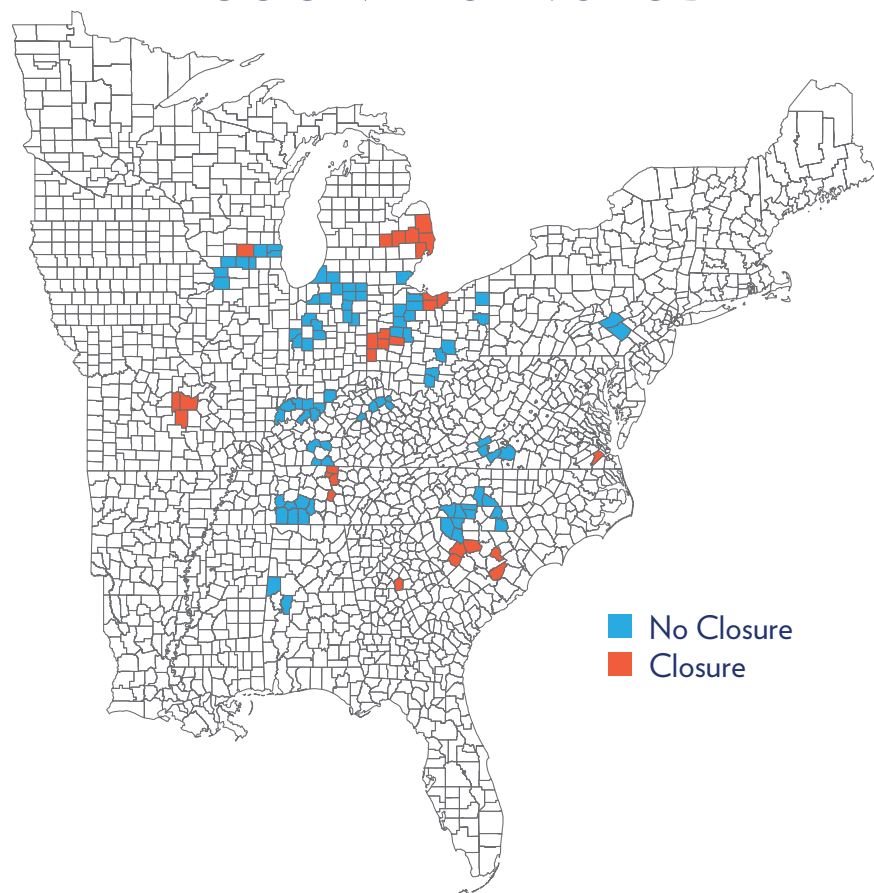


TRENDS IN OPIOID OVERDOSE DEATHS AFTER AUTO PLANT CLOSURES

ResearchSNAPSHOT

Opioid overdose deaths have been called “deaths of despair” because of their possible connection to individual and community distress. This study looks at how proximity to auto plant closures — which represent large, traumatic, and culturally significant shocks to economic opportunity — affected opioid deaths among working age adults between 1999 and 2016. The authors focused on counties with a high level of manufacturing employment, and asked: did individuals living within the same labor market (i.e., commuting zone) as a plant closure go on to have increased rates of opioid overdose mortality compared to those residing in labor markets that did not have a closure?

112 MANUFACTURING COUNTIES IN STUDY

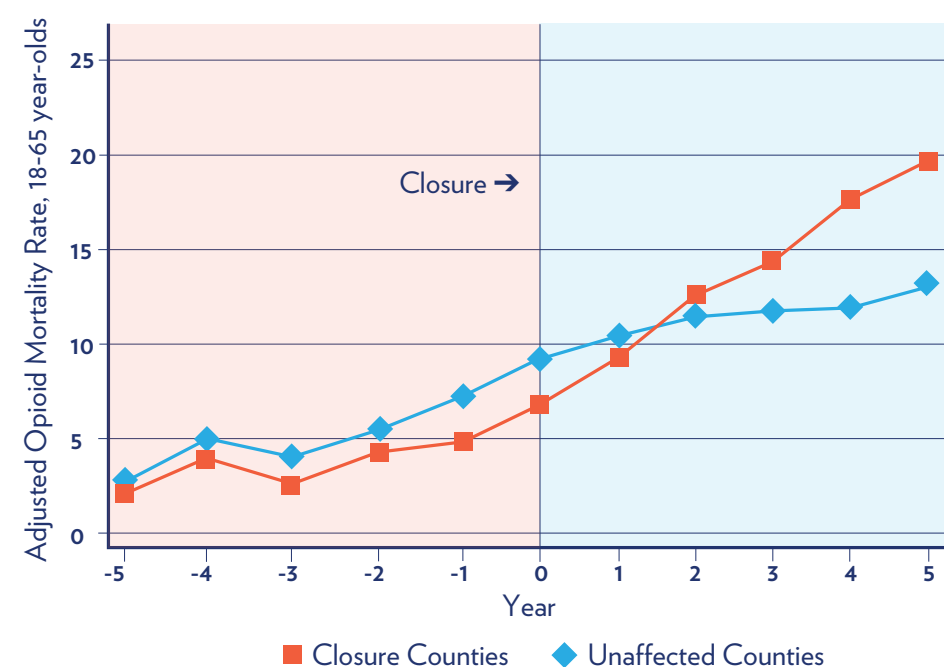


29 counties in **10** commuting zones with auto plant closures were compared to **83** counties in **20** commuting zones where all auto plants remained open.

COUNTIES WITH CLOSURES SAW HIGHER OPIOID MORTALITY RATES OVER TIME THAN UNAFFECTED COUNTIES.

After five years, **85%** relative increase in overdose mortality rate among working age adults in auto plant closure commuting zones

 **+8.6 deaths** per 100,000 residents



Disproportionate Effect on Young, Non-Hispanic White Men

- Non-Hispanic White men 18–34 **+20.1 deaths**/100,000
- Non-Hispanic White men 35–65 **+12.8 deaths**/100,000
- Non-Hispanic White women 18–34 **+6.4 deaths**/100,000
- No significant increases in deaths among:
 - Non-Hispanic White women 35–65
 - Hispanic White men and women
 - Nonwhite men and women

Diminishing economic opportunities are associated with opioid overdose deaths. Policymakers should consider targeting regions affected by manufacturing losses with increased screenings and community-based interventions for substance use disorder. Affected communities may also benefit from health system and community engagement in identifying and addressing critical social determinants of health. Given the likelihood of further declines in manufacturing, social policies should target regions with longstanding economic ties to this sector.