



State of the County Health Report



Burke County 2017

2017 STATE OF THE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT: WHAT & WHY?

The Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is a comprehensive analysis of the county's health and determines health priorities that will be the focus of a community health improvement plan until the next health assessment. This report is a requirement by the NC Department of Health and Human Services for health department's accreditation and the IRS for non-profit community hospitals. The Burke County Health Department partners with Carolinas Healthcare System Blue Ridge (Atrium Health) along with other community agencies to publish the CHNA, which is compiled every three years.

The Burke Wellness Initiative members, stakeholders and county residents met to determine the three-priority area to be addressed. After reviewing the data obtained through community surveys and focus groups, the group identified the top five most important priorities. The five priorities (Mental Health, Substance Use Disorder, Poverty, Chronic Disease and Lack of Affordable Healthcare/Health Insurance) were then measured on an impact matrix to gauge the level of impact and effort for each priority. This matrix identified the top three priorities as Mental Health, Substance Use Disorder and Poverty.



The State of the County Health Report (SOTCH) is a supplement to the CHNA and is compiled and published every year between CHNAs. This report provides an overview of changes and trends within the community, updates of the identified priorities and any new and emerging issues within Burke County.

The most recent Burke County CHNA was published in 2016 and can be viewed online at <http://www.burkenc.org/departmentd/health-department>. The State of the County Health reports can be viewed online at the website link above. Presentations of the current SOTCH will be given to the Board of Health, Burke County Board of Commissioners and to community agencies upon request.

BURKE COUNTY'S DEMOGRAPHIC PICTURE

Source: www.uscensus.gov American Community Survey Demographic Estimates

Total Population

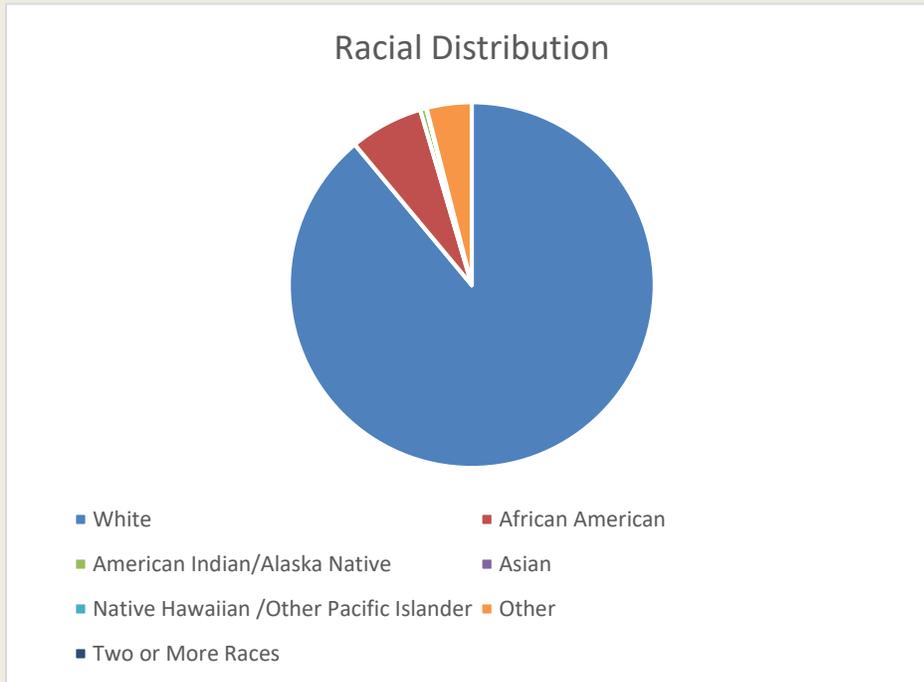
Estimated 2016: 89,082
Up slightly from the 2015 estimate of 88,842
From 2010 to 2015, the total population saw a decline of 2.3%
from 90,912 to 88,842

Median Age

Estimated 2016: 43.3
Which is a slight decrease from
the 2015 estimate of 43.9

Burke County's total population is 50.5% female and 49.5% males.

Population Distribution by Race

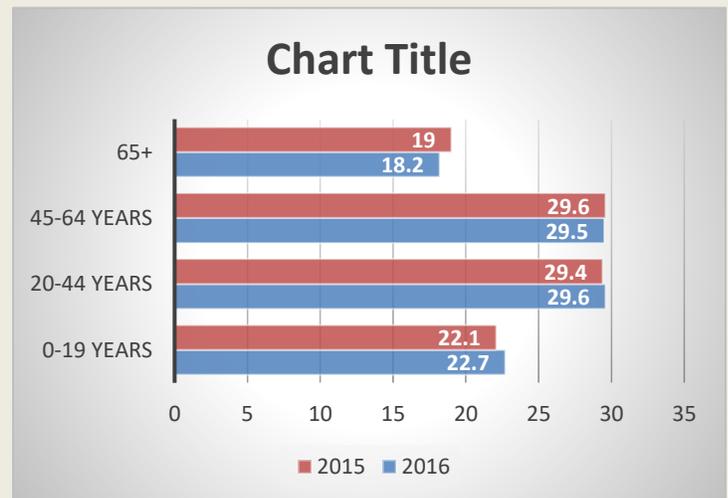


Racial distribution has changed slightly within Burke County from 2010 to 2015 with the percentage of Caucasian being 84% in 2010 and 87% in 2015.

Other races, including but not limited to, African American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic and Pacific Islander comprised approximately 16% in 2010 and approximately 13% in 2015.

Population by Age Group

Estimated percentages of the age groups in Burke County have changed slightly from 2015 to 2016 with the 0-19 and 20-44 age groups increasing



Poverty

- In 2014, 20.5% of county residents lived in poverty when the state rate was 17.2%. The estimated poverty rate for 2015 and 2016 has been 19.9%.
- 30.1% of children in the county lived in poverty in 2014 compared to 24.1% statewide. The rate hasn't changed much since that date and is still above the state rate. The rate was 30.6% in 2015 and 30.2% in 2016 compared to 24.7% and 23.9% respectively for the state.

Unemployment

Source: www.ncworksonline

- The county's unemployment rate was 5.4% in December 2015 compared to 5.1% in December 2014.
- There were 2,099 people looking for work in Burke County compared to 1,393 job openings in December 2015.



Median Household Income

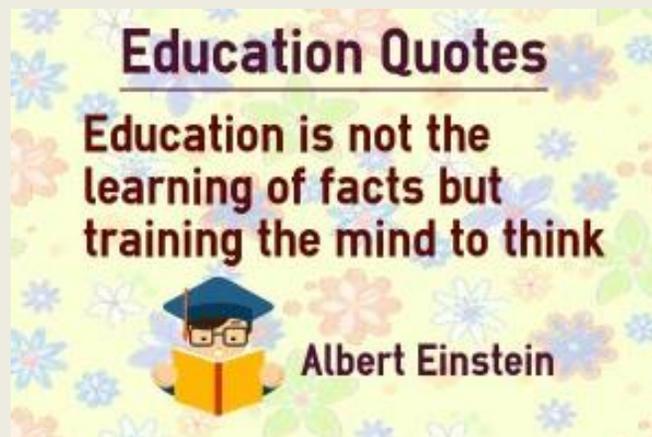
Source: www.census.gov and Ibid and NC Budget and Tax Center

- Median household income in the county was \$39,275, which equaled 84.3% of the statewide household income of \$46,596 in 2014. In 2016, the estimated median household income in Burke County was \$39,759, not a large increase over time.
- For a family size of three it costs \$18.71 per hour to make ends meet in the county, where the hourly median wage equals 76.4% of what's needed.

Educational Attainment

Source: www.census.gov

- In 2016, 79.6% of Burke County residents obtained a high school diploma or higher and 16.9% received a bachelor's degree or higher.
- The graduation rate for the county was 88% in 2016 compared to 83% for NC residents and 90% and 86% in 2017 respectively.





KEY LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH

2010-2014 Ten Leading Causes of Death in Burke County

Rank	Cause	Number	Rate
1	Diseases of the heart	1,131	250.8
2	Cancer - All Sites	1,107	245.4
3	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	378	83.8
4	Cerebrovascular disease	285	63.2
5	Alzheimer's disease	218	48.3
6	Other Unintentional injuries	209	46.3
7	Diabetes mellitus	131	29.0
8	Pneumonia & influenza	127	28.2
9	Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, & nephrosis	121	26.8
10	Chronic liver disease & cirrhosis	78	17.3
10	Suicide	78	17.3

2012 – 2016 Ten Leading Causes of Death in Burke County

Rank	Cause	Number	Rate
1	Diseases of the heart	1,129	253.5
2	Cancer - All Sites	1,105	248.1
3	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	383	86.0
4	Cerebrovascular disease	298	66.9
5	Alzheimer's disease	253	56.8
6	Other Unintentional injuries	239	53.7
7	Diabetes mellitus	154	34.6
8	Pneumonia & influenza	127	28.5
9	Suicide	94	21.1
10	Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, & nephrosis	88	19.8

The leading causes of death in Burke County have not changed much in their ranking from 2010 to 2016, many of the causes continue to rise. These chronic conditions are costly in many ways to a community including reducing the number of productive years of life lost. More targeted work and attention will need to be addressed over the coming year.

Priority Progress

Since the action plans for the 2016 CHNA were just recently developed, extensive progress on the identified priorities hasn't taken place to date. The following information is a snapshot of progress beginning for each priority.

Priority #1: Mental Health

Overall goal: To increase support for mental health through involving stakeholders, communication, education and awareness within Burke County.

Strategies/Interventions:

- Adult/youth focused consistent communication and education
- Adult/youth mental health first aid community trainings
- Creating a mental health urgent care center to reduce the number of mental health emergency department visits by 3%



Progress Synopsis

May 2017, began with presentations and a proclamation signing to recognize May as Mental Health Awareness Month with most of the 13 townships, City of Morganton and the Burke County Board of Commissioners. As part of Mental Health Awareness Month, the Burke County Health Department, Carolinas Healthcare System Blue Ridge and several community agencies developed targeted

activities to bring awareness and start a community conversation regarding mental health. During May, 4 Adult and 1 youth Mental Health First Aid trainings were held throughout the county with approximately 55 in attendance. Also, during May, the Burke County Health Department partnered with Partners Behavioral Health Management to offer 3 Question, Persuade and Refer Suicide (QPR) Prevention trainings in the community with approximately 30 in attendance.

On May 18, 2017, a community forum was held to provide information to the public to learn how to help address mental health and substance abuse issues in Burke County thereby reducing the stigma associated with both. Approximately, 80 community members attended the event. The forum showcased a panel of experts in the fields of mental health and substance use and offered resources for the community at large.

Priority #2: Substance Use Disorder

Overall goal: To reverse the trend of substance use disorder through interventions that increase prevention education and communication, reduce the incidences of unintentional opioid overdose and initiate a diversion program within Burke County.

Strategies/Interventions:

- Decrease the rate of unintentional/undetermined prescription opioid overdose deaths
- Decrease the rate of controlled substances and opioids dispensed
- Reduce the percentage of high school students who report drinking alcohol in the past 30 days
- Adult/youth focused consistent communication and prevention education

Substance use/misuse of legal, illegal and non-medical use of prescription opioid medication continues to adversely impact the citizens of Burke County. The impact can be felt in all levels of resources, agencies and individual death and disability within this growing issue.

- According to the 2015 NC County Health Rankings and Roadmaps report, Burke County had 157 drug poisoning deaths and at 25 had the seventh highest drug poisoning death rate in NC.
- In 2015, the average rate of unintentional/undetermined prescription opioid overdose deaths in Burke County was 5.8 per 100,000 residents.
- In 2013, the rate of unintentional medication drug overdose deaths was 30.1, making it one of the highest in the state.
- Burke County had two unintentional medication drug overdose deaths in 1999 compared to 22 in 2014.
- According to the News Herald news report: In 2016, Burke County ranked 3rd in the state for the highest drug-poisoning death rate.
- Local data: A survey of 560 Burke County youth ages 12 to 25 revealed that more than 1 in 4 were misusing prescription medications.



Legal Issues and Substance Use Disorder
Community Forum

Progress Synopsis

As part of the directive from the NC Association of County Commissioners and a priority identified in the 2016 CHNA, the health department convened a planning committee comprised of agency representatives and passionate citizens to develop a series of community forums focused on substance use disorder and its many facets. The forums were held in September, October and most recently in January 2018 with great attendance and community feedback. The

first forum offered speakers that covered general information on substance use, community statistics and resources along with a panel of individuals that have been personally impacted by substance use disorder. The second forum, Legal Issues and Substance Use Disorder, had presenters delve into the legal aspects of substance use disorder and the possibility of establishing a drug court in Burke County. The third community forum, Substance Use and the Workplace, featured nationally awarded speakers that presented information on substance use issues and employer's responses to those issues along with NC Attorney General Josh Stein delivering the keynote address. All the community forums were well attended, very productive with professional input and a great deal of community engagement. Out of the community engagement during the forums, three overarching needs were exposed as potential areas to combat this issue. The need to establish a drug court with a diversion component, additional treatment options (residential) and long-term recovery support after treatment along with prevention efforts at all community levels.



NC Attorney General Josh Stein's address at the Substance Use and the Workplace Community forum



Substance Use and the Workplace Community Forum

During these forums, NC Representative Hugh Blackwell, reached out with great interest in what Burke County residents were feeling about this issue and what NC Legislators could do to help local communities in this fight. The planning committee and several community leaders met with Representative Blackwell and presented ideas that might be pushed forward in the legislative realm. Continued community engagement and forums around this issue is slated for the near future. The health department and community partners are working on factual, consistent messaging to aid in prevention and communication of resources for those in need.

Highlights in Community Progress with Community Partners:

- 275 Medication Lock boxes were distributed, and Lock Your Meds presentations given throughout the community



Substance Use Disorder Community Forum

- 5 – Lock Your Meds billboards were placed throughout the community
- 2 additional Medication Drop Boxes were placed at East Burke Pharmacy and Morganton Public Safety through collaboration with Project Lazarus
- 104 Naloxone kits were delivered to the Sheriff’s Office for law enforcement through collaboration with Partners Behavioral Health Management and Project Lazarus
- Implementation of Emergency Department Prescription policy change through collaboration with Carolinas Healthcare System Blue Ridge

Priority #3: Poverty

Overall goal: To reduce the incidences of poverty by increasing opportunities to achieve a desirable quality of life.

Strategies/Interventions:

- Increase utilization of 211 resources by 25%
- Decrease those residents living in poverty by increasing opportunities for involvement in the evidence-based program, Circles

Over the last year, Greenway Transportation, Kate B. Reynolds Foundation and the Burke Foundation have been working to develop a public transportation route that would benefit Burke County residents and provide transportation to educational, medical and employment opportunities. The Burke Wellness Initiative group will be working closely with the Circles Initiative Coordinator to expand this evidence-based program assisting those families working their way out of poverty.

NEW & EMERGING ISSUES

The Federal Government has been discussing potential cuts to or elimination of the Prevention and Public Health Fund monies. These cuts or elimination of funds would cut federal dollars given to the NC Department of Health and Human Services and therefore pass the decrease in funding down to the local health departments. These funds support a large portion of clinical and community services such as; immunizations, chronic disease management and prevention, health promotion/health education/community education, infectious disease surveillance and outbreak control, etc. This action will drastically change the face of Public Health with reduction in staffing and services that support our community.



Medicaid transformation is another emerging issue within our state. Medicaid is the State-run insurance program and covers clinical services provided through local health departments. The proposed transformation will change the way local health departments provide and receive reimbursement for their services. Currently, health departments bill for services rendered from multiple payor sources and Medicaid Transformation will change this structure to a value-based system with the potential to generate less income and eventually cause a reduction in services provided to the community.

Community leaders and stakeholders will begin a dialogue around a community pharmacy initiative. They are working together to create and secure funding for a community pharmacy for those uninsured and underinsured individuals/families that have difficulty securing medications for acute and chronic conditions.

COMMUNITY CHANGES AND FUNDING

Fonta Flora State Trail is a beautiful opportunity that recently opened in Burke County. The trail will loop around Lake James and connect to Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail and Mountains-to-Sea Trail. The trail that will open will run from the Fonta Flora County Park to the Linville Access Area and to the community of South Pointe. Work is being done on the master plan for the trail from Lake James to Morganton, and from the lake to the town of Marion in McDowell County. Burke and McDowell counties plan to split the cost for this part of the trail. Duke Energy has given \$40,000 for the master plan to help with the Morganton to Marion link of the trail. The long-term plan is to eventually link the trail between Asheville and the city of Morganton greenway system. It is expected that the investment into the loop trail will be around \$14 million, with Burke County's part about \$1 million. The rest of the money has or will come from grants and donations.

Over the last year, two non-profits in Burke County received and have provided expanded services within the community through a Community Health grant. The Burke County Health Department received funding to begin offering primary care services to those residents without a medical home and in need of these services. This grant is a collaboration between Public Health and Carolinas Healthcare System Blue Ridge. The second Community Health grant provided funding to the Good Samaritan Clinic. This funding gave the county's free clinic an opportunity to open and staff for services, a satellite clinical office in the Eastern part of Burke County for those uninsured clients with transportation issues.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

The Burke Wellness Initiative is the community collaboration working together to impact the health and identified priorities within this report and the CHNA. We would welcome additional

community members that are passionate to help Burke County move toward a healthier place to live, work, play and pray. If you are interested in being part of the Burke Wellness Initiative, please contact Lisa Moore at 828-764-8218 or at lisa.moore@burkenc.org.

This report does not cover all the positive community partner initiatives taking place in Burke County but provides a snapshot of progress being made within the community.

Acknowledgement: Thanks to the community partners that supplied information and continue to work together to make Burke County a great place to live.