

Board of Health Health Officer Report

12 September, 2023



Opioid Epidemic

- Ongoing epidemic/crisis
- Reprieve from increase in most recent data, will continue to monitor, but overall trend year to year continues to increase
- Xylazine (aka Tranq) found a handful of times in King County in other drugs aside from fentanyl.
 - Providers and law enforcement reporting anecdotal reports of use in Snohomish, still no lab ID yet. Also reports of Xylazine test strips being positive in neighboring counties from other health officers.

Opioid Epidemic

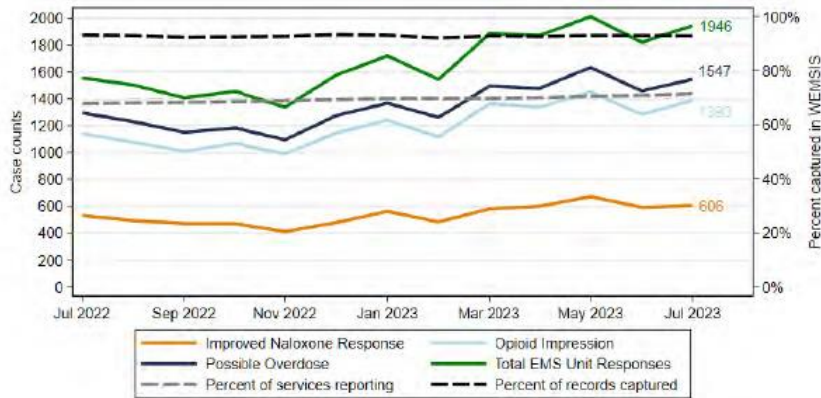
- Executive's Office opioid response plan updates:
 - Executive issued an update to opioid MAC group response plan
 - Includes near term strategies including foundational work for mobile opioid use disorder (OUD) treatment
 - Longer term strategies will be forthcoming in the coming months

Opioid Epidemic

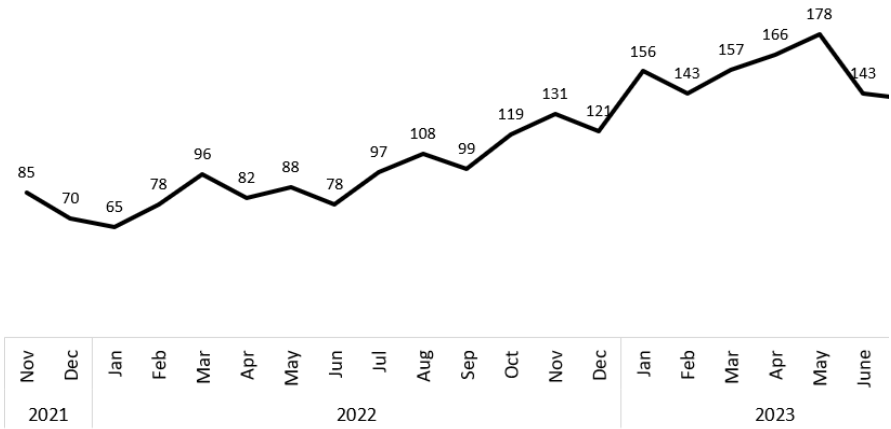
- UW Transit study assessing fentanyl and methamphetamine in the air and on surfaces of transit vehicles
 - Ubiquitous, but at very low levels
 - Very reasonable to be concerned
 - Unlikely to cause direct health effects due to the drugs themselves
 - Smoke from any source can cause symptoms
 - Further study and evaluation indicated

Opioid Epidemic: WA EMS OD Response Trends

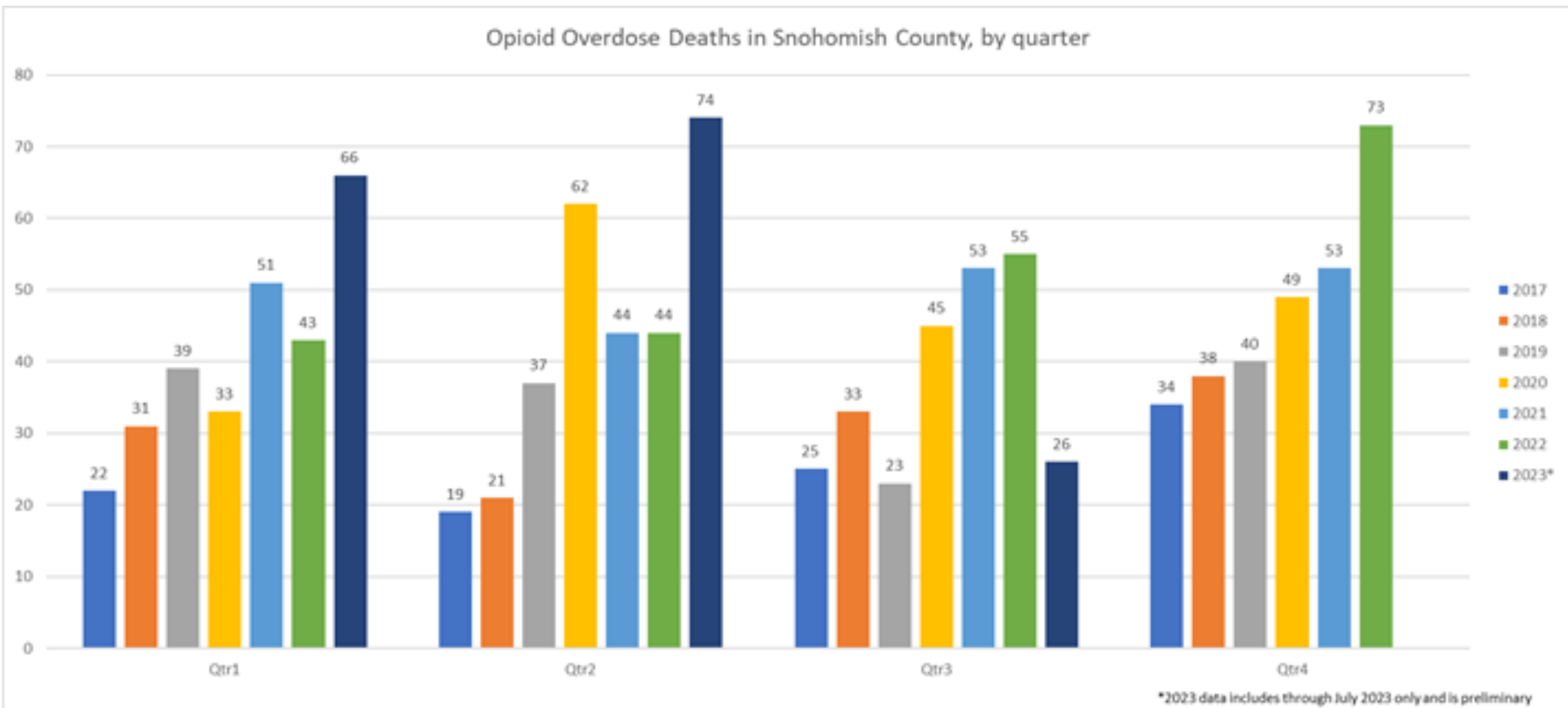
EMS Opioid Responses
July 2022 - July 2023



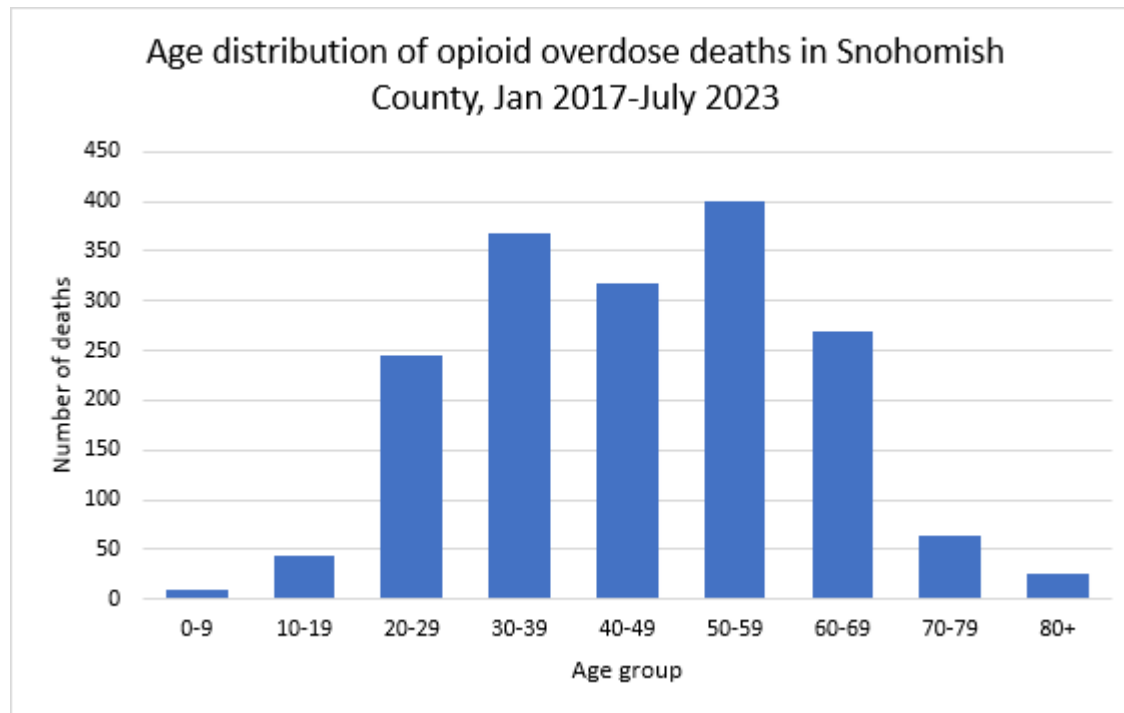
EMS Responses to Possible Opioid Overdoses in Snohomish County,
November 2021 - July 2023



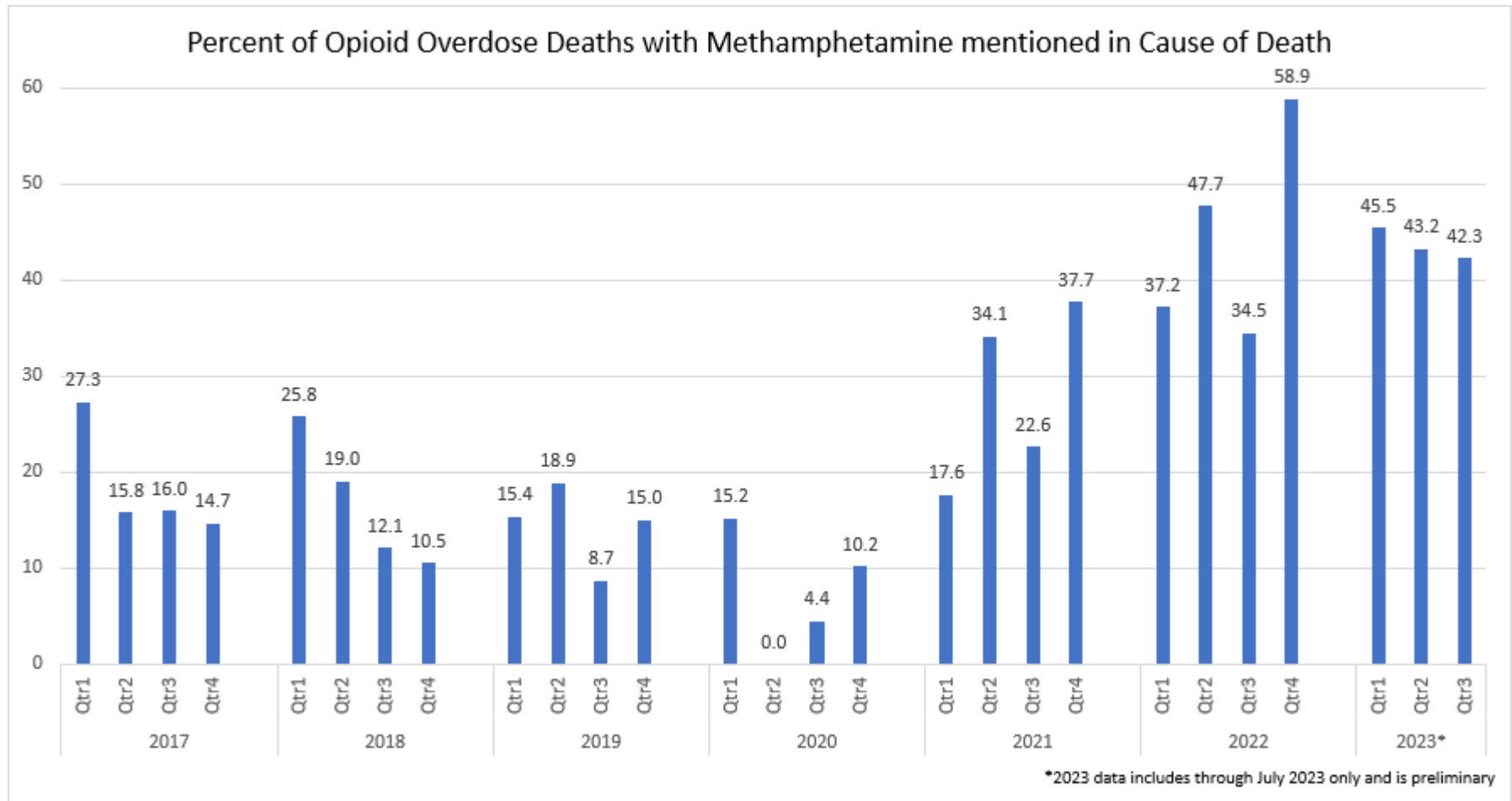
Opioid Epidemic: Snohomish OD Response Trends Year to Year



Opioid Epidemic: Snohomish OD Response Age Distribution



Opioid Epidemic: Snohomish OD Response Polysubstance OD



COVID-19 Community Level

New Cases (per 100,000 population in the last 7 days)	Indicators	Low	Medium	High
41	New COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population (7-day total) 2.5	<10.0	10.0-19.9	≥20.0
	Percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients (7-day average) 5%	<10.0%	10.0-14.9%	≥15%

Some changes to our report to better align with [CDC](#) and [State](#) visualizations

- Changed green to blue to align with DOH and improve visibility for individuals with colorblindness
- Will be adding syndromic surveillance data soon for ED discharge diagnoses

Executive Summary

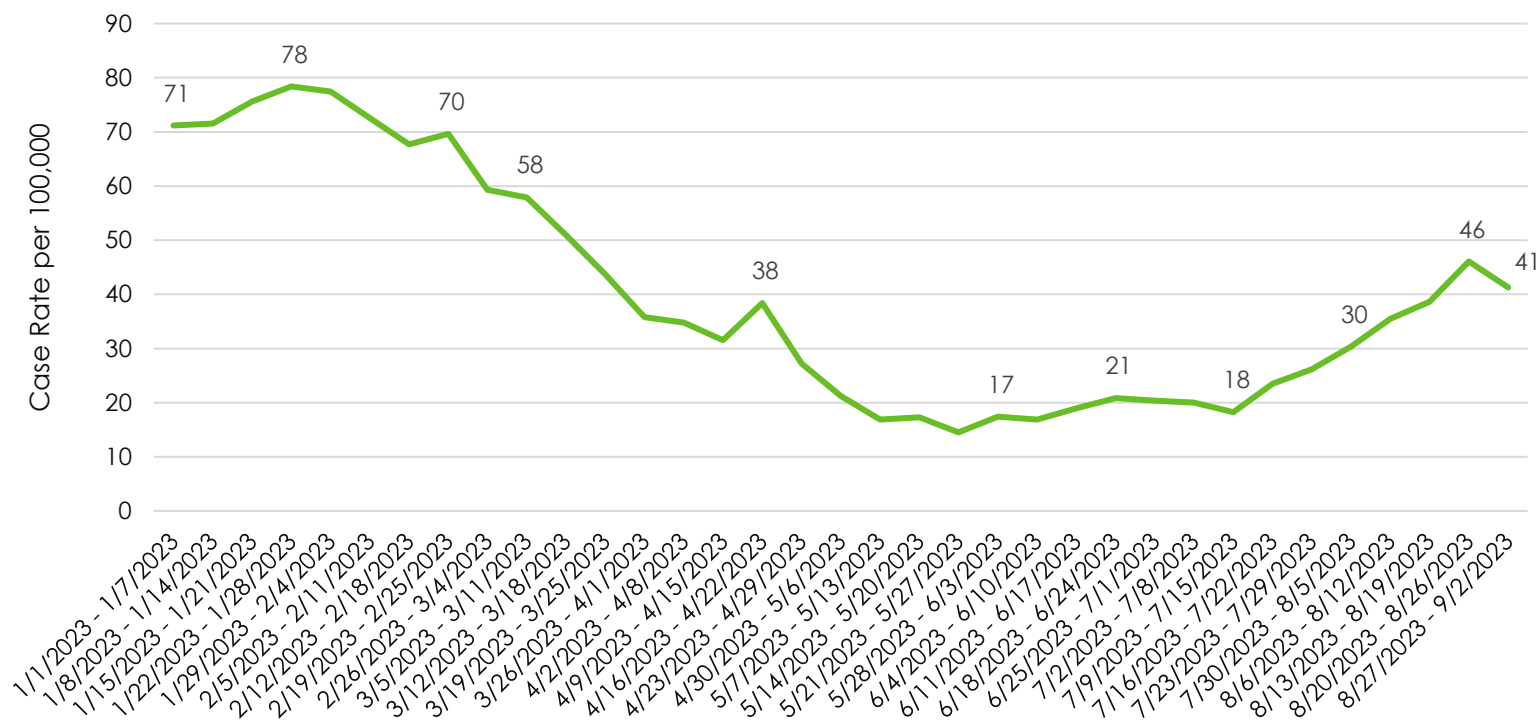
- Snohomish County case rates increased over the past month with a slight decrease in the last week. (Only cases tested by a healthcare provider or laboratory are counted in this report. Homebased tests are not reported to public health and are not included in this data.)
- COVID-19-related hospitalizations increased over the last month with a peak case rate of 3.9/100,000 for the week of August 20-26.
- COVID-19 transmission was between 10-49/100K across most zip codes in Snohomish County. Case rates were highest in the northwest (Everett, Marysville, Lake Stevens) and rural southeast parts of the county. Note, change in the COVID-19 map case-rate ranges to align with the Washington State Department of Health.
- Case rates increased in all age groups during the month of August. Over the last week (8/27-9/2/2023) most age groups saw a decrease in cases except for the following age groups: 0-14, 20-29, 40-49. Highest case-rates are amongst our 70+ population, which is due to higher rates of testing and small population size.
- Overall COVID-19 case rates were up during August for all race/ethnicity groups. Variability seen was amongst racial groups with small population sizes.
- There has been an increase in the number of cases associated with reported long-term care facility (LTCF) outbreaks during the month of August. There were over 100 cases associated with 16 facility outbreaks from July 30 through September 2, 2023.

Executive Summary

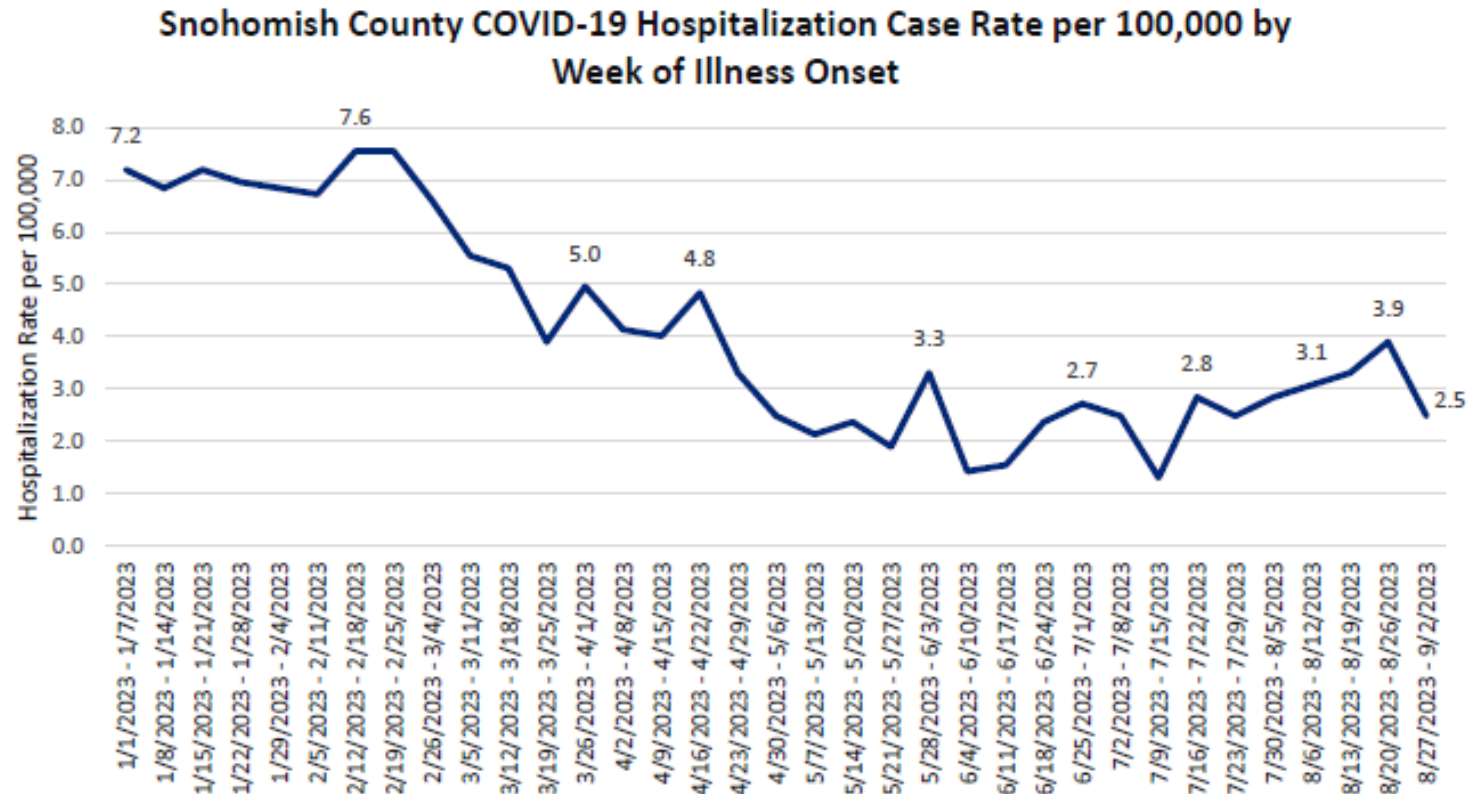
- In addition to surveillance data presented, I am hearing from all partners from Skagit down to Pierce that healthcare systems are seeing notable increases in rates of COVID testing, positivity rates and hospitalizations. Definitely seems to be an increase. Wastewater surveillance also indicating some increase in SWISS region.
- Primary take away at this point: COVID seems to be increasing. The data here is a couple of weeks old and since that time there are many indications that incidence continues to increase. While we are nowhere near previous peaks, the trend is very concerning going into respiratory season.

COVID-19 7-Day Case Rate

Snohomish County COVID-19 Weekly Case Rates per 100,000 by Symptom Onset Date

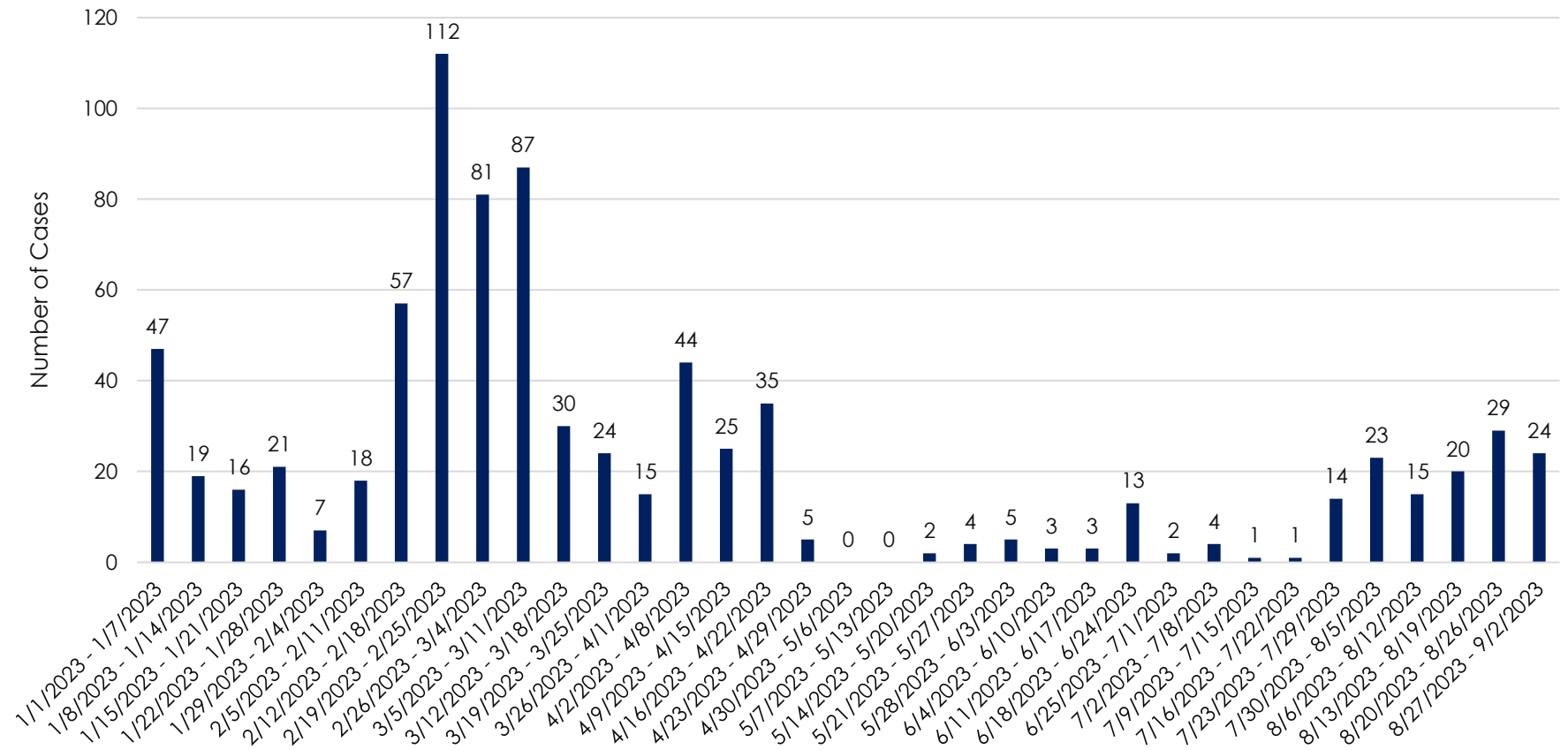


COVID-19 7-day Hospitalization Rate**



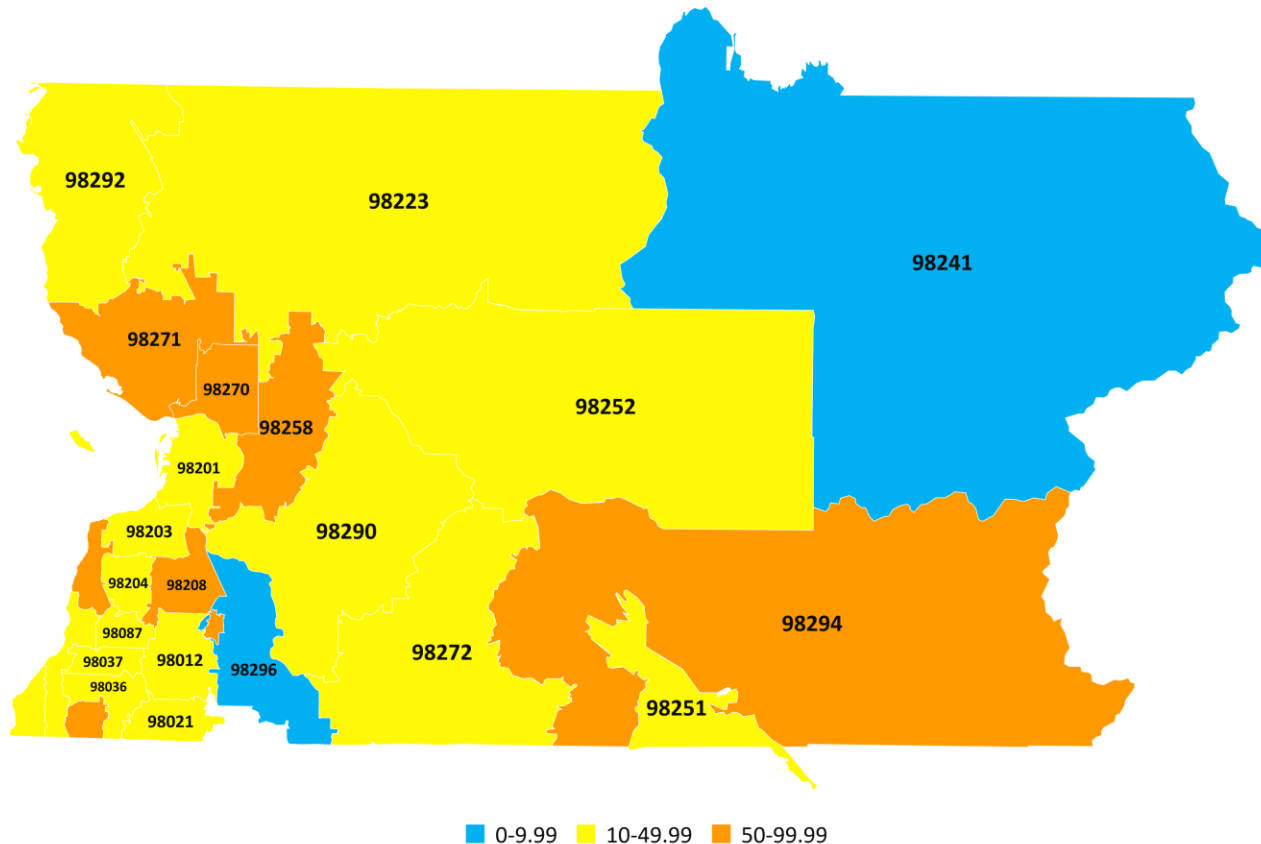
LTC Outbreak Report Trend

Snohomish County Long-term Care Facility Outbreak Associated COVID-19
Cases by Onset Date



COVID-19 Case Rates per 100k per 7 Days by Zip Code

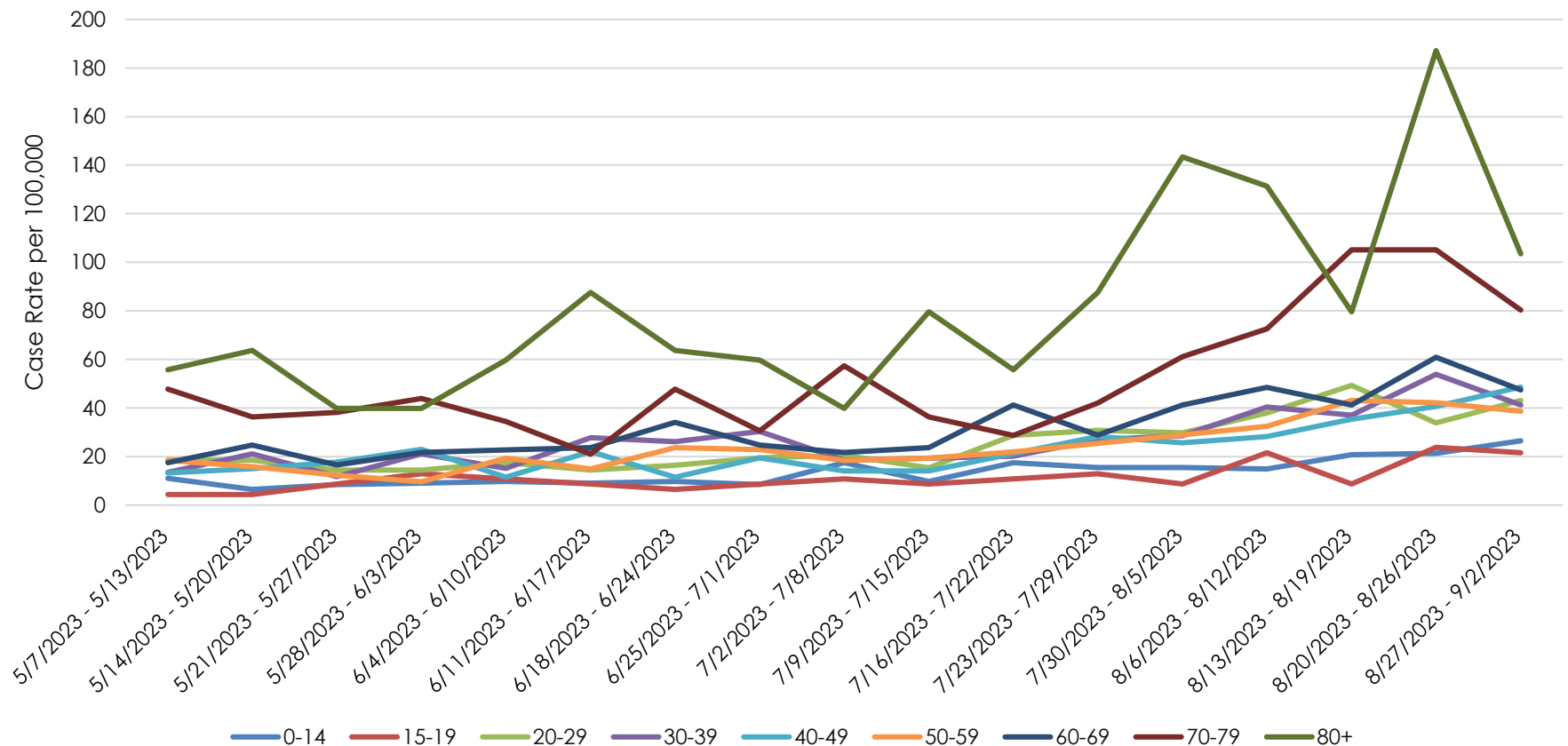
Snohomish County COVID-19 Case Rates per 100,000 by Zip Code
August 27 - September 2, 2023



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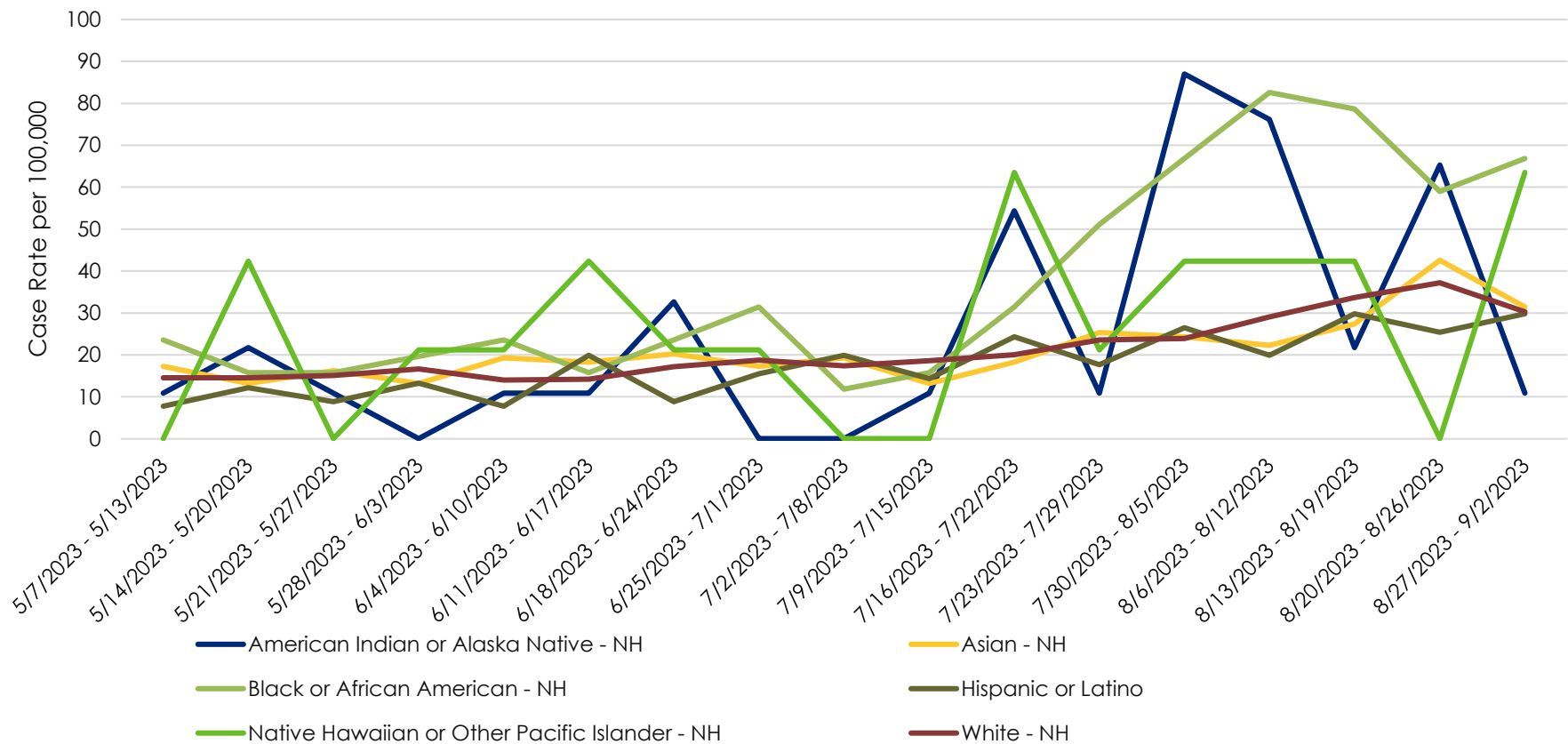
COVID-19 Case Rates per 100k/7 Days by Age Group

Snohomish County COVID-19 Case Rates per 100,000 by Illness Onset Date and Age Group



COVID-19 Case Rates per 100k/7 Days by Race/Ethnicity

Snohomish County COVID-19 Case Rates per 100,000 by Illness Onset Date and Race/Ethnicity



COVID-Related Topics

- Masking:
 - Planned regional approach for syndromic surveillance-based threshold
 - More to come soon
 - Some organizations are already [re-instating masking policies](#)
 - Regional experts (including myself) published a [commentary on masking in healthcare](#)

COVID-Related Topics

- New Variants:
 - Current Dominant strain EG.5
 - A/w increased rate of hospitalization and death
 - New variant under monitoring BA.2.86
 - Also referred to as “Pirola”
 - Descended from XBB, 35 new mutations
 - Unpublished data being communicated by experts is encouraging that BA.2.86 is unlikely to be more contagious/pathogenic.
 - Moderna and Pfizer reported they have data showing strong immune response to this variant and EG.5 with new COVID vaccines
- Long-COVID: [Working Definition](#) created by [RECOVER](#) study investigators
 - Postacute Sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 Infection
 - [National Academy of Science Symposium](#)

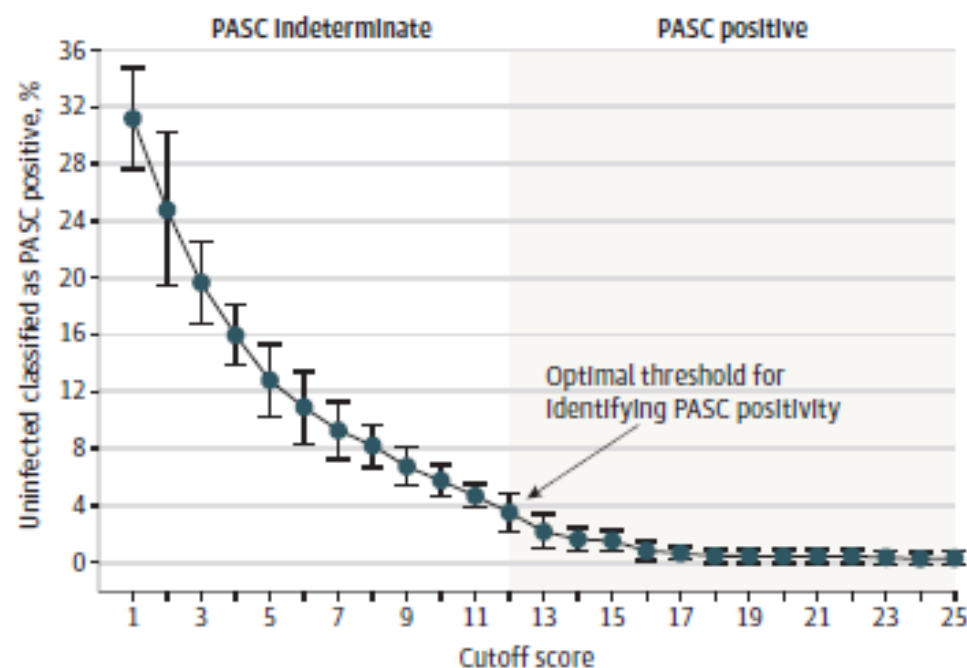
Development of a Definition of Postacute Sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 Infection

Tanayott Thaweethai, PhD; Sarah E. Jolley, MD, MS; Elizabeth W. Karlson, MD, MS; Emily B. Levitan, ScD; Bruce Levy, MD; Grace A. McComsey, MD; Lisa McCorkell, MPP; Girish N. Nadkarni, MD, MPH; Sairam Parthasarathy, MD; Upinder Singh, MD; Tiffany A. Walker, MD; Caitlin A. Selvaggi, MS; Daniel J. Shinnick, MS; Carolin C. M. Schulte, PhD; Rachel Atchley-Challenner, PhD; RECOVER Consortium Authors; Leora I. Horwitz, MD; Andrea S. Foulkes, ScD; for the RECOVER Consortium

Table 2. Model-Selected Symptoms That Define PASC and Their Corresponding Scores^a

Symptom	Log odds ratio	Score
Smell/taste	0.776	8
Postexertional malaise	0.674	7
Chronic cough	0.438	4
Brain fog ^b	0.325	3
Thirst	0.255	3
Palpitations	0.238	2
Chest pain ^b	0.233	2
Fatigue ^b	0.148	1
Sexual desire or capacity	0.126	1
Dizzines	0.121	1
Gastrointestinal	0.085	1
Abnormal movements	0.072	1
Hair loss	0.049	0

A Optimal threshold for identifying PASC positivity



Other Communicable Disease Concerns

- CDC reporting increased RSV activity in SE US
 - [Health Alert](#)
 - RSV Vaccines (60+ and pregnant people) and Mab for infants coming this fall
 - [2 vaccines Approved by FDA for 60 and older](#)
 - [ACIP recommends single dose with shared decision making in this group](#)
 - [Mab for infants approved](#) and ACIP recommended.
 - [Recommended adding to VFC program as well](#)
 - [FDA approved Vaccine for pregnant women](#) waiting on ACIP/CDC recommendation

Other Communicable Disease Concerns NEW

- Candida Auris Tacoma Pierce,
 - [Health Alert](#)
 - Local transmission suspected but no other cases identified to date on screening of multiple patients.
 - Inquire about high-risk exposures in newly admitted patients and consider C. auris screening in patients at high-risk for C. auris, including:
 - Close contact in a healthcare setting to another patient with C. auris; or
 - An overnight stay in a healthcare facility outside the U.S. or in a region within the U.S. with documented C. auris cases in the previous year
 - Coordinate with LHJ for screening
 - Of note recent screening in Snohomish related to MDRO outbreak was negative at two local facilities.

Other Communicable Disease Concerns:

Previous topics with no new updates

- General increase in GI illness related pathogens including:
 - New outbreak of Listeria [Health Alert](#).
[DOH Release](#)
 - Associated with Milkshakes from Fugals restaurant in Tacoma. Tied to milkshake machine contamination.

6 Top Health Priorities Identified by the Data Committee

- **Persons experiencing homelessness**
- **Opioid overdoses**
- **Inadequate prenatal care**
- **Mental health access and provider ratios**
- **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**
- **Food security**

Top health issues and barriers to good health identified by the community through key informant interviews and focus groups

- **Health care**
access including dental, affordability, competent care
- **Mental health (esp. among youth)**
access, affordability, competent care
- **Basic needs**
food, shelter, hygiene, etc.

General Program Updates

- Epidemiology and Informatics program growth:
 - Starting capacity evaluation
 - Future growth plans near term: Database manager/analyst, another Epi with opioid settlement funding, Additional epi with skills in geographic data analysis/visualization skill set/
- STI/HIV:
 - Hired ARNP



Questions?

PUBLIC HEALTH
always working for a safer & healthier
SNOHOMISH COUNTY