State of the County Health Report: Wilkes County 2016

Wilkes County Health Department

Promoting health and preventing disease in our community.

Table of Contents

Wilkes County Demographics Snap Shot 1

Public Health Prevention at Work 2

Health Priority #1: Substance Abuse and Mental Health 3

Health Priority #2: Obesity and Chronic Disease 4

Health Priority #3: Tobacco and Smoking 5

New Initiatives and Emerging Trends 6

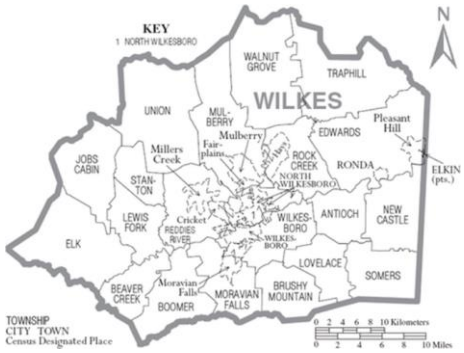
For more information, please contact us at:

Wilkes County Health Department
306 College Street
Wilkesboro, NC 28697
(336) 651-7450 Office
(336) 651-7813 Fax
(336) 651-7530 Environmental Health
(336) 651-7451 WIC
(336) 667-0460 Diabetes Center
www.wilkeshealth.com

NORTH CAROLINA Accredited Health Department 2015-2019 Local Health Department Accreditation Board

Overview and Demographics

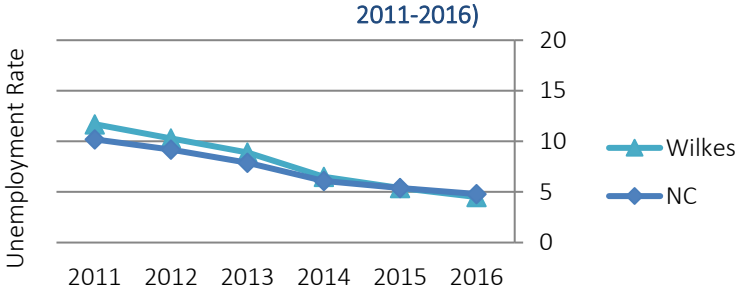
In North Carolina, the state requires each local health department to conduct a Community Health Assessment (CHA) every four years for accreditation and as part of its consolidated contract. During the years between community health assessments, health departments submit an abbreviated **State of the County's Health (SOTCH) report.** In Wilkes County, this report consists of an overview of demographics, health indicators, and leading causes of morbidity and mortality. This report also contains various updates on the community's top four health priorities, action plan projects, local initiatives and emerging trends.



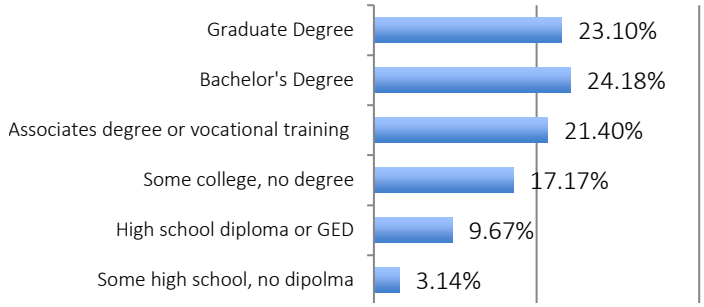
Wilkes County Demographics Snap Shot

Total Population 68,502 (US Census, 2015 Estimates)

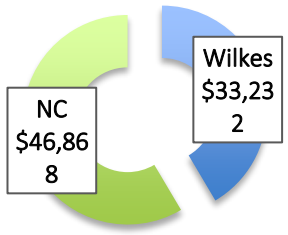
Unemployment (NC Department of Commerce, 2011-2016)



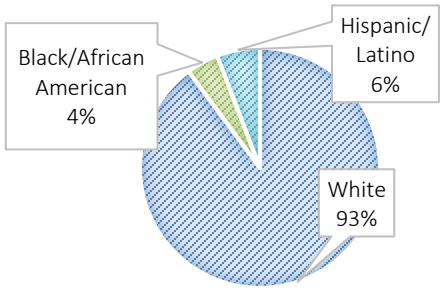
Educational Attainment (CHA 2015/2016)



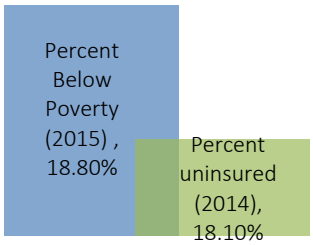
Median Household Income (NC Department of Commerce, 2015)



Race Distribution (US Cencus, 2015)



Poverty & the Uninsured (US Census)



Leading Causes of Death (North Carolina County Health Data Book, 2016)

1. Diseases of the Heart
2. Cerebrovascular Disease
3. Cancer
4. Diabetes Mellitus
5. Pneumonia and Influenza

Leading Risk Factors

- Poor Nutrition
- Lack of Physical Activity
- Tobacco Use

Sharing the State of Health

Copies of this report may be found at http://www.wilkeshealth.com/.
The report will be presented to community leaders and groups throughout 2017. To request additional information or to schedule a presentation of this information for your group, call Rachel Willard at 336.651.7449 or email at rwillard@wilkescounty.net.

Public Health Prevention at Work

The Wilkes County Health Department protects and improves community wellbeing by preventing disease, illness and injury, and improving social, economic and environmental factors that are essential to our health. As the local champions for public health, we are in the business of prevention, rather than treatment, and serving the whole community, rather than individuals. By preventing disease, promoting good health and creating environments that help people stay healthy, public health saves money and improves everyone's quality of life. [1]

The Wilkes County Health Department works closely with health care providers, businesses, public agencies, government and the media to examine the ways in which our community's resources and needs are interconnected. By strengthening these connections between community partners, we are improving community health through a holistic model that acknowledges all needs of a person—the whole person. Seeing health through the lens of the whole person means addressing all of a person's health-related needs, from physical and behavioral health services to education, nutrition, and social services. Caring for the whole person is successful when community partners have strong connections between their systems, which enables people to use resources effectively and improve their health outcomes.

[1] https://www.apha.org/~/media/files/pdf/topics/aca/apha_prevfundbrief_june2012.ashx

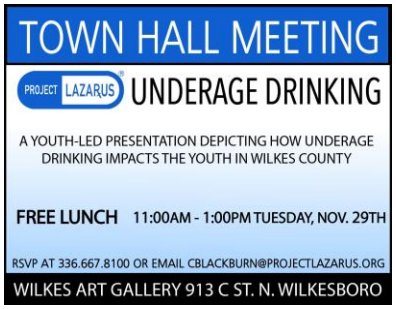
Health Priority #1: Substance Abuse and Mental Health

Local Community Objectives

1. By June 30, 2018, increase the number of adults who report that their health is good, very good, or excellent by 5%.
2. By June 30, 2018, decrease the number of ED admissions to Wilkes Regional Medical Center for mental health or substance abuse diagnoses by 2%.
3. By June 30, 2018, reduce the percentage of high school students who report alcohol use one or more of the past 30 days by 2%.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Action Plan Progress

Project Lazarus has established a new permanent drop box for expired or unused prescriptions and medications located at the Wilkes Family Pharmacy. The community has helped with the promotion of permanent drop box locations by distributing educational flyers. Project Lazarus Youth Coalition also placed billboards and flyers throughout the county on safely locking and securing your medicines. During the past year roughly 150 lock boxes have been distributed to families throughout the county. Project Lazarus partnered with Two Rivers Cinema to show *The Anonymous People* to educate the community on recovery. Project Lazarus also received a 5 year Drug Free Communities Grant to help reduce use and initiation of prescription drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

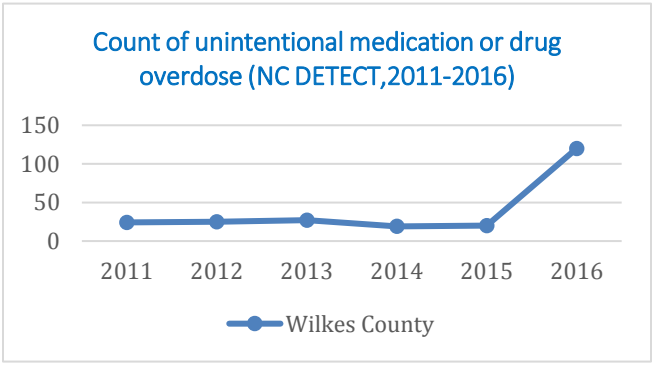


In November, Project Lazarus hosted a Town Hall Meeting that featured a Youth Photovoice Project around alcohol abuse.

The Health Foundation has also started a coalition related to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's). In order to help build a more resilient community the coalition hosted 2 different trainings to increase knowledge and awareness. The two trainings offered were Lemonade for Life (42 participants) and Community Resilience Model Training (36 participants).

Multiple community organizations continued to offer Mental Health First Aid and Darkness to Light trainings throughout the year.

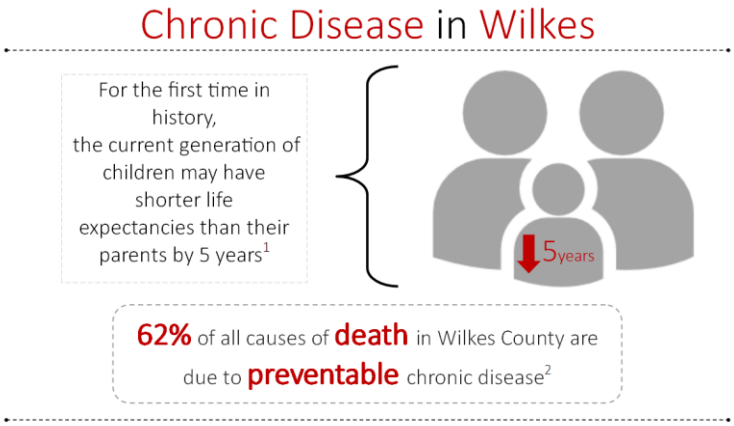
Change in Data: According to NC Region 3 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, in 2015 76.2% of the residents reported having good, very good, or excellent health compared to 78.4% in 2014. Due to upgrades and improvements in Wilkes Regional Medical Center's data platform, NC DETECT was able to capture more complete and accurate diagnosis codes. From the upgrades a huge increase was seen in unintentional overdoses from 2015 (20 cases) to 2016 (120 cases). With these improvements we also saw an increase in heroin overdoses. Wilkes County added 1 permanent drop in 2016 increasing the number from 3 to 4.



Health Priority #2: Obesity and Chronic Disease

Local Community Objective

1. By June 30, 2017, decrease the number of children and adults who are overweight or obese by 2%.
2. By June 30, 2018, reduce the number of children or adults who are pre-diabetic by 1%.
3. By June 30, 2018, reduce the rate of cardiovascular disease mortality from 166.4 to 164.0.



[1]Olshansky et al., A Potential Decline in Life Expectancy in the United States in the 21st Century, NEJM. [2]NC SCHS, 2009-2013

Obesity and Chronic Disease Action Plan Progress:

Wilkes County has worked on multiple initiatives in the past year to help reduce chronic disease and obesity in our community. The health department completed its first cohort of Brenner FIT families. Fourteen families completed the program, and can now make healthier decisions that impact their family's nutrition, physical activity and quality time. The health department completed its third season of providing Market Bucks to families in need. This year the health department reached 213 families and provided $3,700 worth of produce to them. We also completed another season of cooking demonstrations at the Farmers' Market reaching over 600 people. Through a Women's Circle Grant, the health department was able to provide 13 mammograms to women in need.

In 2015 the Wilkes Health Action Team (WHAT) applied for the Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas Grant through the Duke Endowment. In November of 2015, notification was made that they were one of the five communities selected to participate in the first collective impact cohort. During the course of 2016 the WHAT steering committee and partners have made tremendous progress. The Duke Endowment funds have helped implement SPARK in all 13 elementary schools. The WHAT group has also created a Work Well Wilkes Employee Wellness task force, which awarded 5 mini grants to local agencies who participate in the Work Well Wilkes group.

The Health Foundation installed outdoor gym equipment on the Wellness Trailhead section of the Yadkin River Greenway system. The Health Foundation, Partnership for Children and Wilkes County Schools were awarded a scholarship to attend the Canyon Ranch Institute to learn how to collaborate to make healthy food choices easier for children and families in Wilkes County.

The Town of Wilkesboro has developed and implemented a new downtown masterplan. The plan includes streetscaping, complete streets, and created a more inviting atmosphere for pedestrians and cyclist. The town also cleared and opened additional trails on the Cub Creek Greenway.

Wilkes County Schools continues to offer free breakfast and lunch to all students through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program. The school system has also worked with the Health Foundation and Health Department to implement Motivating Adolescents with Technology to CHOOSE Health (MATCH) for all 7th

graders. Wilkes County Schools partnered with the Health Department and SafeKids to host Walk to School Day in 3 Elementary Schools and Bike to School Day with 1 school. Through a Department of Transportation grant 4th and 5th graders at Mulberry Elementary were fitted and received free bike helmets.

The Partnership for Children has established a Preschool Physical Activity and Nutrition Team to help reduce childhood obesity in child care centers. Currently six of the child care centers are Shape NC sites. Some of the childcare centers also offer the Be Active program. The Partnership also hosted a pop up market this growing season at one of its centers. Interns from the Health Department provide nutrition lessons to several classrooms. The Partnership also offered grocery store tours to parents to help them make healthier choices while shopping.

Changes in Data:
More children in grades K-8 in Wilkes County Schools are considered to be in the Healthy Fitness Zone (HFZ) for body composition. In 2016 60% of girls and 59% of boys were in the HFZ compared to 58% of girls and 57% of boys in 2015. Based on our Market Buck program surveys, 58% of families who participated stated that they did increase their fruit and vegetable consumption during the market season compared to 40% in 2015 and 38% in 2014.

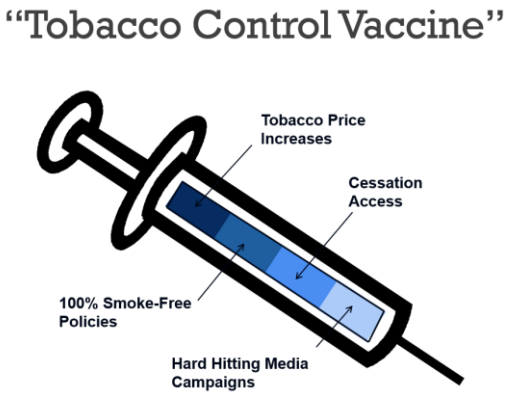
Recent Data Changes	2014		2015	
	LHD Region 3	NC	LHD Region 3	NC
Adults with a BMI greater than 25 (reported overweight or obese) *(Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2014 & 2015)*	67.8	65.6	69.6	65.8
Adults reported no physical activity within the last month *(Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2014 & 2015)*	26.7	23.2	27.7	26.2

Recent Data Changes	2012	
	Wilkes County	NC
Children ages 2-4 who are obese *(NC-NPASS, 2012)*	19.7%	14.5%

Health Priority #3: Tobacco and Smoking

Local Community Objectives:

1. By June 30, 2018, increase the number of 100% tobacco free grounds policies, practice, and environmental changes to support prevention of tobacco use for youth and adults from 1 to 3.
2. By June 30, 2018, increase the number of Wilkes County residents who utilize the NC Quitline by 5%.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs.* 2014

Tobacco and Smoking Action Plan Progress

In August, Wilkes County Health Department hosted a 5A's training for all clinical staff, outreach social workers, outreach nurses, nutritionist, and health educators. The health department also invited the school based health center mental health providers to attend the training. The health department trained 55 people, with the goal of increasing utilization of the Quitline NC fax referral form in the clinic.

QuitNow NC is a resource that provides free counseling to individuals who want to quit using tobacco. It is promoted in various methods through partnerships with local healthcare providers who can refer patients who are interested that can receive a call from a trained quit-coach.

The Wilkes County Health Department supports tobacco prevention through promotion of Quitline NC (1.800.QUITNOW) while also providing community services in tobacco prevention and cessation. We also support workplaces, governments, realtors, and others in exploring the benefits of adopting practices that support others in quitting while protecting many from secondhand smoke.

On October 3, 2016 the Wilkes County Board of Health adopted a regulation prohibiting the use of e-cigarettes in local government buildings and transportation vehicles. The new regulations became effective November 1, 2016. Wilkes County Health Department has provided stickers for old signs to every agency throughout Wilkes County.

In 2016, Walden Ridge and Grandview Apartments adopted smoke-free policies. Both complexes implemented smoke free buildings and within 25 ft of any building. Each complex also set up designated smoking areas. Both complexes are looking at e-cigarettes to their policies later.

Changes in Data: In 2016, 190 Wilkes County residents utilized the Quitline compared to 125 residents in 2015 (Quitline NC Reports). Wilkes County also increased the number of multi-unit housing complexes who are smoke free from 3 to 5.

New Initiatives and Emerging Trends

New Initiative: Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)

On Thursday December 15th Wilkes County Health Department along with the co-applicant Wilkes Community Health Center, was among the newly announced Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) New Access Point grant recipients. Wilkes County Health Department was one of the six funded sites in North Carolina, and one in 75 across the nation. Wilkes County Health Department was awarded $793,324 for the first year of the grant with $650,000 awarded the following years. The new access point will allow the Wilkes County Health Department to open the Wilkes Community Health Center as a federally qualified health center (FQHC) to expand and provide primary health care needs to the residents of Wilkes County. To date in 2016, the Health Department provided nearly 6,700 medical, screening and enabling visits to 2,800 patients. By the end of year 2018, Wilkes Community Health Center's goal is to serve over 4,500 patients.

High rates of uninsured adults and chronic disease in Wilkes County, has presented challenges in maintaining the current level of services with increasing costs and reduced funding available to meet these needs. Wilkes County also has 50.3% of its residents living below the 200% federal poverty level. The new HRSA FQHC funding will allow Wilkes Community Health Center to expand the services the health department offers, and become an integral and integrated player in the health care delivery system. With the funding Wilkes Community Health

Center will be able to provide adult and child primary health care, medications, and other enabling services for both adults and children.

Emerging Trend: Emergency Preparedness

Wilkes County Health Department hosts two CDC Public Health Associates, both of whom have been involved in CDC's international responses to emerging public health threats. Martin Klingbeil deployed to Freetown, Sierra Leone in Winter 2015-16, and helped to implement the Sierra Leone Trial to Introduce a Vaccine against Ebola (STRIVE) as well as working in a Management & Operations capacity, contributing to the stand-up of the CDC Sierra Leone Country Office in Freetown. Jeffrey Ramos deployed to San Juan, Puerto Rico in May 2016, and continues to serve as the Deputy Chief of Operations in the EOC during the Zika Response. Our Associates add to the health department's capacity in Emergency Preparedness because of their experience participating in large-scale, international public health emergencies of emerging infectious diseases.

Wilkes County Health Department has worked collectively with local emergency response agencies to develop a plan for responding to Ebola and Other Highly Infectious Disease emergencies. Several community partners conducted an Emergency Preparedness Tabletop Exercise in October designed to test this plan. Exercises like this allow agencies to improve plans and allow us to better serve our community in the event of an infectious disease emergency.

Here is what we can do...

Practice safe prescription medication use by taking correctly, storing securely, disposing properly, and never sharing.

Health begins where we live, learn, work and play. Take action in building our neighborhood to be safe and healthy.

Being healthy takes a community. Attend a Mental Health First Aid training and join local community groups that work to support mental health systems.

Your opportunity for health starts long before you need medical care. Sign up for your local Women, Infant & Children (WIC) program through your local health department.

The opportunity for health begins in our families, neighborhoods, schools and jobs. Participate in local bike and walk safety programs to and from school. Being healthy takes a community.

Your neighborhood or job shouldn't be hazardous to your health. Support tobacco free living.

Health starts—long before illness—in our homes, schools and jobs. Investing in our mothers and children is investing in our future.

Live active, eat local vegetables and fruits.

All citizens have the opportunity to make the choices that allow them to live a long, healthy life.[3] Support local policies for sidewalks and bike lanes.