

# 2016 COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

February 2017

## OVERVIEW

The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is completed through a collaborative process in which community members gain insight into health concerns and resources within the county. This CHNA was completed as a joint effort between the Burke County Health Department (BCHD) and Carolinas HealthCare System Blue Ridge, along with the organizations that comprise the Burke Wellness Initiative. From January, 2015 through present day, over 50 community partners representing 30 agencies/community liaisons in Burke County collaborated to complete the 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) through a formal community engagement process, Mobilizing for Action Through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP).

The assessment was developed on four pillars split into primary and secondary data. The two components of primary data resulted from both survey and focus group data from Burke County citizens, regarding health and social issues that impact the health of the people living in Burke County. The primary data was collected from 1,392 completed community surveys and approximately 40 focus group attendees. The two pillars of secondary data were gathered from state, national and local statistics. Information from this community health needs assessment reveals the health and quality of life in Burke County while identifying the strengths, challenges and resources in the community.

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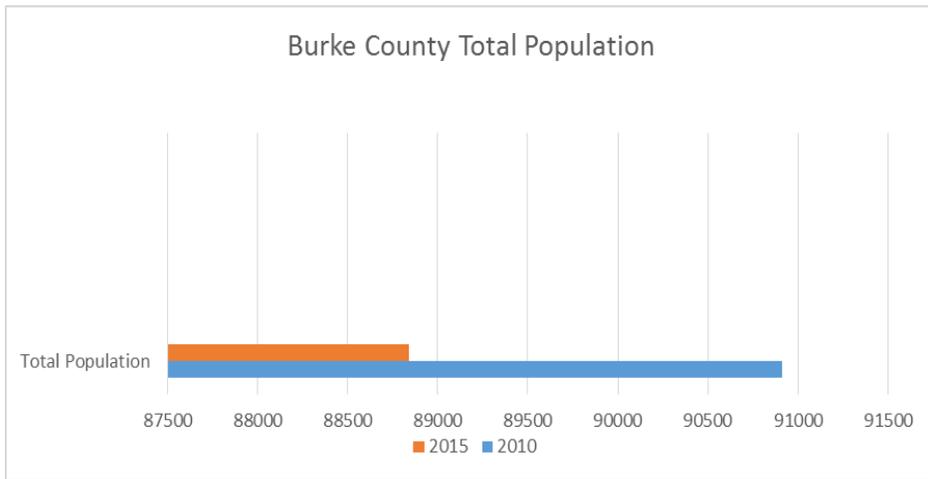
### *Priority Selection*

Burke Wellness Initiative members, stakeholders and county residents met to determine the three priority areas to be addressed. After reviewing the data obtained, the group identified the top five most important priorities then measured them on an impact matrix to gauge the level of impact and effort for each priority. This matrix identified the top three priorities that will be developed into action plans for community work over the next three years.

- 1. Mental Health**
  - 2. Substance Use/Misuse**
  - 3. Poverty**
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Burke Wellness Initiative



### Data Review

#### Economic Climate

- Median household income in Burke County is \$37,086 which is considerably lower than the NC county average of \$46,556
- The poverty rate in Burke County has exceeded the state rate for the past eight years
- Between 2010 and 2014, the total percent of Burke County residents in poverty increased by 13.6%. During the same interval, the percent of Caucasian residents in poverty increased by 22% and the percent of African American residents in poverty decreased by 1%
- When compared to the state in 2010, Burke County had a higher percentage of the population below the poverty level in all age groups
- Largest difference in poverty occurred among the under 18 population
- In 2014, Burke County's poverty rate for children under the age of 5 was greater than 40%

#### Employment

- Unemployment was 5.7% on average in 2015
- In 2015, the education and healthcare sectors were the top employers in Burke County with Case Farms and Valdese Weavers were the top employers in the private sector

#### Demographics

- Population of 88,842 residents
- Total population did see a decline from 2010-2015 from 90,912 to 88,842
- Population is 87% White with 13% being comprised of but not limited to African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and Pacific Islander
- 95.5% of citizens are English speaking with 1.5% speaking Spanish and 3.0% speaking other languages
- Median age in Burke County is up from 41.2 in 2010 to 43.9 in 2015
- Burke County is 50.4% female and 49.6% male
- Burke County, like the state, has seen an increase in the 65 and older age group with the largest group being aged 60-64

#### Education

- Burke County exceeds the state graduation rate of 83% with 88% of Burke County students receiving high school diplomas
- Burke County's percentage of free and reduced lunch is 59.35%



## Morbidity/Mortality

The five leading causes of death for residents in Burke County have not changed in the last several years:

1. Heart Disease
2. Cancer
3. Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease
4. Cerebrovascular Disease (Stroke)
5. Alzheimer's Disease.

Most chronic conditions facing the community are costly and largely preventable with some positive lifestyle behavior changes. Diabetes is a serious chronic condition that was identified in the 2013 CHNA and the Diabetes Collaborative continues to develop strategies and devote resources to help curb potential problems associated with diabetes.

## Areas of Success

Both individuals and organizations in Burke County portray a strong sense of community engagement. The desire is evident in the pursuit to collectively address concerns that impact the health of residents and ensure Burke County is a healthy place for all populations.



The establishment of Burke Integrated Health filled a gap identified in the last CHNA with providing both primary and behavioral health care services for all citizens in need of a combination of medical, mental, behavioral and substance use services.

The Burke Health Network provides a safety net of providers establishing coordination, connections and creating resources for residents who do not qualify for government assistance yet fall below 100-200% of the federal poverty level.

Burke Recovery continues to lead a community based coalition, Burke Substance Abuse Network (BSAN), to combat substance use/misuse among youth, adults and families in Burke County. BSAN has made positive strides in the arena of prevention education and awareness throughout the community. Over the next year, BSAN will work on the submission of a Drug Free Community grant to remain vigilant in creating strategies to assist with reducing the drug problem facing Burke County.

Another community organized coalition, FaithHealthNC, facilitated by Carolinas HealthCare System Blue Ridge, helped local faith communities caring for people in need. With promoting overall health and well-being of the community through health education, screenings, and innovative events, FaithHealthNC also identifies and links patients with faith-based resources such as food pantries, clothing closets, home repair ministries and other safety net provisions.

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## Areas of Concern



While the leading causes of death in Burke County has remained relatively constant, the growth in the aging population is of concern since the healthcare infrastructure and programming for the older population is limited. Therefore, the Burke Wellness Initiative made the commitment to address areas of inadequate access for the aging population. However, all human service agencies across the county struggle adhering to constant reform in all aspects of healthcare funding and third party reimbursements. Therefore, the partners work diligently to reduce duplication of services and maximize resources for optimal utilization.

Just as much as the nation, substance use and misuse afflicts Burke County. Through the BSAN, Burke County strives to be a recovery-oriented community. However, as the number of hospitalizations and deaths to medication, opioid and heroin misuse continues to rise, treatment center placements remain quite limited. Children placed in foster care due to parent's positive drug screens has resulted in an exponential increase for the Department of Social Services to find qualified foster parents.

Traditional manufacturing, once a staple for employment in Burke County, has either left or transitioned to advanced manufacturing involving greater automation. While degree paths and training is available at Western Piedmont Community College, there are insufficient numbers of students entering these programs even though these are well paying positions.

## Feedback from Community Survey and Focus Groups

**Approximately 1,432 Burke County residents completed the CHNA community survey or participated in a community focus group. Of the respondents:**

- 46% were under the age of 50
- 35% were 50 and over
- 74% were White non-Hispanic
- 67% were female and 15% were male
- 64% were employed full time; 5% were employed part time; 3% were unemployed and 6% were retired
- 57% had an Associates Degree or Higher
- 61% of the respondents aged 18-54 strongly agreed or agreed that Burke County is a good place to live
- 47% of the respondents aged 55 and older strongly agreed or agreed that Burke County is a good place to live

**Several respondents stated the best things about living in Burke County were:**

1. Location (close to the mountains and beach)
2. Sense of Community
3. Access to Recreation Areas
4. Safe Place to Live

### Top 7 Health Issues Identified

**Out of a list of about twenty possible health issues, survey and focus group participants identified the following:**

Substance Use/Misuse  
Chronic Disease  
Mental Health  
Physical Activities/Lifestyle Choices  
Transportation  
Aging Problems  
Oral Health

Out of a list approximately seventeen community social issues, the top seven were identified as: Underemployment, lack of affordable health insurance/health care, poverty, neglect/abuse (elder, children, spouse, etc), homelessness, access to healthy food and lack of public transportation.

### Conclusion

Mental health, substance use/misuse and poverty touch every member of the community in one way or another. When caring communities pool resources and work together to provide education and access to care, they empower individuals to take responsibility for their health and well-being. Primarily, this CHNA provides a solid foundation for community agencies and stakeholders to work together to strengthen the individual's capability to make positive health and wellness changes.

## Contact Us

For more information or a copy of the complete 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment, please contact

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