



Center on  
**Rural Addiction**  
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT



# Rural Practitioners' Perceptions of Substance Use Disorders and Treatment during COVID-19



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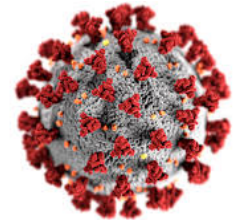
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# Overview of Baseline Needs Assessment

The CORA Surveillance & Epidemiology Core conducted a Baseline Needs Assessment Survey in Vermont to examine mechanisms to improve the delivery of evidenced-based substance use treatment and training for providers in rural VT.

- ❖ Deployment Period: April 28, 2020 – May 31, 2020
- ❖ Method: Electronic Surveys
- ❖ Sample:
  - N = 147/689 Practitioners (MD/DO, NP, PA) invited to survey
  - n = 63 Primary Care Physicians

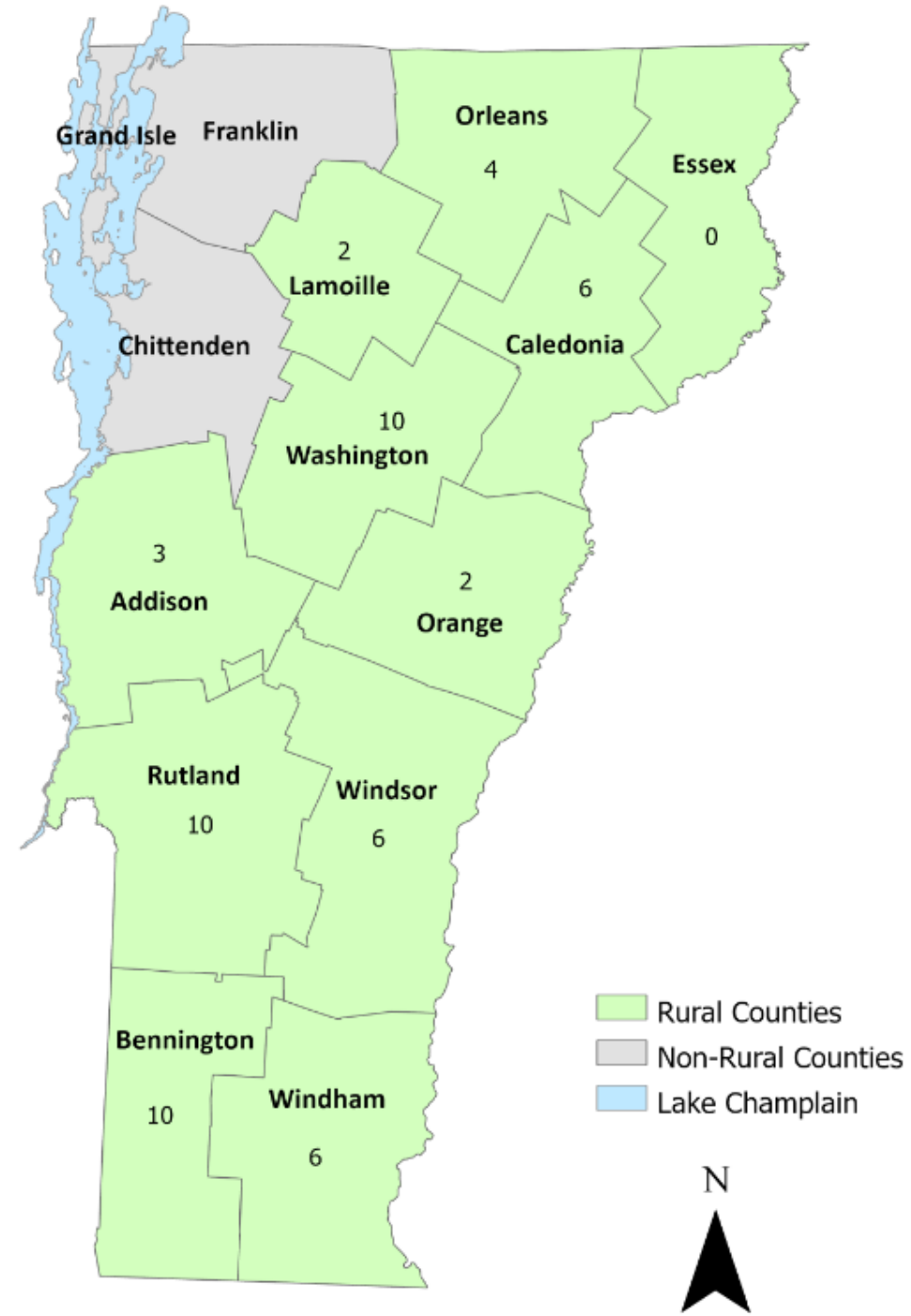


*On March 13, 2020  
Vermont's Governor  
declared a state of  
emergency in  
response to COVID-19.*

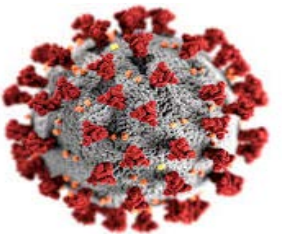
# Responses by County

63 primary care physicians from rural counties

HRSA-designated rural county work location	n	Percent
Addison	3	5%
Bennington	10	16%
Caledonia	6	10%
Lamoille	2	3%
Orange	2	3%
Orleans	4	6%
Rutland	10	16%
Washington	10	16%
Windham	6	10%
Windsor	6	10%
Multiple counties	4	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100%</b>



# Findings



As part of the assessment providers were asked about their perceptions of changes in substance use and access to treatment services during COVID-19

## How has substance use changed?

39% “substance use has increased”

19% “substance use has stayed the same”

3% “substance use has decreased”

## How has access to Medication for Addiction Treatment changed?

2% “access to MAT has increased”

34% “access to MAT has stayed the same”

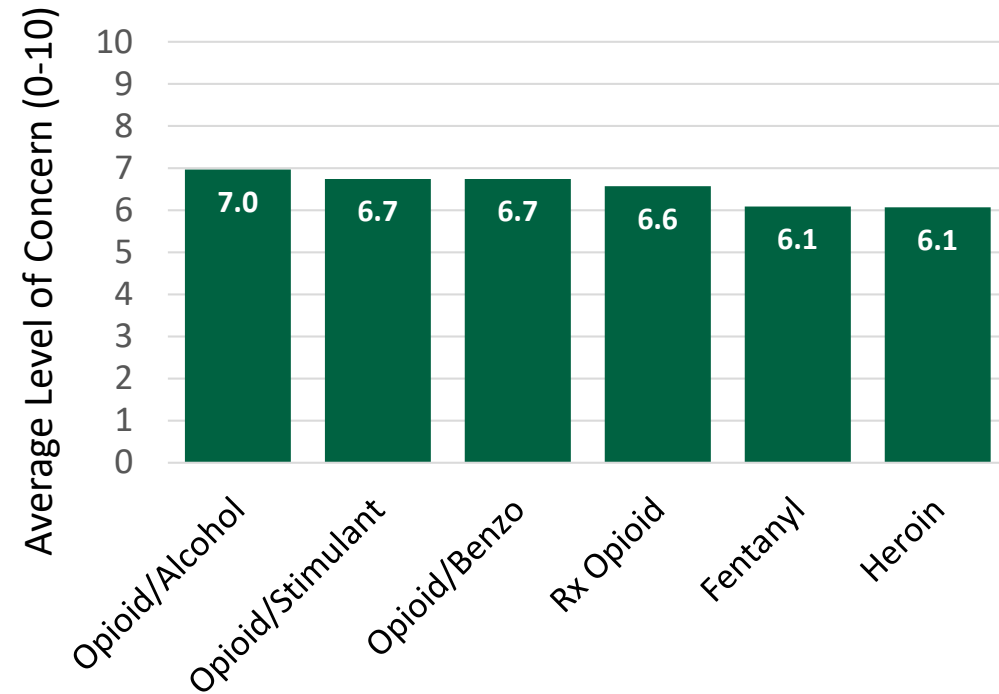
34% “access to MAT has decreased”

# Findings

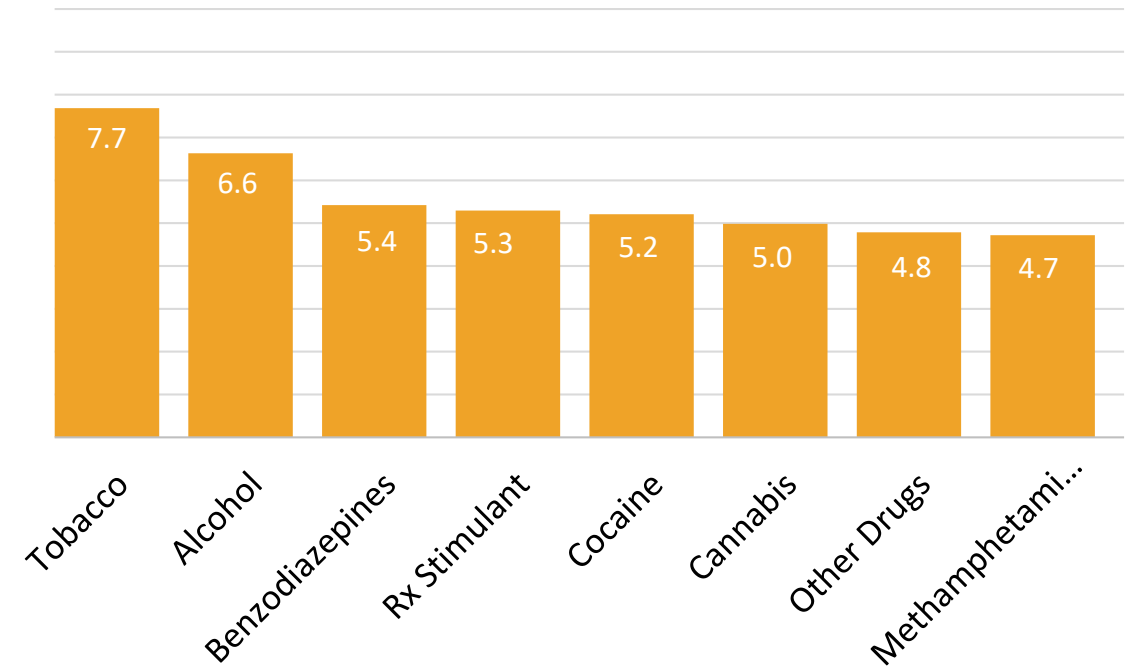


There was high level of concern about the use of opioids/opiates

### Opioids and Opiates



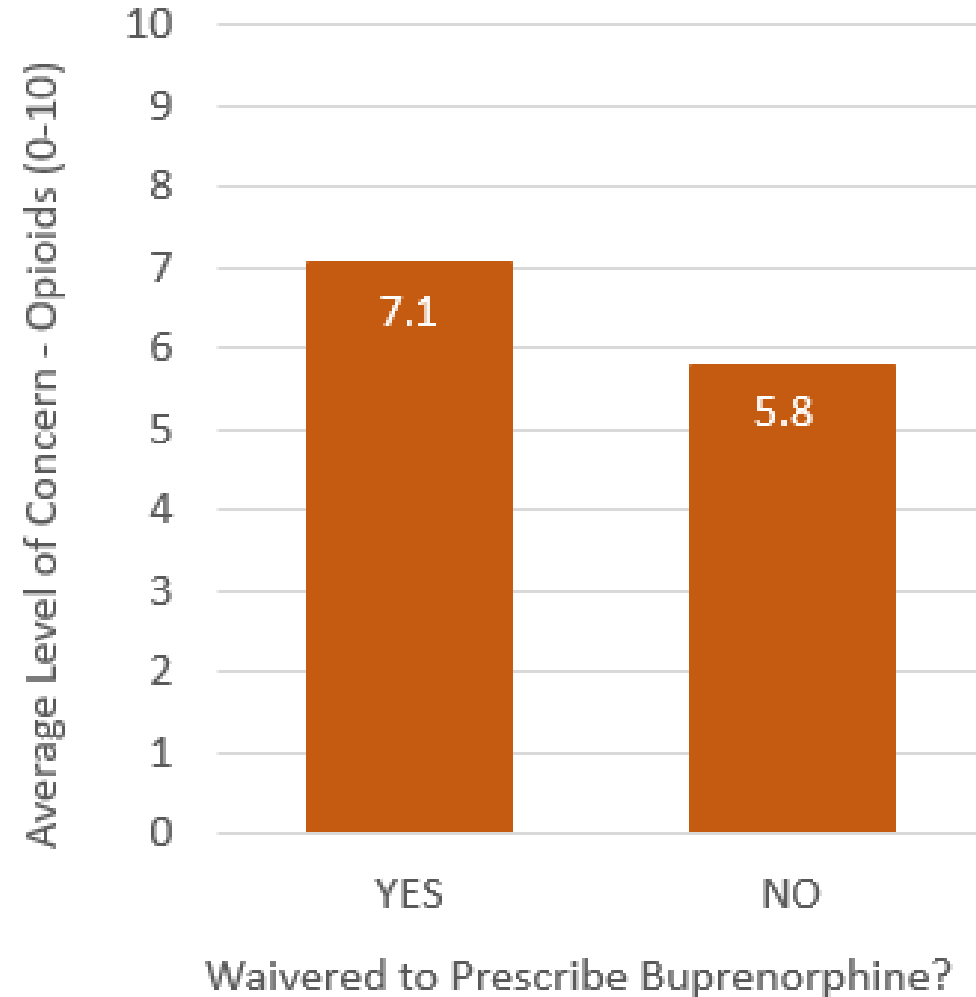
### Other Drugs



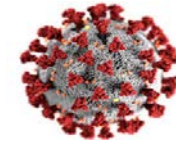
# Findings



- ❖ Overall, 43% of primary care physicians surveyed were waived to prescribe Buprenorphine
- ❖ Concern about opioids/opiates may vary as a function of waiver status



# Summary of Key Findings



## Substance Use & Access to Treatment during COVID-19

- ❖ Increases in substance use
- ❖ Decreases in access to treatment

## Provider Concern about Opioids & Being Waivered

- ❖ Higher level of concern among waived physicians



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Thank You