

State of the County Health Report 2008



Issued by
Cleveland County Health Department

The mission of the Cleveland County Health Department is to assure, enhance, and protect the health of Cleveland County citizens through education and prevention.

Highlights of 2008

- ◆ Publication of the 2007 Community Health Assessment in print and electronic format; the document was entitled Cleveland County 2007: A Community Assessment—What Makes a Healthy Community?;
- ◆ Implementation of the ACHIEVE (Action Communities for Health, Innovation, and EnVironmental Change) initiative sponsored by the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors and Y-USA;
- ◆ Successful application for the Nurse-Family Partnership program for implementation in Cleveland County with funding from the Kate B. Reynolds Foundation and the Duke Endowment;
- ◆ Collaborative sponsorship of the 3rd annual Step One Challenge, a county-wide walking contest held April-June, 2008;
- ◆ Completion of a major renovation of the main Health Department facility offering patients and staff a more pleasant atmosphere for patient care;
- ◆ Completion and dedication of the Self-McNeilly Solid Waste Management Facility;
- ◆ Sponsorship of a series of drive-through rabies clinics in September to provide free rabies vaccines for animals in Cleveland County;
- ◆ Implementation of a Medical-Nutritional Therapy program at CLECO Primary Care Clinics through a grant from the Kate B. Reynolds Health Care Trust;
- ◆ Implementation of improved technology access through placement of notebook computers in patient exam rooms;
- ◆ Publication of a new Service Guide to fully inform Cleveland County residents of current Health Department services;
- ◆ Development of a youth leadership program called the Learning Institute for the Prevention of Underage Drinking to address the issue of flavored malt beverages and energy drinks; and
- ◆ Accreditation by the Local Health department Accreditation Board for 2008-2012 with high praises for the services rendered to the residents of Cleveland County.

ACHIEVE Action Communities for Health, Innovation, & Environmental Change

Bringing communities together to prevent chronic diseases & promote healthy lifestyles.

The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors and the YMCA of the USA selected Cleveland county as one of **ten** communities nationwide to participate in the Action Communities for Health, Innovation, and environmental Change initiative. The ACHIEVE initiative supports local health departments and YMCAs to advance community leadership in the nation’s efforts to prevent chronic diseases and related risk factors.

Three “coaches” lead this effort in Cleveland County: Karma Edwards representing the Cleveland County Health Department, Tracee Murrell representing the Cleveland County Family YMCA and Anne Short representing the community through the Alliance for Health. These coaches lead an 18 member community team known as the local CHART Team in developing and implementing a community action plan for the county.

As part of the ACHIEVE initiative, over thirty individuals completed a CHANGE assessment focusing on environmental and policy changes in physical activity, nutrition, tobacco use and chronic disease management. This data was blended with information from the 2007 Community Assessment to provide a foundation for team activities.

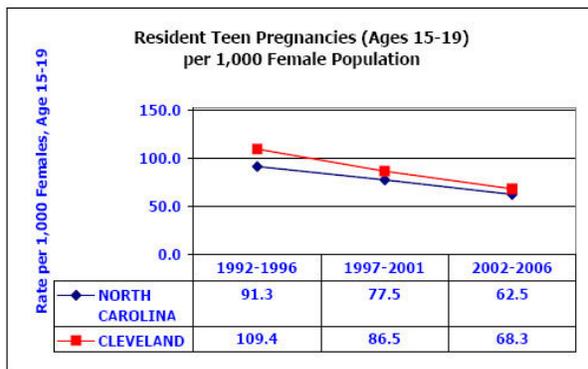
In June 2008 nine individuals from Cleveland County attended the ACTION Institute in Alexandria, Virginia where they met with team members from the other nine ACHIEVE sites and began work on the community action plan. The local CHART team has developed a mission statement for their work: *“Empower Cleveland County residents to prevent and reduce chronic diseases and related risk factors through environmental approaches that impact policies addressing lifestyle changes such as health eating, physical activity and tobacco use.”*

The community action plan for Cleveland County has been submitted to NACCD for approval and the local CHART team is at work on its first objective, that of creating a permanent infrastructure for work affecting physical activity and nutrition in the county. To accomplish this, CHART team members have chosen to create an Eat Smart, Move More Coalition model for the county and are currently recruiting members for such a coalition with an anticipated start date of February, 2009.

CCHD Begins Work to Address Adolescent Pregnancy in Cleveland County

Key informants in the 2007 Community Assessment rated teen pregnancy as the fifth-highest issue and community respondents rated it as the seventh-highest issue in the survey. Consequently, the Cleveland County Health Department and the Alliance for Health have chosen adolescent pregnancy as a priority for action in the 2008-2010 time frame.

Information from the NC Center for Health Statistics revealed the following about teen pregnancies in Cleveland County:



Additional information from the NC DHHS, Division of Public Health, State Center for Health Statistics reveals that in 2006, Cleveland County reported 229 pregnancies among 15-19 year olds for a rate of 63.8 per 1000 individuals. In 2007, the number of reported pregnancies among 15-19 year olds rose to 263 for a rate of 71.8 per 1000 individuals. Repeat pregnancies in 2006 numbered 64 among this age group while 80 repeat pregnancies were reported among 15-19 year olds in 2007. Cleveland County’s ranking by rate among the 100 counties in the state moved from 58 in 2006 to 40 in 2007.

Currently, Communities in Schools in Cleveland County provides a Teen Parent program with two staff members assigned to work with girls in the middle and high schools. Health educators from the Cleveland County Health Department provide abstinence education in the 9th grades of the four high schools in the county. Wise Guys, a male empowerment program, has been taught to athletes in fall sports at Shelby and Kings Mountain High Schools but is no longer provided due to a lapse in funding.

Adolescent Pregnancy, cont.

Based on this data as well as community interest, the Cleveland County Health Department has chosen to address the issue with two initial steps. First, in collaboration with the Alliance for Health, a Task Force on Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention will be established to identify risk factors at work in the county and to research and identify programs which will address those risk factors and potentially reduce the adolescent pregnancies in the county.

Second, the Cleveland County Health Department applied for and was awarded a Nurse-Family Partnership program for the county. One of five awarded in North Carolina, the program is funded by grants from the Kate B. Reynolds Health Care Trust and the Duke Endowment. The Nurse-Family Partnership is a program targeting high-risk, low-income, first-time mothers with intensive case management services from early in the pregnancy to the child's second birthday. The program in Cleveland County is designed to support a maximum of 100 young mothers through the work of a Nurse Supervisor, four Nurse Home Visitors, an administrative assistant for data collection and reporting and an interpreter. Funding for part of the administrative assistant's time and for the interpreter was received from the Cleveland County Partnership for Children through June, 2009.

The Nurse-Family Partnership is a nationally-recognized program based on the standards created by Dr. David Olds. This is an evidenced-based program with research from programs in Elmira, New York, Memphis, Tennessee and Denver Colorado serving as the basis for program activities. Cleveland County's program must adhere to these national standards, receive training from the National Service Office in Denver, Colorado, and provide consistent services to young mothers in order to maintain its funding status. Kathy Ledbetter, the Child Health Nursing Supervisor at the Cleveland County Health Department, and Dorothea Wyant, Director of Nursing, are currently searching for the staff members for this endeavor.



Substance Abuse Continues as a Community Health Priority

Use of illegal substances ranked first in the 2007 Community Assessment for community respondents and ranked second among key informants in the survey. However, as a household issue, among community respondents, substance abuse ranked 31st of 39 issues, continuing the perception that householders see a problem with illegal substances anywhere but their own homes.

The Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition sponsored by the Cleveland County Health Department and the Alliance for Health has initiated two projects in 2008 to address specific components of substance abuse.

First, the Cleveland County Health Department, with funding from Pathways LME and the Alliance for Health, developed and implemented the Learning Institute for the Prevention of Underage Drinking. The focus of the program is on the use of alcopops, flavored malt beverages as the first step in underage drinking. Modeled on a similar program to involve youth in the resolution of litter problems in the county, this Learning Institute recruited six individuals from each of the four high schools in the county to join forces to address underage drinking. The effort began in spring 2008 with the sponsorship of a "Take It Back" Forum with four students from Crest High School who engaged approximately fifty community members in a discussion of underage drinking in the county. The idea for a Learning Institute to advocate for real changes in legislation is led by James H. Hines, Jr., the Director of Community Health Services for the Cleveland County Health Department, and DeShay Duddy, the staff coordinator for the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition and instructor for alcohol education program on binge drinking offered to high school juniors in the county.

The Learning Institute began with student applications for participation with principals of the four high schools making the selection. The students then spent an entire day at the Cleveland County Health Department learning about alcopops

Substance Abuse, cont.

and advocacy methods to influence and/or change legislation on this issue. Speakers included State Representative Debbie Clary who advised the youth about the most effective ways to work with legislators to make substantive changes in legislation. Another speaker was Donna Huey-Brooks, a commentator from Channel 33, the local cable news network, who worked with the participants on media access. The youth then signed a commitment to continue work beyond the one-day Learning Institute; continuing participation was unanimous and enthusiastic.

The next step in this process was to choose project areas and develop working groups. Three objectives were chosen: a PowerPoint presentation to educate the community about underage drinking and alcopops, a local video also for education purposes and a print media campaign on the topic. The youth have continued their work with meetings scheduled in 2009. They anticipate a February 2009 deadline to begin their presentations to members of the Board of Health, directors of the Alliance for Health, and other civic groups in preparation for making contacts with members of the North Carolina General Assembly.

The second focus of work in 2008 came via physicians in the Cleveland Regional Medical Center Emergency Department who became increasingly concerned about the misuse and abuse of prescription medications among patients in the Emergency Department. In collaboration with Debbie Clapper, manager of the Community Care of North Carolina partnership serving Cleveland and Rutherford counties, a Task Force on the Abuse and Misuse of Prescription Medications was organized with membership from physicians, nurses, pharmacists, health educators, law enforcement, schools and community agencies. This task force is focusing on two areas: the education and training of health professionals and a community awareness program to educate residents about the current misuse and abuse of prescription medications and the potential consequences of such use. Members of the task force have agreed to meet on a quarterly basis with the goal of crafting a community response to this issue presented to the community in June 2009. The Alliance for Health is providing limited staff support to this effort and will include its work in a new community health action plan for substance abuse prevention.

An additional activity scheduled for March 2009 will be the collection of data around substance abuse through the Student Drug Use Survey to be conducted in the 6th, 9th and 12th grades in Cleveland County schools. This survey has been ongoing in Cleveland County since 1996 and has allowed consistent measurement of student drug use and the risk factors supporting that use over a twelve-year period. The survey planned for 2009 will include specific questions concerning the student use of prescription medications in an effort to update substance abuse prevention programming currently offered in the schools through CODAP services of the Cleveland County Health Department.

Third Annual Step One Challenge Swept by Teams from PPG Industries

As a response to community concerns about overweight and obesity, the Cleveland County Health Department with its collaborating partners (Alliance for Health, Cleveland County HealthCare System and Image Marketing) initiated a county-wide walking contest in 2006 to encourage individuals to become more physically active. The third annual contest in 2008 saw 278 teams of three to six walkers registered involving 1,458 individuals committed to those teams. At the end of the six-week contest, 191 teams involving 1,012 walkers reported their results to the sponsors and vied for prizes ranging from high end pedometers to water bottles with the Step One logo. The total steps walked by reporting participants were 345, 519,571 steps, ranging from an average of 1,321,009 steps per person on the first place team to 15,866 per person on the last place team. Winning teams were determined by figuring the highest average steps per person, rather than the total steps walked.

Winning teams were recognized at the August 19, 2008 meeting of the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners. For the first time in contest history, the top three finishers came from one location in the county—PPG Industries. PPG has been a leader in developing a wellness program for its employees using the Lunch and Learn program established under the Fit Together initiative led by Karma Edwards.

The winning teams were:

- 1st place—Amazing Walking Machines** captained by Marie Harrill with 6,605,046 total steps or an average of 1,321,009 steps per person;
- 2nd place—Go Team** captained by Debbie Atchley with a total of 6,640,611 total steps or an average of 1,106,769 steps per person; and
- 3rd place—Wcrew Wellness Walkers** captained by Victor Darville with 5,248,487 total steps or an average of 1,049,699 steps per person.



Review of Age-Adjusted Death Rates

An annual review of mortality data is critical to prioritization of targeting programs addressing specific chronic diseases in Cleveland County. Five year cumulative rates are used as an accurate measure to review chronic disease data for the county and to affirm choices for targeted responses.

Causes of Death	# of Deaths 1999-2003	Death Rate 1999-2003	# of Deaths 2000-2004	Death Rate 2000-2004	# of Deaths 2001-2005	Death Rate 2001-2005	# of Deaths 2002-2006	Death Rate 2002-2006
Diseases of the heart	1,472	284.1	1447	275.6	1418	270.5	1,386	262.1
Cancer – all sites	1,088	207.4	1,092	205.7	1,054	199.6	1,065	200.9
Cerebrovascular disease	345	66.8	337	64.5	318	60.9	312	59.6
Chronic lower respiratory diseases	222	42.5	214	40.6	228	43.5	222	41.9
Diabetes mellitus	167	32.0	177	33.6	169	32.3	156	29.6
Alzheimer's diseases	124	24.2	150	28.8	165	31.7	179	34.1
Other unintentional injuries	136	27.7	147	29.6	158	31.7	168	33.4
Motor vehicle injuries	99	20.6	99	20.5	102	21.0	101	20.8
Nephritis, nephritic syndrome, and nephrosis	93	17.8	100	19.0	92	17.6	92	17.5
Pneumonia & influenza	106	20.6	96	18.4	91	17.5	96	18.2
Total Deaths – all causes	4,995	970.4	5,054	970.2	5,001	962.4	5,046	964.3

Specific programs in Cleveland County have addressed the issues of heart disease, diabetes, COPD and asthma, pneumonia and influenza and injuries. Both the Temple Initiative and the Search Your Heart program have focused efforts on cardiovascular health, including stroke education, and have played a role in the rate reduction from 284.1 deaths per 100,000 in 1999-2003 to the rate of 262.1 deaths per 100,000 in 2002-2006. Diabetes, rated high in the 2007 Community Assessment as a health issue and adopted as a priority by both the Cleveland County Health Department and the Alliance for Health, is addressed by the newly-implemented Diabetes Self-Education Management Program and the Diabetes Clinic at the Health Department. However, as diabetes is a priority health issue, plans are to implement a Diabetes Coalition in collaboration with the Diabetes Center of Excellence at Cleveland Regional Medical Center to coordinate programming and address any service gaps in Cleveland County. Chronic lower respiratory diseases are addressed through a COPD initiative underway from the Community Care of North Carolina partnership serving Cleveland and Rutherford counties as well as programs provided by the Cleveland County Asthma Coalition, especially the Basic Asthma Education classes offered on a monthly basis. Pneumonia and influenza are addressed annually through a series of flu shot clinics offered at various sites throughout Cleveland County. In addition, a Point of Dispensing Exercise initiated by the CCHD Emergency Preparedness Coordinator provided flu vaccines at two drive through clinics in fall, 2008 to 640 residents of Cleveland County.

Health Department Renovates, Receives Accreditation in 2008

Following an intensive, year-long self-study, staff members of the Cleveland County Health Department, led by Jan Huffman as Accreditation Coordinator, celebrated the award of Accreditation by the local Health department Accreditation Board on August 6, 2008. The accreditation period is 2008-2012. Accreditation was awarded with a 100% agency/program accreditation score.

Part of the celebration included a breakfast for all Cleveland County Health Department staff members, a presentation of the accreditation credentials to Health Director Denese Stallings by Betty Alexander, Chair of the North Carolina Accreditation Board, and a declaration of August 6, 2008 as Public Health Day in Cleveland County. Residents of the county were invited to take guided tours of the newly renovated main Health Department building, the Public Health Annex, the Self-McNeilly Solid Waste Management Facility and the Cleveland County Animal Shelter. Various staff members served as tour guides for this activity.

The renovation of the main Health Department facility were the first major changes since the building was constructed. A theme of water, using various shades of blues and greens, was carried out in the renovations which included new space designations as well as new furniture and equipment in the facility. Major changes included the move of Family Planning Clinic to the first floor clinical area and the move of Child Health Clinic to the third floor clinical area, providing a seamless flow to clients of maternity, child health, WIC and dental services.

The Self-McNeilly Solid Waste Management Facility was also dedicated on August with members of the Self and McNeilly families in attendance. Mr. Joseph "Lee" Self and Mr. James D. McNeilly were instrumental in the establishment, development and continued operating success of the Solid Waste Management Program. These two individuals became the first employees of the Cleveland County Landfill on November 15, 1973. Mr. Self was the Landfill Supervisor until his retirement on December 31, 1982. At that time, Mr. McNeilly assumed the responsibility of Landfill Supervisor until his retirement on November 30, 2000. County Commissioners felt it appropriate to honor these two individuals for their outstanding service.

Cleveland County Board of Health

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This State of the County Health Report is produced collaboratively by the Cleveland County Health Department and the Alliance for Health in Cleveland County, Inc. to relate current information on health issues in the county. The report is produced in the years that Cleveland County does not conduct a community assessment and serves as an update on health concerns.

This report is distributed in hard copy format to the following entities:

- ◆ Cleveland County Board of Health
- ◆ Cleveland County Board of Commissioners
- ◆ Alliance for Health Board of Directors
- ◆ Cleveland County Legislative Delegation to the North Carolina General Assembly
- ◆ Cleveland County Memorial Library—Shelby and Spangler Branches
- ◆ Mauney Memorial Library-Kings Mountain
- ◆ Gardner-Webb University Library
- ◆ Cleveland Community College Library

This report is also posted on the web site of the Cleveland County Health Department found at:

www.clevelandcounty.com/public/health