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To the Honorable JB Pritzker, Governor
and Members of the General Assembly:

This report provides details on opioid overdoses in Illinois for the year 2020. Overdose data from the previous years are also provided to allow for comparisons. The Opioid Overdose Semiannual Report consolidates the overdose reporting requirements under the Hospital Licensing Act (210 ILCD 85/6.14g) and the Counties Code (55 ILCS 5/3-3013).

The report includes information on overdose deaths, including heroin and opioid analgesics. Additionally, it includes non-fatal overdose information reported by hospitals to the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) as required in the Hospital Licensing Act (210 ILCS 85/6.14g(b)). This semiannual report updates the “Opioid Overdose Semiannual Report - September 2020”, adding more recent data and trends. The 2020 data shared within this report are finalized.

In 2020, opioid overdose deaths among Illinois residents increased 32.7% from 2,219 deaths in 2019 to 2,944 deaths in 2020. The report includes demographic data that indicate a continuation of the previously reported racial disparities, with non-Hispanic Black or African American populations continuing to be disproportionately affected by opioids.

Continuing reporting, updates, and information may be found on the IDPH website at <http://dph.illinois.gov/opioids/home> and <https://idph.illinois.gov/OpioidDataDashboard/>. Among the many resources on the IDPH website are the Illinois Opioid Action Plan and the Illinois Opioid Action Plan Implementation Report, which are located under “Data and Reporting” and “Publications.”

I hope you find this report informative and useful as we continue working together to address the opioid crisis facing Illinois.

Sincerely,

Ngozi O. Ezike, MD
Director

Statewide Semiannual Opioid Report

Illinois Department of Public Health

August 2021

FATAL OPIOID OVERDOSES

In 2020, there were 2,944 fatalities due to opioid overdose in Illinois, an average of eight Illinois resident deaths per day. This represents a 32.7% increase from 2019 (Fig. 1) and is 2.3 times higher than motor vehicle fatalities and 2.2 times higher than homicides. While the number of fatalities has been steadily increasing since 2013, 2020 was the largest annual increase over this time.

Prior to May of 2020, the monthly trends fluctuated, but overall, overdose incidents were gradually on the rise. The rate of increase began to escalate in the second half of 2019 and culminated in May 2020 with a peak of 354 deaths. The number of deaths decreased in the following months (June – Dec.; Fig. 2).

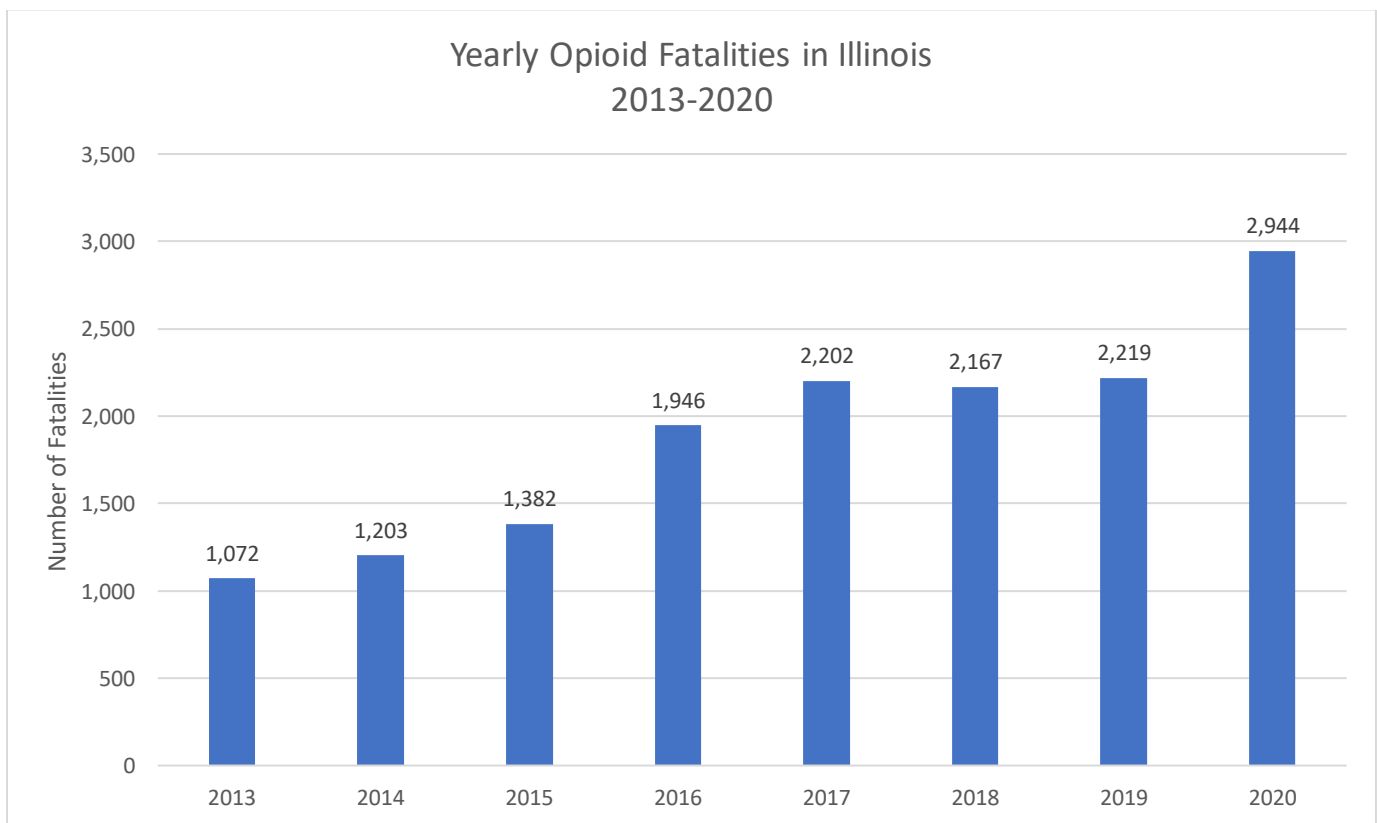


Figure 1. Yearly opioid fatalities in Illinois from 2013-2020 as reported by the Illinois Vital Records System, IDPH.

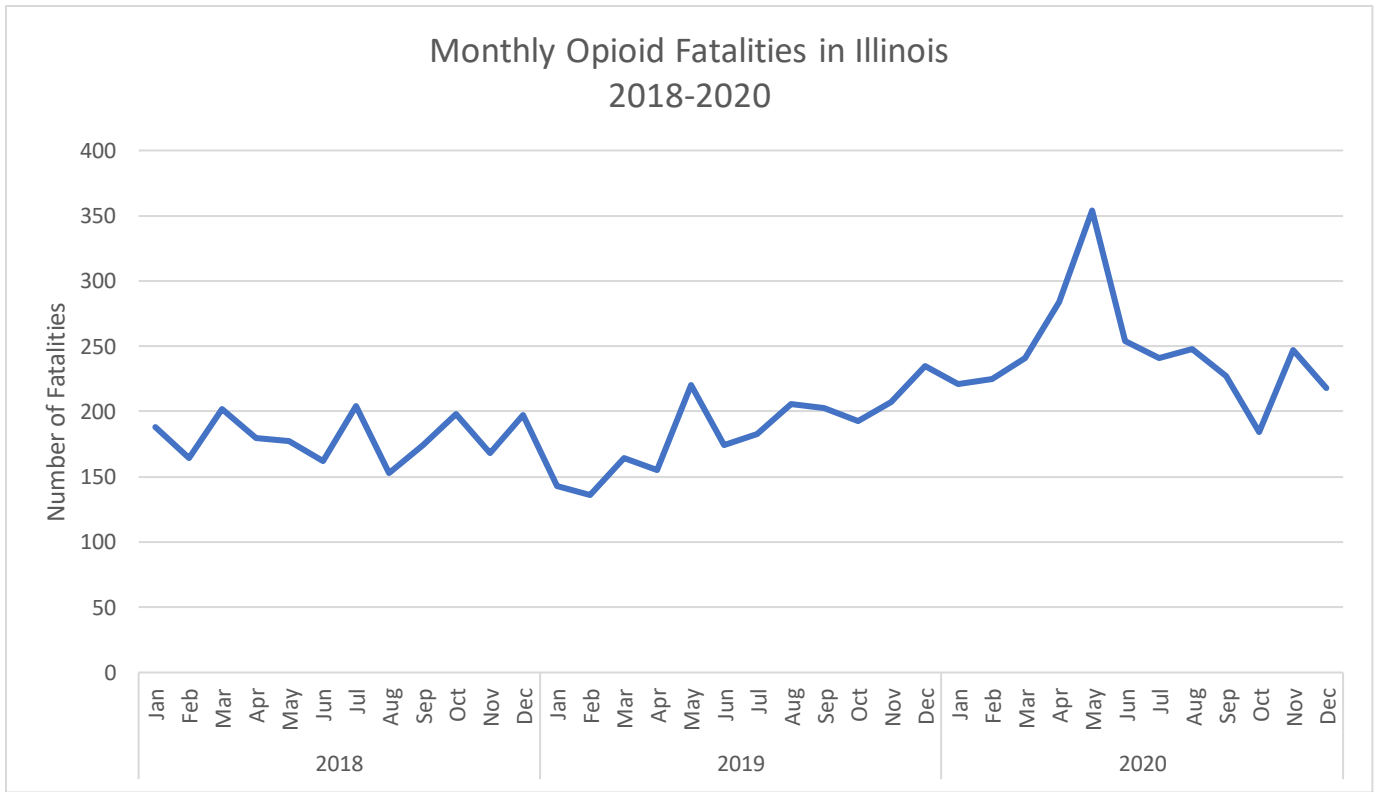


Figure 2. Monthly opioid fatalities in Illinois from 2018-2020 as reported by the Illinois Vital Records System, IDPH.

Demographics of opioid fatalities are listed in Table 1. The highest number of opioid fatalities in 2020 occurred in non-Hispanic White individuals (1,530), while the highest fatality rate was among non-Hispanic Blacks (55.3 per 100,000). By age group, the highest number and rate of opioid fatalities occurred in the 35–44-year age group (686; 41.8 per 100,000), followed by the 45-54-year age group (683; 41.7 per 100,000). Finally, the highest number and rate of opioid fatalities occurred in males (2,167; 34.6 per 100,000), which accounted for 74% of the fatalities.

Table 1. Statewide opioid fatality rate by race/ethnicity, age group, and sex for 2020 as reported by the Illinois Vital Records System, IDPH

	Total Number	Fatality Rate (per 100,000 of each population)
Race/Ethnicity*		
Non-Hispanic White	1530	20.8
Non-Hispanic Black	1044	55.3
Hispanic/Latinx	344	16
Non-Hispanic Other	26	3.1
Age Groups		
< 25	215	5.3
25 - 34	628	35.5
35 - 44	686	41.8
45 - 54	683	41.7
55 - 64	573	34.4
65 +	159	8.0
Sex		
Female	777	12.0
Male	2167	34.6

*The fatality rate for race/ethnicity is age-adjusted.

Synthetic opioids, specifically fentanyl, are the leading cause of fatal drug overdoses statewide and are involved in 84% of opioid fatalities and 70% of all drug fatalities in 2020. However, the substance use landscape across the state is different depending on location. There are pockets of high opioid overdose rates in both urban and rural areas, with 15 having a rate above the statewide opioid fatality rate of 23 deaths per 100,000 capita. Figure 3 and Table 2 depict the county-level opioid overdose fatality rate per 100,000 capita.

2020 Illinois Opioid Fatality Rate per 100,000 Capita

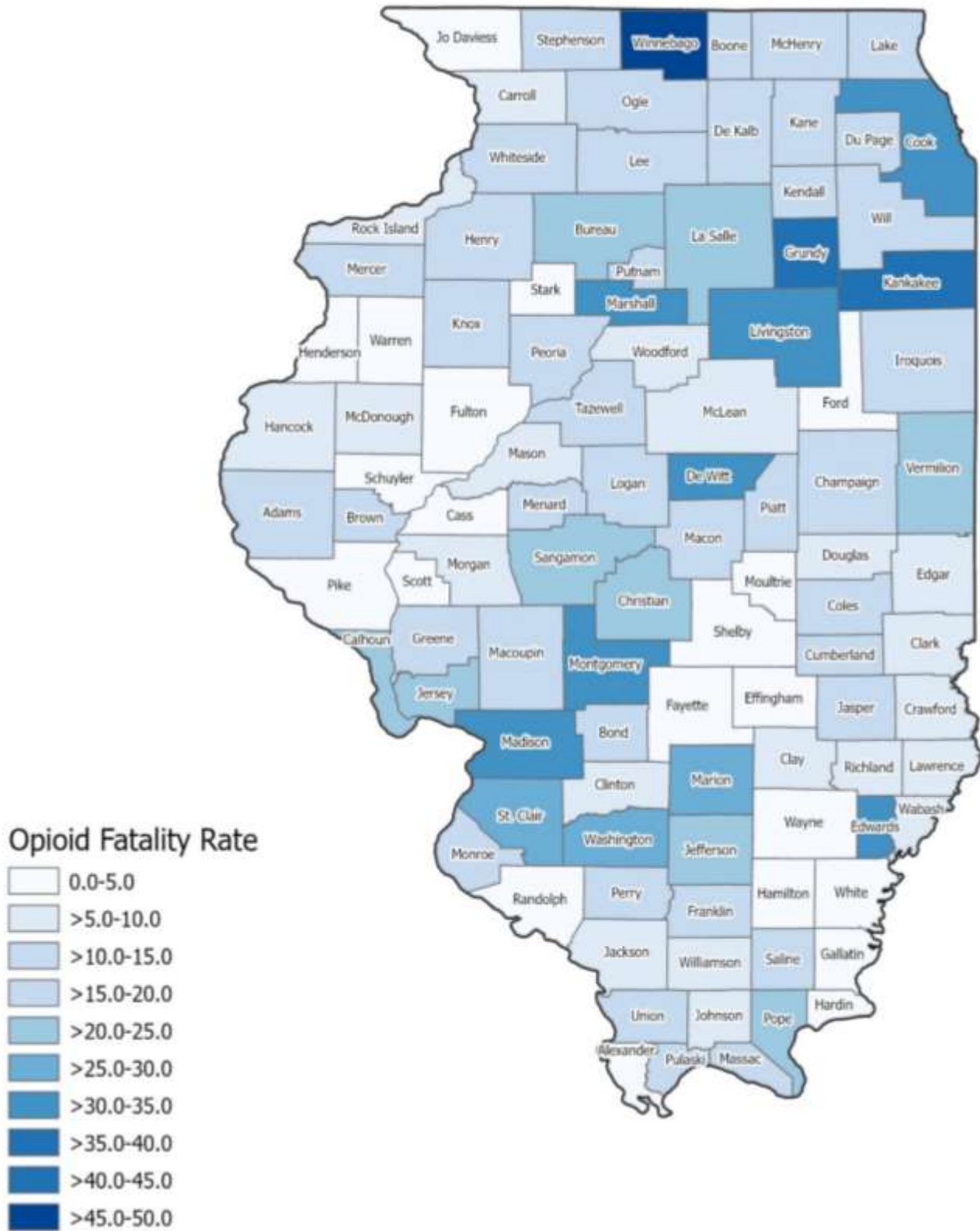


Figure 3. 2020 Illinois opioid fatality rate per 100,000 capita by county as reported by the Illinois Vital Records System, IDPH. County-level fatality rates are calculated by the number of county residents who died due to opioid overdose per year divided by the population of the county and multiplied by 100,000. Counties with smaller populations could have rates higher than counties with larger populations, even though there are fewer opioid fatalities.

Table 2. 2020 Illinois opioid fatality rate per 100,000 capita by county

County	Opioid Fatality Rate per 100,000 Capita
Adams	15.2
Alexander	0.0
Bond	12.0
Boone	14.9
Brown	15.3
Bureau	21.2
Calhoun	20.8
Carroll	7.0
Cass	0.0
Champaign	17.1
Christian	21.4
Clark	6.4
Clay	7.5
Clinton	8.0
Coles	11.8
Cook	31.8
Crawford	5.3
Cumberland	18.5
DeKalb	18.2
De Witt	31.7
Douglas	5.1
DuPage	14.0
Edgar	5.8
Edwards	31.3
Effingham	0.0
Fayette	4.7
Ford	0.0
Franklin	15.5
Fulton	2.9
Gallatin	0.0
Greene	15.3
Grundy	35.3
Hamilton	0.0
Hancock	5.6
Hardin	0.0
Henderson	0.0
Henry	14.3
Iroquois	14.5

County	Opioid Fatality Rate per 100,000 Capita
Jackson	8.7
Jasper	10.4
Jefferson	23.8
Jersey	22.9
Jo Daviess	4.7
Johnson	8.0
Kane	14.2
Kankakee	35.4
Kendall	12.5
Knox	16.0
Lake	11.4
La Salle	20.1
Lawrence	6.3
Lee	11.7
Livingston	33.6
Logan	10.4
McDonough	6.7
McHenry	19.4
McLean	9.3
Macon	18.1
Macoupin	11.0
Madison	31.8
Marion	26.6
Marshall	34.7
Mason	7.4
Massac	14.2
Menard	16.3
Mercer	12.8
Monroe	14.6
Montgomery	31.5
Morgan	8.8
Moultrie	0.0
Ogle	15.7
Peoria	16.6
Perry	18.9
Piatt	12.2
Pike	0.0
Pope	23.7

County	Opioid Fatality Rate per 100,000 Capita
Pulaski	18.3
Putnam	17.4
Randolph	3.1
Richland	6.3
Rock Island	7.0
St. Clair	28.3
Saline	12.5
Sangamon	20.5
Schuyler	0.0
Scott	0.0
Shelby	4.6
Stark	0.0
Stephenson	17.9
Tazewell	14.4
Union	17.8
Vermilion	20.8
Wabash	8.7
Warren	0.0
Washington	28.6
Wayne	0.0
White	0.0
Whiteside	10.8
Will	17.3
Williamson	7.5
Winnebago	45.8
Woodford	7.8

Non-Fatal Opioid Overdoses

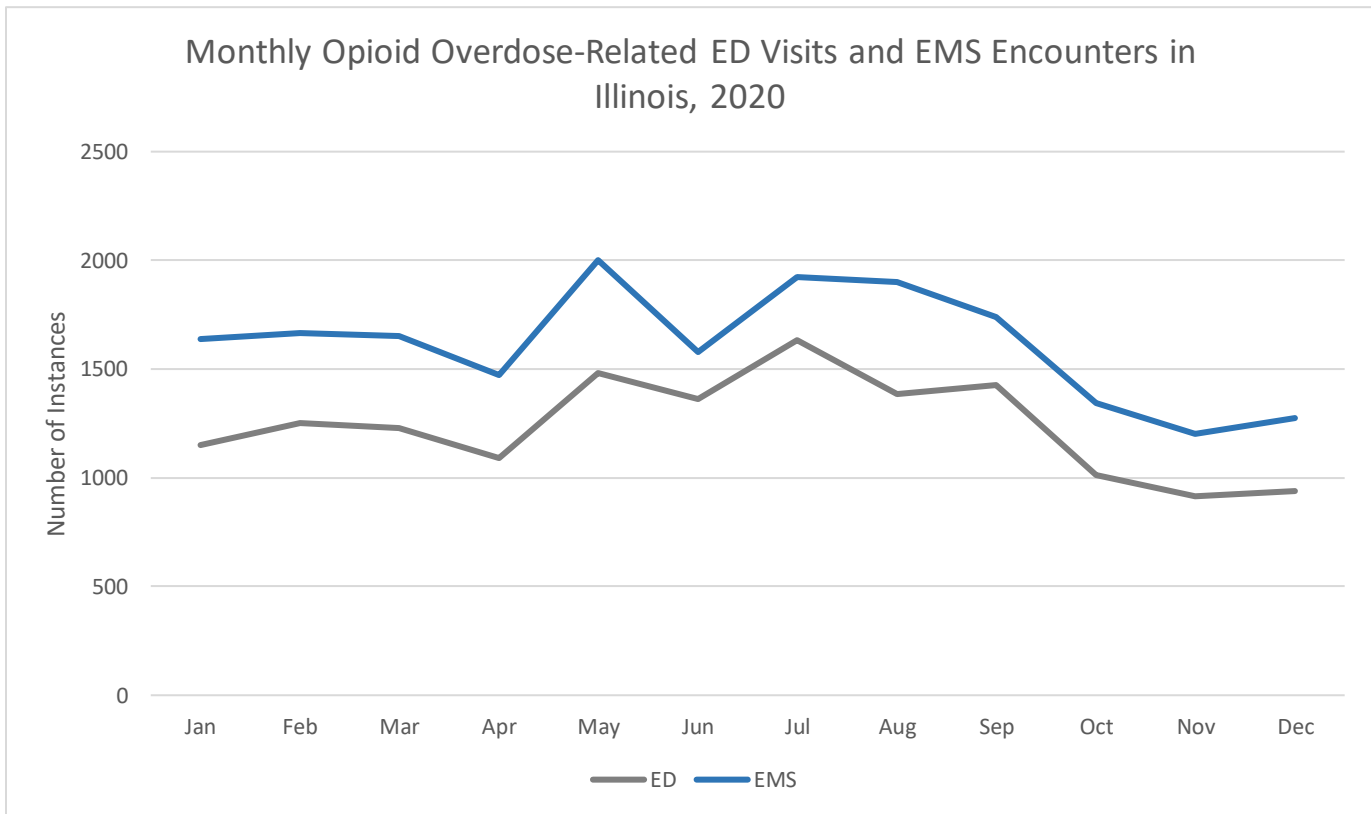


Figure 4. Monthly opioid overdose-related emergency department (ED) visits and emergency medical services (EMS) encounters in Illinois in 2020. ED visits as reported by IDPH Hospital Discharge Dataset; EMS encounters as reported by IDPH Prehospital Emergency Medical Services.

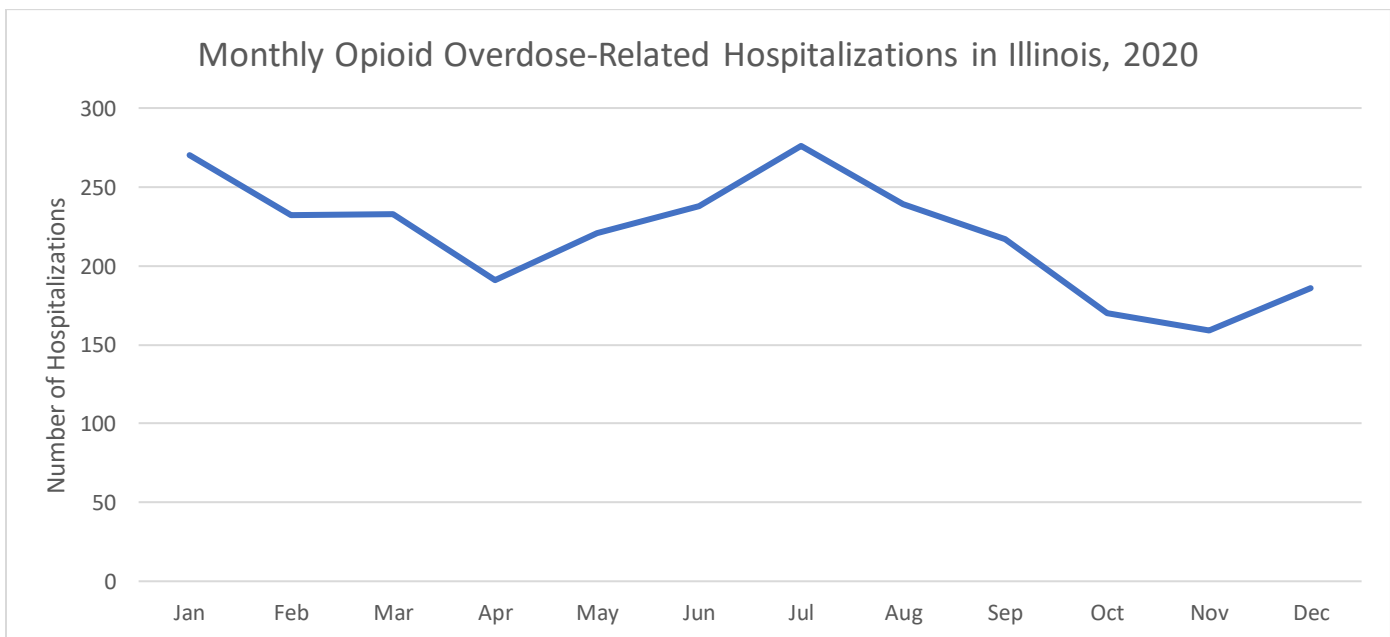


Figure 5. Monthly opioid overdose-related hospitalizations in Illinois in 2020 as reported by IDPH Hospital Discharge Dataset.

Monthly opioid overdose-related ED visits and EMS encounters in 2020 peaked during the spring and summer months and then decreased in the autumn and winter months (Fig. 4), which was similar to the fatal overdose trends. Hospitalizations for opioid-overdose related conditions followed a similar trajectory, peaking in July 2020 and generally decreasing across the autumn and winter months with a slight increase in December (Fig. 5). Throughout 2020, Illinois experienced the opioid overdose epidemic and the COVID-19 pandemic. For more detailed information on the impact of COVID-19 on the opioid overdose crisis, visit <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/opioids/idphdata>.