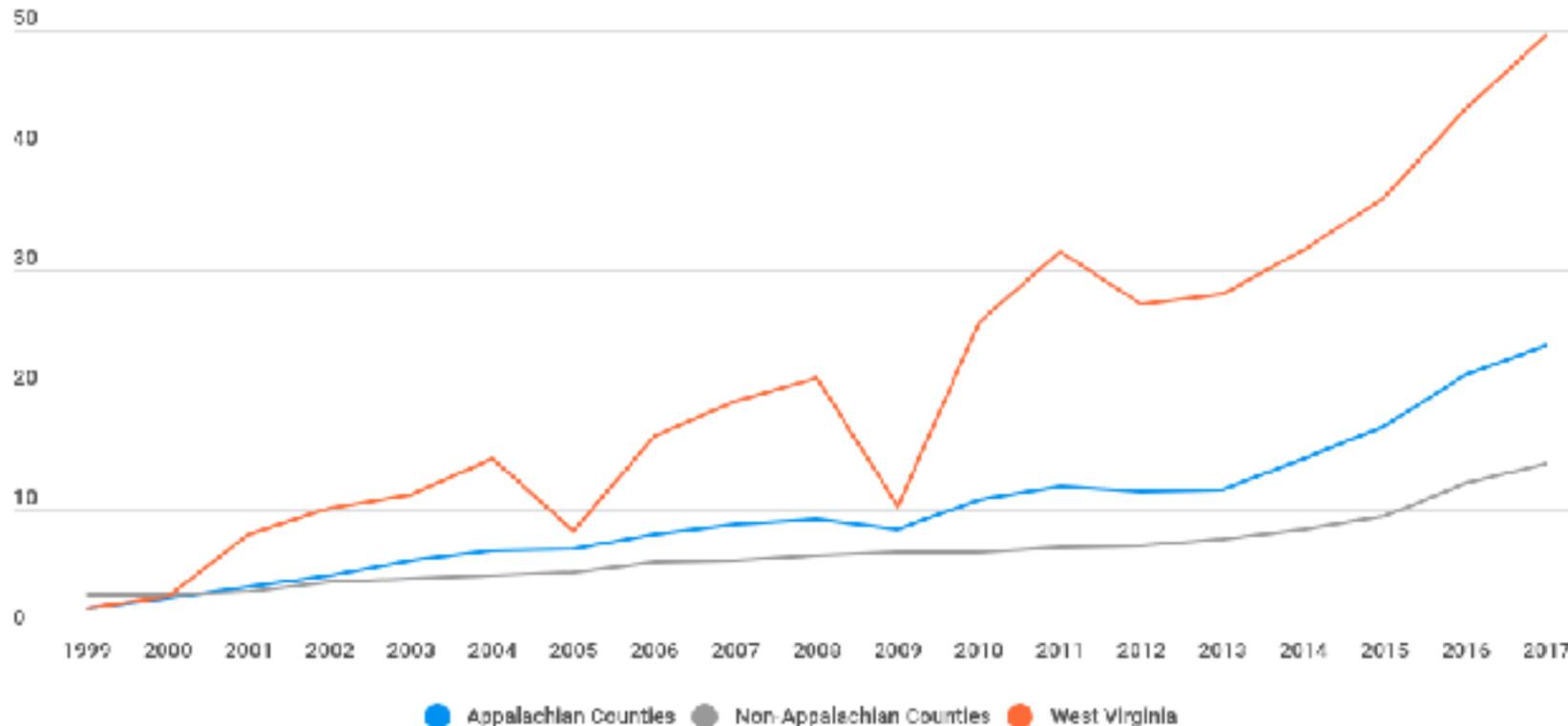


# STRENGTHENING THE LOCAL RESPONSE TO THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC IN WEST VIRGINIA



# APPALACHIAN COUNTIES IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

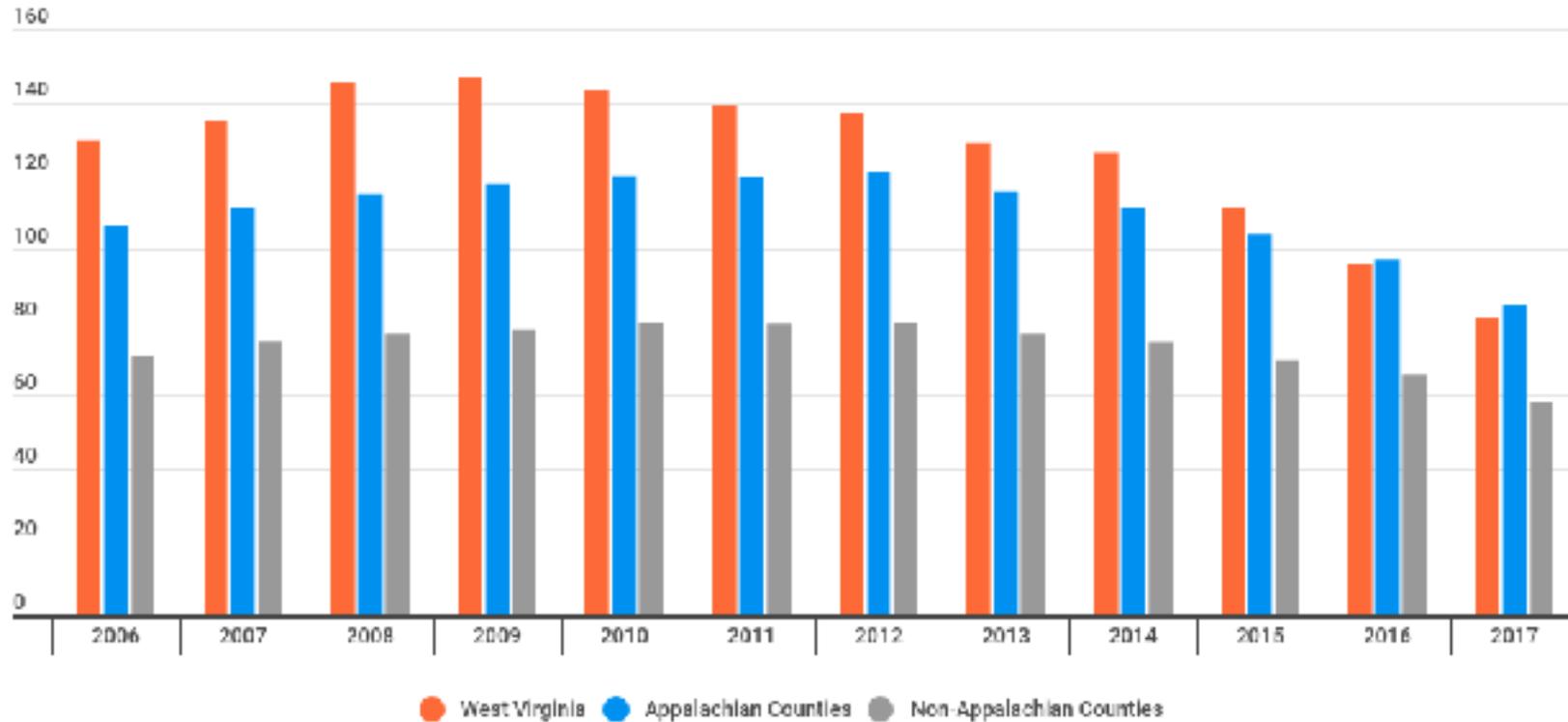
Age-Adjusted Opioid Overdose Death Rates, per 100,000 residents, 1999-2017



In 2017, the opioid overdose death rate was **259% higher** in West Virginia counties than in non-Appalachian counties.

# OPIOID EPIDEMIC: SUPPLY SIDE

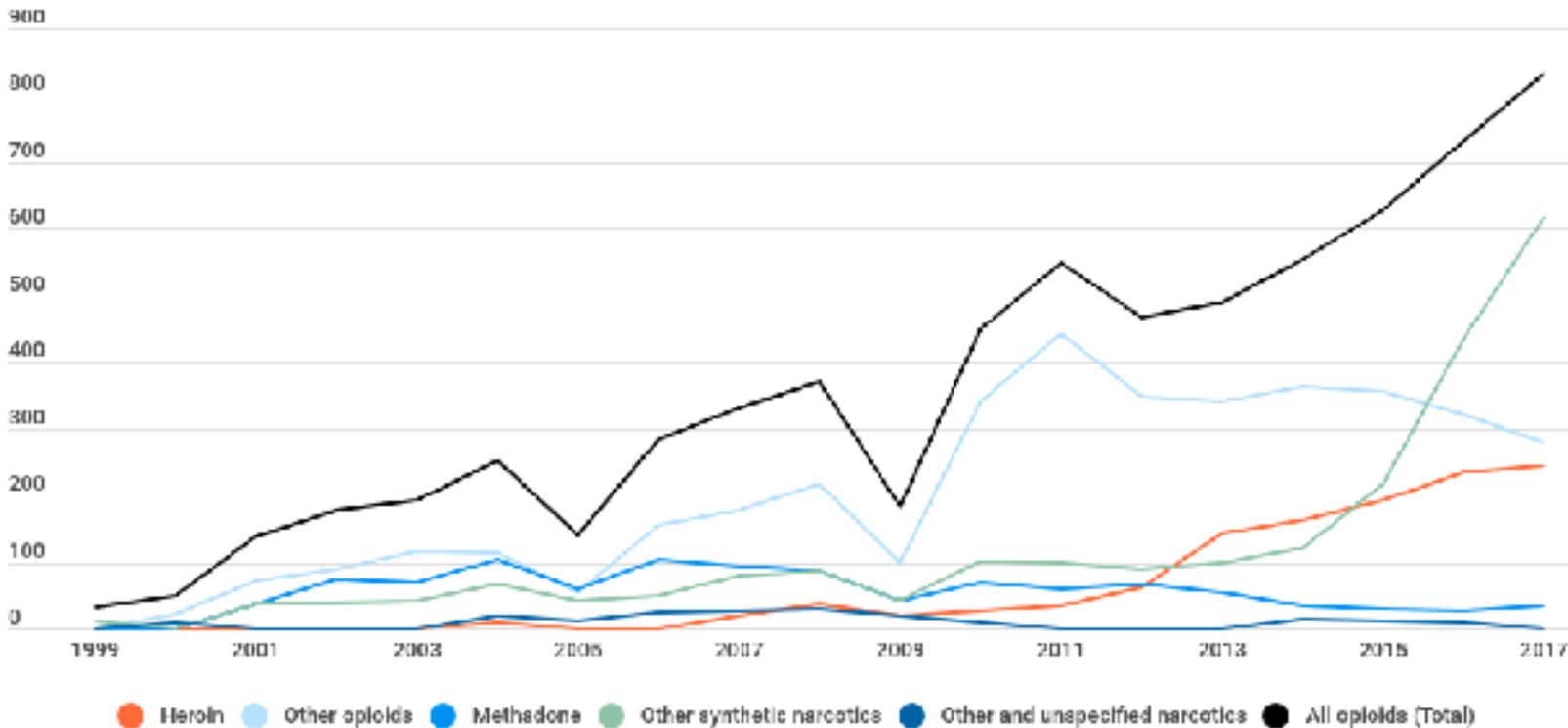
Opioid Prescription Rates, per 100 residents, 2006-2017



In 2017, the opioid prescription rate in West Virginia was 81.3 prescriptions per resident - **40% higher** than in non-Appalachian counties.

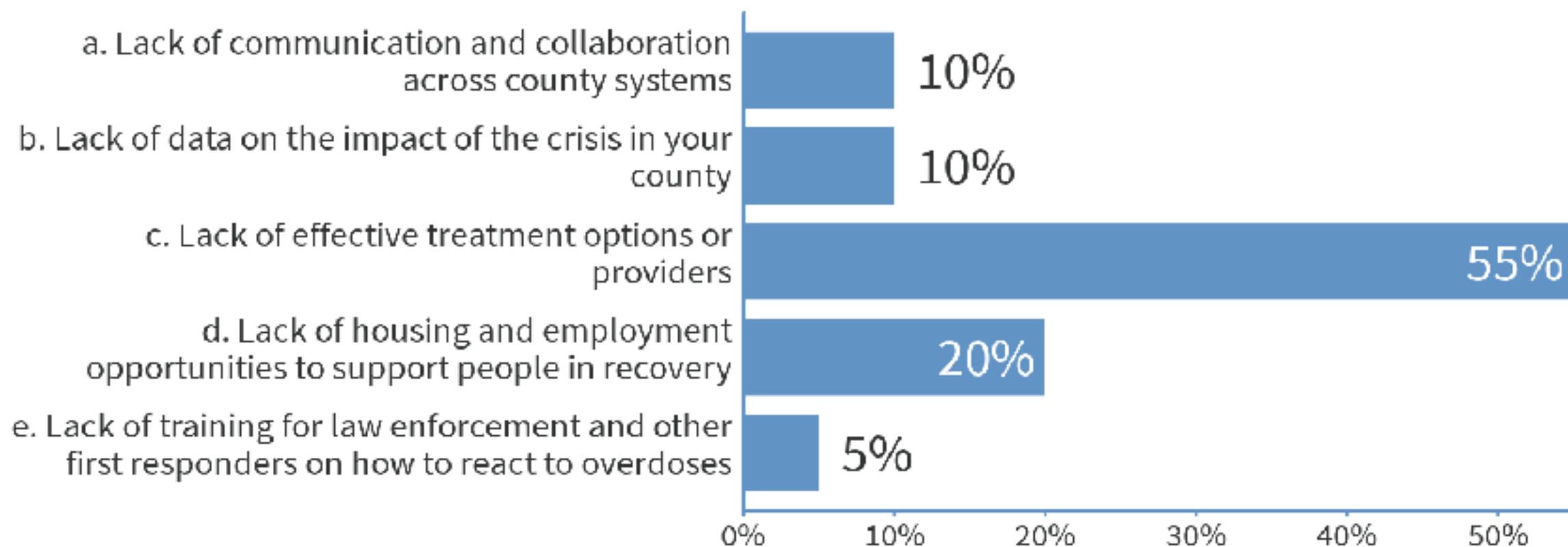
# OPIOID EPIDEMIC: DEMAND SIDE

Total Opioid Overdose Deaths, by Type of Opioid, 1999-2017



From 1999-2017, opioid abuse progressed from legal, prescription opioids to illegal opioids, like heroin and fentanyl.

# 1) What has been your biggest challenge with stemming the opioid epidemic in your county?



# WHY COUNTIES?

**Counties are on the frontlines due to their involvement in:**



**HEALTH**



**HUMAN SERVICES**

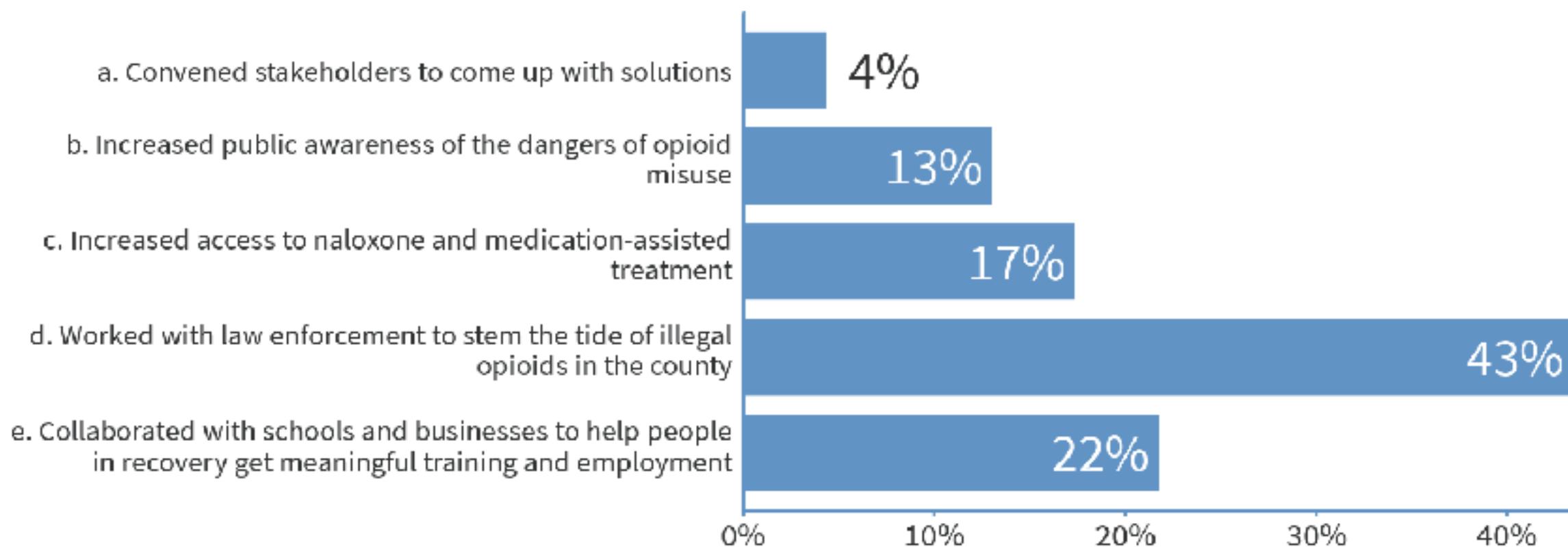


**JUSTICE &  
PUBLIC SAFETY**



**ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**

## 2) What have you as a county leader done in your community to address the opioid epidemic?



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1. Exercise strategic local leadership

- Set a tone of compassion
- Opioid Task Forces
- Regional cooperation

Case Studies: Ross County, Ohio and Mercer County, W.Va.

## 2. Emphasize preventive and educational initiatives

- Safe disposal sites
- Community outreach
- Data and technology

Case Study: Allegany County, Md.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

3. Expand access to addiction treatments
  - Naloxone and MAT
  - Telemedicine
  - Mental health treatment

Case Studies: Project Lazarus (Wilkes County, N.C.)

4. Criminal justice response to illegal opioids sales; treatment and services to justice-involved individuals
  - Reduce illicit opioids
  - Treatment and workforce training in jails
  - Housing and employment opportunities

Case Studies: A New Beginning (Campbell County, Tenn.)

# RECOMMENDATIONS

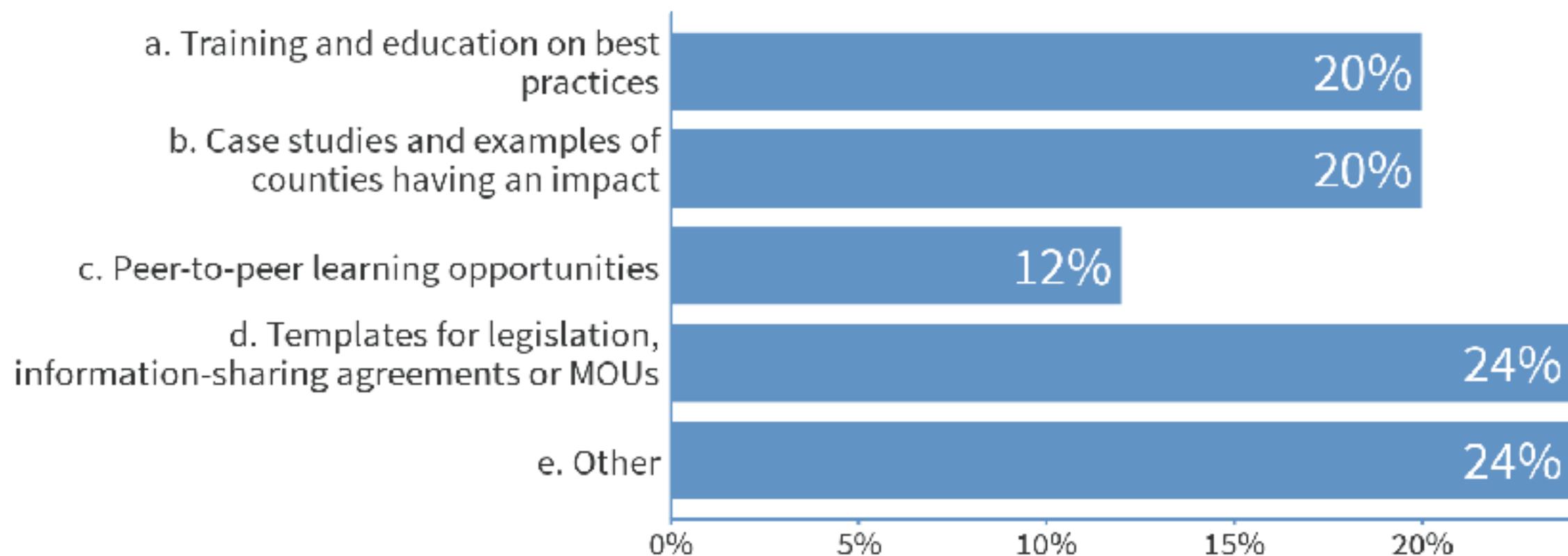
5. Mitigate local economic impacts and consider new economic development strategies
  - Collaborate with educational institutions
  - Help businesses learn to work with individuals in recovery
  - Reinforce safety net services
  - Expand entrepreneurial opportunities

Case Studies:

Housing Development Alliance (Perry County, Ky.)

Coalfield Development Corporation (Lincoln, McDowell, Mingo and Wayne Counties, W.Va.)

### 3) What sort of resources do you as a county official need to lead your county's efforts to address the opioid crisis?



# CONCLUSION

- **45,000** deaths due to opioid overdoses nationwide in 2017
- **5,600** of these deaths were in Appalachia
- Counties must partner with states, with the federal government and regionally with municipalities and other counties to pool their resources and develop solutions together.

# QUESTIONS?

**Jonathan Harris**

jharris@NACo.org

202-942-4247



**[www.NACo.org/OpioidsInAppalachia](http://www.NACo.org/OpioidsInAppalachia)**

# STRENGTHENING THE LOCAL RESPONSE



TO THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC IN WEST  
VIRGINIA

[www.NACo.org/OpioidsInAppalachia](http://www.NACo.org/OpioidsInAppalachia)