

State of the County Health Report 2014



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.

From the Director's Chair—

2014 was a landmark year in the history of the Cleveland County Health Department as we successfully transitioned from paper to electronic medical records. After a thorough review of the potential EMR vendors, CCHD staff selected a web-based system from Patagonia and began the process of workflow analysis and training for all staff. In May 2014 the practice management phase "went live" successfully and in August 2014 all components of the EMR "went live".

2014 also saw the successful implementation of new software programs in environmental health services, animal control, dental clinic and the WIC program. Strategic planning and comprehensive training enabled these service units to make the transition to new software with a minimum of disruption to their services.

The implementation team for our EMR transition was selected to attend the North Carolina Public Health Association conference to present "EMR Best Practices" to attendees. This team also presented on our successful transition at the NC Public Health Nursing Administrators Conference in November.

Two CCHD employees were recognized by their peers on the statewide level during 2014. Sherry Yocum, Communicable Disease nurse, received the Communicable Disease Nurse Spirit Award conferred by the North Carolina Division of Public Health Communicable Disease Branch. Linda Kiser, the school health nurse supervisor for CCHD, received the 2014 School Nurse Administrator of the Year award from the School Nurse Association of North Carolina.

CCHD employees provided a visible presence at the 2014 Cleveland County Fair again focusing on good hand washing practices for fair attendees as part of our continuing response to the 2012 E. coli outbreak at this event. Employees also manned an information display during the ten-day run of the fair to highlight and promote the services offered at CCHD.

Finally, plans were finalized, bids awarded and ground broken for the new health department facility planned for opening in February-March 2016. We are excited about our move to this well-planned facility and look forward to continuing to serve Cleveland County residents with quality, comprehensive health services!

Dorothea Wyant, Health Director

Priority Health Issues for Cleveland County

The Cleveland County Health Department, in collaboration with the Alliance for Health in Cleveland County, the Cleveland County HealthCare System and the United Way of Cleveland County, published and distributed the comprehensive 2011 Community Assessment. The document was released to the public in February, 2012, after approval by the Cleveland County Board of Health and the Board of Directors of the Alliance for Health. This is the seventh in a series of comprehensive assessments published in Cleveland County since 1985 that have guided community leaders in addressing emerging issues and allocating resources for program support in the county.

Oversight for the assessment was provided by a Core Committee of thirty individuals selected from across the county with expertise in survey development and data collection/analysis. These individuals were provided further support from members of the Board of Health and Board of Directors of the Alliance for Health. Staff support for the process was provided by employees of the Health Education/Health Promotion/CODAP Services unit of the Cleveland County Health Department with additional administrative support provided by Nancy Gamble.

Members of the Core Committee reviewed results from the survey and listening sessions as well as secondary data compiled by health educators to guide their ranking of priority health issues facing residents of Cleveland County. Committee members used the 13 focus areas established for the Healthy North Carolina 2020 model to frame the priority setting process as well as the socio-ecological model encompassing individual, social support, community and institutional factors affecting population health. Particular consideration was given to addressing prior work done in identified focus areas, the potential for current or new community partners and the availability of evidence-based interventions to address the objectives under each focus area.

Priority areas selected for further study were substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases and unintended pregnancy and physical activity and nutrition.

Objectives for consideration under substance abuse include:

1. By 2015 reduce the percentage of youth grades 9—12 who have used alcohol and illicit drugs by 10%.
2. By 2015 increase the number of community residents familiar with abuse of alcohol, prescription medications and over-the-counter medications by 15%.

Objectives for consideration under sexually transmitted diseases and unintended pregnancy include:

1. By 2015 decrease the teen pregnancy rate in Cleveland County to a rate equal to or lower than the rate for North Carolina as a whole.
2. By 2015 reduce the percentage of positive results for Chlamydia by 5% for individuals ages 15-24.

Objectives for consideration under physical activity and nutrition include:

1. By 2015 reduce the percentage of children and adolescents considered overweight or obese by 10% using a comprehensive community initiative.
2. By 2015 increase the percentage of adults in Cleveland County who are physically active and consume five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily based on self-reporting.

Progress in Meeting Health Priorities

Substance Abuse:

- 23 students and their families served through the SOBIR (Student Options Begin with Intervention and Recovery) program offered through CODAP Services; 3 middle and 19 high school students served through June 2014; July 2014 SOBIR began accepting court referrals as well as referrals from Cleveland County Schools;
- 42 classes involving 806 8th grade students taught using the Northland Powerlines substance abuse prevention curriculum;
- Six county-wide medication take back events staffed by Cleveland County Sheriff's Department, Shelby Police, Kings Mountain Police and volunteers from the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition and the Task Force on Overdose Prevention;
- Six permanent take back boxes established at sites throughout Cleveland County for collection of prescription and over-the-counter medications;
- Total of 700,000 dosage units of medications taken back in the county with an approximate street value of \$2.3 million;
- Six targeted presentations developed for educational use in the county for students grades K-2, 3-5, middle and high school, adults, senior citizens and caregivers of children; from September—December four presentations to senior citizens and five to caregivers; one presentation to students at Gardner-Webb University;
- Won a Safe Kids Medication Safety grant in collaboration with Safe Kids Cleveland County to provide print materials for caregivers and for distribution at the Cleveland County Fair;
- Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition completed the second year of a North Carolina Coalition Initiative grant focusing on underage drinking with education directed to parents and alcohol retailers;
- Developed an agreement with all law enforcement agencies in Cleveland County for at least one county-wide alcohol compliance check involving Cleveland County Sheriff's Office, Shelby Police, Kings Mountain Police, Boiling Springs Police, Gardner-Webb University Policy and the North Carolina Highway Patrol;
- Produced and distributed brochures targeting parents and alcohol retailers using the tagline "Don't Buy, Don't Supply" to promote restrictions on underage drinking;
- Collaborated with law enforcement and Emergency Medical Services to sponsor a Prom Promise event at Shelby High School;
- Sponsored the Minority Health Conference in April 2014 focusing on illicit drug use and non-medical use of prescription medication;
- Collaborated with Safe Kids Coalition of Cleveland County to include information on alcohol and prescription drug abuse in the Safe Teens program, a part of the student driver training curriculum offered in Cleveland County Schools; and
- Successfully submitted a grant application to become a Drug Free Community; grant awarded in September, 2014 and began services in October, 2014; funding from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, US Department of Health and Human Services; funding level \$125,000 annually.

Progress in Meeting Health Priorities

Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Unintended Pregnancy:

- Collaboration with the Western North Carolina AIDS Project to provide the SISTA program in minority settings; collaboration with minority churches and sororities to schedule three programs during the year;
- Provision of “10th day” class focusing on STDs and FDA-approved contraceptives to 9th grade students in Cleveland County Schools to support health and physical education teachers required to teach comprehensive curriculum; 27 classroom encounters involving 810 students at Crest High School, Burns High School and Shelby High School;
- Provision of puberty education to 5th grade students in Cleveland County elementary schools; 52 classroom encounters involving 1,040 students in 10 elementary and intermediate schools;
- Pilot program using Smart Girls and Wise Guys curriculum offered to targeted 8th grade students at Burns Middle School in collaboration with Communities in Schools of Cleveland County; 8 girls and 6 boys enrolled in the 10 week curriculum to test materials and parent responses to this sequence of classes;
- Nurse Family Partnership program served 131 clients in the current year from 210 referrals made by agencies and programs; 44 babies born to NFP participants and 20 individuals graduated from program in 2014; program indicators show positive results-7.1% of babies in program were low birth weight compared to NFP target of 7.8% and NC data of 7.9%; only 5.9% of program participants had subsequent pregnancies compared to NFP target of 25% and NC target of 22.4%; 100% of children of participants were up to date on immunizations at program completion; 69.4% of program participants 18 years or older were in the workforce at program graduation;
- 73 teens enrolled in the Teen Parent Program sponsored by Communities in Schools who collaborate with CCHD staff to provide care; among 31 12th grade students enrolled, 25 graduated from high school on time in 2014;
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition compiled and published Private Matters, a resource guide focusing on programs and services for middle and high school youth in Cleveland County; guide is available in print and electronic formats;
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition sponsored “Let’s Talk” month in October to encourage parents to clearly communicate with youth about sexuality issues; posters and brochures distributed through school based health centers, churches, parks and recreation programs and in CCHD clinic settings;
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition collaborated with the Alliance for Health in Cleveland County to sponsor ads in county high school football programs as well as the official program for the American Legion World Series held in August 2014 with the message of “Don’t Let the Friday Night Lights Go Out for You”;
- Four CCHD staff members from family planning unit attended the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina Annual Conference in Greensboro, NC to increase their understanding of local program options; and
- CCHD in collaboration with the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition submitted an application for funding under the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Initiative to phase in the Smart Girls and Wise Guys Programs for 8th grade girls and 9th and 10th grade boys in two high schools in the county and in Turning Point Academy, the alternative school for Cleveland County Schools.

Progress in Meeting Health Priorities

Physical Activity and Nutrition:

- Two Cleveland County churches recognized by the American Heart Association as Fit Friendly: Washington Missionary Baptist Church and Long Branch First Baptist Church;
- 9th annual Step One Challenge county-wide walking contest held September 6-October 17 involving 535 walkers trying to average 10,000 steps per day; total steps walked were 137,148,479 which converts to 68, 575 miles;
- 3rd annual Step One Challenge/5K and Fun Run was held on September 6 to kick off the walking contest with 85 runners and 20 children participating;
- Satellite Foothills Farmers' Market held on-site at the Cleveland County Health Department June-September 2014 with an average of five to seven vendors; market held on Tuesday mornings from 8:00 a.m. until noon; market accepted SNAP/EBT and debit cards to encourage the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables by CCHD clients and staff as well as community members from the surrounding area;
- Mass mailing to 3000 households in two-mile radius of CCHD to promote satellite Farmers' Market in collaboration with Region 4 Community Transformation Grant;
- Brochures provided for 1, 2, and 3-mile walking trails identified and marked in Shelby, Kings Mountain and Fallston;
- Twelve school-community gardens established at elementary schools, Turning Point Academy, one middle school and one high school in the county; gardens coordinated by contract CCHD employee Julie Weathers in collaboration with site coordinator at each school; 75% of plants and seeds required for spring/summer planting donated by local farmers to encourage gardening; 2500+ pounds of food donated to community agencies, church feeding programs and Farmers FoodShare for distribution during spring/summer/fall planting seasons; program nominated for the 2014 GlaxoSmithKline Child Health Recognition Award;
- CCHD staff participated in joint use-shared facility training provided by Region 4 CTG grant as foundation for development of agreements with Cleveland County Family YMCA and Cleveland County Schools;
- CCHD developed and adopted Vending Machine Policy to limit high-sugar and high-fat content offerings in vending machines in facility; policy serves as model for other agencies and programs and has been forward to Cleveland County Manager for consideration as policy for all county-owned facilities;
- CCHD strengthened tobacco-free campus policy to include all tobacco products as well as e-cigarettes and adopted enhanced policy in June 2014; policy submitted to County Manager for adoption for all county-owned facilities;
- CCHD staff supported International Walk to School Day in collaboration with Safe Kids Coalition to encourage 300 students at Graham Elementary School to walk to school;
- CCHD staff supported World's Largest Swim Lesson sponsored by Safe Kids Coalition, Shelby City Parks and Recreation and Cleveland County Family YMCA involving 300= children in June 2014;
- Cleveland County Eat Smart Move More Coalition collaborated with CCHD to develop and implement a Healthy Child Care Facility Recognition Program initially targeting five child care facilities in Cleveland County with the first recognition to be awarded in May 2015.

Data from Priority Areas

Substance Abuse:

Data that supports current programming in substance abuse prevention is derived from the 2012 PRIDE Student Drug Use Survey conducted with 6th, 9th and 12th grade students in Cleveland County Schools. The data for alcohol, tobacco and marijuana 30 day and past year use for 6th grade students indicated a slight increase from the 2009 data but still was below the national average. However, there was cause for concern among 9th and 12th grade students as shown by the percentage of students reporting use below:

Category	Grade 9			Grade 12		
	2009	2012	Nation	2009	2012	National
Tobacco 30 days	20.7%	21.2%	16.4%	26.0%	29.6%	30.5%
Tobacco Past year	31.8%	32.0%	26.5%	41.0%	42.4%	43.9%
Alcohol 30 days	18.1%	18/8%	20.2%	30.4%	35.0%	38.1%
Alcohol Past year	45.1%	41.9%	44.0%	61.7%	61.9%	64.2%
Marijuana 30 days	14.9%	19.0%	12.8%	17.7%	24.8%	21.6%
Marijuana Past year	24.2%	28.6%	19.8%	28.9%	37.7%	32.7%

Specific data around the non-medical use of prescription drugs in Cleveland County reveals the following:

- 357 individuals were admitted to local emergency departments due to drug overdose in 2013; 25 admissions were young people ages 12-18 and 32% of total admissions fell in the 19-35 age category;
- 10% of 9th grade students reported using a prescription drug to get high in 2012 compared to the national figure of 7.5% of 9th graders; 22.3% of students reported prescription pills as easy to get;
- According to the Controlled Substances Reporting System, a total of 259,535 prescriptions for controlled substances were written in Cleveland County in 2013;
- Youth listening sessions conducted for the NCCI project revealed that peers did not perceive using prescription drugs as harmful because prescription drugs are safe and prescribed by a doctor; and
- Young people also reported “pharm” parties as occurring in the county, a critical factor in increasing the potential for overdoses.

Using resources from the Drug Free Communities grant, the PRIDE Student Drug Use Survey will be conducted again in March 2015 to measure student responses to tobacco, alcohol, illicit and prescription medications.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Unintended Pregnancy:

Sexually transmitted diseases and teen pregnancy continue to be priority issues in the county and point to health disparities between the white non-Hispanic and African-American non-Hispanic populations.

Pregnancy Rates Among Girls 15-19

Category	2009		2011		2013	
	Number	Rate/ 1000	Number	Rate/ 1000	Number	Rate/ 1000
NC Total Pregnancies	18,142	56.0	13,909	43.8	11,178	35.2
White Non-Hispanic	9,941	45.4	5,719	30.8	4,549	24.7
African-American	7,156	80.2	5,399	61.6	4,172	49.2
Hispanic	2,865	118.4	2,241	71.1	2,005	57.9
Other Non-Hispanic					411	31.0
Cleveland County Total	245	63.8	191	56.4	127	38.6
White Non-Hispanic	149	52.8	102	43.4	72	31.5
African-American	89	97.4	79	89.8	49	59.1
Hispanic	17	*	8	*	6	*
Other Non-Hispanic					0	0

*Rates based on fewer than 20 cases are unreliable and are not included in the data. Data is from the NC State Center for Health Statistics. Cleveland County data for births to African-American girls ages 15-19 has been reduced from a high of 108.9/1000 in 2007 to 59.1/1000 in 2013.

Sexually transmitted diseases continue to show a health disparity between the white non-Hispanic and African-American non-Hispanic population. In 2013, 92% of Chlamydia cases were in girls 15-29; 95% of Chlamydia among blacks were in this age group. 87% of all Gonorrhea cases were found in ages 15-29; 92% of Gonorrhea among blacks fell into this group. Data is from Communicable Disease Branch, NC Division of Public Health.

Diagnosis	2011		2012		2013	
Chlamydia	Cases	% of Total				
Total Cases Cleveland	495		498		374	
African American	269	54.3%	274	55.0%	204	55.0%
Gonorrhea						
Total Cases Cleveland	173		163		129	
African-American	130	75.1%	111	68.1%	78	60%

Physical Activity and Nutrition:

- The need to address physical activity and nutrition is verified by the cost of treating cardiovascular and circulatory disease for Cleveland County residents in 2013 as computed by the NC State Center for Health Statistics—\$86,897,185 for 2,251 cases.
- Data from the same source indicates that the cost of treating 299 cases of diabetes was \$6,649,444 in 2013.
- Diseases of the heart remain the leading cause of death for Cleveland County residents from 2009-2013 and account for 15,876 total years of potential life lost for the same time period.
- Diabetes is the 8th leading cause of death in the county 2009-2013 and accounts for 2,358 total years of potential life lost for this time period.
- According to the 2013 BRFSS survey results reported regionally, 11.8% of adults reported consuming fruits, vegetables or beans five or more times per day.
- Using the same BRFSS data, 49.3% of adults reported participating in 150 minutes or more of physical activity per week, with 21.9% reported between 1 and 149 minutes and 28.8% reporting no physical activity at all.

Emerging Issues Affecting Community Health

- County commissioners for Cleveland County are under continuing pressure to create more and better-paying jobs for county residents. Two business parks in the county offer land and shell buildings. Ongoing discussion about economic incentives to draw business at the local and state level continue to impact job creation in the county.
- Additional calls for more after school activities for middle and high school youth have been heard from community members. In response, the Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland County is working to develop a Teen Center to be housed in Shelby and offering academic support as well as physical activity and nutrition options for participants. Tight resources have made funding-raising for this \$500,000 project a challenge.
- The ongoing transition of control of local healthcare facilities to the Carolinas HealthCare System has impacted the potential for local sponsorships of health-related activities in the county as decision-making about these events is now headquartered in Charlotte.
- Continuing controversy about a potential casino development in the county demands attention at almost every governmental meeting and has created contention among the factions supporting the development and those opposing it—this atmosphere has the potential to affect the decision-making process at all levels of government.
- The county's health ranking of 84th in health outcomes and 66th in health behaviors forces the issue of increasing personal responsibility for health for county residents. The award of two major grants in substance abuse prevention—the federal Drug Free Communities grant focusing on alcohol and prescription medication abuse and the Strategic Prevention Framework-Partnerships for Success grant from the NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services to focus on the non-medical use of prescription medications by young people ages 12 –25 will bring additional resources to address substance abuse issues but also may create a perception that grant activities can solve the problems without commitment from residents of the county.
- Continuing questions about vaccinations for children, health literacy and the ability of county residents to understand personal and population health issues and the future of reforms under the Affordable Care Act bring greater challenges to individuals charged with making decisions about health care for family members .

Cleveland County Snapshot—Demographics and Health Data

- Cleveland County covers a 465 square miles land mass with 15 municipalities and townships.
- The county’s population is 97,047 (2013 Census) concentrated in the three largest municipalities, leaving the northern end of the county very rural.
- Limited transportation is provided by the Transportation Administration of Cleveland County offering a regular route in Shelby and transportation by appointment for medical reasons.
- 13.1% of the county’s residents are between 10 and 19 years of age; 15.3% of residents are 65 or older.
- Among residents 25 or older, 06.7% have less than a 9th grade education, 12.5% have between a 9th and 12th grade education with no diploma and 34.1% are high school graduates including those with equivalency certificates.
- Per capita income in the county is \$19,591 with a median household income of \$38,181 according to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey.
- 19.7% of persons in the county live below the poverty level; 61.07% of students enrolled in Cleveland County Schools are eligible for free/reduced lunch compared to 56.14% eligible in North Carolina.
- The September 2014 unemployment rate in the county was 6.5% down from a high of 15.5% in 2010.
- During 2013-14 DSS issued \$26,604,921 funds for food assistance to a monthly average of 18,391 families and children, elderly and disabled adults.
- DSS certified or recertified a monthly average of 18,077 households for Medicaid and 22,433 individuals received this benefit.

Leading Causes of Death—Cleveland County

2008-2012				2009-2013			
Rank	Cause of Death	Number of Deaths	Rate per 100,000	Rank	Cause of Death	Number of Deaths	Rate per 100,000
1	Diseases of the heart	1,243	253.9	1	Diseases of the heart	1,210	247.8
2	Cancer – all sites	1,120	228.8	2	Cancer – all sites	1159	237.3
3	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	317	64.8	3	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	321	65.7
4	Cerebrovascular disease	309	63.1	4	Cerebrovascular disease	298	61.0
5	Other unintentional injuries	221	45.1	5	Alzheimer’s disease	215	44.0
6	Alzheimer’s disease	211	43.1		Other unintentional injuries	215	44.0
7	Septicemia	169	34.5	7	Septicemia	184	37.7
8	Pneumonia & influenza	166	33.9	8	Diabetes mellitus	153	31.3
9	Diabetes mellitus	140	28.6		Pneumonia & influenza	153	31.3
10	Nephritis, nephritic syndrome & nephrosis	127	25.9	10	Nephritis, nephritic syndrome & nephrosis	144	29.5
	Total all deaths	5,495	1122.6		Total all deaths	5,500	1126.1

Health Data, continued:

A review of the leading causes of death by ranking, number of deaths and unadjusted death rates per 100,000 provided by the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics reveals a slight decrease in the rates for diseases of the heart, cerebrovascular disease, other unintentional injuries and diabetes mellitus. However, the rates for cancer—all sites, chronic lower respiratory diseases and Alzheimer’s disease increased slightly.

Health disparities continue to exist as evidenced by data from the NC Center for Health Statistics in the race/ethnicity-specific and sex-specific age adjusted death rates for 2009-2013:

- Higher rate for diseases of the heart for white, non-Hispanics (214.4/100,000) compared to African-American non-Hispanics (210.6/100,000);
- Higher rate for cerebrovascular disease for African-American, non-Hispanics (59.6/100,000) compared to white, non-Hispanics (51.6/100,000); and
- Higher rate for diabetes mellitus for African-American, non-Hispanics (65.4/100,000) compared to white, non-Hispanics (19.8/100,000).

White, non-Hispanics have a higher death rate from all other unintentional injuries (including overdoses) at 47.5 per 100,000 than African-American non-Hispanics at 21.5/100,000.

New Initiatives:

- Drug Free Communities Grant to address alcohol and prescription medications;
- Strategic Prevention Framework-Partnership for Success Grant to address non-medical use of prescription medications among young people ages 12—25;
- Continuing dialogue with Cleveland County Schools to enhance comprehensive reproductive health and safety curriculum in schools;
- Potential to add 7th grade substance abuse prevention curriculum Teen Intervene;
- Expanded access to nutrition classes with move to new facility in 2016; and
- Completion of the 2015 Community Health Assessment, identification of health priorities and development of new community health action plans.

2014 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. 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/Lawndale branches
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This report is also posted on the web site of the Cleveland County Health Department at www.clevelandcounty.com/cchd