

Putnam County Behavioral Health Data Report

2023



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Data Disclaimer

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The St. Johns River Rural Health Network, Inc. (SJRRHN), in partnership with the Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida, Inc. (HPCNEF) and SMA Healthcare, conducted a behavioral health data scan for Putnam County. The overall purpose of this behavioral health data report is to review and analyze relevant data from available sources in addition to telehealth data collected by SMA Healthcare to assess the needs of Putnam County residents for mental and behavioral healthcare services, as well as social determinants of health (SDOH) factors that could impact the community's health.

The total population of Putnam County was estimated at 73,147 people in 2021, and the data shows that many of these individuals and families are at risk for mental health illness as well as health barriers such as limited health insurance coverage, limited healthcare service access and availability, low income, disability, and food insecurity, to name a few. According to the 2023 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (CHRR), Putnam County ranks as one of the lowest counties in the State of Florida for many health indicators. CHRR data places Putnam County (out of 67 FL counties) in the following rankings: Health Outcomes (66th), Health Factors (67th), Length of Life (66th), Quality of Life (65th), Health Behaviors (65th), Clinical Care (57th), Social & Economic Factors (67th), and Physical Environment (58th). According to CHRR data, residents of Putnam County are also more likely to experience SDOH barriers like transportation, social and economic factors, lack of insurance or healthcare affordability, education, and food insecurity than residents of the state of Florida as a whole.

About 20 percent of Putnam County residents reported being in frequent mental distress, compared to 14 percent for the state of Florida, and Putnam County residents were more likely to experience poor mental health days than the rest of Florida, 5.9 days per month compared to 4.5 days per month respectively (CHRR, 2023). Putnam County residents are also dealing with substance use, youth substance use, suicide, and self-harm injuries, as well as issues with access to behavioral health services and telehealth. Putnam County is designated as a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for primary care, dental health, and mental health (Health Resources & Services Administration [HRSA], 2023). In 2021, Putnam County had 32 total behavioral/mental health professionals, a rate of 43.3 per 100,000 population, compared to the State of Florida's average rate of 115.2 behavioral/mental health professionals per 100,000 population (FLHealthCharts). It is estimated that a little over 78 percent of Putnam County residents have broadband internet access, which impacts telehealth accessibility.

Discussions from the Putnam County Behavioral Health Forum have revealed that the greatest need for Putnam County is increasing the number of behavioral/mental health providers and services available for community members, including telehealth services. The total number of SMA telehealth appointments during the data collection period (July 2021–March 2023) was 5,362, consisting of 1,978 different patients served.

INTRODUCTION

The St. Johns River Rural Health Network, Inc. (SJRRHN), in partnership with the Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida, Inc. (HPCNEF) and SMA Healthcare, organized a behavioral health data report for Putnam County. The overall purpose of this data report is to review and analyze secondary data from available sources in addition to primary data collected by SMA Healthcare, on telehealth, to assess the needs of Putnam County residents for mental and behavioral healthcare services, as well as social determinants of health (SDOH) factors that could impact the community's health. This data report first discusses background information on mental health, then dives into the data with population characteristics, health status, healthcare services and utilization, and telehealth.

Background

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI, 2022), about 21 percent of U.S. adults experienced some type of mental illness in 2020. Mental illness could be described as a condition that affects emotions, thoughts, behaviors, and relationships, and disrupts daily activities (NAMI, 2023), but the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) defines any mental illness (AMI) as a mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder (2022). NIMH describes serious mental illness (SMI) as a mental illness with more serious functional impairment of life activities (NIMH, 2022). It should be noted for this report that the terms mental health, mental illness, and behavioral health are used interchangeably with a similar purpose and meaning. Although the prevalence rates for mental illness are similar for rural and urban populations, individuals in rural areas are more likely to experience a serious mental illness (Rural Health Information Hub [RHIH], 2019). In addition, about 53 percent of U.S. adults in rural areas expressed that the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected their mental health in 2020, including a staggering 71 percent of young adults aged 18 to 34 (NAMI, 2022). About 46.2 percent of U.S. adults with a mental illness received some type of treatment in 2020 compared to 48 percent of nonmetropolitan adults, and on average, there is a gap of about 11 years from the onset of the mental illness to when the first treatment starts (NAMI, 2022). Undiagnosed and untreated mental health conditions are not only a disruption to an individual's quality of life, but they can also impact social determinants of health (SDOH) factors and lead to physical health deterioration and other chronic health conditions (NAMI, 2022; RHIH, 2019).

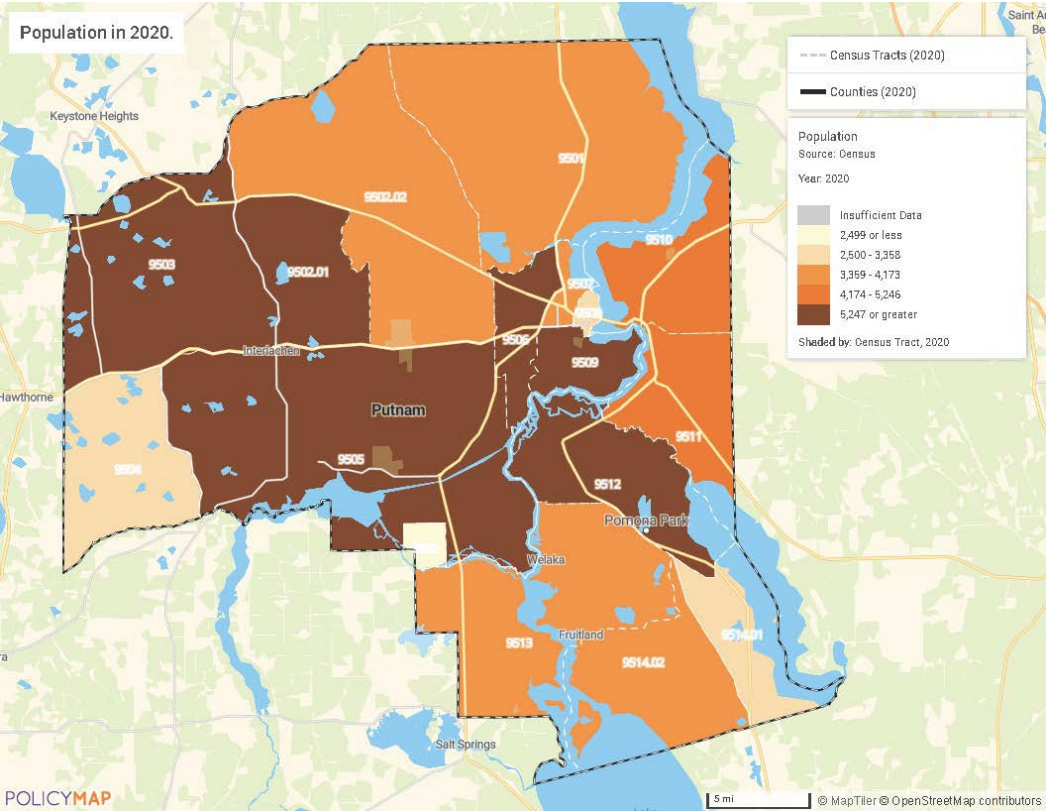
Rural areas are often labeled Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs) or Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) due to a lack of available services and adequate healthcare staffing, which leaves many rural populations without proper care for health concerns (RHIH, 2021). An estimated 155 million people in the U.S. live in a Mental Health Professional Shortage Area (MHPSA), including more than 25 million people in rural areas (NAMI, 2022). In addition to lack of access to care, rural areas can have other factors that prevent or dissuade individuals from seeking care, such as stigma, cultural beliefs, attitudes toward health services or treatments, or SDOH barriers like lack of transportation and affordability of health services. The National Rural Health Association (NRHA, 2015) describes these issues with the 4 A's of Behavioral Health Services: Availability, Accessibility, Affordability, and Acceptability.

The following sections discuss the data collected for this report, including population characteristics, health status, healthcare services and utilization, and telehealth in Putnam County.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

In 2021, the total population of Putnam County was estimated at 73,147 people and the State of Florida was estimated at 21,339,762 people (2021 ACS 5-year estimates). Figure 1 displays a county map of the 2020 population distribution by U.S. census tract. The map shows census tracts with smaller populations in lighter colors to larger populations in darker colors.

FIGURE 1. PUTNAM COUNTY POPULATION BY CENSUS TRACT, 2020

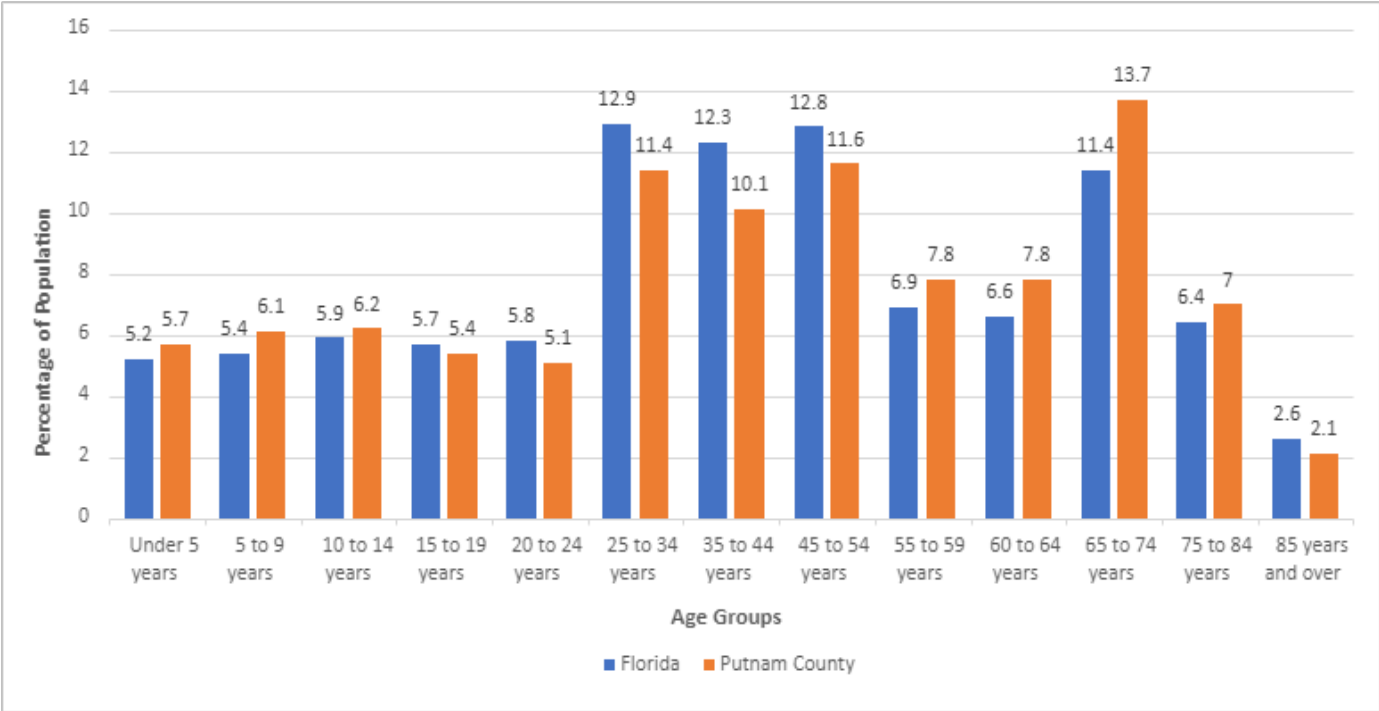


Created by SJRRHN using PolicyMap, 2023.

Age & Gender

The population of Putnam County by gender was estimated to be 49.7 percent male and 50.3 percent female, similar to the State of Florida with 49.2 percent and 50.8 percent, respectively (2021 ACS 5-year estimates). Figure 2 displays the population of Putnam County and the State of Florida residents by categorized age groups. The median age was 45.1 years in Putnam County and 42.3 years in Florida.

FIGURE 2. POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE GROUP, 2017-2021

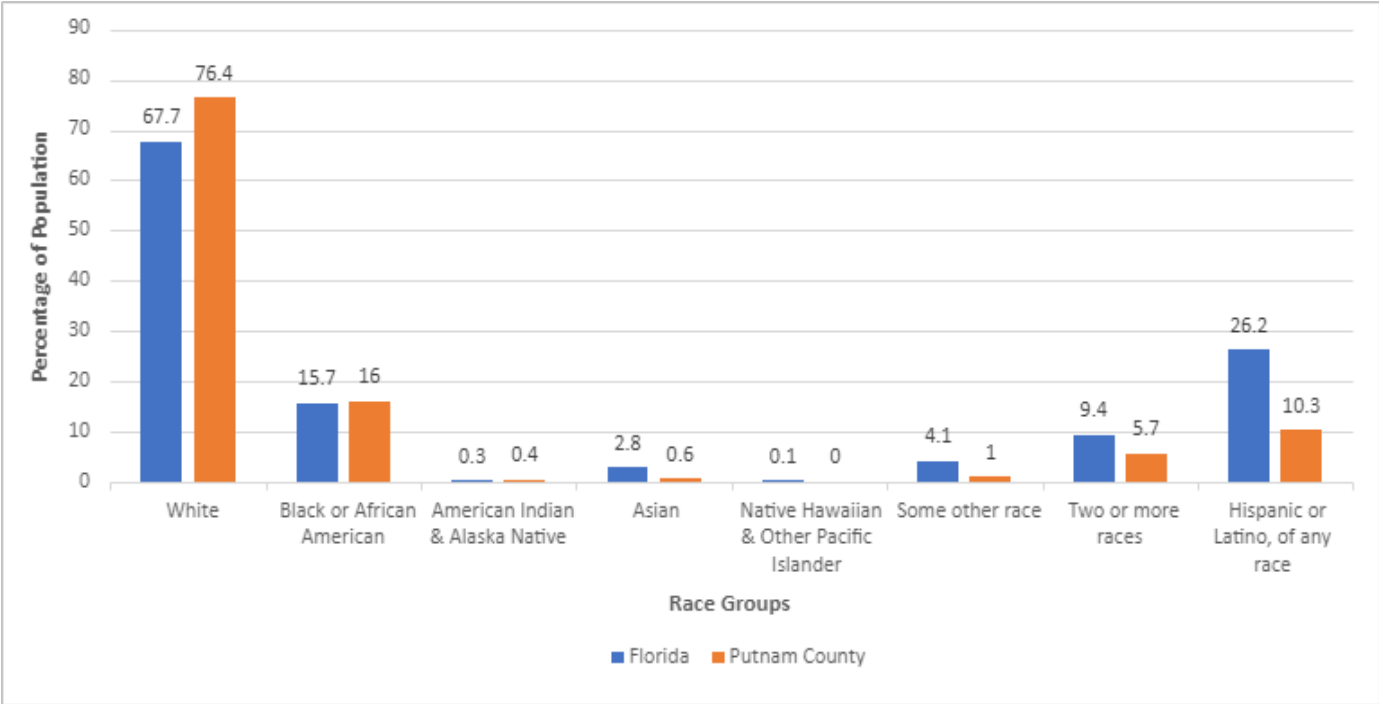


Data Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP05, Demographic and Housing Estimates.

Race & Ethnicity

Figure 3 compares the racial composition of Putnam County to the State of Florida. Putnam County is less diverse than the state with 76.4 percent identifying as white, compared to 67.7 percent of the Florida population. An estimated 10.3 percent of Putnam residents identify as Hispanic or Latino, while the State population is 26.2 percent Hispanic or Latino (2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates).

FIGURE 3. POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY, 2017-2021

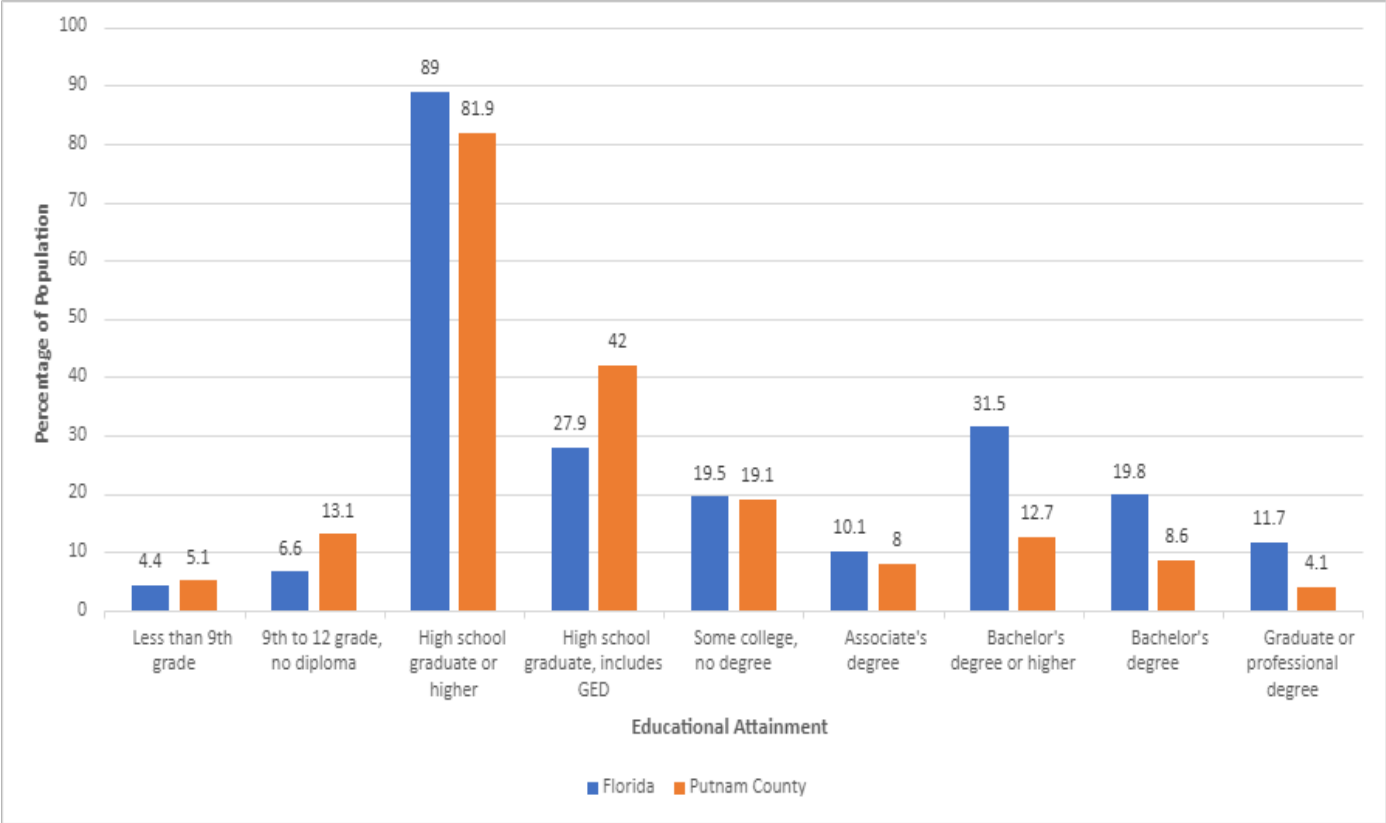


Data Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP05, Demographic and Housing Estimates.

Education

Only 81.9 percent of Putnam County’s population aged 25 years and over have achieved an educational level of high school graduate or higher compared to 89 percent of the State of Florida. Putnam County residents also have lower attainment of a Bachelor’s degree or higher at 12.7 percent compared to the State of Florida at 31.5 percent (2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates). See Figure 4 below for a 5-Year Estimate comparison of each educational attainment category.

FIGURE 4. REPORTED HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED, 2017-2021

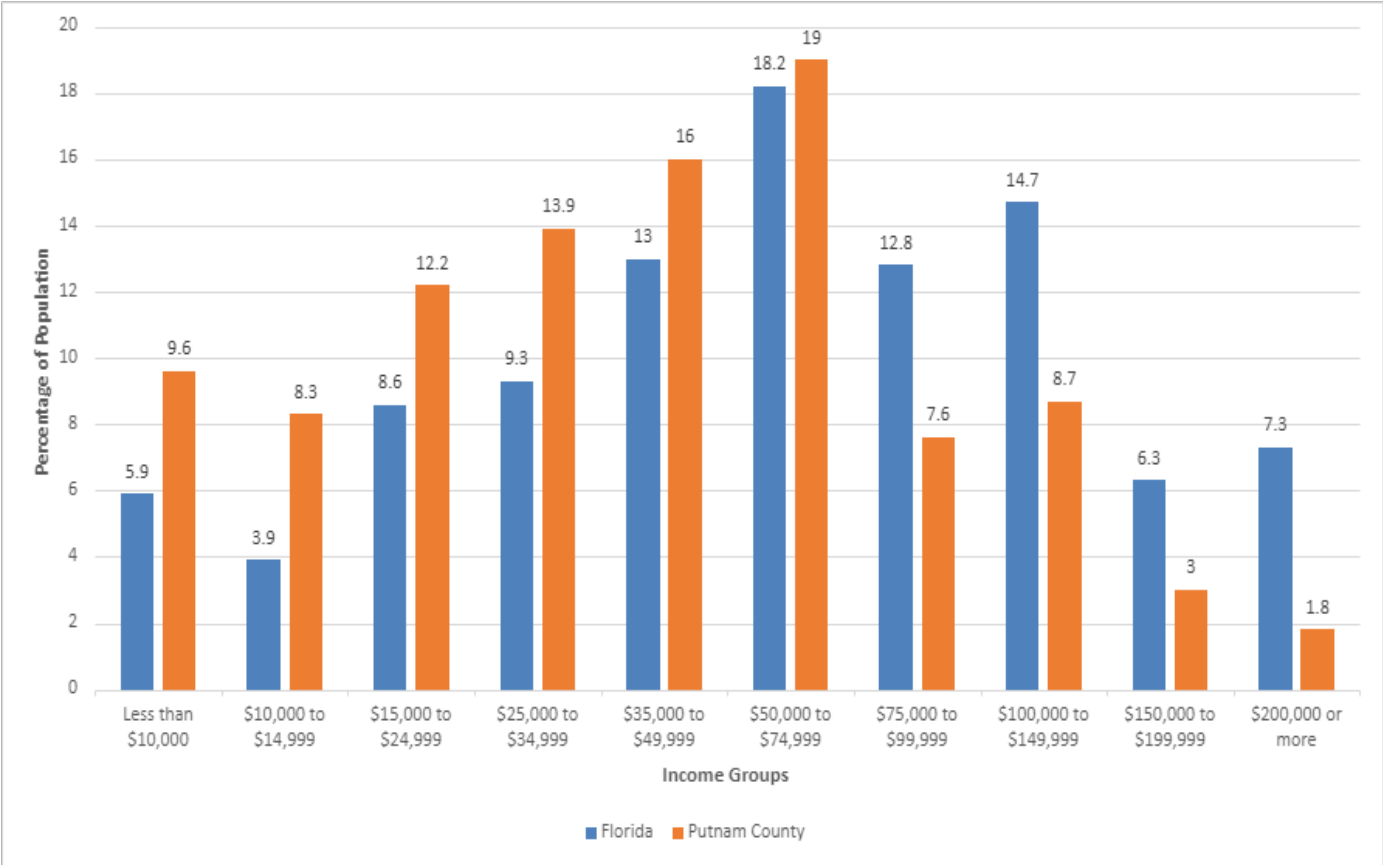


Data Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S1501, Educational Attainment.

Income & Poverty

Putnam County’s distribution of household income compared to that of Florida is displayed in Figure 5. The largest percentage for Putnam County’s household income (19 percent) and Florida’s (18.2 percent) was a range from \$50,000 to \$74,999. The median household income in Putnam County was \$39,975, compared to Florida’s median household income of \$61,777 (2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates).

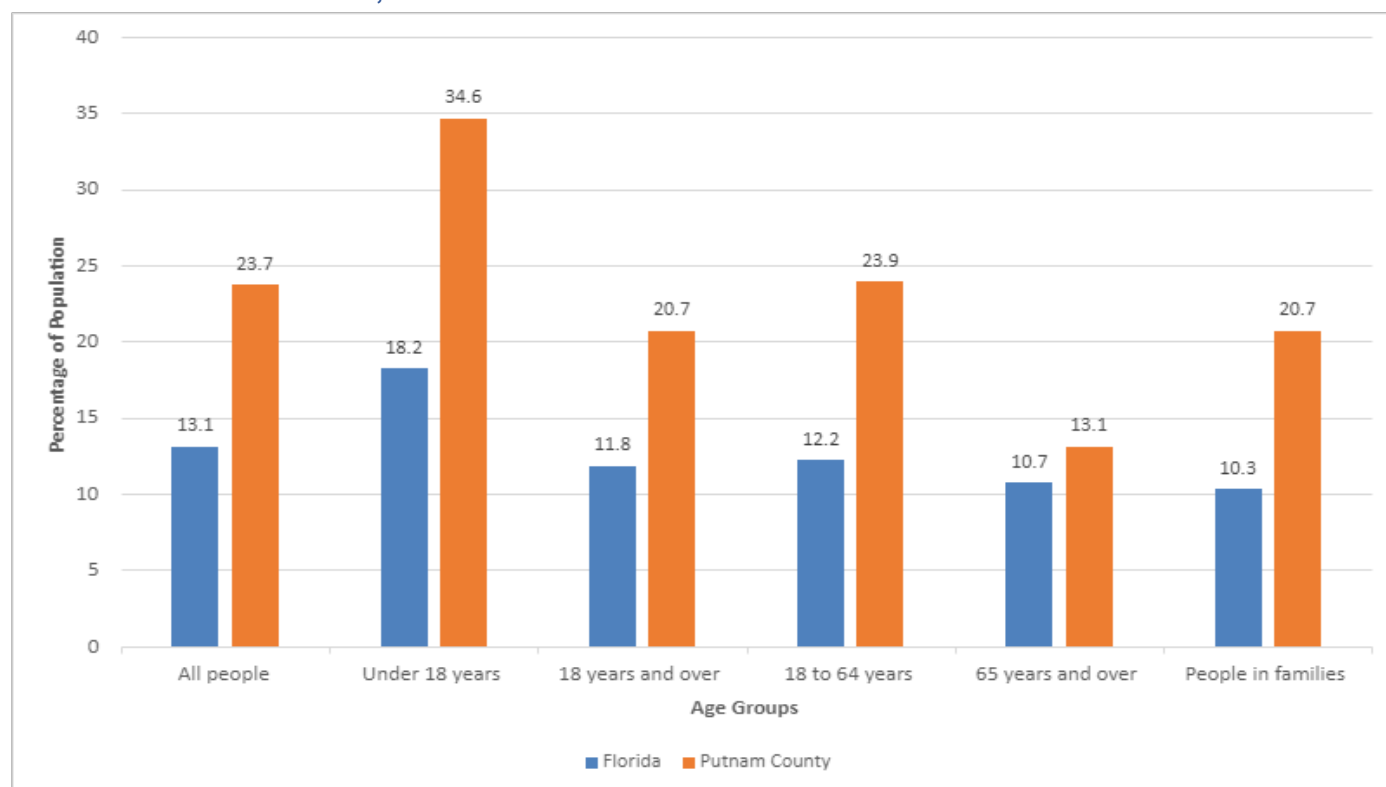
FIGURE 5. INCOME DISTRIBUTION, 2017-2021



Data Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP03, Selected Economic Characteristics.

Figure 6 illustrates the percentage of households in Putnam County and the State of Florida whose income was under the poverty line within the last 12 months. Almost 24 percent of Putnam County residents are below 100 percent poverty level compared to 13.1 percent of Florida residents. Putnam County’s largest percentage of residents living under the 100 percent poverty level are under 18 years old (34.6 percent), almost double the poverty line percentage for Florida’s residents of the same age group (18.2 percent).

FIGURE 6. PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES AND PEOPLE WHOSE INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS IS BELOW THE 100% POVERTY LEVEL, 2017-2021

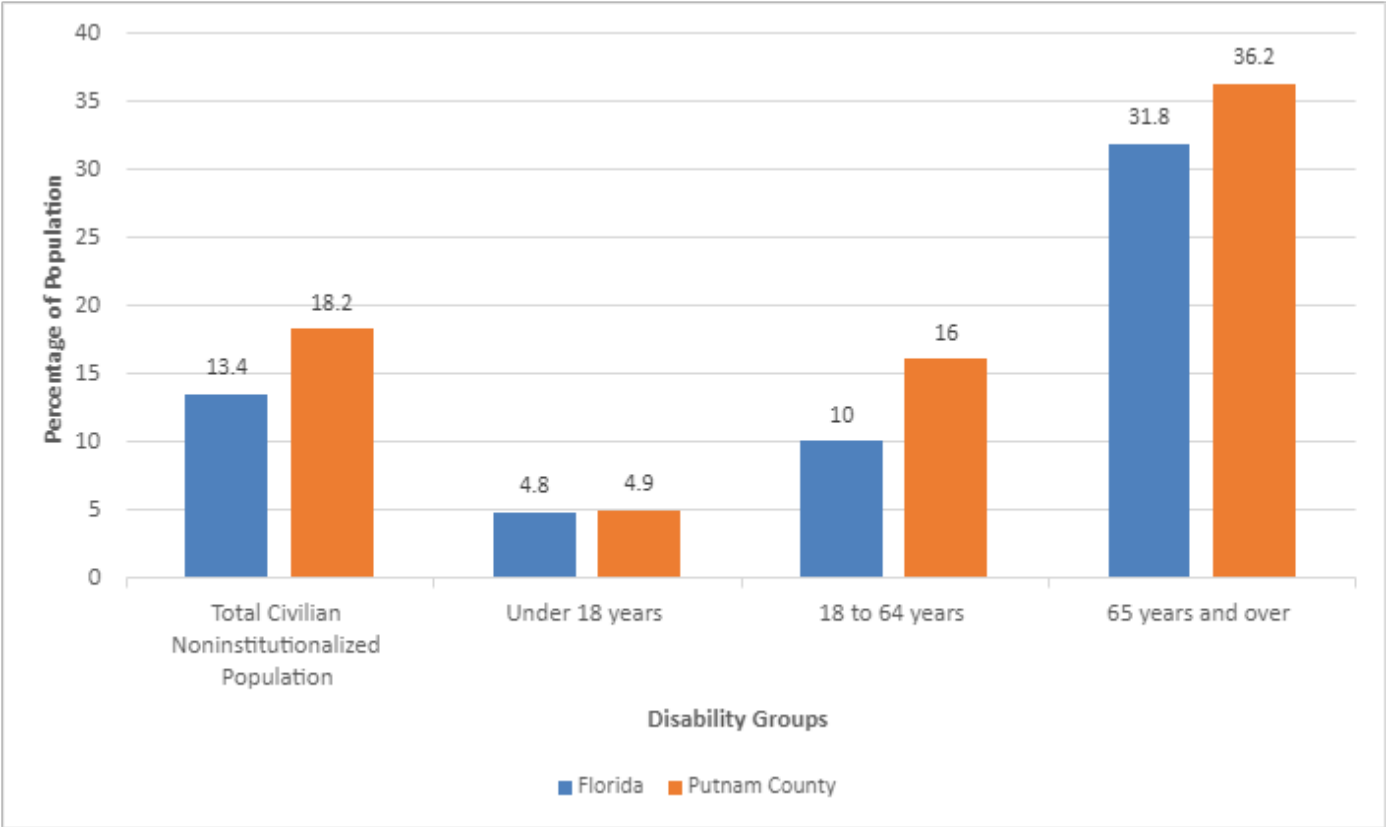


Data Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP03, Selected Economic Characteristics.

Disability

An estimated 18.2 percent of Putnam County residents and 13.4 percent of Florida residents are living with a physical or mental disability. The highest percentage of both populations are of the 65 years and over category, of which Putnam County had 36.2 percent and Florida had 31.8 percent (2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates). See Figure 7 for a 5-Year Estimate comparison of each disability category.

FIGURE 7. PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION LIVING WITH A DISABILITY, 2017-2021



Data Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP02, Selected Social Characteristics.

CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)

Putnam County also exhibits high social vulnerability according to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention’s (CDC) Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) County Map (2023), as presented in Table 1, especially for socioeconomic status and household characteristics. The SVI data indicates the capacity of a population or community to prepare and respond to stressful events; the higher the score, the less capacity and resiliency for a community to respond properly (CDC, 2023).

TABLE 1. CDC/ATSDR SOCIAL VULNERABILITY INDEX 2020 FOR PUTNAM COUNTY, FLORIDA

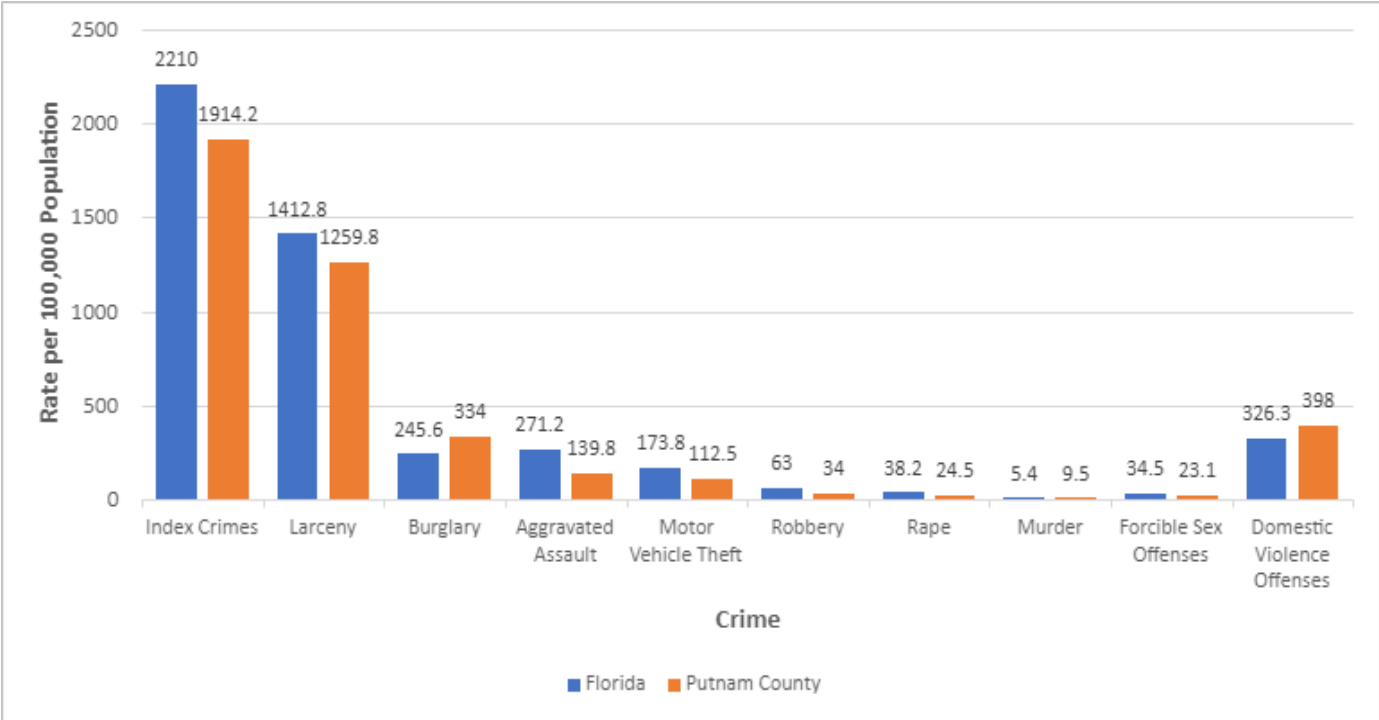
Category	Overall	Socioeconomic Status	Household Characteristics	Racial & Ethnic Minority Status	Housing Type & Transportation
SVI	0.9545	0.9545	0.9545	0.5000	0.7424

Note. CDC/ATSDR SVI is scored from 0 – 1. The lower the number (closer to zero), the less social vulnerability, the higher the number (closer to one), the more social vulnerability.

Crime

During 2019–2021, the highest crime rate in Putnam County and the State of Florida was in Index crimes. Index crimes—comprising aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, murder, robbery, and sexual offenses—track the number of crimes reported to law enforcement and not the arrests for the given crimes (Florida Department of Law Enforcement). See Figure 8 for a 3-Year Rate comparison of crime categories in Putnam and the state and Table 2 for drug arrest data for Putnam County.

FIGURE 8. INCIDENCE OF CRIMES, 3-YEAR ROLLING RATE, 2019-2021



Data Source: Florida Health Charts, County Health Dashboard, Crime and Domestic Violence.

TABLE 2. ANNUAL DRUG ARRESTS COUNT FOR PUTNAM COUNTY, 2020

Arrests	Year	Number
Annual Drug Arrests	2020	481
Annual Adult Drug Arrests	2020	477
Annual Juvenile Drug Arrests	2020	4

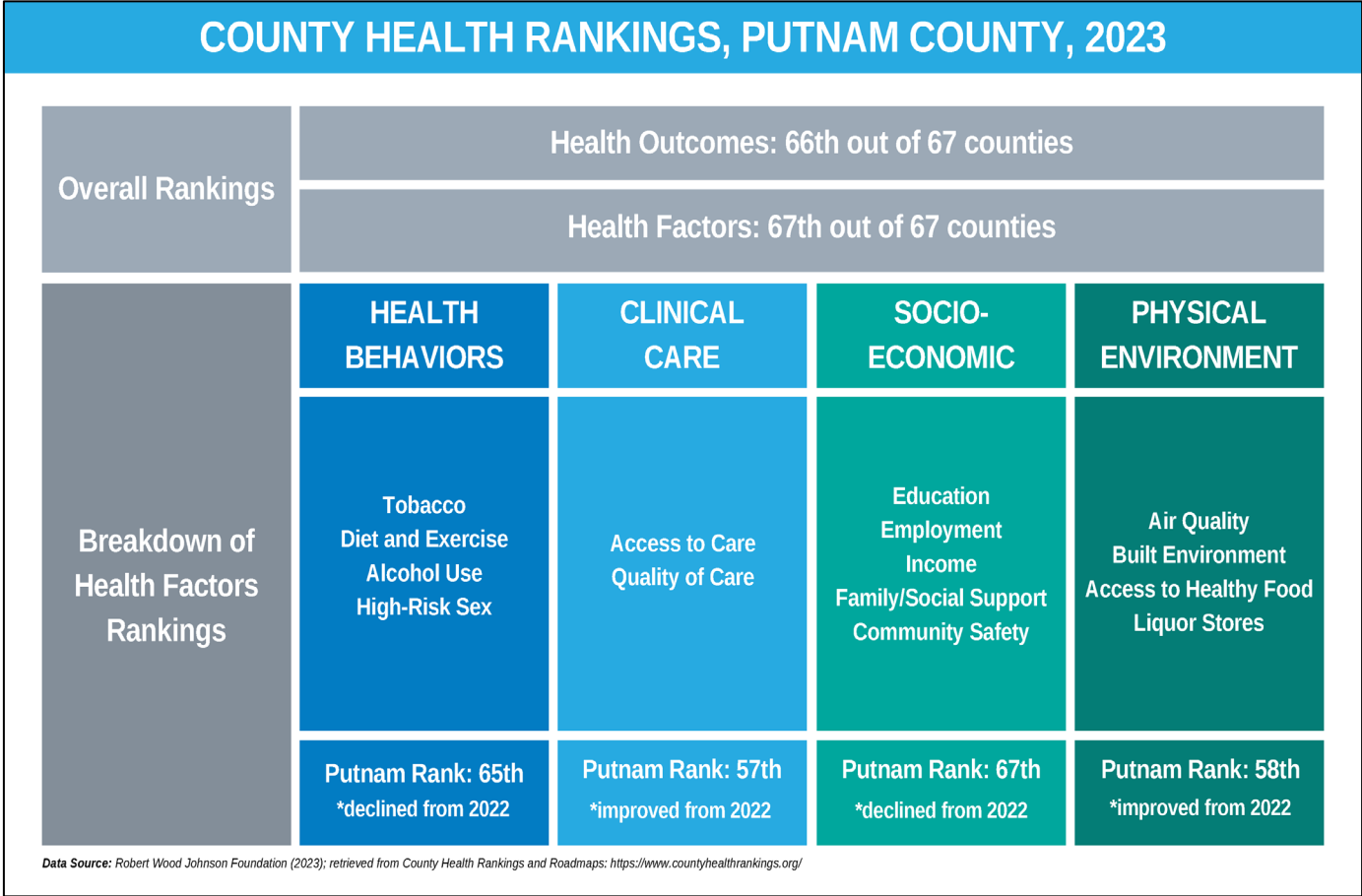
Data Source: Florida Health Charts, Substance Use Dashboard.

HEALTH STATUS

How does Putnam County Compare?

According to the 2022 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (CHRR), Putnam County ranks as one of the lowest counties in the State of Florida for many health indicators. CHRR data places Putnam County (out of 67 FL counties) in the following rankings: Health Outcomes (66th), Health Factors (67th), Length of Life (66th), Quality of Life (64th), Health Behaviors (62nd), Clinical Care (61st), Social & Economic Factors (65th), and Physical Environment (62nd). According to CHRR data, residents of Putnam County were also more likely to experience SDOH barriers such as lack of transportation, social and economic factors, lack of insurance or healthcare affordability, lack of education, and food insecurity than the state of Florida as a whole. See Figure 9 for the 2023 Putnam County health rankings.

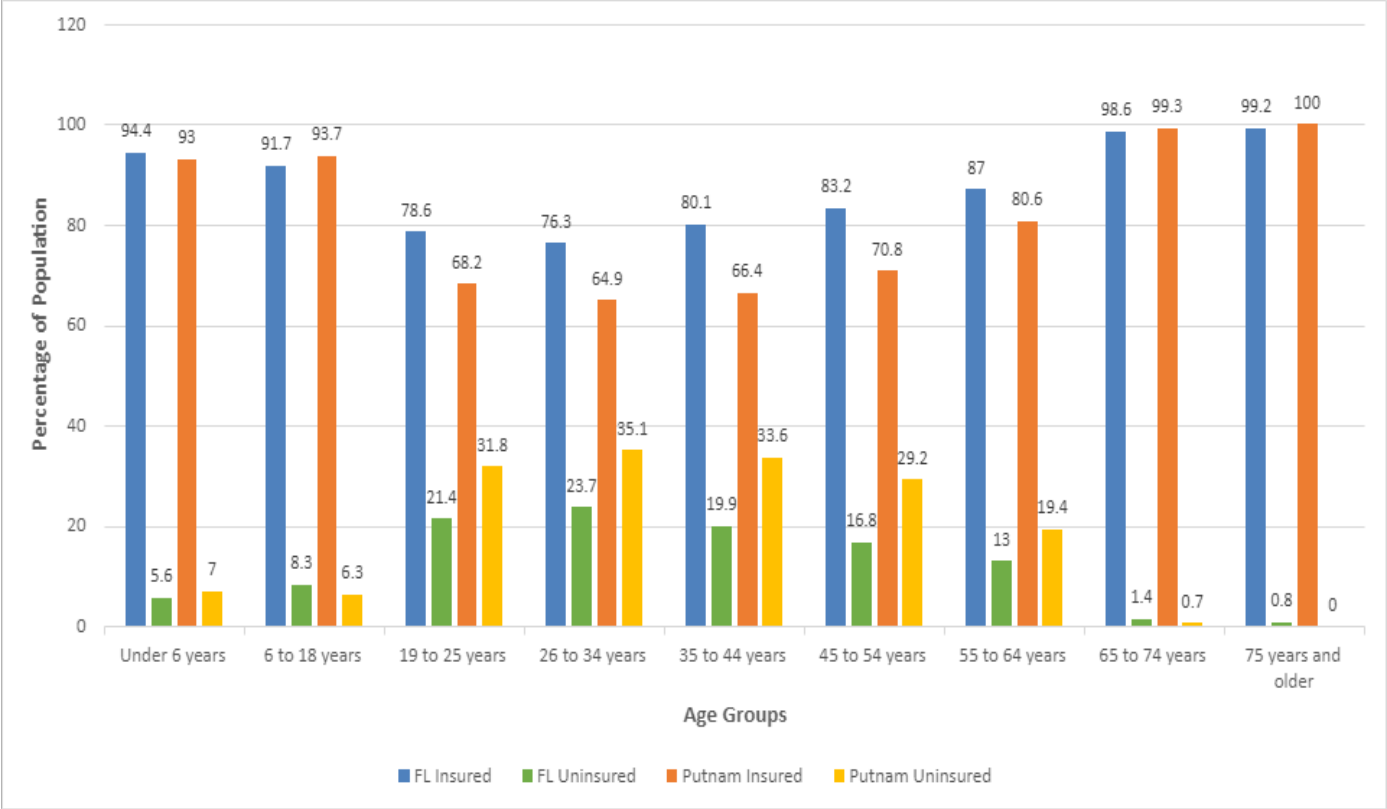
FIGURE 9. PUTNAM COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS, 2023



Health Insurance Coverage

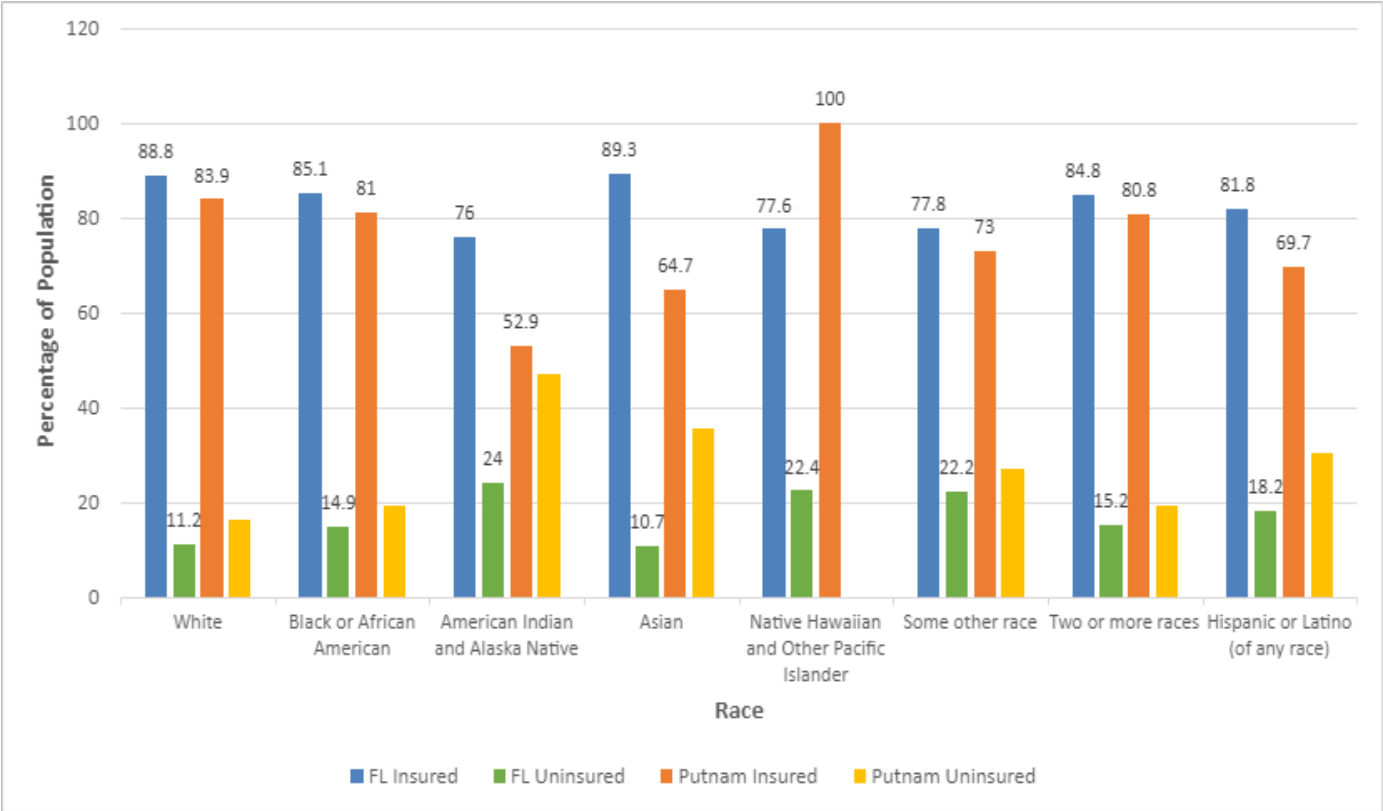
In Putnam County, 82.9 percent of the population has health insurance coverage; however, 52.4 percent have public health insurance coverage compared to the State of Florida average of 36.7 percent (FLHealthCharts). In 2019, almost 22 percent of Putnam County adults reported not being able to see a doctor at least once in the past year due to cost (FLHealthCharts). See Figures 10 and 11 for a comparison of insurance coverage by age group and race in Putnam County and the State of Florida (ACS 5-Year Estimates). Displayed in Figure 12 is a map of the estimated percentage of people without health insurance in Putnam County.

FIGURE 10. HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE BY AGE, PUTNAM COUNTY & FLORIDA, 2021



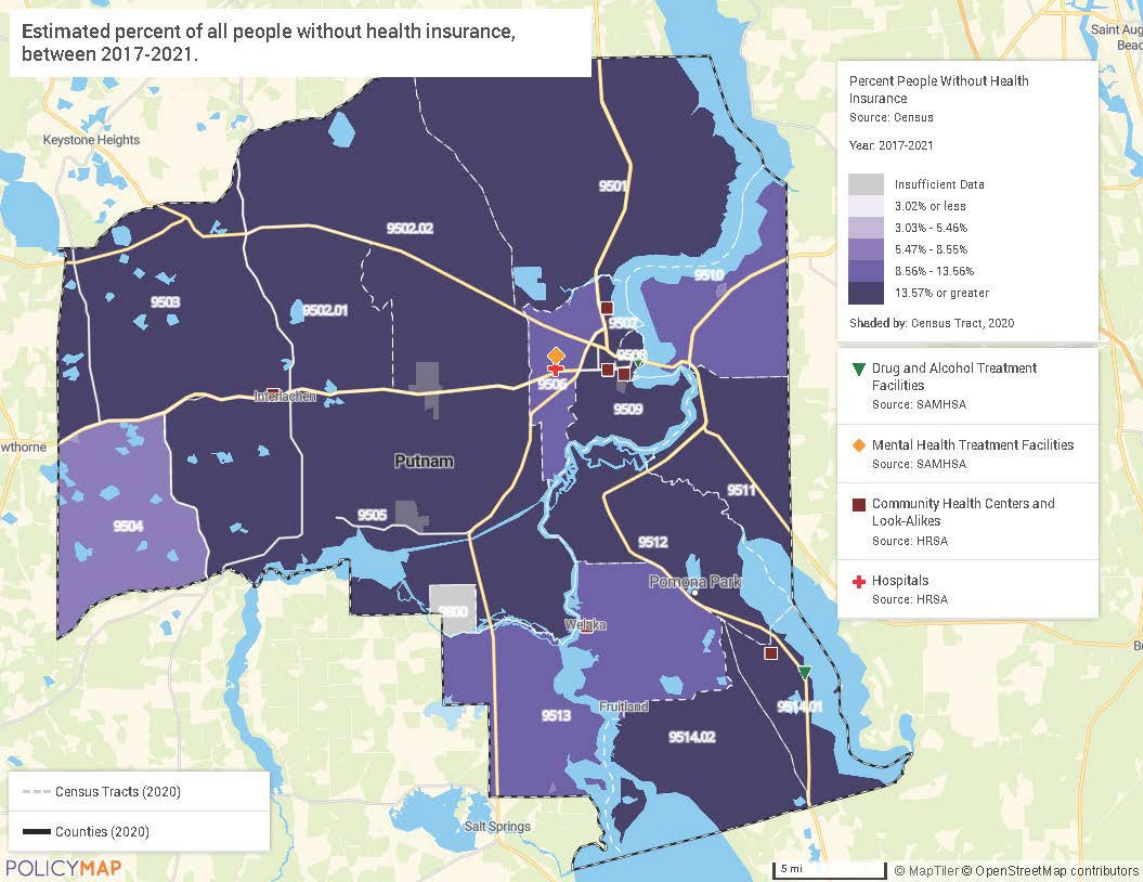
Data Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S2701, Selected Characteristics of Health Insurance Coverage.

FIGURE 11. HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE BY RACE, PUTNAM COUNTY & FLORIDA, 2021



Data Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S2701, Selected Characteristics of Health Insurance Coverage.

FIGURE 12. MAP OF ESTIMATED PERCENT OF PEOPLE WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE, 2017-2021



Health Behaviors

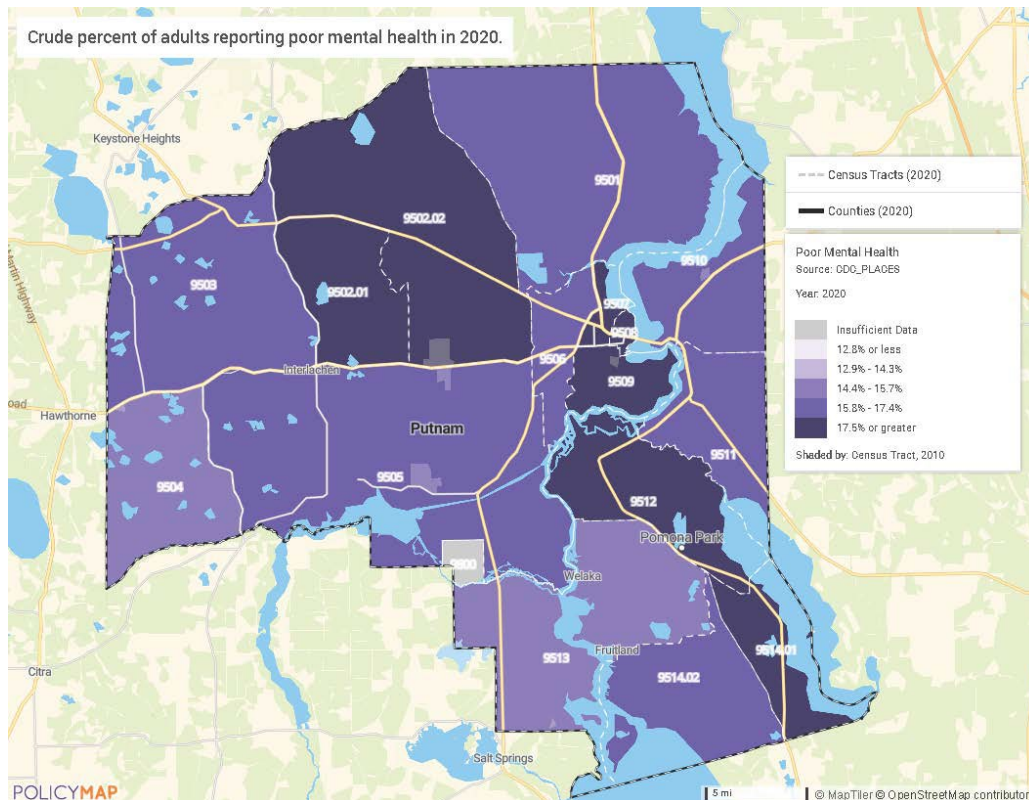
About 20 percent of Putnam County residents reported being in frequent mental distress, compared to 14 percent for the state of Florida, and Putnam County residents were more likely to experience poor mental health days than the rest of Florida, 5.9 days per month compared to 4.5 days per month respectively (CHRR, 2023). In addition to perceived mental health status, there are other health factors such as obesity, being inactive, smoking status, and stress that can impact a person's health. Data for some of these health behaviors can be found in the table below. Additional substance use data will be discussed in the following section.

TABLE 3. BEHAVIORAL & HEALTH INDICATORS FROM THE 2019 BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTOR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM SURVEY

Data Indicator	Year	Putnam	Florida
Adults who are inactive or insufficiently active	2016	62.5%	56.7%
Adults who are overweight	2019	30.2%	37.6%
Adults who are obese	2019	39.5%	27%
Adults who are current smokers	2019	26.9%	14.8%
Adult current smokers who tried to quit smoking at least once in the past year	2019	62.1%	59%
Adults who said their overall health was "fair" or "poor"	2019	26.9%	19.7%
Adults who said their overall health was "good" to "excellent"	2019	73.1%	80.3%
Adults whose poor physical or mental health kept them from doing usual activities on 14 or more of the past 30 days (Among adults who have had at least one day of poor mental or physical health)	2019	30.7%	18.3%
Adults with good mental health	2019	82.9%	86.2%
Adults who had poor mental health on 14 or more of the past 30 days	2019	17.1%	13.8%
Average number of unhealthy mental days in the past 30 days	2019	4.6%	-
Adults who have ever been told they had a depressive disorder	2019	23.5%	17.7%
Adults who engage in heavy or binge drinking	2019	16.4%	18%

Data Source: FLHealthCharts, Community Health Status Summary.

FIGURE 13. MAP OF PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS REPORTING POOR MENTAL HEALTH STATUS IN 2020



Substance Use

The substance use dashboard by FLHealthCharts provides data from multiple sources such as the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration. Table 4 displays some of the substance use data from the dashboard for Putnam County.

TABLE 4. SUBSTANCE USE DATA

Data Indicator	Year	Count
Opioid Overdose Deaths	2021	21
Drug Overdose Deaths	2021	30
Emergency Medical Service Responses to a Suspected Opioid-involved Overdose	2022	157
Emergency Medical Service Responses to a Suspected Drug Overdose Including Opioids	2022	350
Florida Poison Information Network Calls Related to Opioids	2022	11
Alcohol Confirmed Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes	2021	30
Drug Confirmed Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes	2021	7

Data Source: Florida Health Charts, Substance Use Dashboard.

The Florida Youth and Substance Abuse Survey (FYSAS) is an annual, statewide school-based survey effort that measures the prevalence of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use; delinquent behaviors; and the risk and protective factors related to these behaviors. Table 5 displays data from the FYSAS from 2014–2022 for a comparison of data points across time. For most of the data in Table 5, Putnam County youth had a higher rate of drug or alcohol use than the State of Florida average. Reported youth substance use, however, did decline from 2014–2022 in both Florida and Putnam County.

TABLE 5. FLORIDA YOUTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE SURVEY DATA, 2014-2022

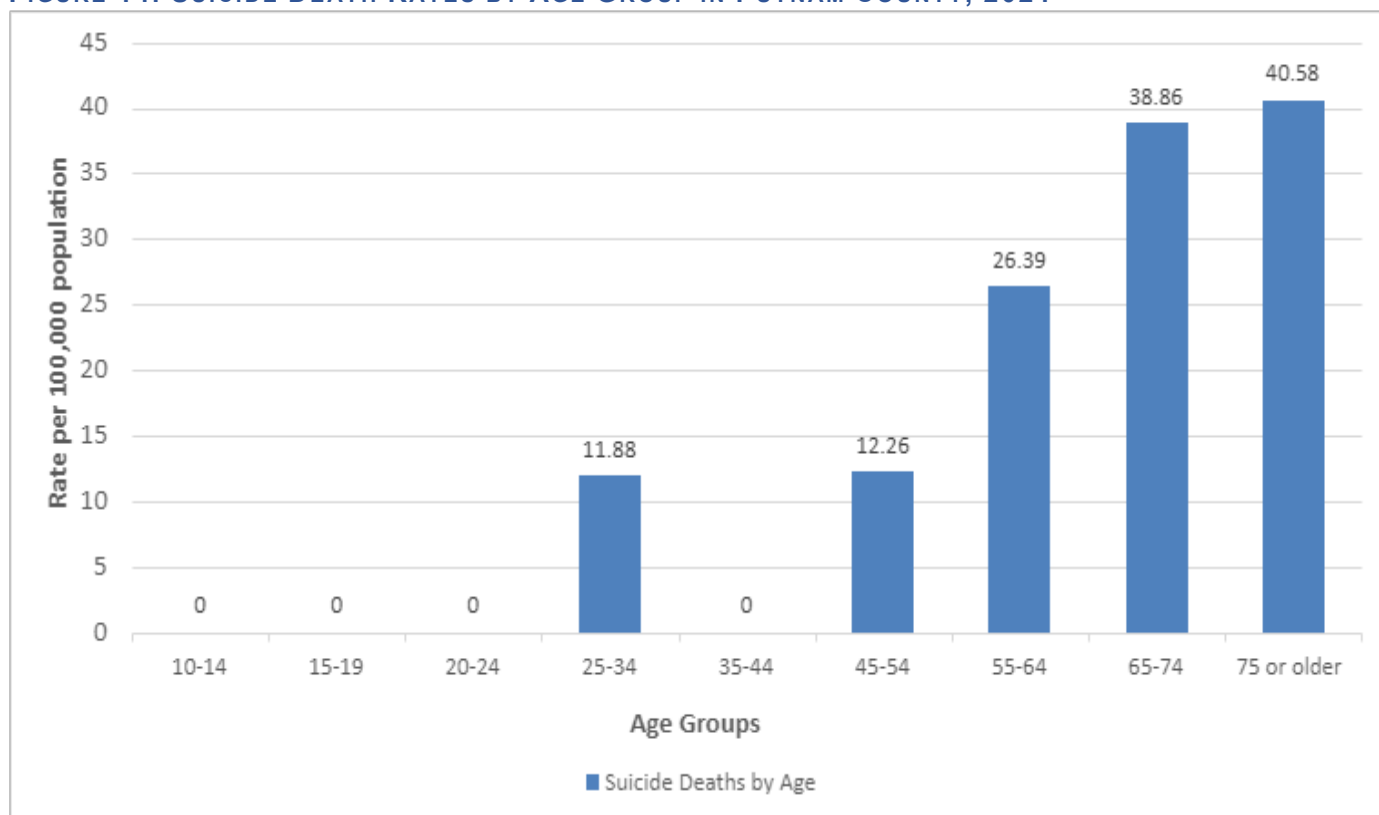
Data Indicator	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022
Students who have drank alcohol in the past 30 days (percent)					
Florida	20.5	18.3	15.3	14.8	11.8
Putnam	22.1	23.3	16	14.7	14
Students who smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days (percent)					
Florida	4.9	3.4	2.5	1.8	1.2
Putnam	9.8	7.1	4	1.8	1.2
Students who vaped nicotine in the past 30 days (percent)					
Florida	x	x	x	11.4	9.7
Putnam	x	x	x	10.9	11.1
Students who have used marijuana or hashish in the past 30 days (percent)					
Florida	12.4	11.2	10.9	10.7	8.3
Putnam	14.4	12.7	11.2	12.5	7.1

Data Source: Florida Health Charts, Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey. Note: x = no data available.

Health Outcomes

The highest rates of suicide in Putnam County for 2021 were of individuals 65 years and older. The most common method of suicide was firearm use, followed by suffocation. Several age groups had no reported suicide deaths. See Figure 14 for a comparison of suicide death rates among age groups in Putnam County.

FIGURE 14. SUICIDE DEATH RATES BY AGE GROUP IN PUTNAM COUNTY, 2021

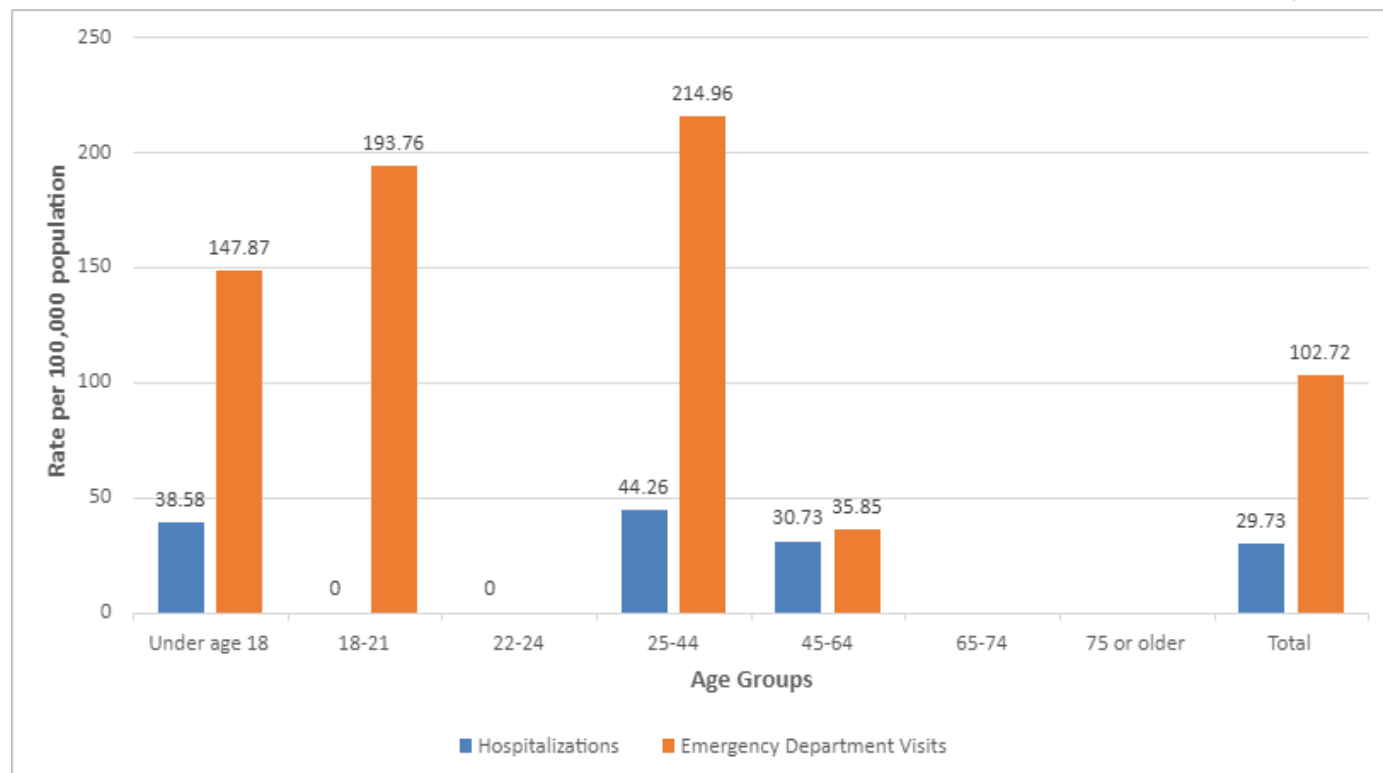


Data Source: Florida Health Charts, Intentional Self-Harm Injuries.

Non-fatal intentional self-harm injuries were also reported for Putnam County in 2021 by Emergency Department (ED) visits and Hospitalizations per age group. The highest rate of ED visits occurred among the 25–44 years age group, followed by 18–21 years age group. The

highest rate of Hospitalizations also occurred among the 25–44 years age group, followed by the under 18 years group. See Figure 15 below for a comparison of the ED and Hospitalization rates for non-fatal intentional self-harm injuries by age group in Putnam County in 2021. Note: the columns with zero or no data listed had either no reported self-harm injuries or the number of self-harm injuries was so little or could not be accurately counted that it could not be converted into a rate.

FIGURE 15. NON-FATAL INTENTIONAL SELF-HARM INJURIES BY AGE GROUP IN PUTNAM COUNTY, 2021



Data Source: Florida Health Charts, Intentional Self-Harm Injuries.

The Baker Act Reporting Center at the University of South Florida (USF) receives data from facilities statewide regarding involuntary examinations (Baker Acts). Table 6 illustrates the total number of reported involuntary exam initiations (i.e., Baker Acts) for Putnam County residents for the fiscal years (FY) 2016–2021. It is important to note that Putnam County does not have a receiving facility within its borders, so residents must utilize services in facilities in surrounding counties. USF reports that in FY 2020–2021, the majority of Putnam County residents who received an involuntary examination were seen at Flagler Hospital (26.50%), Meridian Behavioral Health Care - Gainesville (16.70%), Halifax Psychiatric Center - North (13.07%), UF Health Shands Psychiatric Hospital (11.07%), and Halifax Health Medical Center (5.63%) (USF Baker Act Reporting Center FY 2020–2021 Annual Report).

TABLE 6. INVOLUNTARY EXAMINATIONS OF PUTNAM COUNTY RESIDENTS, FYS 2016-2021

Fiscal Year	Involuntary Examinations											
	Involuntary Exams (All Ages)	% of Total				% of Total by Initiator Type			% Change from			
		<18	18-24	25-64	65+	Law Enforcement	Health Professional	Ex-Parte	1 Year		5 Years	
									BA Exams FY19/20 to FY20/21	Pop* 2019 to 2020	BA Exams FY16/17 to FY20/21	Pop * 2016 To 2020
2020-2021	551	32.12%	9.07%	52.99%	5.08%	52.99%	43.92%	3.09%	-1.08%	0.47%	-1.78%	0.48%
2019-2020	557	25.85%	12.57%	53.68%	7.18%	45.06%	52.24%	2.69%				
2018-2019	550	20.55%	16.00%	56.00%	6.73%	46.91%	52.00%	1.09%				
2017-2018	641	22.93%	9.52%	61.00%	5.93%	50.70%	46.49%	2.81%				
2016-2017	561	22.82%	14.08%	57.04%	5.88%	46.88%	50.98%	2.14%				

Data Source: USF Baker Act Reporting Center FY 2020-2021 Annual Report.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES & UTILIZATION

Behavioral Health Services

Putnam County is designated as a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for primary care, dental health, and mental health (Health Resources & Services Administration [HRSA], 2023). In 2021, Putnam County had 32 total behavioral/mental health professionals, a rate of 43.3 per 100,000 population, compared to the State of Florida average rate of 115.2 behavioral/mental health professionals per 100,000 population (FLHealthCharts). Table 7 lists the data for health resource access and availability for Putnam County.

TABLE 7. PUTNAM COUNTY, FLORIDA HEALTH RESOURCE ACCESS AND AVAILABILITY 2021

			Putnam County	State of Florida
Indicators	Data Year	<i>n</i>	Rate per 100,000	Rate per 100,000
Total Licensed Dentists (Fiscal Year)	2021	10	13.5	55.7
Total Licensed Physicians (Fiscal Year)	2021	56	75.7	308.8
Total Licensed Pediatricians (Fiscal Year)	2021	7	9.5	21.6
Total Hospital Beds	2021	99	133.8	316
County Public Health Department Full-Time Employees	2021	71	96	47
Licensed Mental Health Counselors	2021	17	23	56.3
Licensed Psychologists	2021	3	4.1	23
Licensed Clinical Social Workers	2021	9	12.2	48.9
Total Behavioral/Mental Health Professionals	2021	32	43.3	115.2
Adult Psychiatric Beds	2021	0	0	31.2
Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Beds	2021	0	0	3.2
Federally Qualified Health Centers	2023	6	-	-

Data Source: Adapted from FL Health Charts Health Resources Availability Tables and Florida Voices for Health (FVH) – Federally Qualified Health Centers.

TELEHEALTH

Top Behavioral Health Issues and Barriers in Putnam

From discussions at the Putnam County Behavioral Health Forum, the greatest need expressed for Putnam County is increasing the number of behavioral/mental health providers and services available for community members to access. Also discussed in the Forum was the need for support and advocacy from local government officials for providing financial support for programs and addressing public policies that could increase internet access and internet speeds in the community.

Telehealth

During the past few years, there has been a rapid expansion of using technology for healthcare service delivery due to the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as prevention strategies and restricted access to healthcare services (Doraiswamy et al., 2020). Technology such as telehealth, telemedicine, and other forms of virtual care might not be the best solution for all healthcare services, but it certainly has created opportunities for rural geographic regions and specific populations that lack access to appropriate care. Telehealth service delivery options have been used in public health settings to address provider availability or MHPSAs and SDOH barriers to care like transportation and affordability (Kisicki et al., 2022; NHRA, 2015; RHIH, 2021).

Access to telehealth could be impacted by the ending of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency on May 11, 2023. Although, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) states that many of the telehealth flexibilities will continue through December 2024 (DHHS, 2023). The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) are implementing a temporary rule for telemedicine flexibilities for prescribing controlled medications in response to the ending of the PHE (SAMHSA, 2023). This temporary rule will allow prescribing controlled medications via telehealth to continue through November 2023.

SMA Data

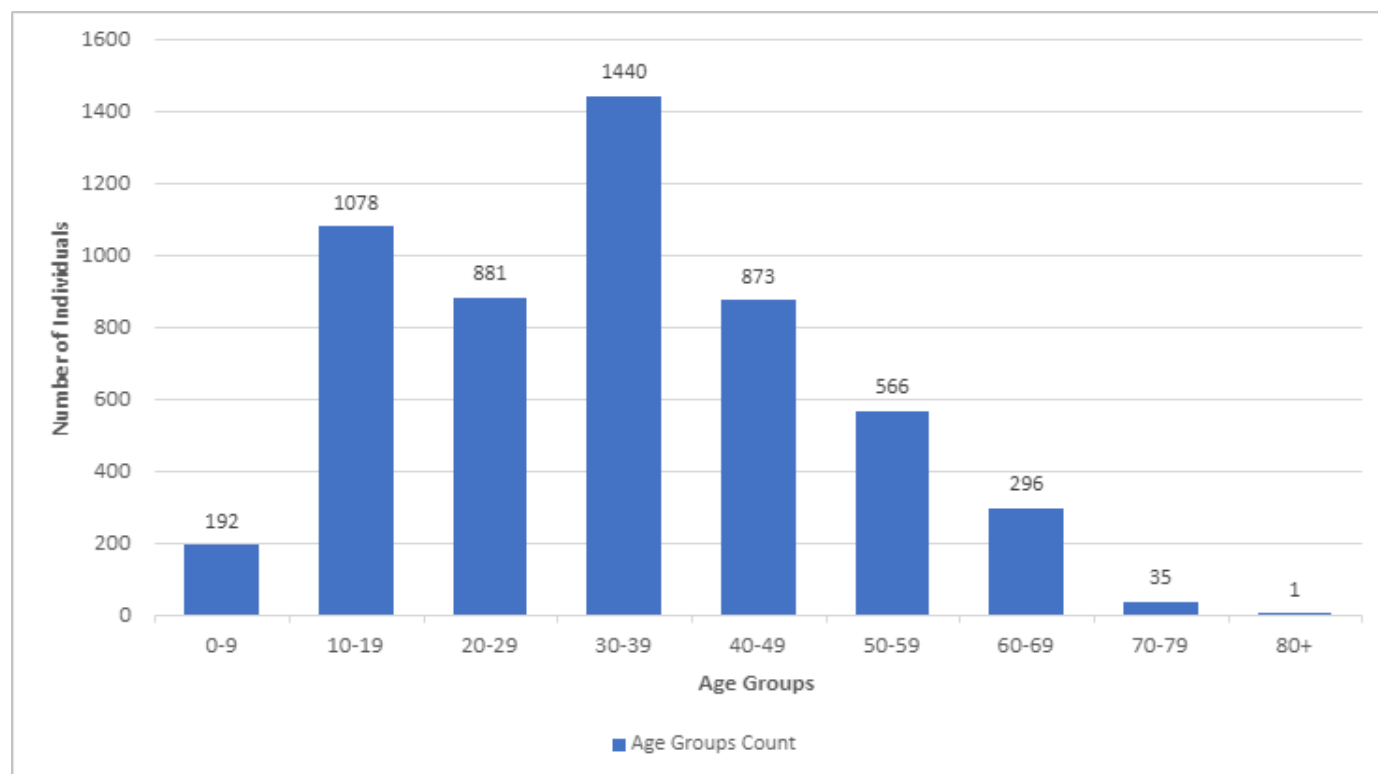
The following tables and figures display data from SMA telehealth appointments, including the number of individuals served and demographics. SMA sent the data to SJRRHN in quarterly reports. The total number of appointments during the data collection period (July 2021 – March 2023) was 5,362, consisting of 1,978 different patients served. Of the 5,362 appointments, 43.4 percent of patients identified as male, and 56.6 percent identified as female. The largest percentage of patients served are of the 30–39 age group and 82.6 percent of patients identified as White/Caucasian. The majority of the patients served live in zip code 32177, followed by 32148.

TABLE 8. TELEHEALTH APPOINTMENT DATA

Date Range	Number of Unique Clients Served	Number of Unique Service Dates	Total Appts
July 2, 2021–March 31, 2022	466	188	2,635
April 1, 2022–June 30, 2022	413	64	807
July 1, 2022–September 30, 2022	378	60	704
October 1, 2022–December 31, 2022	379	61	693
January 1, 2023–March 31, 2023	342	58	524
Total	1,978	431	5,362

Data Source: SMA Healthcare, Inc.

FIGURE 16. NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY AGE GROUP



Data Source: SMA Healthcare, Inc.

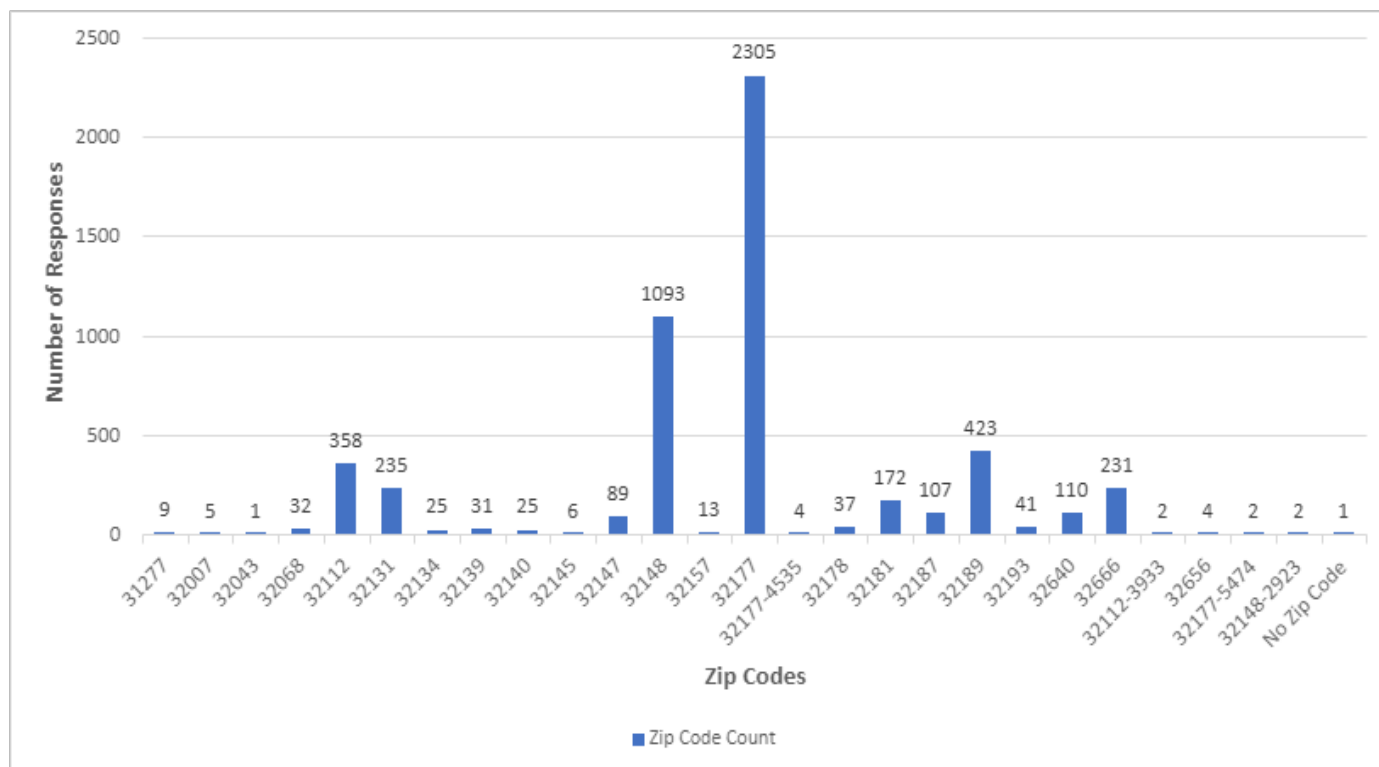
TABLE 9. NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Race	Ethnicity	Count of Race	Count of Ethnicity
American Indian/Alaskan Native	Mexican	1	1
	None/Other	14	14
	No Entry	15	15
American Indian/Alaskan Native Total		30	30
Asian	None/Other	6	6
Asian Total		6	6
Black/African-American	No Entry	88	88
	None/Other	548	548
	Other Hispanic	14	14
	Haitian	7	7
	Puerto Rican	3	3
Black/African-American Total		660	660
Multi-Racial	Mexican	9	9
	No Entry	10	10
	None/Other	17	17
	Other Hispanic	14	14
	Puerto Rican	17	17
	Cuban	2	2
Multi-Racial Total		69	69
Native Hawaiian	No Entry	1	1
	Puerto Rican	3	3

	None/Other	2	2
Native Hawaiian Total		6	6
No Entry	Mexican	4	4
	No Entry	135	135
	Puerto Rican	11	11
	Other Hispanic	4	4
	None/Other	8	8
No Entry Total		162	162
Other Pacific Islander	Puerto Rican	2	2
Other Pacific Islander Total		2	2
White/Caucasian	Cuban	28	28
	Mexican	36	36
	No Entry	720	720
	None/Other	3,460	3,460
	Other Hispanic	36	36
	Puerto Rican	147	147
White/Caucasian Total		4,427	4,427
Total Individuals Served		5,362	5,362

Data Source: SMA Healthcare, Inc.

FIGURE 17. NUMBER OF ZIP CODES ENTERED BY INDIVIDUALS SERVED



Data Source: SMA Healthcare, Inc.

In addition to appointment data, SMA Healthcare created a short survey to collect data from their existing patients about telehealth services and asked questions around their experience and satisfaction using telehealth services and why the patient chose to use telehealth services. Mental health providers for SMA Healthcare collected 31 survey responses from telehealth patients over the course of about 12 months (December 2021–November 2022). SMA Healthcare providers were not required to have patients complete the surveys at each visit, contributing to the low number of survey responses. Of the 31 responses, seven different providers were identified, 27 patients marked either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their telehealth session, and three patients were “very unsatisfied” with their session. The survey did not collect patient demographic data nor protected health information (PHI). Table 10 presents the most useful data of the patients’ reason for choosing a telehealth appointment instead of an in-person, in-office visit.

TABLE 10. PATIENTS REASONS FOR CHOOSING TELEHEALTH APPOINTMENT

Reason	Convenience/ Personal Choice	Transportation Issues	Illness/ COVID- 19	Drug Court	Other/ Unspecified
n	19	6	4	1	1

Data Source: SMA Healthcare, Inc.

Lack of transportation can be a major barrier for rural populations, but more than half of the survey participants chose telehealth appointments because of convenience or personal choice. Nancy Russo from SMA Healthcare mentioned that many of the telehealth appointments are completed in a telehealth suite at the SMA Healthcare office, not the patient’s home. Because of poor internet access and speeds in addition to a lack of providers in Putnam County, patients are going into the SMA Healthcare office and having a telehealth appointment with a provider located elsewhere.

Broadband Access

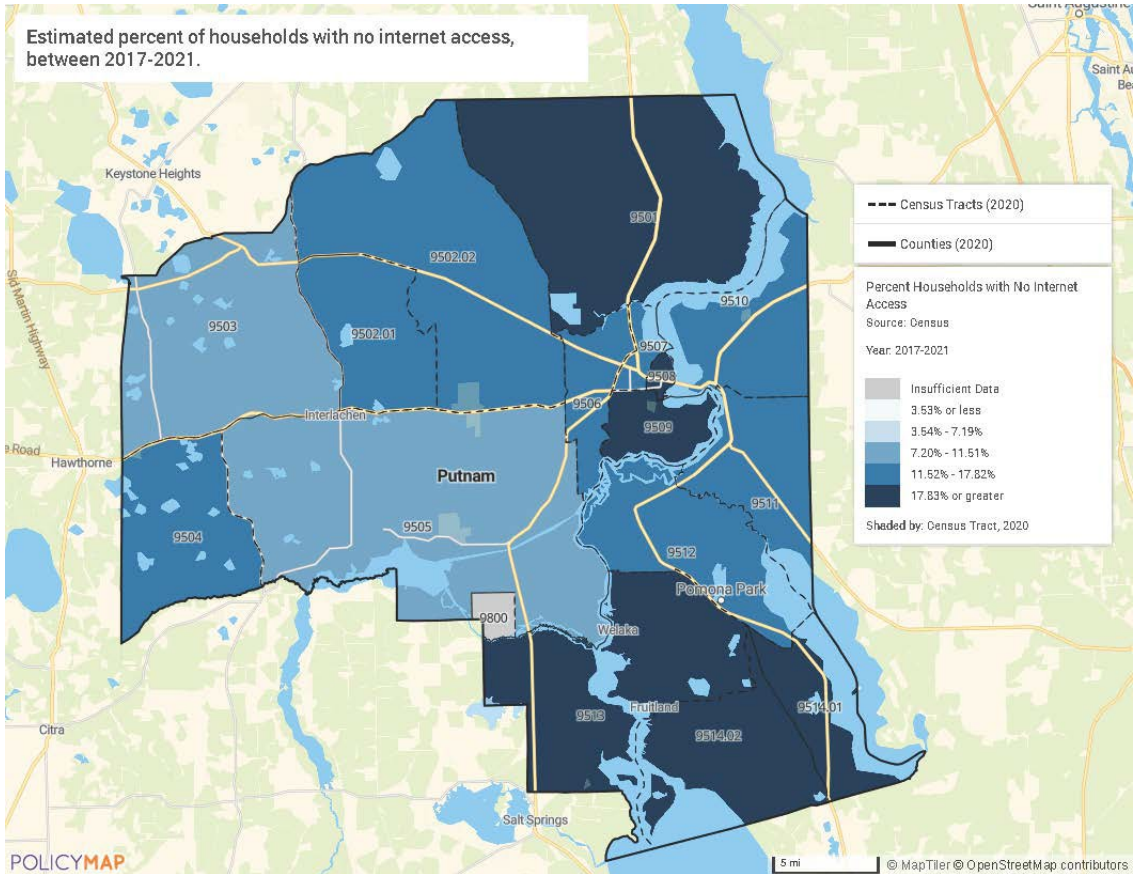
Table 11 lists the estimated percentage of households with broadband internet access in Putnam County and the State of Florida average. In 2021, an estimated 86.4 percent of Putnam County households had access to one or more types of computing devices (computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone) compared to 94.3 percent of households for the State of Florida average (FLHealthCharts).

TABLE 11. HOUSEHOLDS WITH ACCESS TO BROADBAND INTERNET

Data Year	Putnam	Florida
	Percent (%)	Percent (%)
2021	78.4	87.2
2020	76.3	85.4
2019	72.2	83.0
2018	67.9	80.8
2017	62.7	78.6

Data Source: FLHealthCharts, Broadband Access.

FIGURE 18. MAP OF ESTIMATED PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO INTERNET ACCESS, 2017-2021



The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) suggests that an internet speed of 25 megabytes per second (mbps) is needed for telehealth appointments (O’Shea et al., 2022); however, Cooper (2021) notes that some telehealth applications can operate at lower internet speeds such as 2–3 mbps but with the risk of poorer audio and video quality. FCC estimates that about 28.3 percent of Putnam County residents have internet speeds less than 25 mbps, and about 71.7 percent have internet speeds greater than 25 mbps (Federal Communications Commission [FCC], 2023).

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity under Governor Ron DeSantis has launched the Broadband Opportunity Program that has awarded more than \$144 million for projects to increase broadband internet access for Florida communities in need (Office of Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, 2023). Putnam County has been awarded almost \$1.2 million “to add 60 miles of fiber optic cable to their existing network to provide FTTH [fiber to the home] services to 1,192 unserved locations” (Office of Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, 2023). This would be a significant boost to Putnam County residents for technological needs and also increase the ability of residents to have access to telehealth which could improve health outcomes and health service accessibility.

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