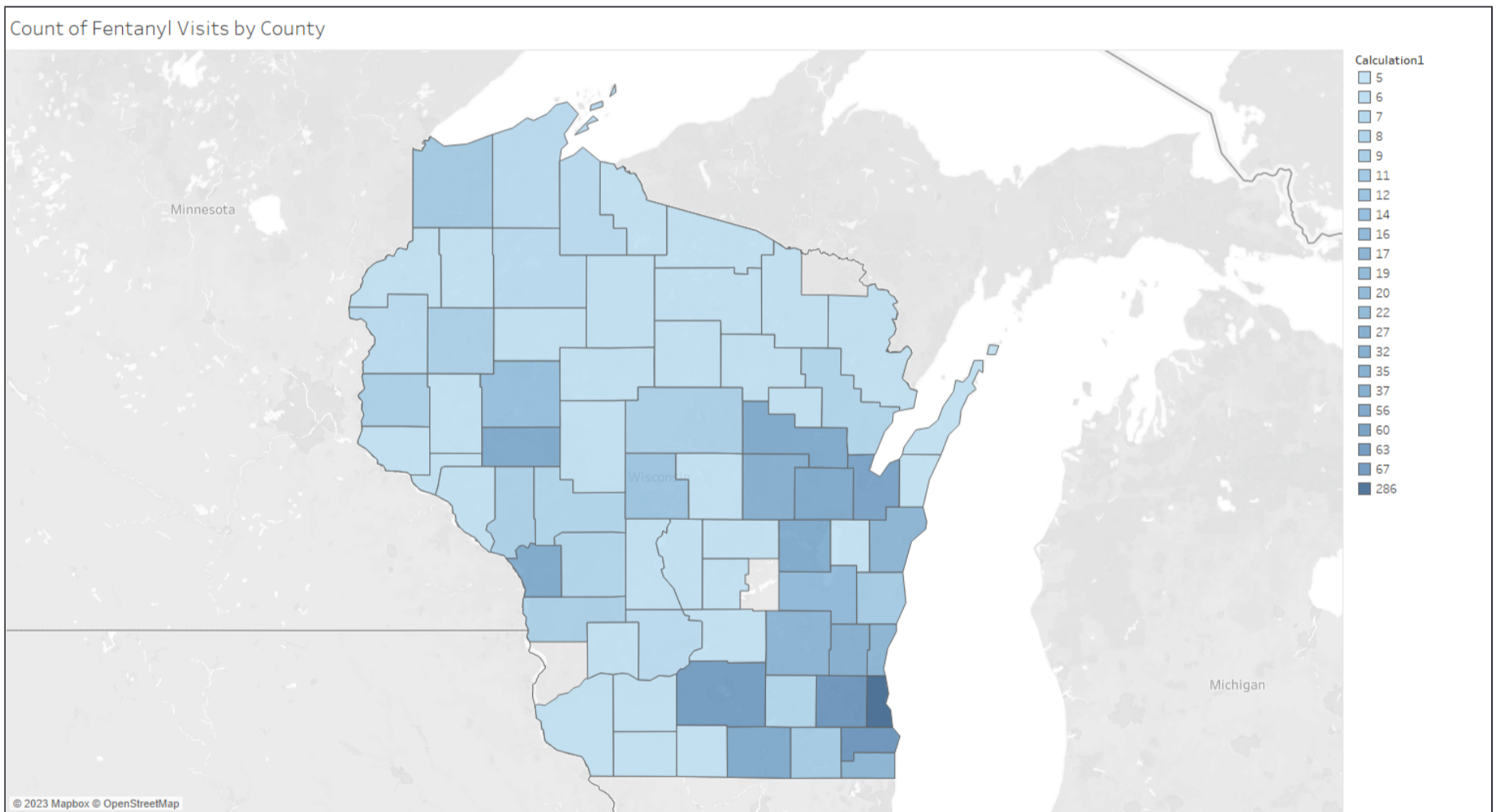
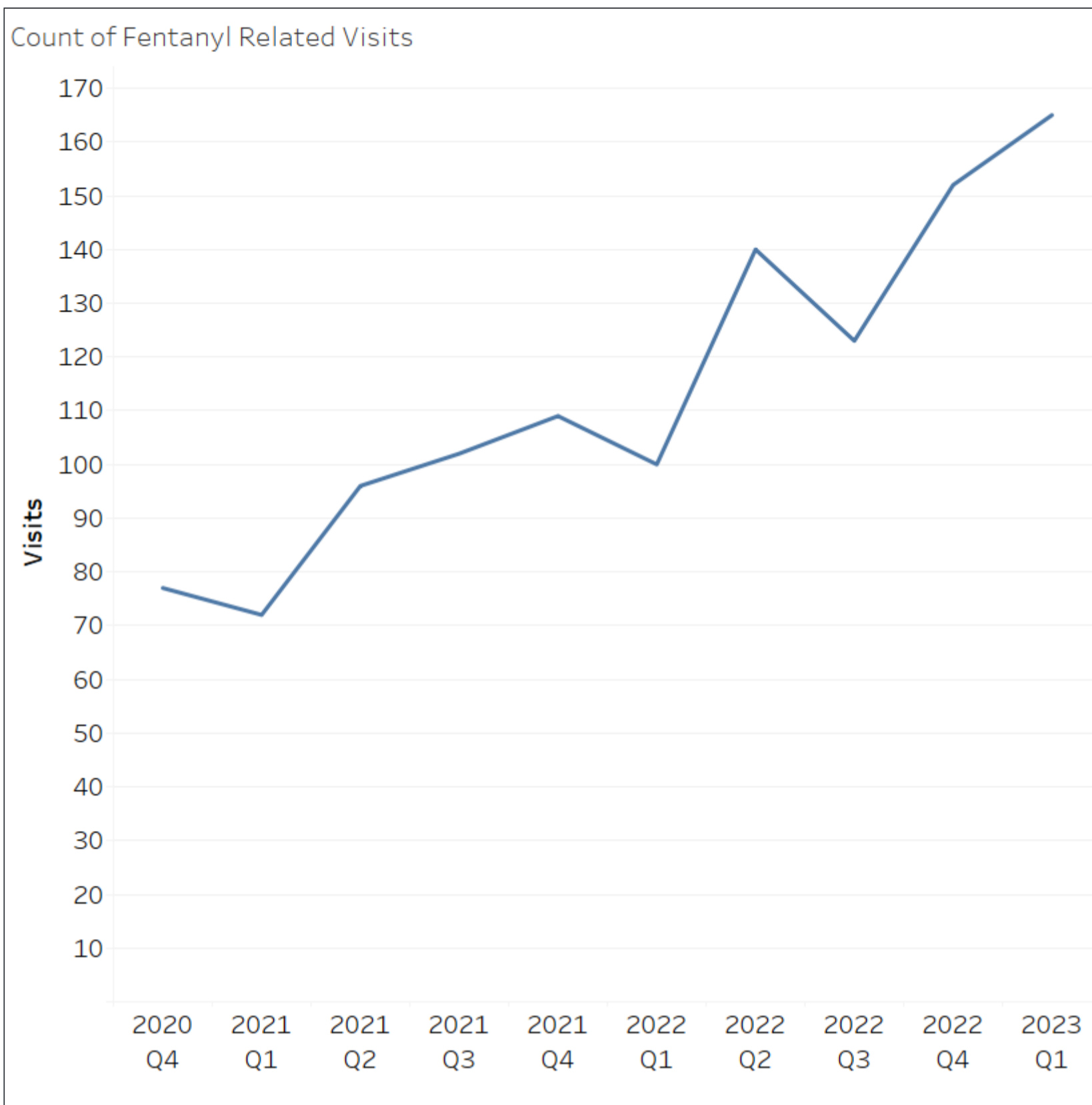


## August Fast Facts: Fentanyl

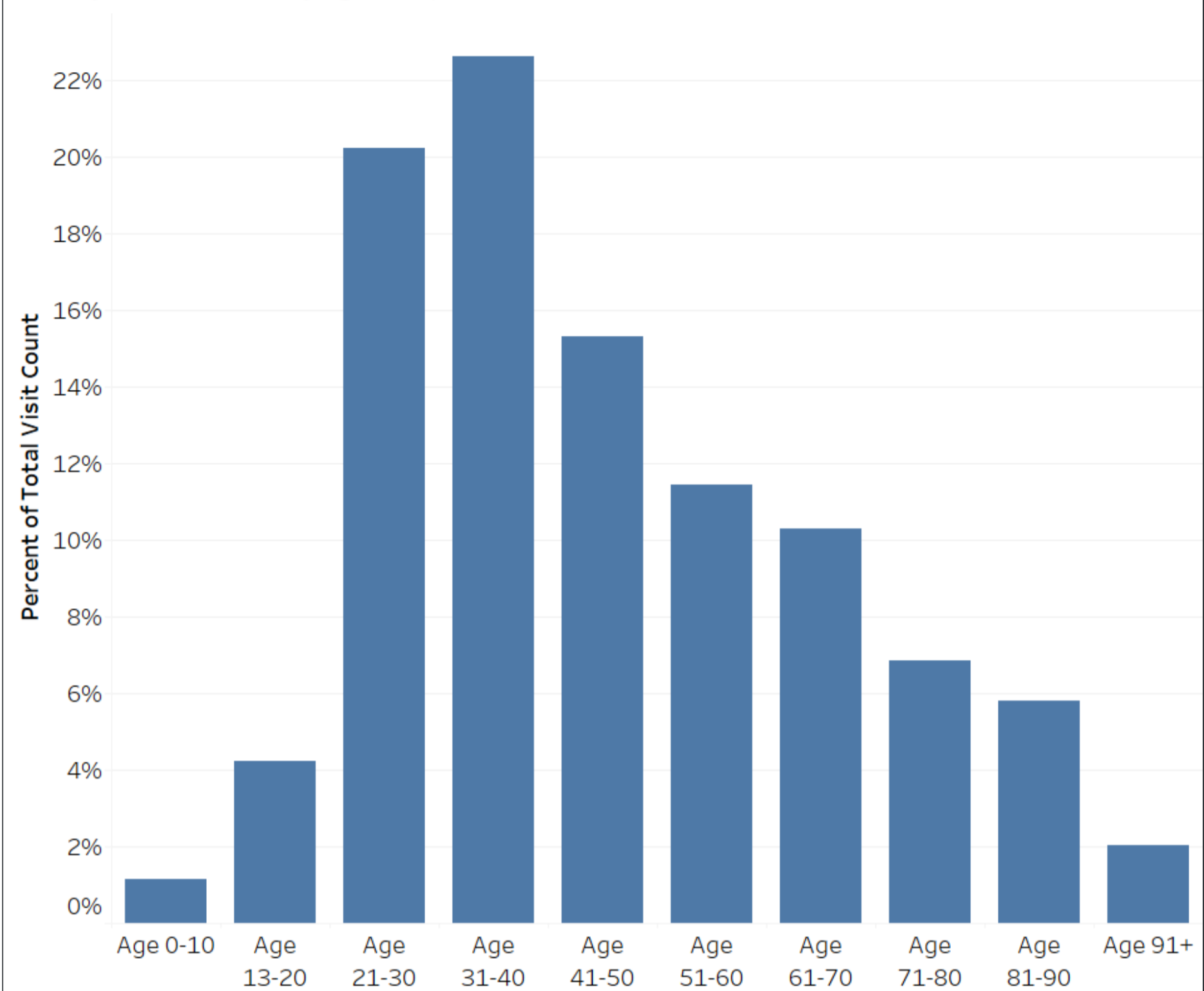
Fentanyl, as described by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is a synthetic opioid that is up to 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine. It is a major contributor to fatal and nonfatal overdoses in the U.S. There are two types of fentanyl: pharmaceutical fentanyl and illegally made fentanyl which are both considered to be synthetic opioids. Pharmaceutical fentanyl is typically prescribed by doctors to treat severe pain, like after surgery and for advanced-stage cancer. Illegally made fentanyl, which is made into a powder or liquid form, is more recently found mixed in with other drugs like heroin, cocaine, or methamphetamines. The CDC states that “fentanyl-laced drugs are extremely dangerous, and many people may be unaware that their drugs are laced with fentanyl.” The National Vital Statistics System found in the United States, more than 150 people die every day from overdoses which are related to synthetic opioids like fentanyl.





Data from the WHA Information Center showing fentanyl related visits shows a steady increase in visits in the past few years. Inpatient facilities saw the highest number of fentanyl related visits, followed by the emergency department. Milwaukee County had the highest visit counts for fentanyl related visits, followed by Waukesha County. Data showed that males had a higher fentanyl related visit count than females. The Information Center data found the average age of patient visit for fentanyl is 46 years old. The age grouping with the highest percentage of visit counts is 31-40 years old, followed by age group 21-30 years. A recently released Forward Analytics report titled *Silent Killer: The Fentanyl Epidemic in Wisconsin* found that fentanyl is now the number one killer for those aged 25 to 54.

Fentanyl Related Visits by Age Groups



Below are more report highlights from Forward Analytics *Silent Killer: The Fentanyl Epidemic in Wisconsin*:

- The fentanyl mortality rate is 2.6 times higher for men than for women.
- Black and American Indian residents' mortality rate is three times greater than the rate for white residents. For Wisconsin's Black population, mortality rates nearly tripled between 2019 and 2021.
- If fentanyl-related deaths were listed as on the cause of deaths list, in 2020 it would have been 2.6 times greater than the number two killer (motor vehicle accidents) among those aged 25 to 34.

## Other Articles in this Issue

- [August Fast Facts: Fentanyl](#)
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- [WHA and WHAIC Present at WCHO Disparities Seminar](#)
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