Substance Use

Community Health Assessment – Priority Setting
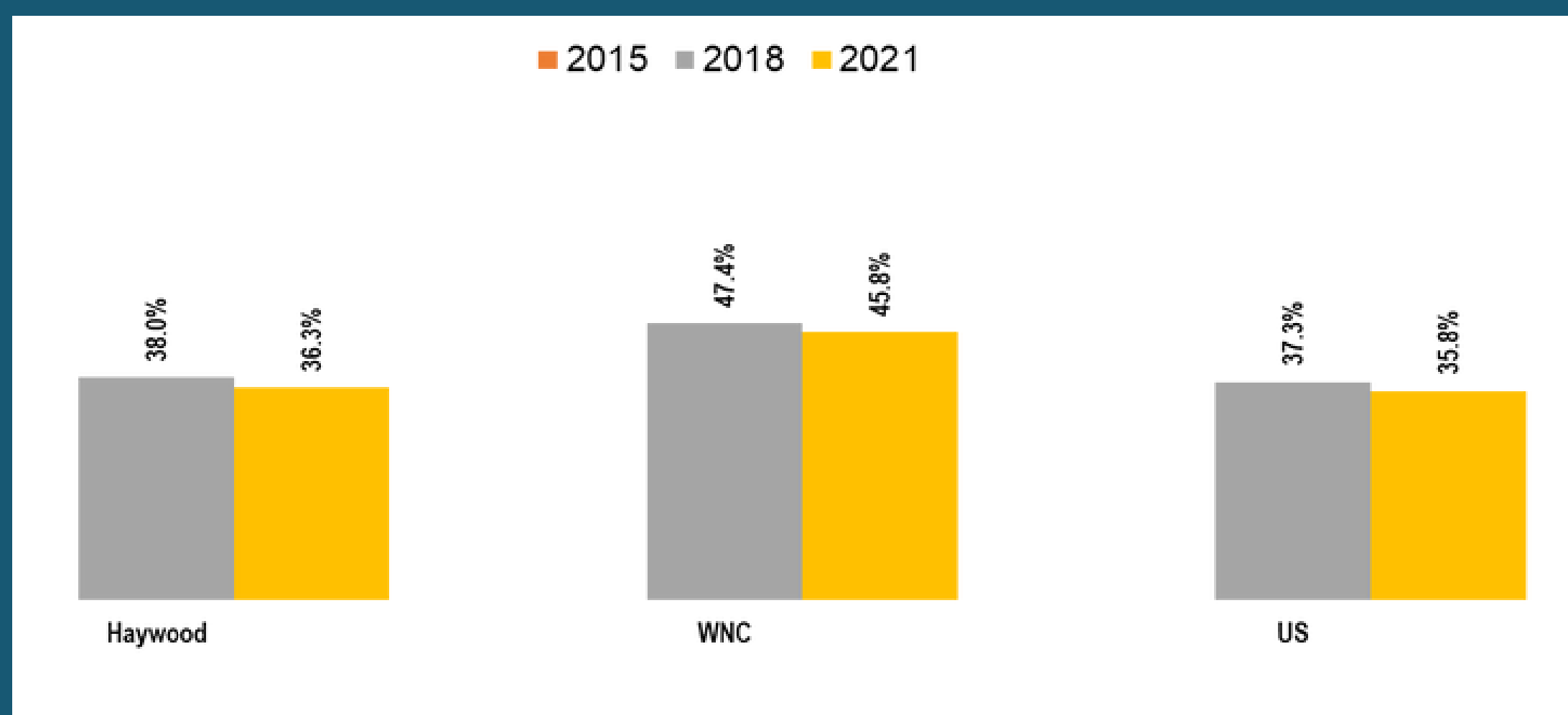Data Summary

Haywood County

Substance Use

Data points reviewed for this area included tobacco, alcohol, and drug use (e.g. prescribed opioids, street drugs, etc). Following internal data review by public health staff, a data team of community partners helped shorten the list. The final data was presented to community partners during two priority-setting meetings. A regional telephone/internet survey, Online Key informant Survey, and secondary data were included in the review process.

WHAT THE NUMBERS SAY:

Life Has Been Negatively Affected by Substance Use (Self or Someone Else) (2021)

Bar chart legend: ■ 2015 ■ 2018 ■ 2021

Haywood: 38.0% (2018), 36.3% (2021)
WNC: 47.4% (2018), 45.8% (2021)
US: 37.3% (2018), 35.8% (2021)

MORE INFORMATION:

- Alcohol: Emergency department visits for alcohol toxicity and alcohol abuse/dependence are many times higher than opioid overdose or methamphetamine-related visits
- Tobacco: ~17% smoking rate + e-cigarettes and smokeless tobacco (~13%, combined). E-cigarette use is on the rise, especially among youth.
- Other Substances:
  - 15.3% of surveyed adults used opioids in the previous month (prescription or non).
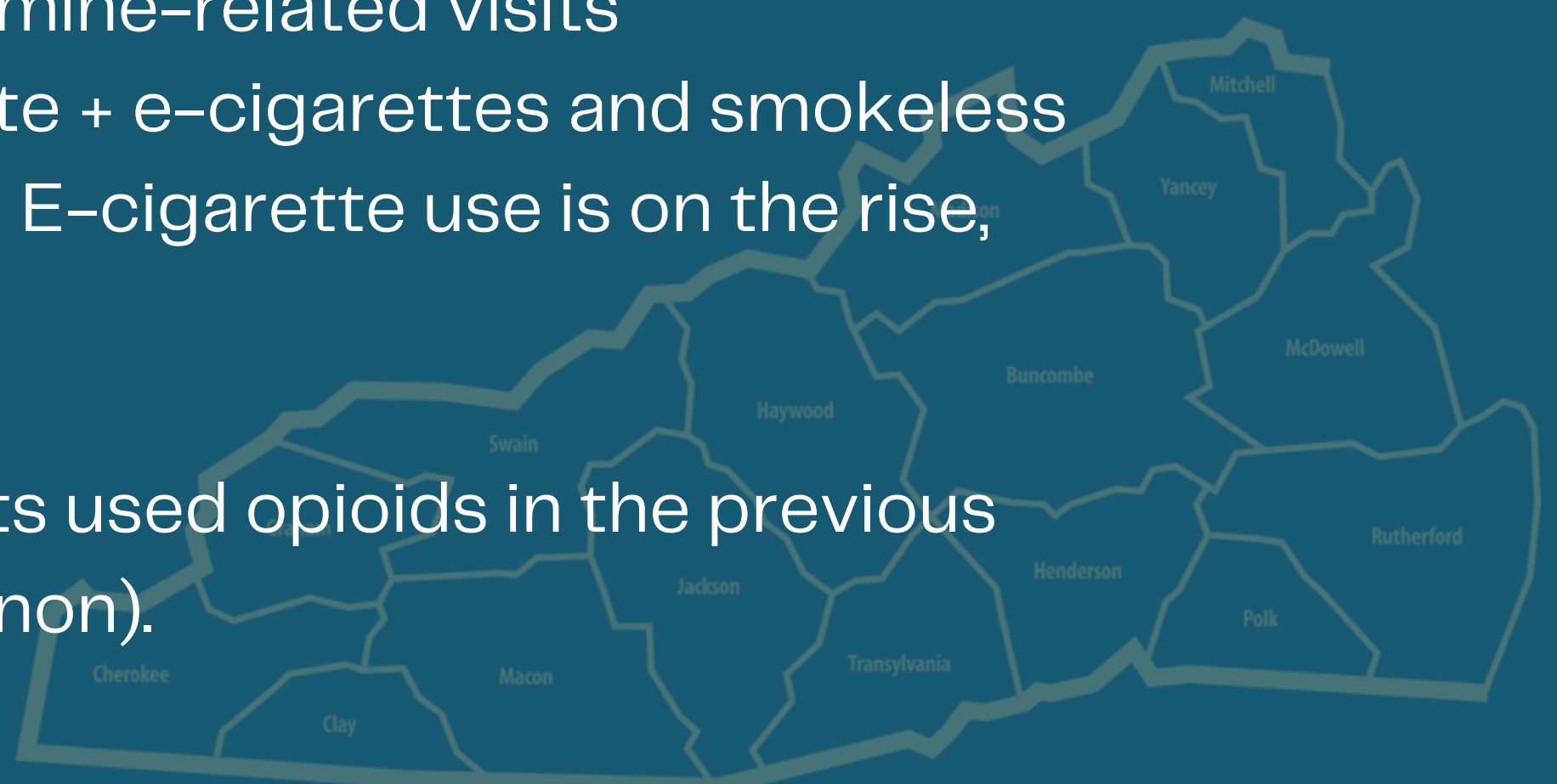
Substance Use

WHO'S IMPACTED?

Substance Use Disorder (SUD) can happen to anyone. However, some populations are affected more heavily, such as individuals without employment or who have a low socioeconomic status, previously incarcerated, and individuals who did not graduate high school.

WHAT'S HURTING?

- Limited resources for prevention, rehabilitation and long-term care
- Stigma and apathy
- Lack of adequate housing, jobs, poor mental health.

CURRENT ACTION

- Programs (e.g. Lock your Meds and Quitline campaigns; Naloxone distribution, etc.)
- Grant funding addressing Opioid Use Disorder
- Tobacco free ordinances
- Existing partnership/coalitions (e.g. Substance Use Prevention Alliance, Recovery Alliance Initiative, etc.)

WHAT'S HELPING?

- Law enforcement leadership, combined with government and healthcare leadership, to tackle the issue as a whole; collaboration
- Widespread community focus on SUDs, treatment options available; community focus on recovery.

CONSEQUENCES

- Illegal drug use accounts for $181 billion in health care, productivity loss, crime, incarceration and drug enforcement, which includes $11 billion in health care costs alone (nationwide) (National Institute on Drug Abuse, n.d.).
- Substance use and misuse is of great community concern and a reflection of a variety of other factors, including mental health and social determinants of health.