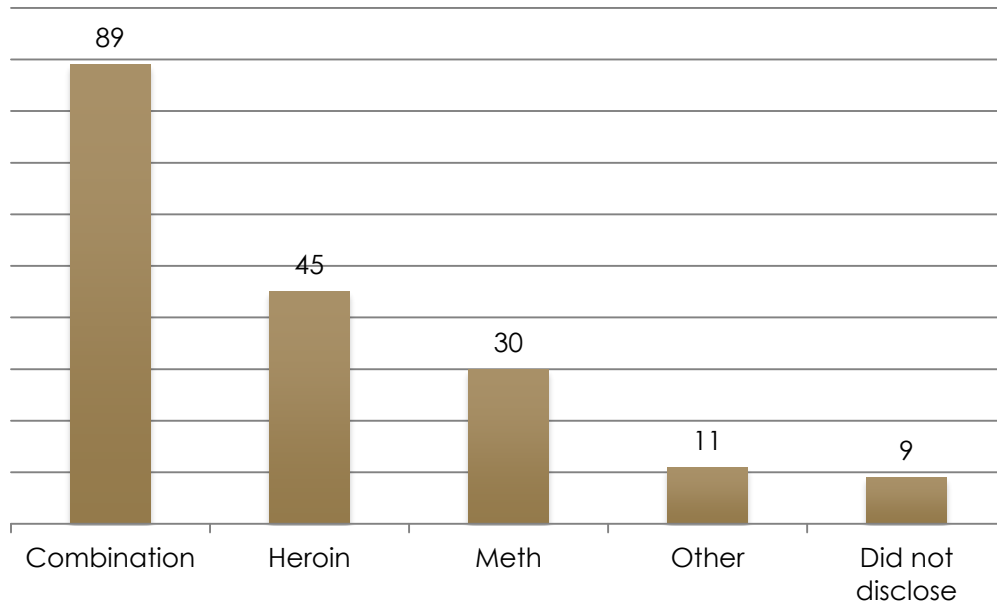


VVHS.ORG

## National Center for Health Statistics, Age-Adjusted Death Rates For Drug Poisoning Per 100,000 Population: 2017

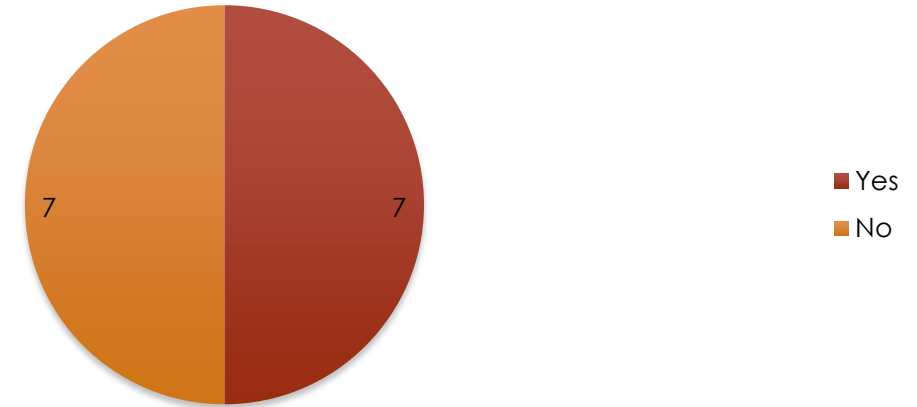


### Type of Substance Injected



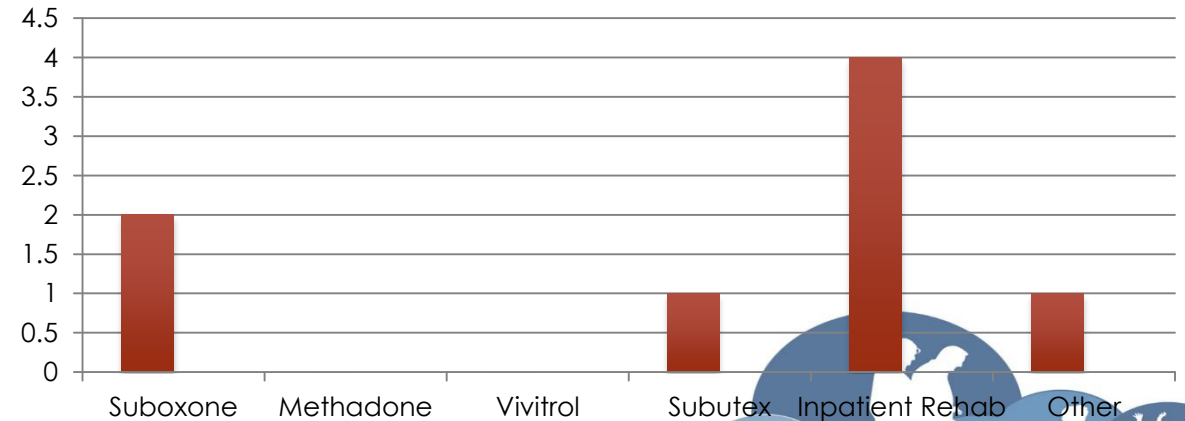
\*Combination refers to clients using a combination of two or more substances. Heroin/Meth, Dilaudid/Heroin, Heroin/Cocaine, Heroin/Insulin are the combinations used by our clients. Other refer to getting needles for someone else, or otherwise did not specify.

### Participated in Substance Abuse Treatment



\* n = 14, information gathered from new intake forms, beginning February 20, 2019.

### Type of Treatment



\* Data based on clients who shared they had participated in substance abuse treatment. One client indicated participating in more than one form of treatment.



# Depression

- Depressive symptoms are more prevalent among indigenous Mexican agricultural workers
- Spanish literacy contributes to the likelihood of having depression

Donlan, W. & Lee, J. Indigenous and Mestizo Mexican Migrant Farmworkers: A Comparative Mental Health Analysis. *Journal of Rural Community Psychology* (2010)



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG

# Remedies for Depression

- Drinking and taking drugs to reduce symptoms
- Seeking professional help, without the use of medications
- Increased and encouraged community socializing and social support
- Reuniting with family.

Donlan, W. & Lee, J. Indigenous and Mestizo Mexican Migrant Farmworkers: A Comparative Mental Health Analysis. *Journal of Rural Community Psychology* (2010)



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG

# Risk and Access to Treatment

- Combined 2003 to 2011 data indicate that Hispanics aged 12 or older were more likely than non-Hispanics to have needed substance use treatment in the past year (9.9 vs. 9.2 percent)
- Hispanics who needed substance use treatment were less likely than non-Hispanics to have received treatment at a specialty facility in the past year (9.0 vs. 10.5 percent)
- Among Hispanics needing but not receiving treatment, only 5.6 percent perceived a need for treatment

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (October 25, 2012). *The NSDUH Report: Need for and Receipt of Substance Use Treatment among Hispanics*. Rockville, MD.



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG

- ▶ Three studies conducted in the West and Southwest found that Latinos and Latinas who were born in the United States reported greater substance use and abuse than either individuals born in Mexico or European Americans ([Farabee et al., 1995](#); [Golding, Brurnam, Benjamin, & Wells 1992](#); [Vega et al., 1998](#))
- ▶ Respondents who had migrated to the United States and respondents who had family members who migrated in the United States were more likely to have used alcohol, marijuana, or cocaine at least once in their lifetime; to develop a substance use disorder; and to have a current (in the past 12 months) substance use disorder than were other Mexicans. [Guilherme Borges, Maria Elena Medina-Mora, Joshua Breslau, Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola](#) *Am J Public Health.* 2007 Oct; 97(10): 1847–1851. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2006.097915
- ▶ Recent national surveys indicate that Latinas/os have less access than other Americans to substance abuse treatment ([SAMHSA, 2001](#); [2002a](#)) or that they have to wait longer to access such services



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG

# The role of MAT in OUD

- Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is the use of medications with counseling and behavioral therapies to treat substance use disorders and prevent opioid overdose.
- MAT operates to normalize brain chemistry, block the euphoric effects of alcohol and opioids, relieve physiological cravings, and normalize body functions without the negative effects of the abused drug
- Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) in combination with counseling and behavioral health therapies, provide a “whole-patient” approach to the treatment of substance use disorders. Research shows that a combination of medication and therapy can successfully treat these disorders, and for some people struggling with addiction, MAT can help sustain recovery

SAMSHA



# Buprenorphine

Buprenorphine is an opioid partial agonist.

This means that, like opioids, it can produce effects such as euphoria or respiratory depression.

With buprenorphine, however, these effects are weaker than those of full drugs such as heroin and methadone

Health care providers must have waiver training and a special DEA license to prescribe buprenorphine.



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

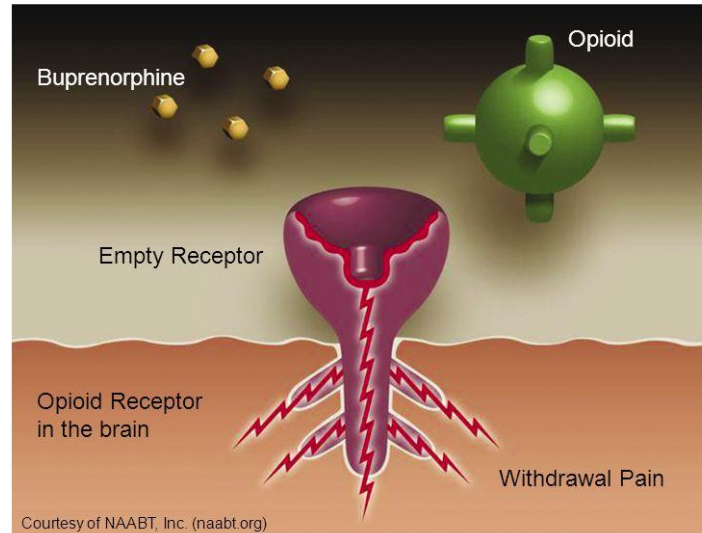
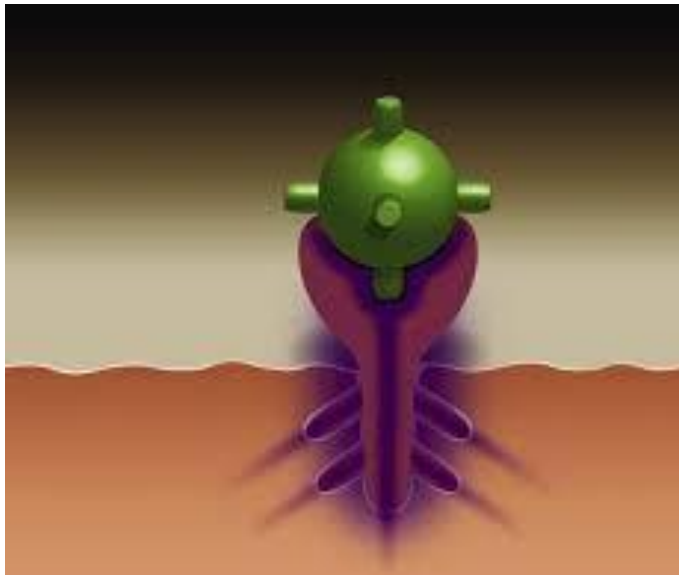
Your Health, Our Priority!

SAMHSA



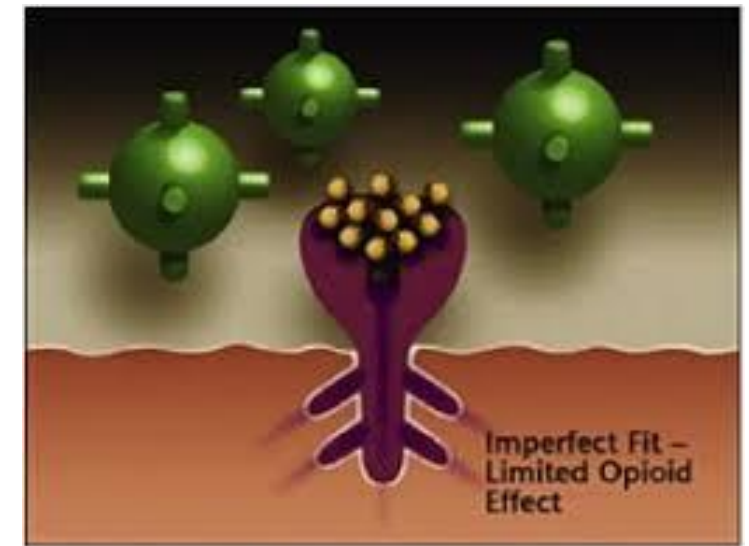
VVHS.ORG

# Mechanism of Action of Buprenorphine



Courtesy of NAABT, Inc. (naabt.org)

**Opioid receptor unsatisfied -- Withdrawal.** As someone becomes "tolerant" to opioids their opioid receptors become less sensitive. More opioids are then required to produce the same effect. Once "physically dependent" the body can no longer manufacture enough natural opioids to keep up with this increased demand. Whenever there is an insufficient amount of opioid receptors activated, the body feels pain. This is withdrawal.



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG

# Buprenorphine Misuse Potential

- Because of buprenorphine's opioid effects, it can be misused, particularly by people who do not have an opioid dependency.
- Naloxone is added to buprenorphine to decrease the likelihood of diversion and misuse of the combination drug product. When these products are taken as sublingual tablets, buprenorphine's opioid effects dominate and naloxone blocks opioid withdrawals.
- If the sublingual tablets are crushed and injected, however, the naloxone effect dominates and can bring on opioid withdrawals.





# Naltrexone

- Naltrexone is an *opioid antagonist*, which means that it works by blocking the activation of opioid receptors. Instead of controlling withdrawal and cravings, it treats opioid use disorder by preventing any opioid drug from producing rewarding effects such as euphoria.
- It works differently in the body than buprenorphine and methadone, which activate opioid receptors in the body that suppress cravings.
- There is no abuse and diversion potential with naltrexone

SAMSHA

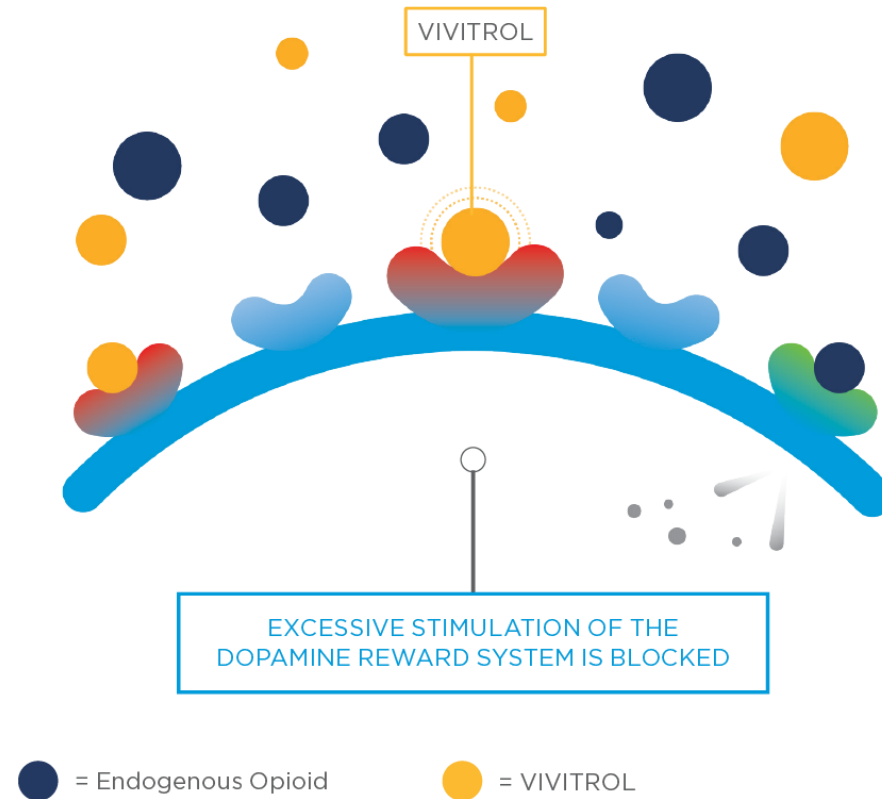


Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.  
*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG

# How Naltrexone Works



*We Treat You Like Family*



**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG

# Naltrexone

- Naltrexone is also used to treat alcohol use disorder.
- It comes in a pill form or as an injectable. The pill form of naltrexone (ReVia, Depade) can be taken at 50 mg once per day. The injectable extended-release form of the drug (Vivitrol) is administered at 380 mg intramuscular once a month
- Research has shown that naltrexone decreases reactivity to drug-conditioned cues and decreases craving. Patients who have been treated with extended-release injectable naltrexone may have reduced tolerance to opioids and may be unaware of their potential sensitivity to the same, or lower, doses of opioids that they used to take.

SAMHSA



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG

# Methadone

- Methadone is a synthetic *opioid agonist* that eliminates withdrawal symptoms and relieves drug cravings by acting on opioid receptors in the brain
- It lessens the painful symptoms of opiate withdrawal and blocks the euphoric effects of opiate drugs such as heroin, morphine, and codeine, as well as semi-synthetic opioids like oxycodone and hydrocodone
- Patients taking methadone to treat opioid addiction must receive the medication under the supervision of a physician
- By law, methadone can only be dispensed through an opioid treatment program certified by SAMHSA.
- Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding can safely take methadone

SAMSHA



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG

- ▶ Published research indicates that the most prevalent forms of MAT, buprenorphine and methadone, are similar in terms of effectiveness.
  
- ▶ Although MAT has significant evidence to support it as an effective treatment, it remains highly underutilized, being used by an estimated 1million of the 2.5 million Americans who might benefit from receiving it.

Volkow ND1, Frieden TR, Hyde PS, Cha SS. Medication-assisted therapies--tackling the opioid-overdose epidemic. N Engl J Med. 2014 May 29;370(22):2063-6. doi: 10.1056/NEJMp1402780. Epub 2014 Apr 23.



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG

# Barriers to MAT treatment

- Cost
- Access
- Stigma
- Lack of awareness



*We Treat You Like Family*



**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG

# What is Integrated Care?

- ▶ The care that results from a practice team of primary care and behavioral health clinicians, working together with patients and families using a systematic and cost effective approach to provide patient-centered care in a defined population
- ▶ This care may address mental health and substance use issues, life stressors and crisis, stress related physical symptoms, and ineffective patterns of health care utilization



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.  
*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG

# The Role of Behavioral Health in Primary Care

- In Colorado, it is harder to get an appointment for mental health and substance use than for primary care, according to the CHAS.
- **21%** of those who couldn't get needed services for drug or alcohol use said it was because they had a hard time getting an appointment.
- **35%** who couldn't get needed mental health services said it was because they had a hard time getting an appointment.
- Meanwhile, just **11%** of Coloradans didn't see a general doctor because of difficulty getting an appointment.

Source: Colorado Health Access Survey



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



VVHS.ORG



# Patient Centered Medical Home

The patient-centered medical home is a model of primary care where patients receive well-coordinated services and enhanced access to a clinical team. The team uses decision support tools, measure their performance, engage patients 'in their own care and conduct QI activities.



**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.  
*Your Health, Our Priority!*

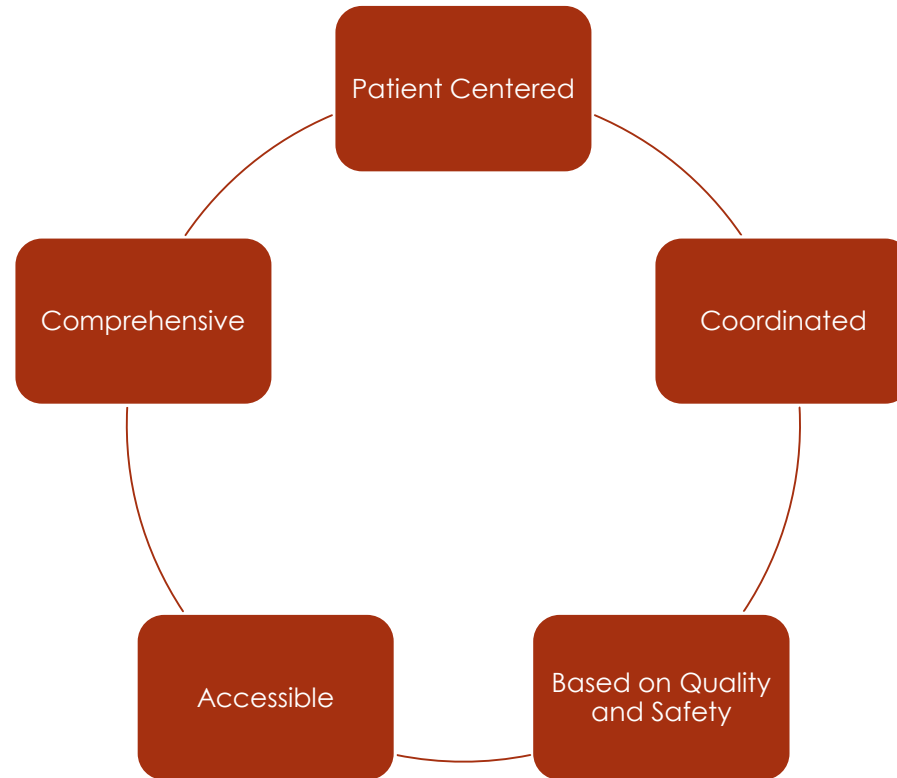
The logo for Valley-Wide Health Systems, Inc. features silhouettes of a family (two adults and a child) standing together, set against a background of overlapping blue circles. The text 'We Treat' is partially visible to the left of the silhouettes.

**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

f o s w

VVHS.ORG

# Components of PCMH include:



*We Treat You Like Family*



**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG

- SBIRT – screening, brief intervention and referral to treatment
- Outreach- in 2019 we screened 295 agricultural workers for drugs and alcohol
- Care coordination to help with referrals and community resources
- Case management to identify barriers to care
- Address social determinants of health – transportation, housing, food insecurity



- SBIRT – screening, brief intervention and referral to treatment
- Access to care – waived providers in all counties, open schedule for same day appointments
- Group Visits
- “Bup” group”
- Mobile Van



# Community Partners

- SLV Behavioral Health
- SLV Health
- Rio Grande Hospital
- Methadone Clinic
- SLV Public Health Partnership



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.  
*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG

# Community Partners

- SLV Area Health Education Center/SHARPP Harm Reduction
- La Puente
- LEAD program “Law Enforcement Diversion Program”
- IT MATTRs – High Plains Research Network, University of Colorado



# Conclusion

- Substance use disorder has impacted the San Luis Valley to a greater extent than other areas in Colorado.
- Agricultural workers and their descendants are at increased risk for using substances to treat their depression.
- Medication assisted treatment can be an effective modality to treat substance use disorder.
- An integrated approach that includes behavioral health is a way to provide patient-centered care that addresses life stressors that may contribute to substance use disorder.
- Collaboration with partners is an important component in addressing drug abuse in the community.



*We Treat You Like Family*



**Valley-Wide**  
Health Systems, Inc.

*Your Health, Our Priority!*



VVHS.ORG

# Thank you



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.

Your Health, Our Priority!



We Treat You Like *Family*



VVHS.ORG