



TUOLUMNE COUNTY STATE OF THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC



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Health Officer and EMS Medical Director

July 2022



OBJECTIVES



Overview of the opioid crisis



History that contributed to the crisis



Changes locally and statewide since 2009



Plan for improvement

OPIOIDS IN TUOLUMNE COUNTY

2020 DATA
[CALIFORNIA STATE DASHBOARD](#)

Tuolumne County is the first in the state (meaning worst) for:

- Number of opioid prescriptions
- MMEs (Morphine Milligram Equivalents) prescribed
- Number of residents over 90 MMEs

Tuolumne is second in the state for:

- Opioid and Benzo co - prescriptions





2021 QUARTER 1 DATA (PRELIMINARY)

TUOLUMNE COUNTY RANKS:

- Worst for total MME
- Worst for residents on >90 MME
- Worst for overlapping benzo prescriptions
- Third worst for number of opioid prescriptions
- Overdose deaths increased 6x since 2019

HISTORY IN TUOLUMNE COUNTY

Opioid prescribing improved significantly in past 10 years

In 2010, Tuolumne County ranked:

- 3rd worst # opioid prescriptions/1000 residents
- 3rd worst for co - prescribed benzodiazepines
- 3rd worst for residents prescribed >90 MME
- 4th worst for MME
- 6th worst for opioid - related deaths

The rest of the state is improving as well, many counties much faster.

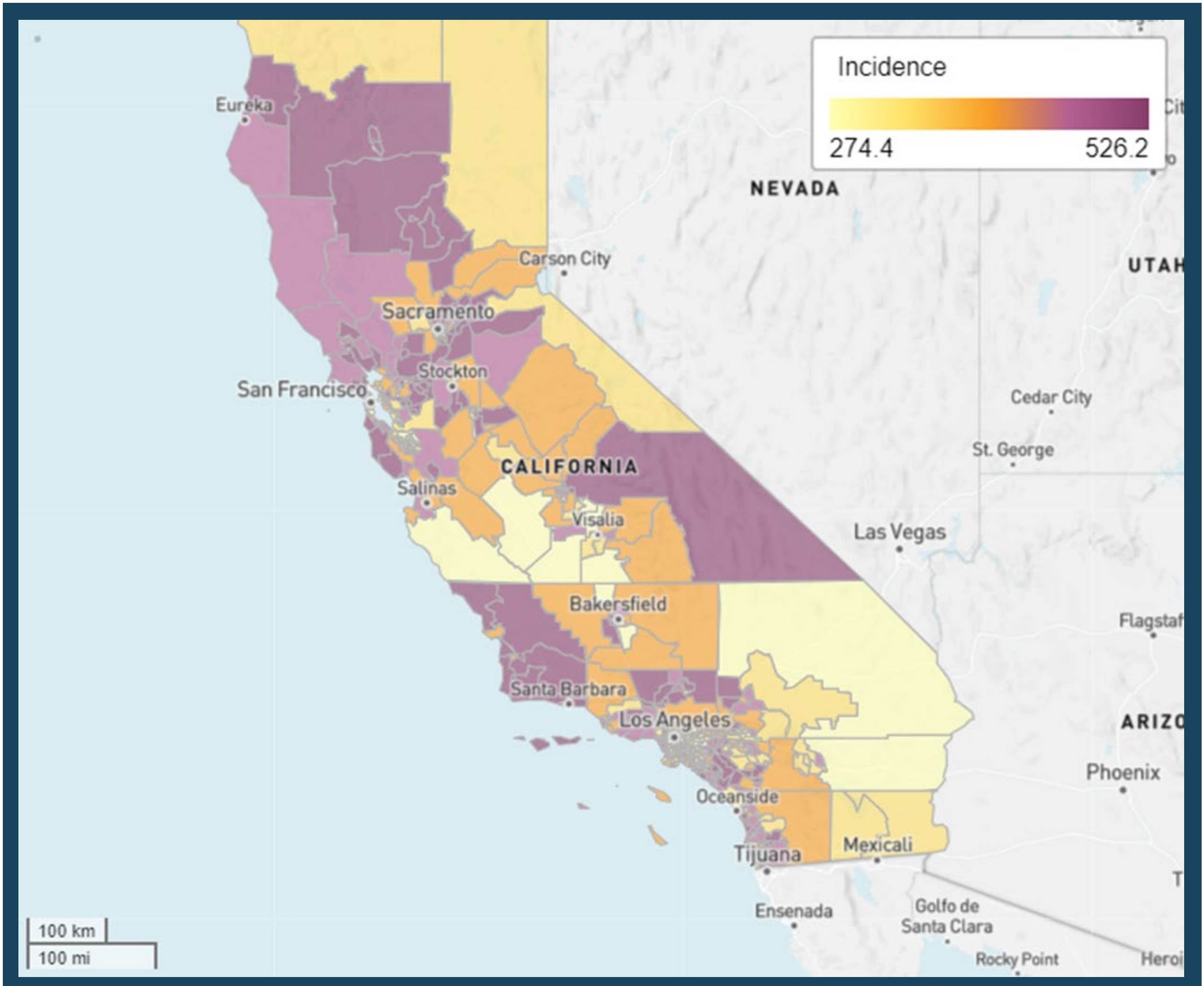
Despite our improvement, we have worsened in rank due to the greater improvement of other counties



IS OUR POPULATION DIFFERENT?

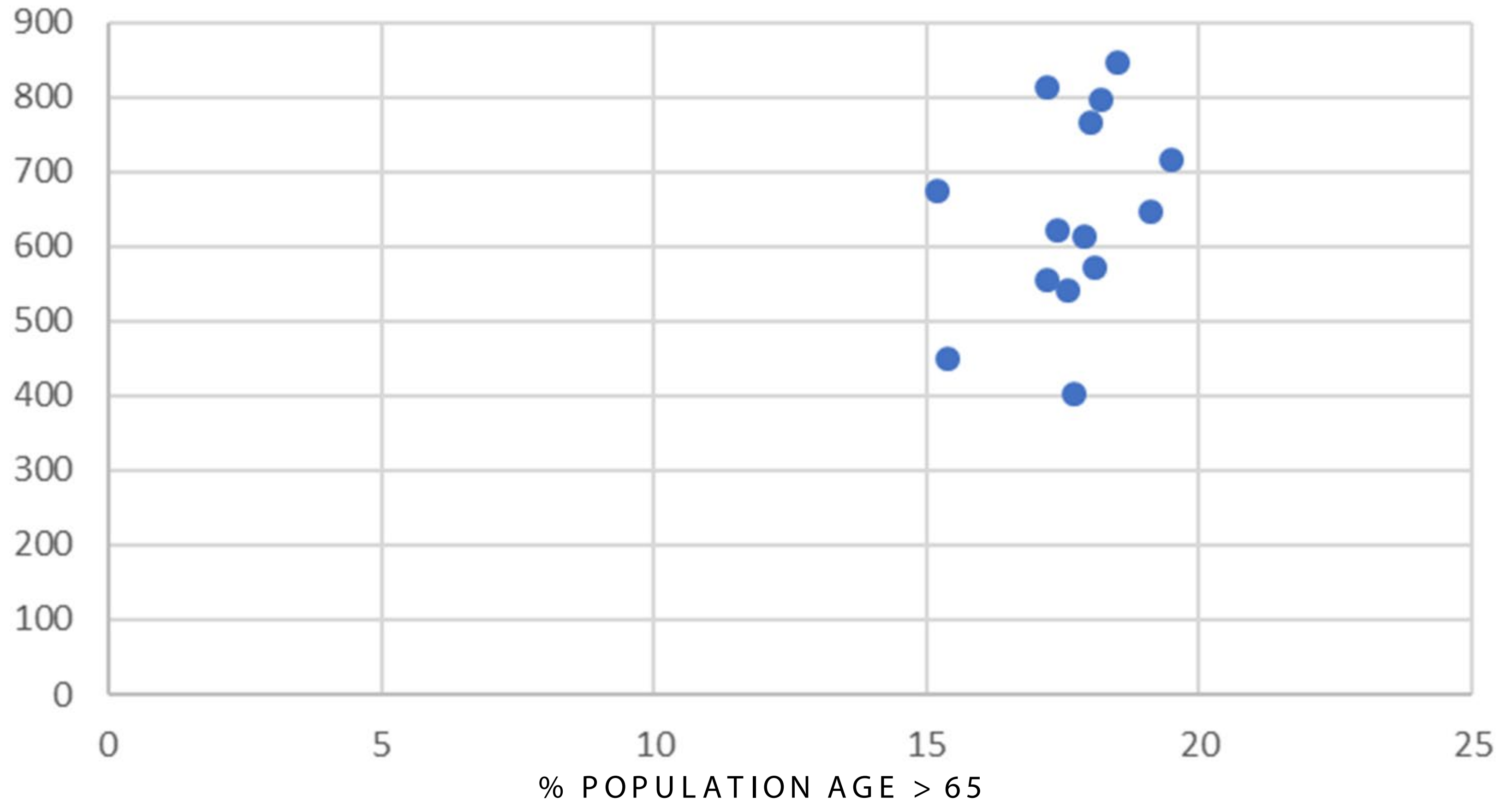
- Tuolumne County is an **AMAZING** place to live and fabulous people live here
- Our population is older than the California average, but age doesn't correlate well with prescribing trends
- Cancer rate medium but other counties with higher or similar cancer rates prescribe less





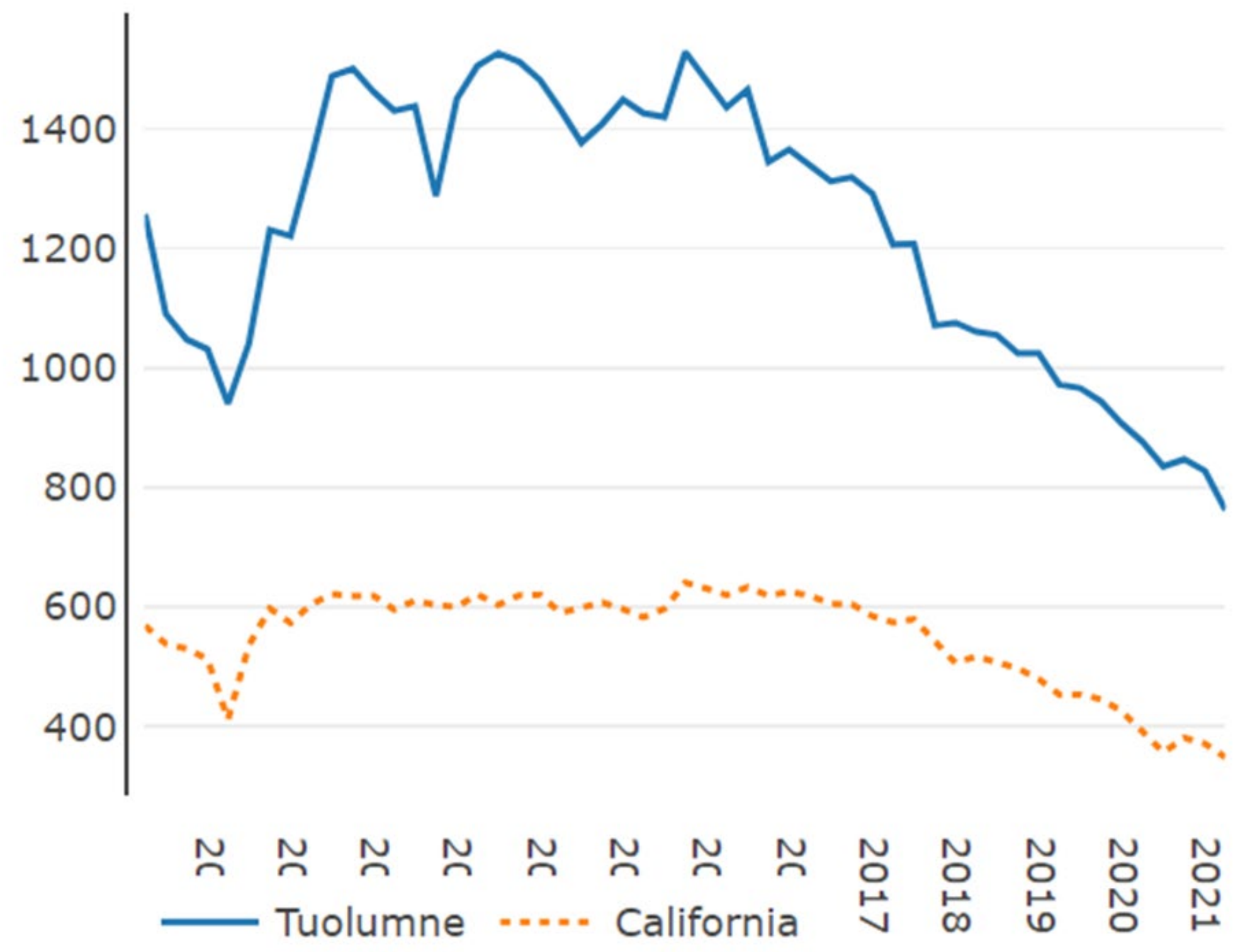
CANCER INCIDENCE 2013-2018

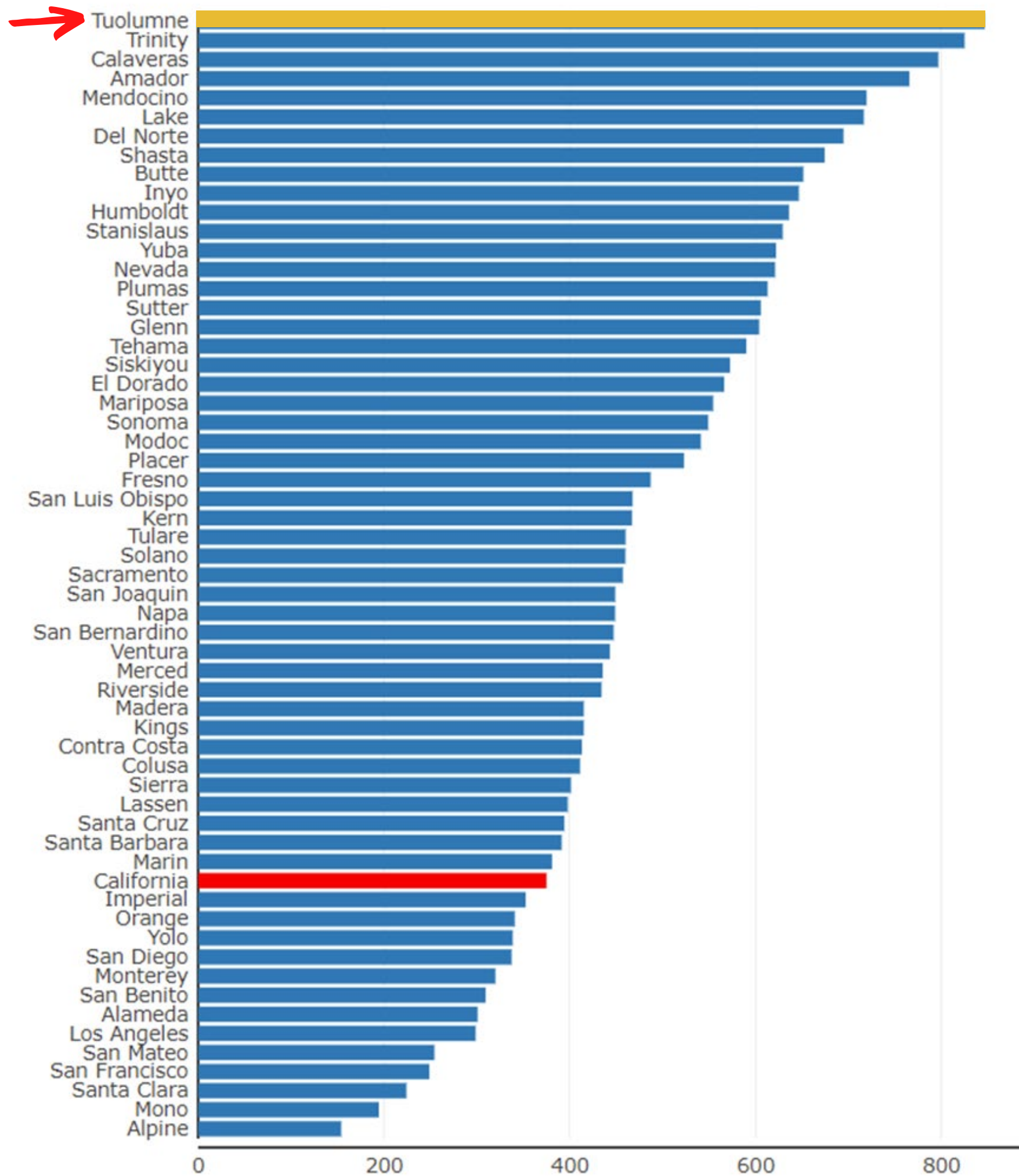
OPIOID RX PER 100,000



Opioid Prescriptions by Patient Location - Total Population, Annualized Quarterly Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents

Tuolumne vs. California



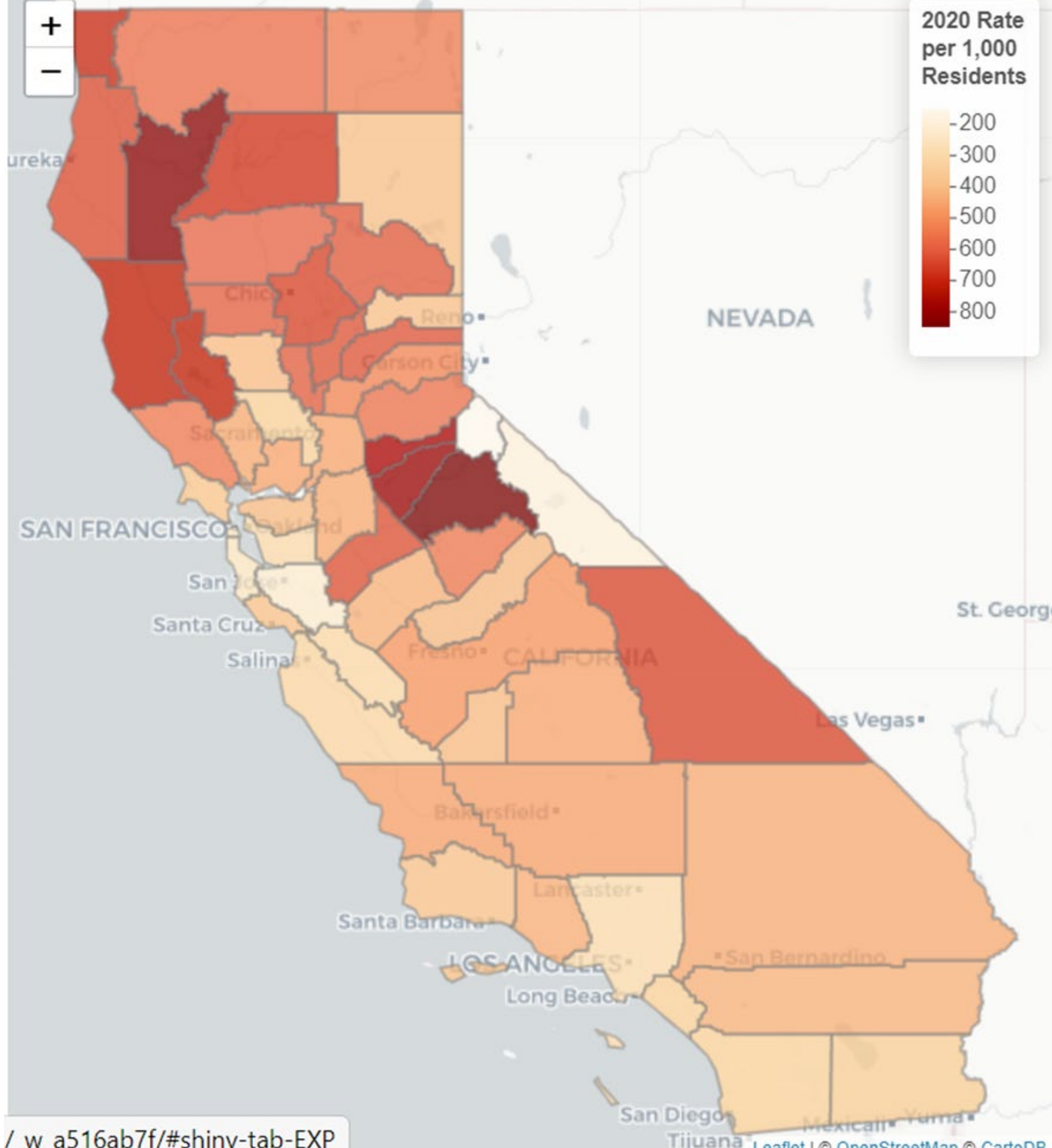


OPIOID PRESCRIPTIONS BY PATIENT LOCATION

PRESCRIPTIONS

Total Population, 2020
Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents

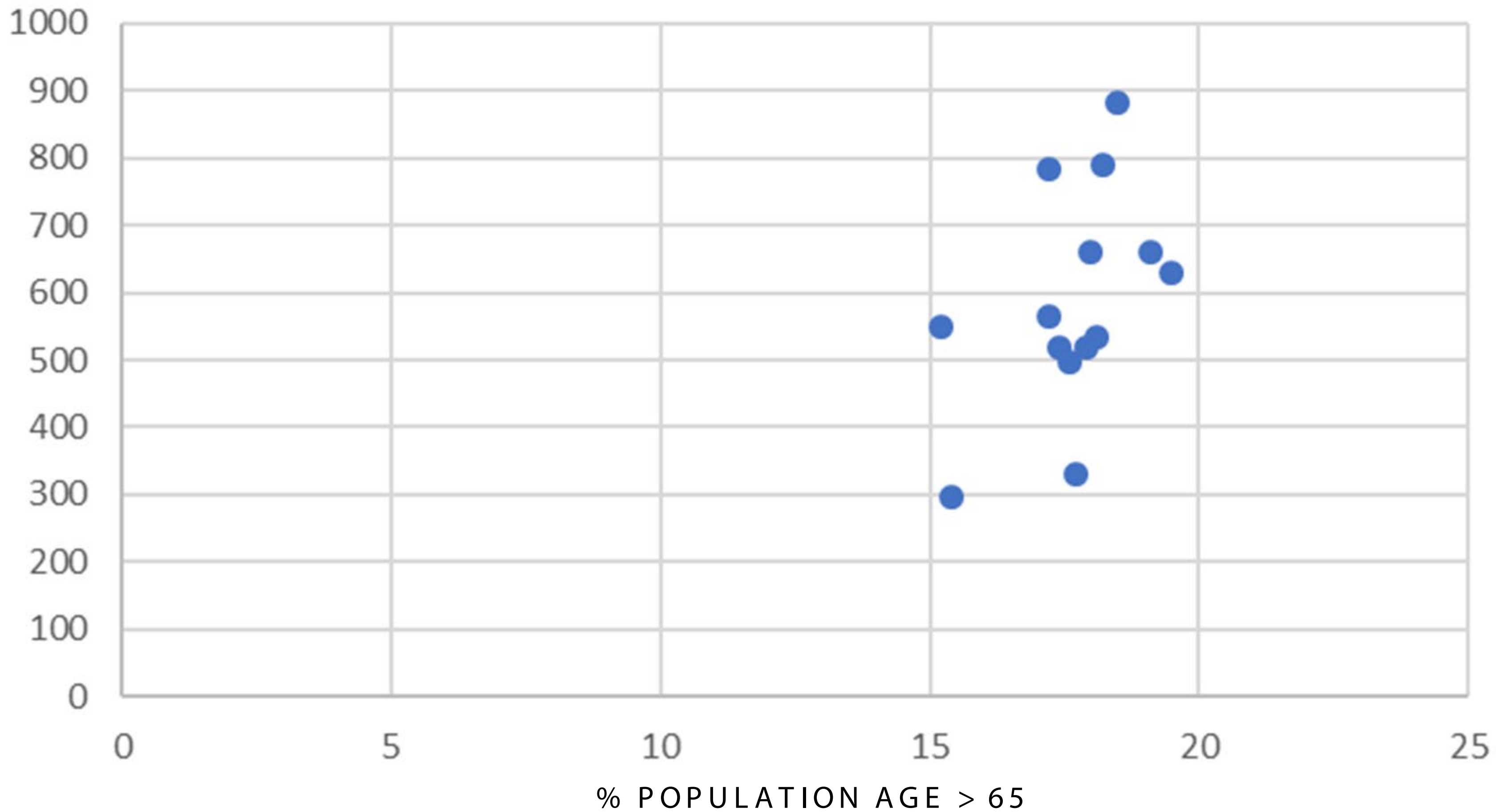
**TUOLUMNE
COUNTY
RANKS FIRST**



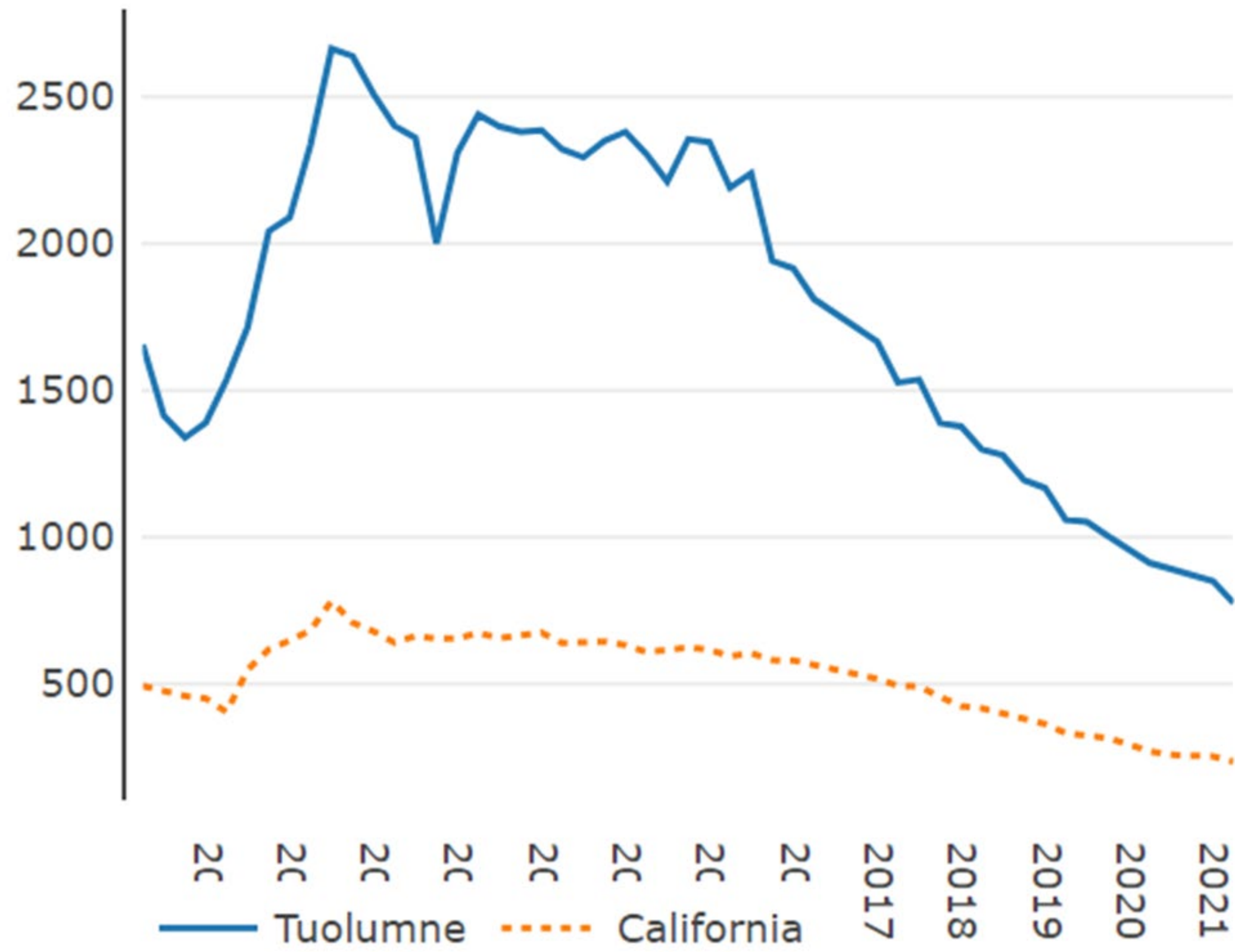
OPIOID PRESCRIPTIONS BY PATIENT LOCATION (CURES)

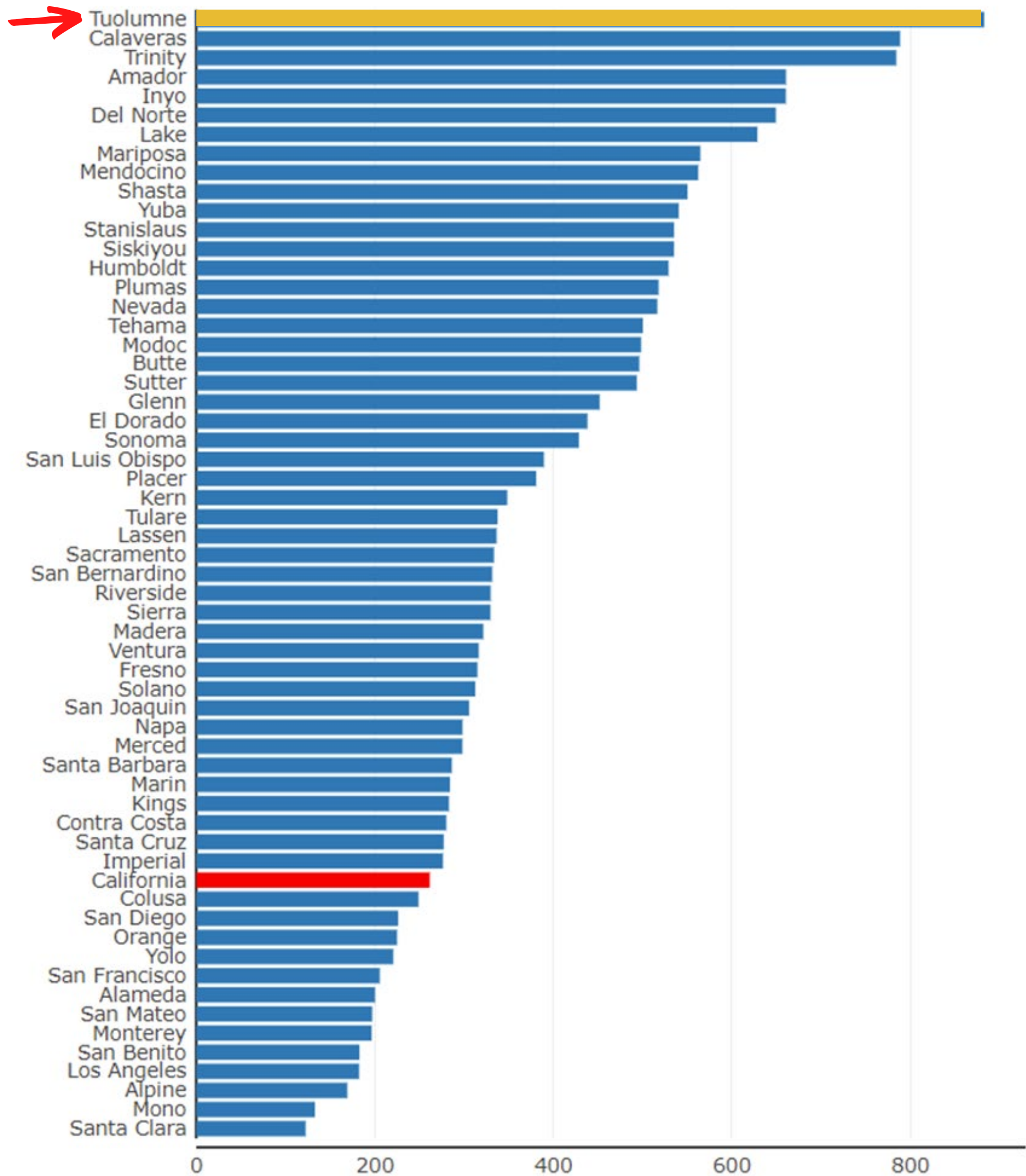
Total Population, 2020
Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents

MMEs/resident (crude rate)



MMEs by Patient Location - Total Population, Annualized Quarterly Crude Rate per Resident Tuolumne vs. California

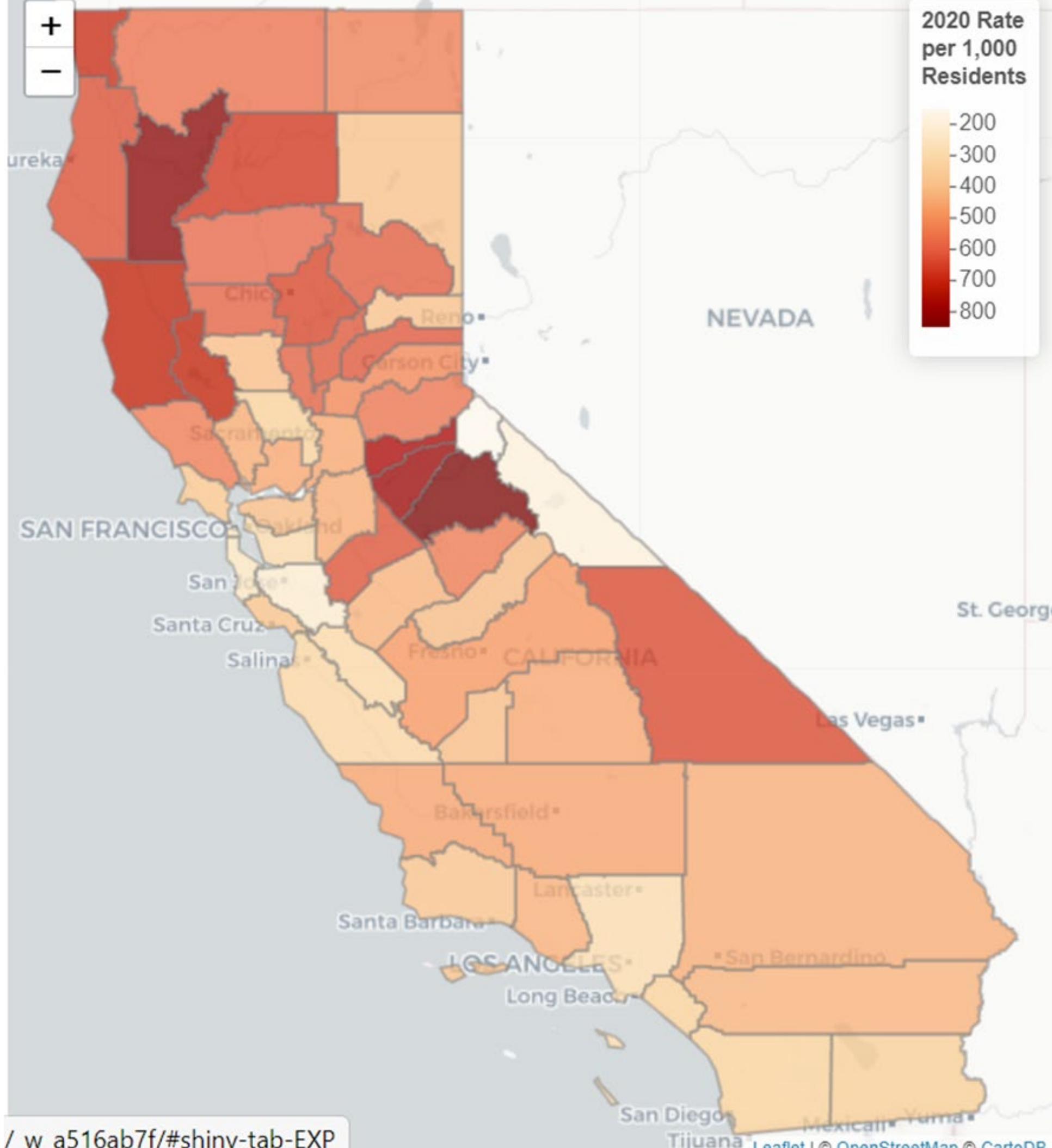




MMEs BY PATIENT LOCATION PRESCRIPTIONS

Total Population, 2020
Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents

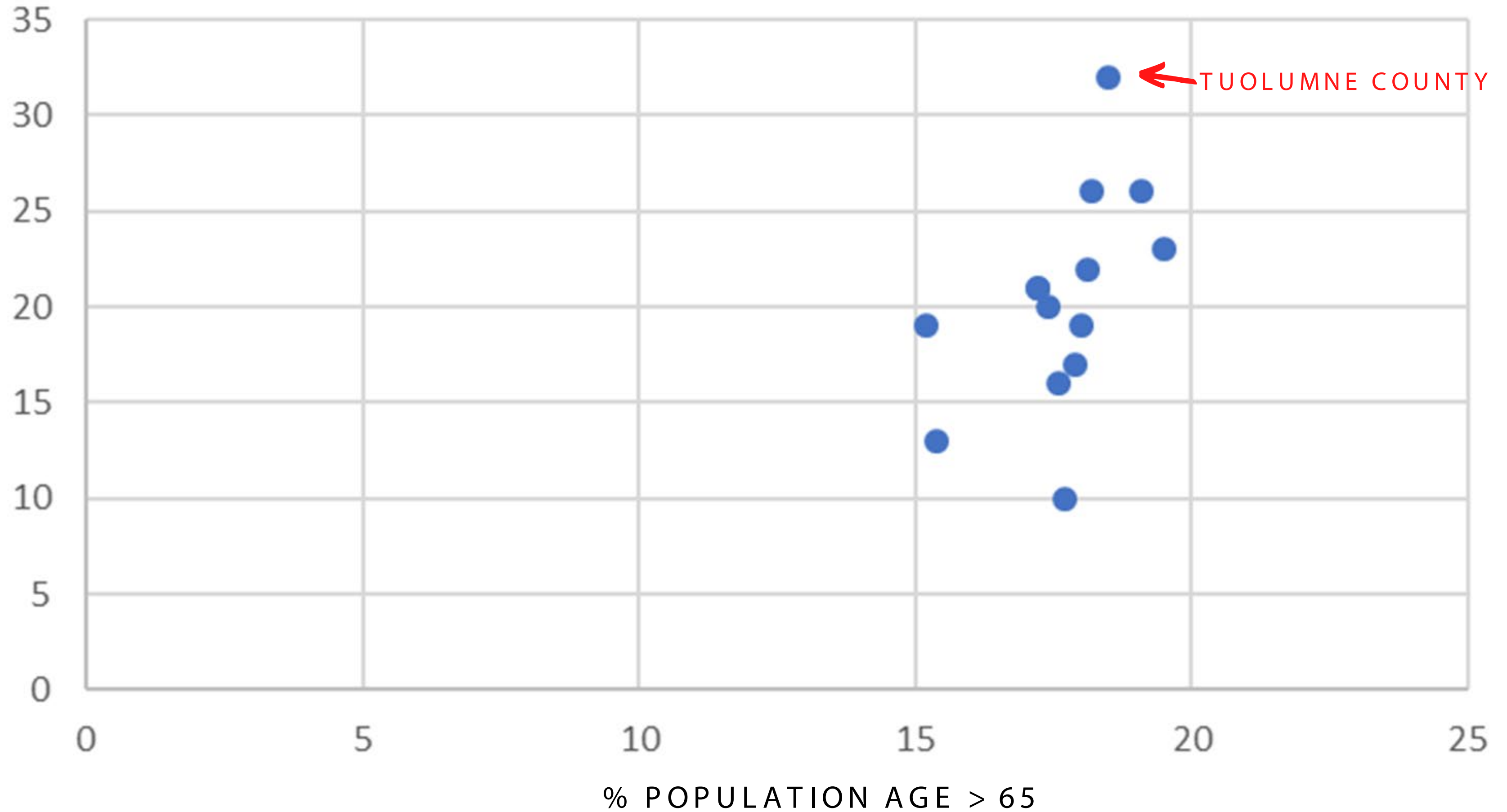
**TUOLUMNE
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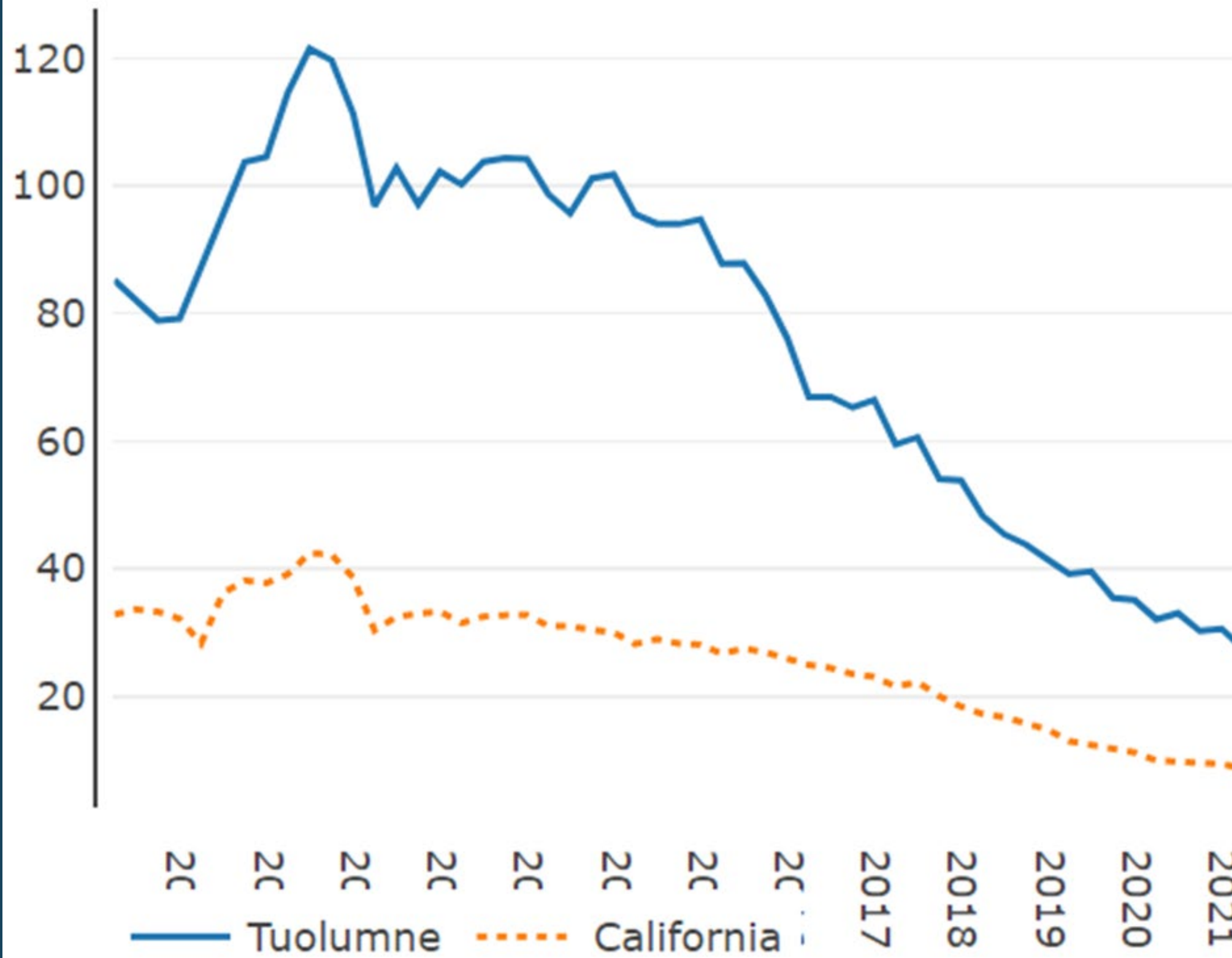
MMEs BY PATIENT LOCATION (CURES)

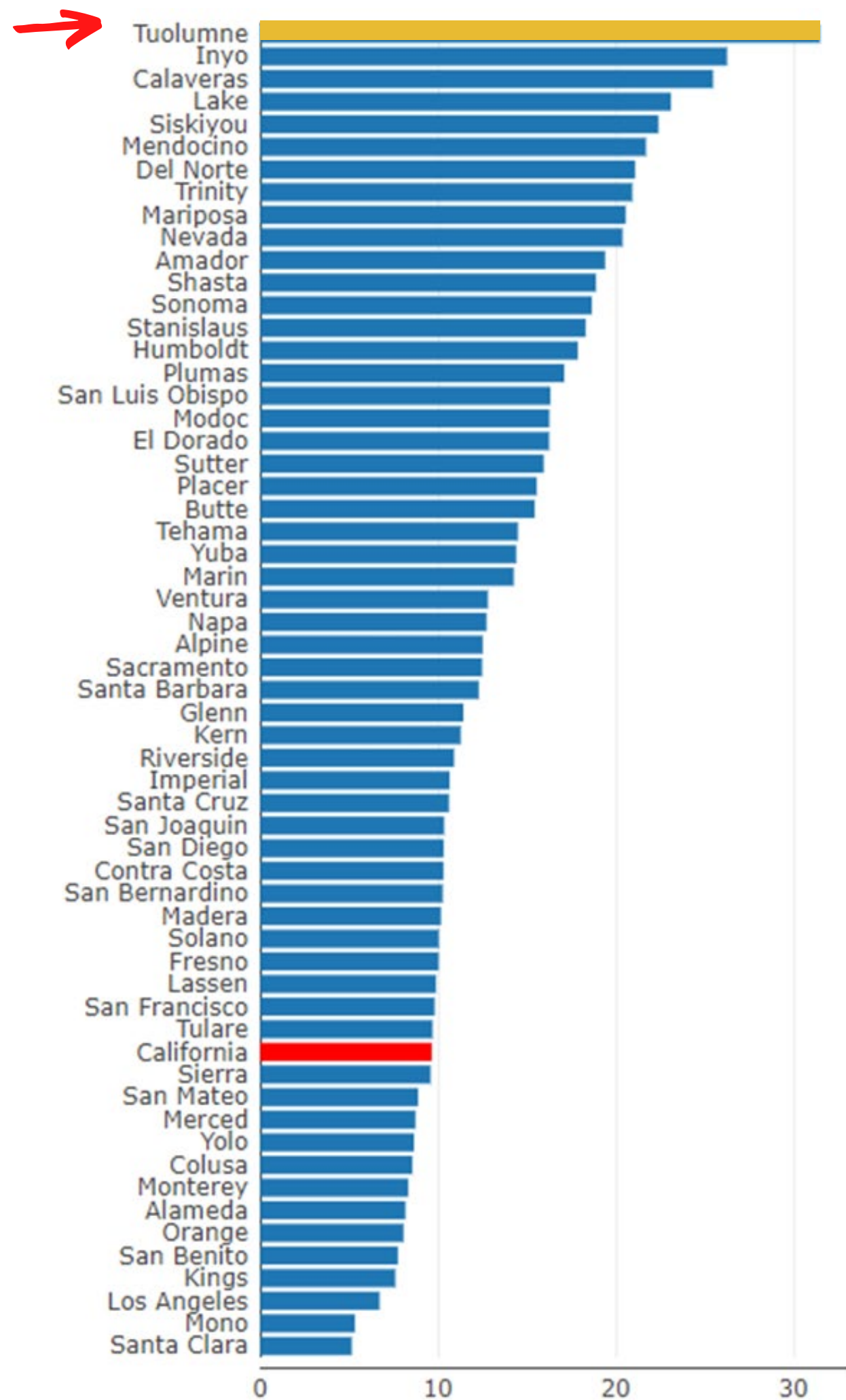
Total Population, 2020
Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents

Residents MME > 90 (per 1000)



Residents on > 90 MMEs of Opioids - Total Population, Annualized Quarterly Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents Tuolumne vs. California

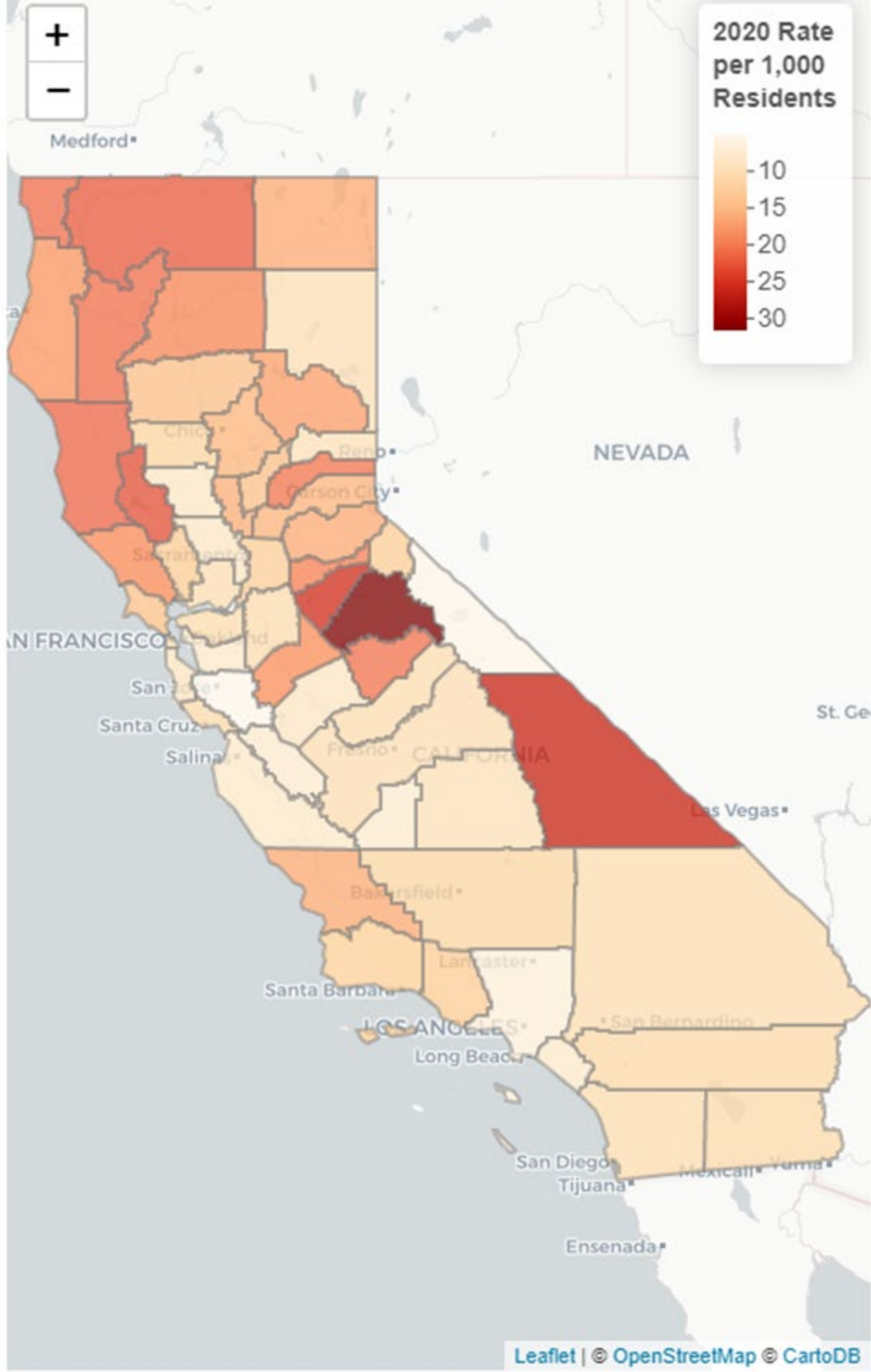




RESIDENTS ON >90 MMEs OF OPIOID PRESCRIPTIONS

Total Population, 2020
Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents

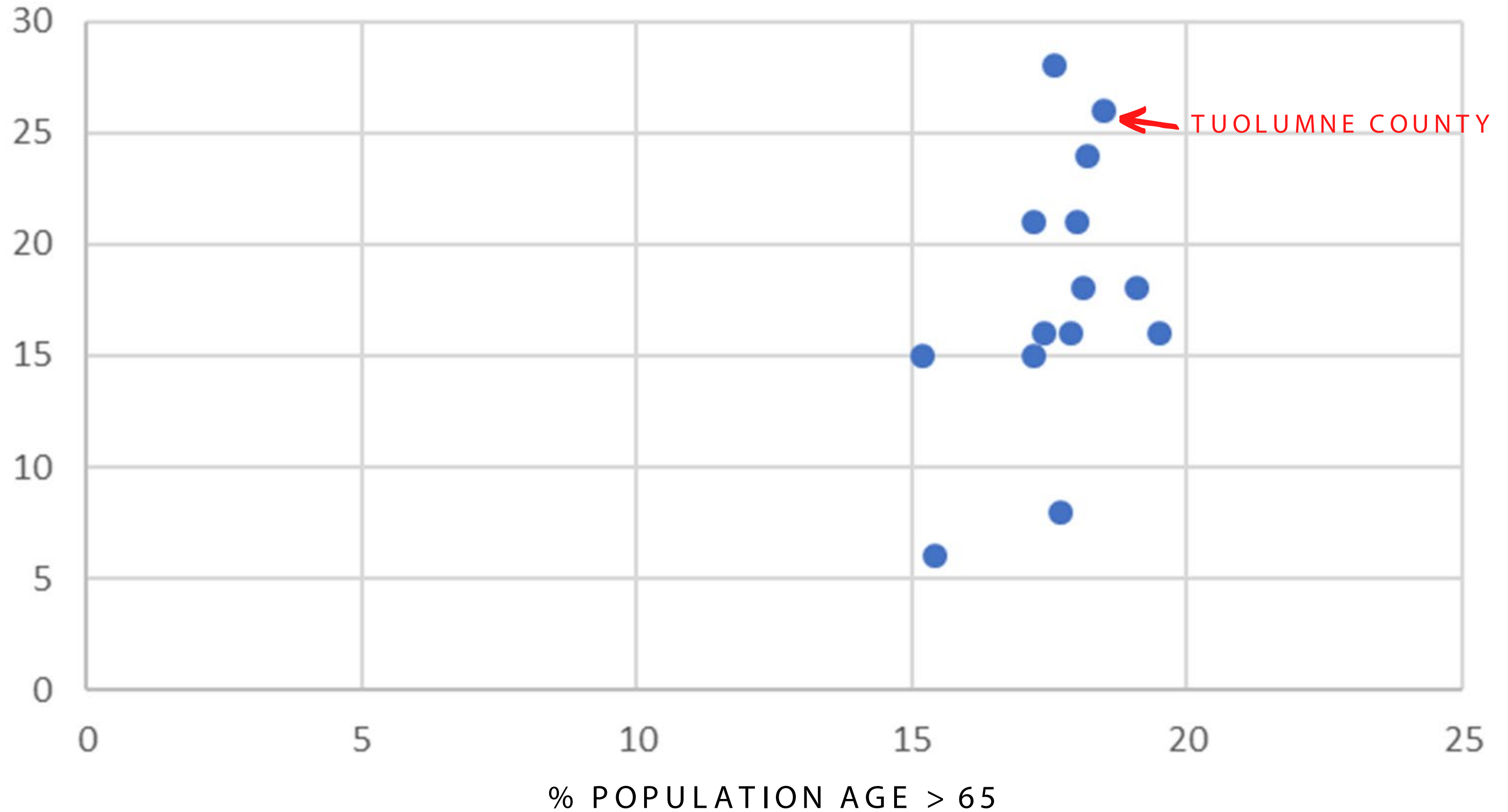
**TUOLUMNE
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RANKS FIRST**



residents on >90 mmeS OF OPIOIDS
(CURES)

Total Population, 2020
Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents

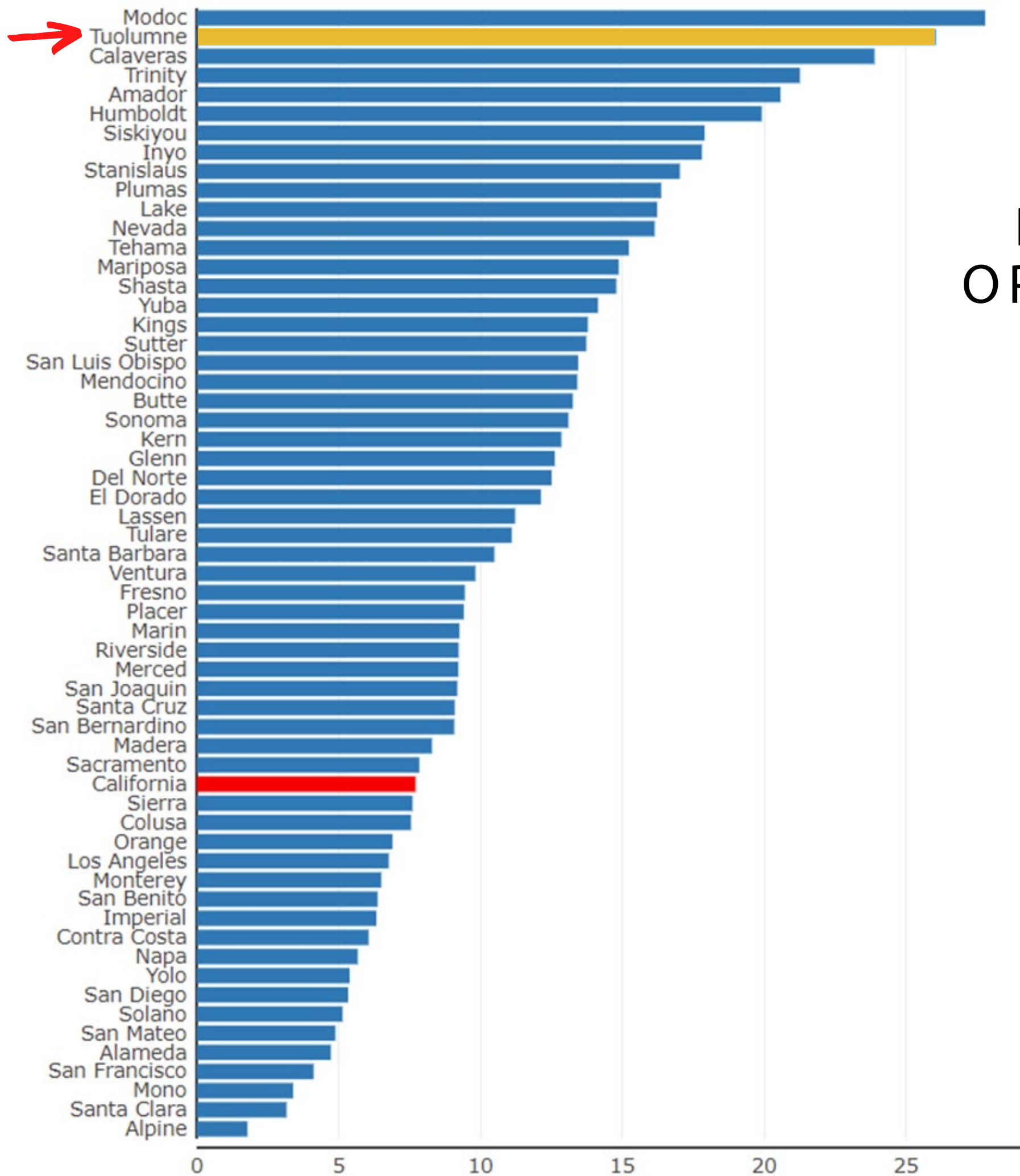
OVERLAPPING BENZOS (PER 1000)



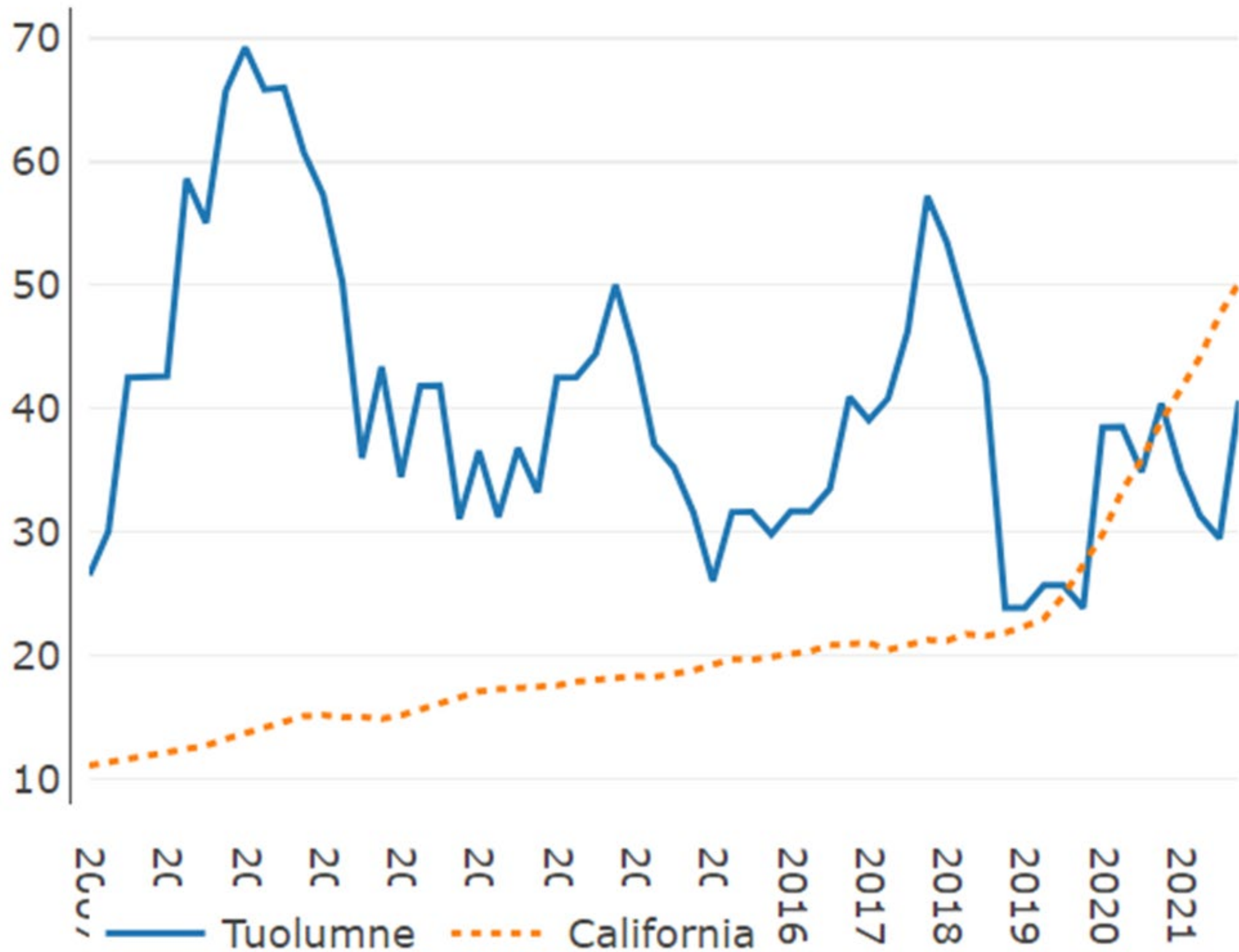
RESIDENTS W/ OVERLAPPING OPIOID/BENZOS PRESCRIPTIONS

Total Population, 2020
Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents

TUOLUMNE
COUNTY
RANKS
SECOND

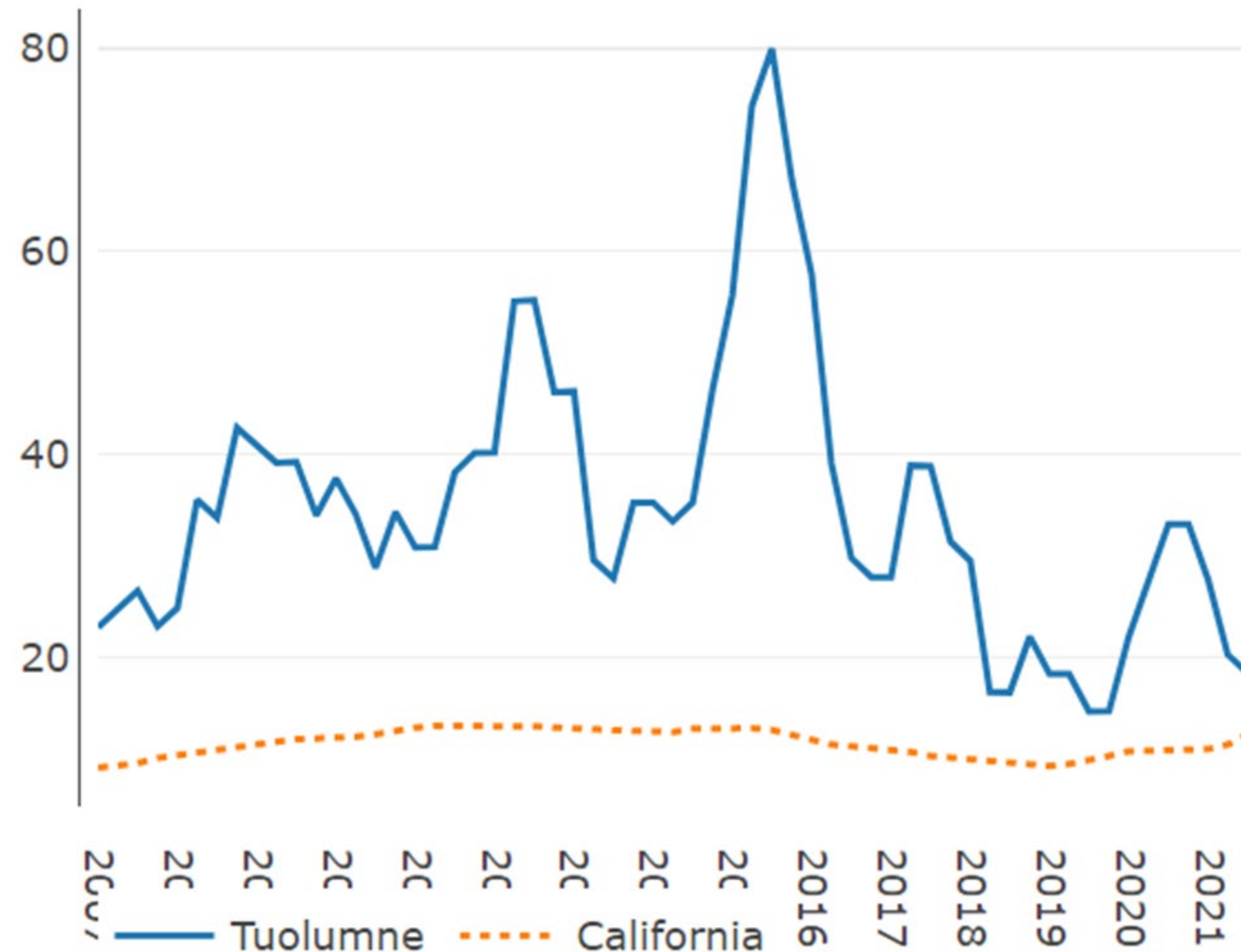


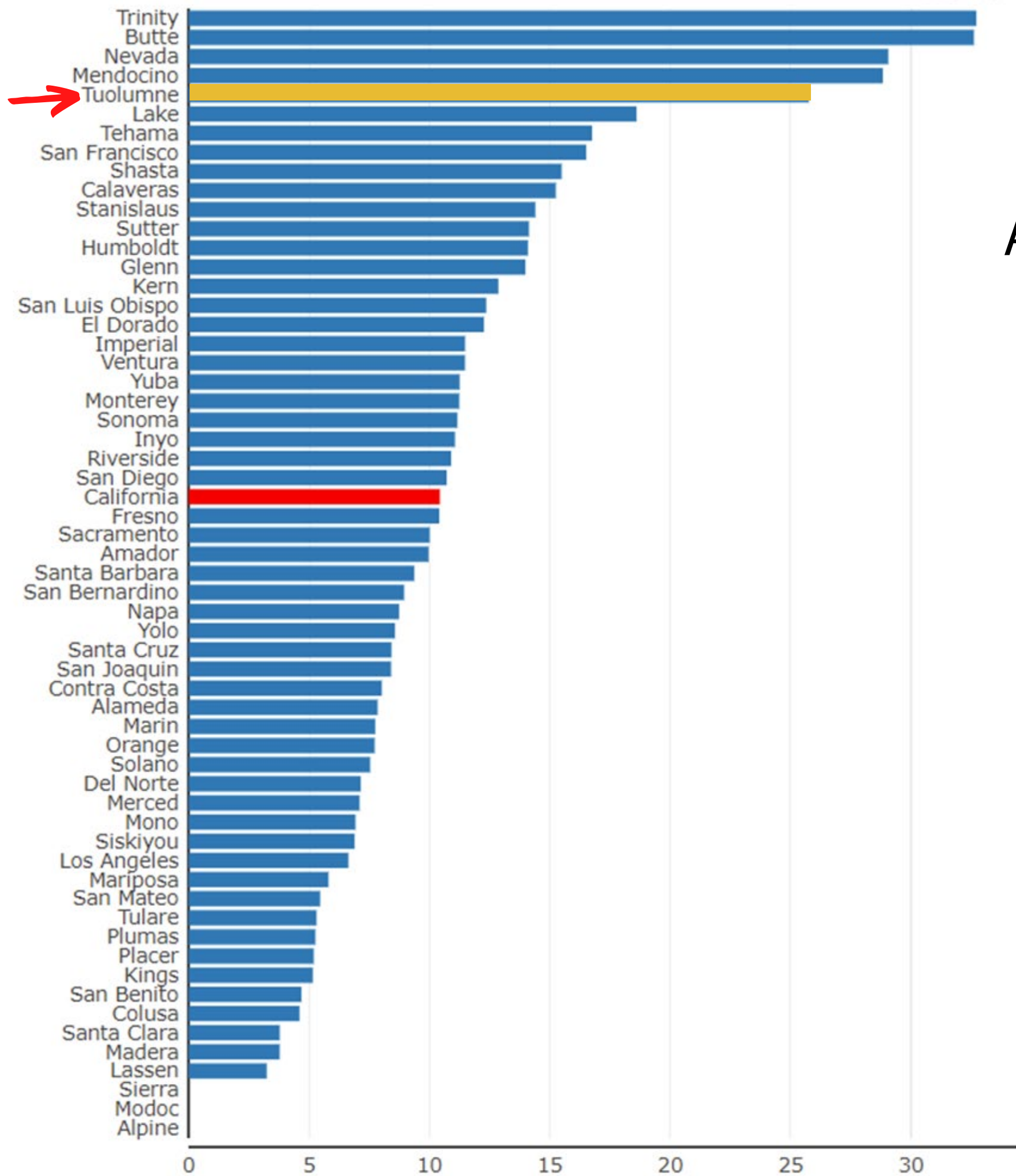
Any Opioid-Related Overdose ED Visits - Total Population, 12-Month Rolling Crude Rate per 100,000 Residents Tuolumne vs. California



Any Opioid-Related Overdose Hospitalizations - Total Population, 12-Month Rolling Crude Rate per 100,000 Residents

Tuolumne vs. California





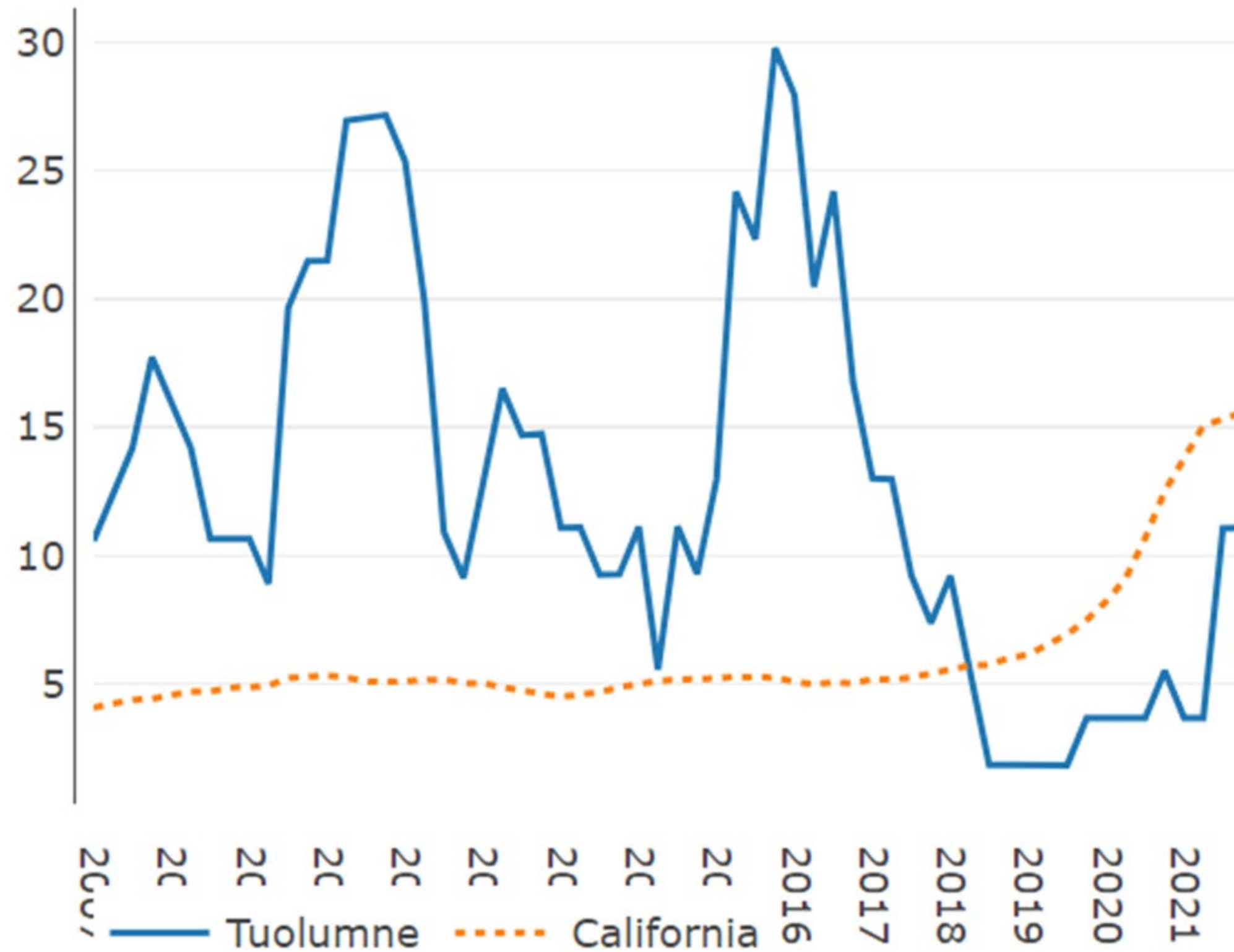
ANY OPIOID-RELATED OVERDOSE HOSPITALIZATIONS

Total Population, 2020
Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents

**TUOLUMNE
COUNTY
RANKS FIFTH**

Any Opioid-Related Overdose Deaths - Total Population, 12-Month Rolling Crude Rate per 100,000 Residents

Tuolumne vs. California





OPIOID DEATHS

Overdose deaths in Tuolumne county have **tripled** since 2020 and have **increased 6x** since 2019.

DEADLY OPIOIDS INCLUDE FENTANYL

Fentanyl is extremely potent

- An amount the equivalent of 3 grains of salt can be fatal
- Past year has seen much more fentanyl locally

Counterfeit pills and other substances can have fentanyl

- Unpredictable amounts
- Difficult to detect, even with fentanyl strips



SHERIFF



Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office

Arrests per year RIMS Reports Data

Drug Possession - Includes H&S sections 11377(a) and 11350(a)							
2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
214	292	360	301	299	305	253	99

Drug Sales – Includes H&S sections 11378, 11379, 11351, and 11352

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
51	97	90	82	109	58	45	18

Sales - related arrests dropped beginning in 2020

The Tuolumne Narcotics Team was dissolved at this time

Possession of Paraphernalia – H&S section 11364

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
277	312	402	345	358	336	275	108

On pace for a significant decrease in arrests in 2022

Under the Influence – H&S section 11550(a)

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
39	28	24	25	36	13	22	10

**Not including 2020 (COVID lockdowns) under
arrests has remained consistent**

- the - influence

Maintaining a place to use and sell drugs “Drug House”

– H & S section 11366

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
2	10	11	3	3	4	0	1

Most “drug house” arrests were traditionally a result of a long - term Tuolumne Narcotics Team investigation involving the use of informants and surveillance

These cases often benefited the community by bringing an end to residences and establishments affecting the quality of life in the surrounding areas

There is only one recorded arrest of this type past two years

ON THE STREET

An aerial photograph of a town, likely in California, showing a mix of residential and commercial buildings. A prominent white church with a tall steeple is visible in the upper left. The town is built on a hillside, with various styles of houses and larger multi-story buildings. The foreground shows a street with parked cars and utility poles.

- **Fentanyl increasing and in non - opioid drugs**
 - This trend is likely to continue
- **Court cases**
 - 2017- 2019, testified for amounts of 7 grams (1/4 oz) to 28.5 grams
 - Now consistently testifying for amounts exceeding 100 grams
- **Short - staffed**
 - Less able to pursue drug - related arrests
 - Tuolumne Narcotics Team dissolved in 2020

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Historical push to prescribe

- Pain was considered the “5th vital sign” & as important as blood pressure, respiratory rate, heart rate, temperature
- Drug companies falsely portrayed their opioid medications as nonaddictive
- Patient satisfaction surveys contribute to provider pay rates
- Lawsuits prosecuted providers for underprescribing in the 90s
 - *Estate of Henry James v Hillhaven Corp* (1991)
 - *Bergman v Wing Chin, MD and Eden Medical Center* (1999)
- Once people are started on opioids and become dependent, it can be very difficult to wean off



WHAT CAN WE DO?

Educate providers and people

- Local resource = redfeatheropioidcoalition.org
 - Monica Lewis coordinator
- Public Health outreach

Improve access to recovery resources

- AHS has a grant application for a Substance Use Navigator
 - Connect patients to local resources
 - Personal follow-up with patient to ensure compliance
- Soon to be announced EMS grant would allow expansion of EMS resources
- Opioid settlement funds pending



WHAT CAN WE DO?

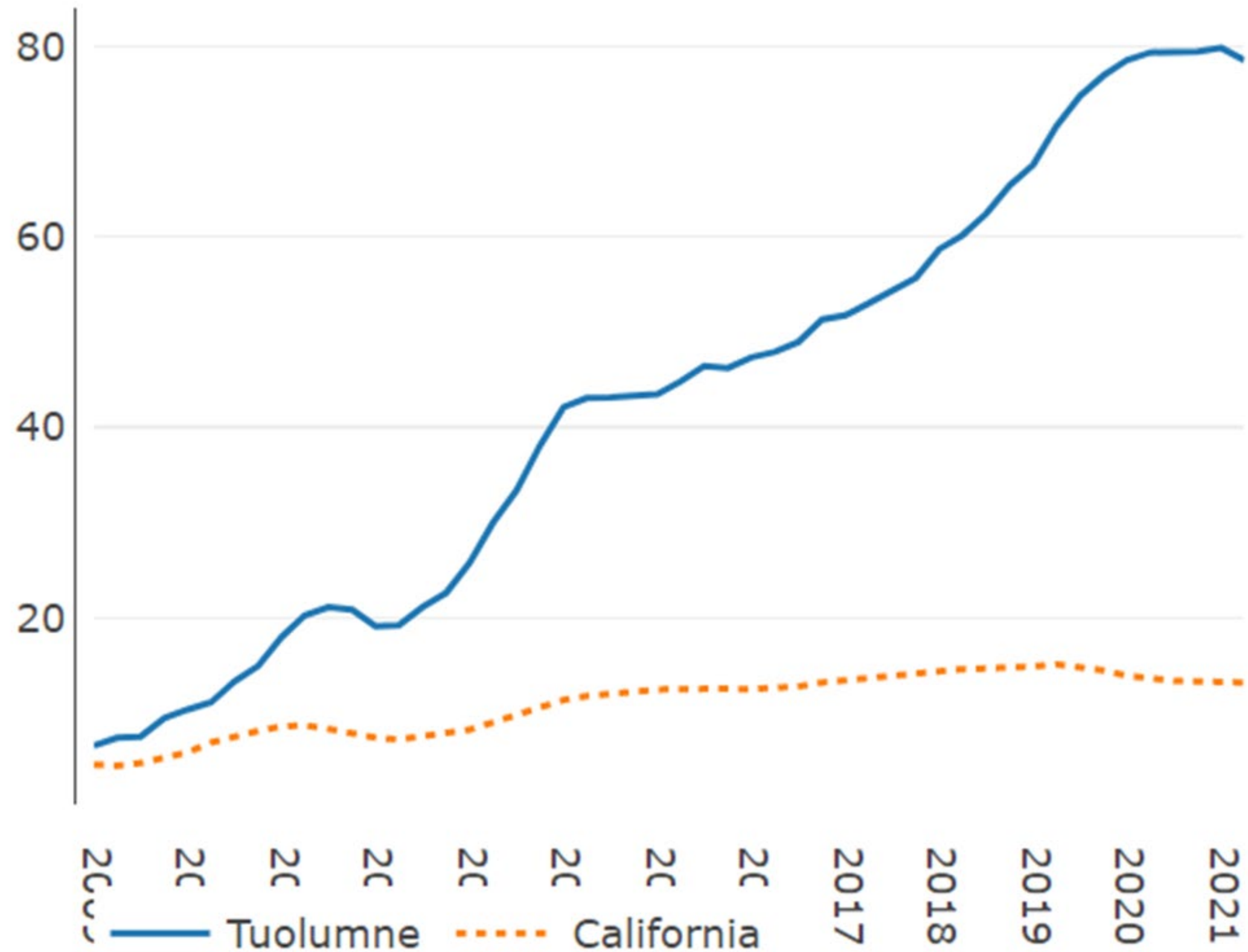
Improve knowledge of and access to other pain control modalities such as:

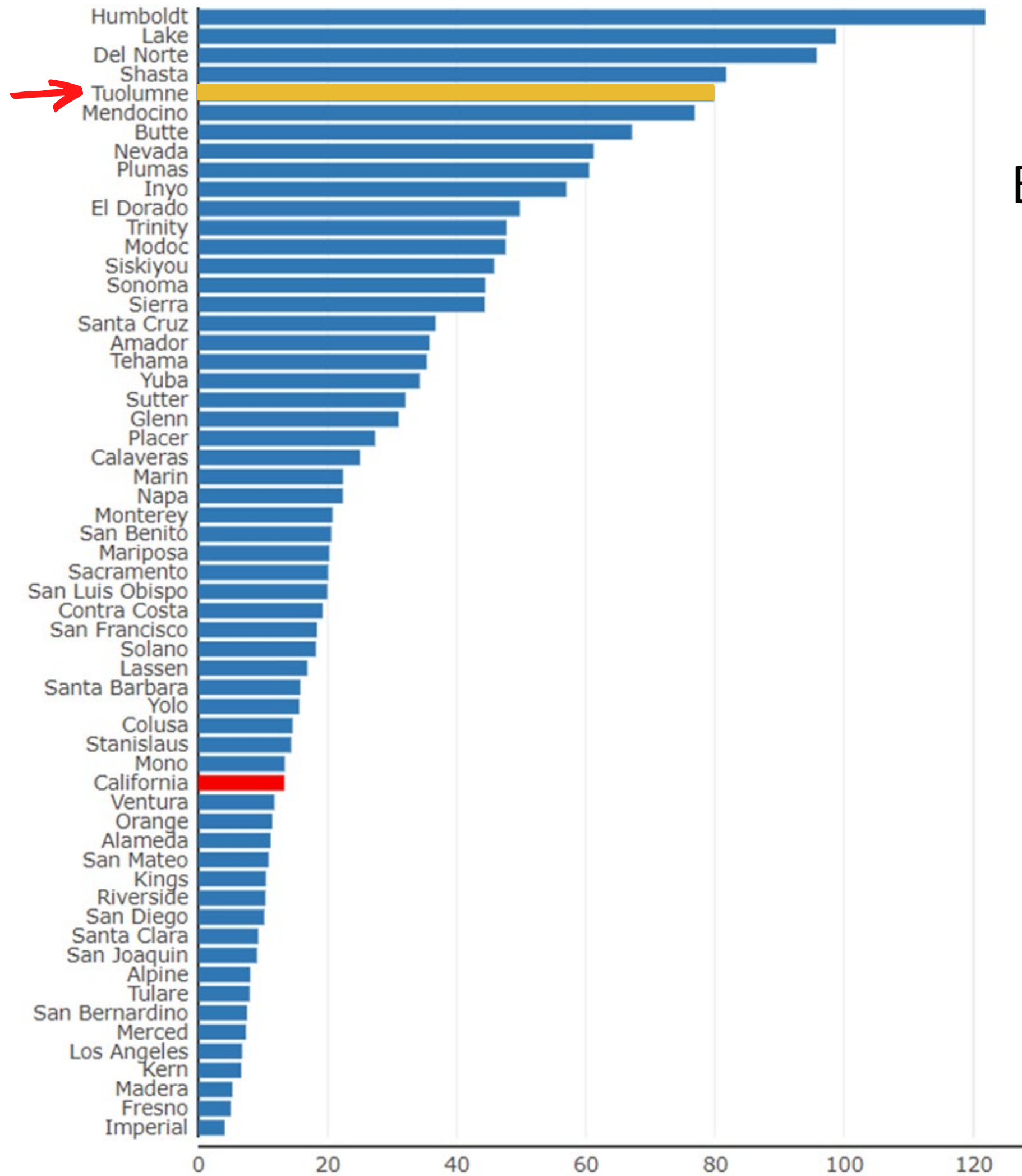
- Diet
- Exercise
- Yoga
- Acupuncture
- Non- narcotic medications and/or herbs
- Buprenorphine is an opioid that is:
 - much less likely to cause overdose
 - prescribed for pain
 - prescribed for addiction, Medication- Assisted Treatment (MAT)



Buprenorphine Prescriptions by Patient Location - Total Population, 12-Month Rolling Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents

Tuolumne vs. California





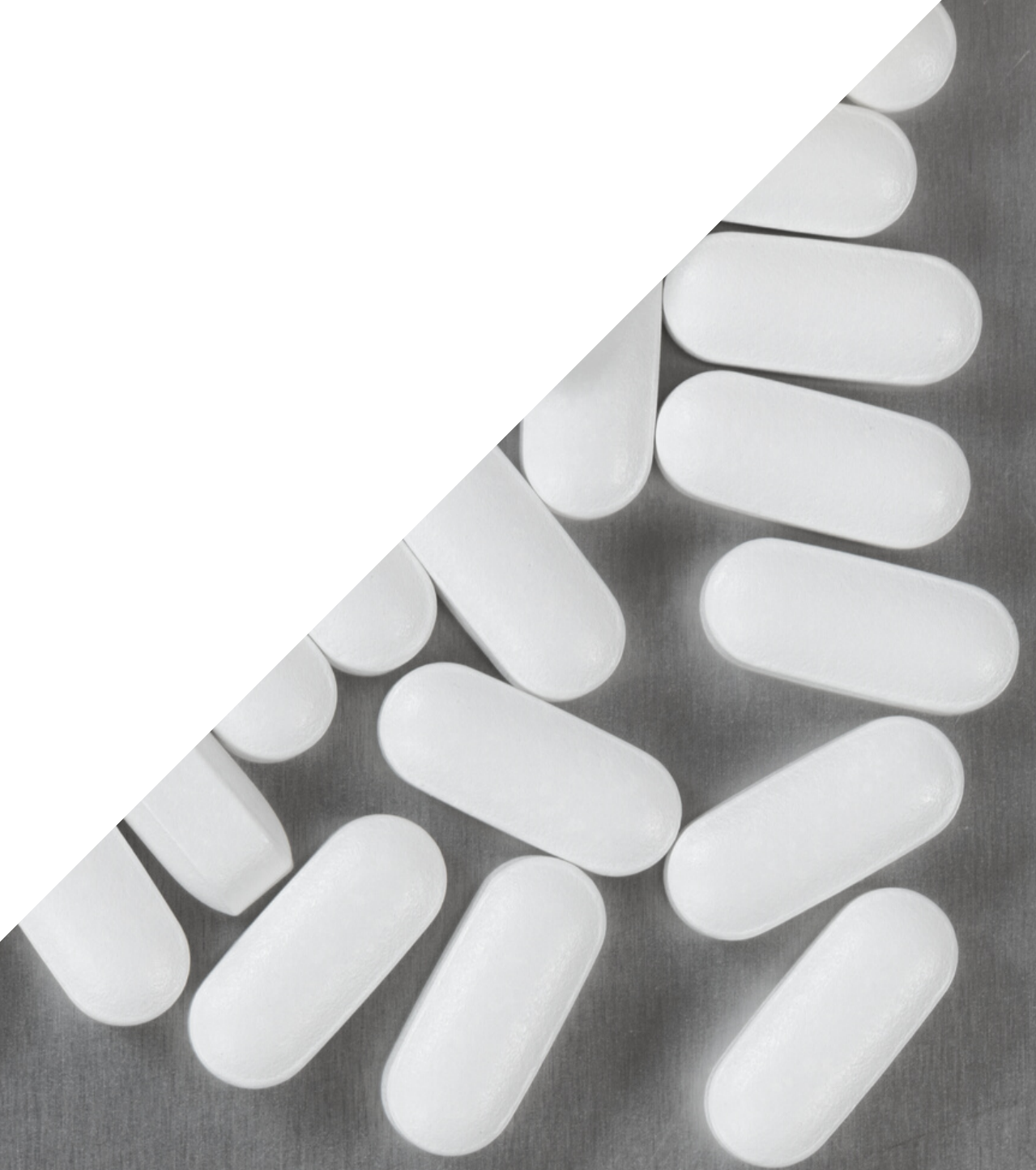
BUPRENORPHINE PRESCRIPTIONS BY PATIENT LOCATION PRESCRIPTIONS

Total Population, 2020
Crude Rate per 1,000 Residents

**TUOLUMNE
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REFERENCES

- <https://www.californiahealthmaps.org>
- <https://skylab.cdph.ca.gov/ODdash/>
- <https://redfeatheropioidcoalition.org>



A landscape photograph featuring a range of dark, forested mountains in the background under a clear sky. In the foreground, there is a field of tall, purple-flowered plants, possibly lupines, with green foliage. A dark blue horizontal bar is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the word "QUESTIONS?" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

QUESTIONS?

