

Wilkes County
Community Health Assessment
Final Report

Produced in collaboration by Wilkes Community Health Council (Healthy Carolinians), Wilkes County Health Department, the Northwest Partnership for Public Health and The North Carolina Institute for Public Health

Purpose of the Community Health Assessment

- Describe the health status of the community.
- Create a resource for WCHC, WCHD, WRMC, others.
- Provide direction for the planning of health activities.

Three Contributing Viewpoints

Number Data	Resident Opinion Survey Data	Stakeholder Opinion Data
Demographic Socioeconomic Health Environmental	Random survey (n=200)	Interviews by invitation (n=25)

Special Notice Is Given to Differences...

- between data sources
- between Wilkes and NC
- between ages
- between genders
- by race or ethnicity
- over time

Demographic and Socioeconomic Data

Population Characteristics

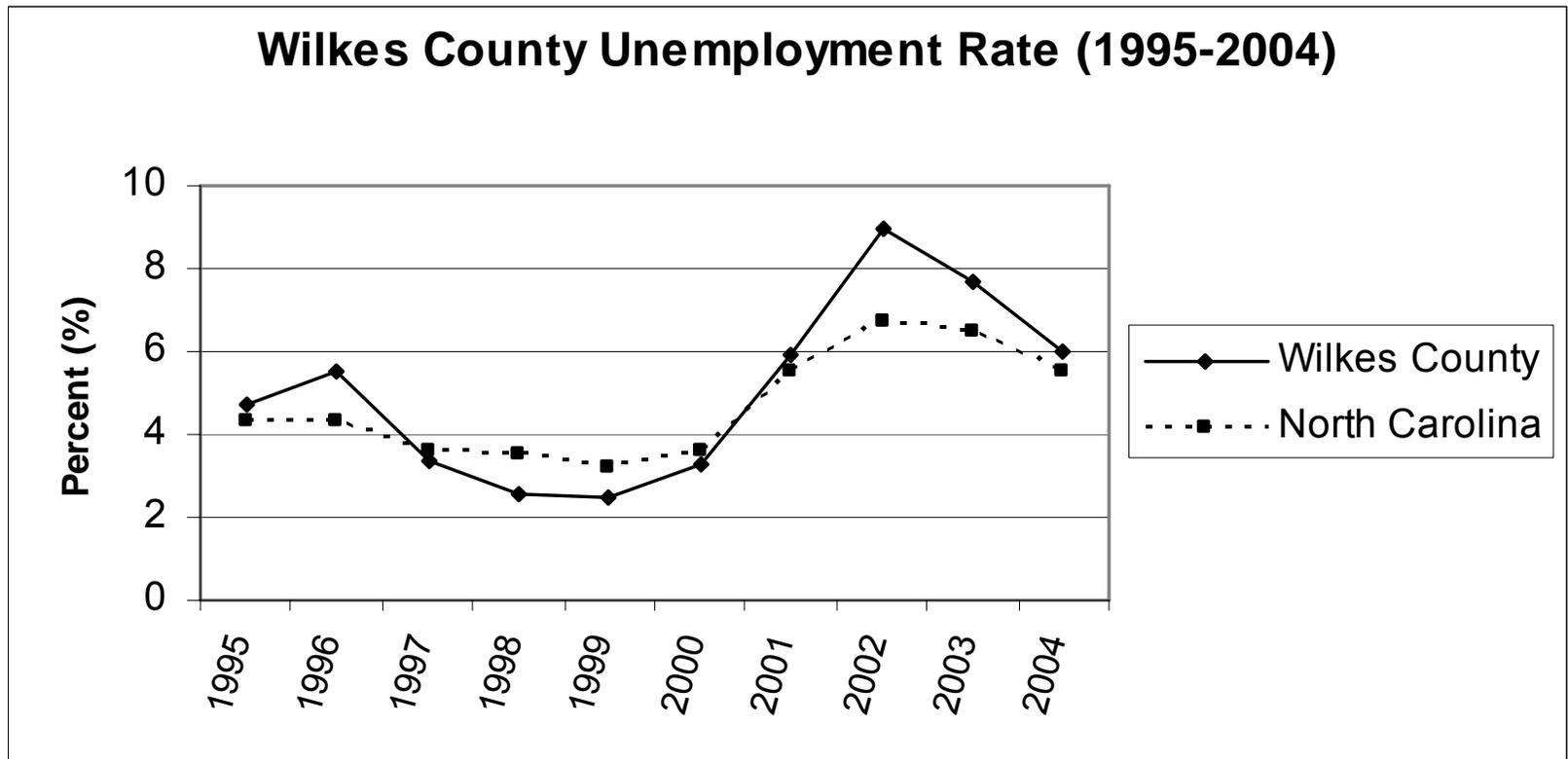
- Growing and aging population (est. 68,000)
 - 14% fewer 0-19 year olds than typical NC county
 - 16% more 55+ year olds than typical NC county
- Average age 38.5 (NC=35.3)
- 7.0% minority (NC=30.0%)

Population Characteristics

- Per capita income \$3,519 below NC
- 11.9% live in poverty (=NC)
 - Race: 21% Blacks in poverty (similar to NC)
 - Age:
 - 26% were 0-17 (20% *lower* than NC)
 - 20% were 65+ (53% *higher* than NC)
- 21% without health insurance (NC=19%)
- 20% Medicaid eligible (NC=17%)

Unemployment

- Recent modest employment growth has not made up for jobs lost in 00-02



Compared to Other NC Counties

- 50% *higher* school dropout rate (6.4 vs. 4.8 NC) and 50% *fewer* college graduates (11.3 vs. 22.5 NC)
- 50% *lower* crime rates
- Consistently higher numbers of youth in juvenile justice system (including high-risk prevention)
- Consistent and similar to NC rates of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Significantly more people per healthcare provider, especially dentists than NC

Health Statistics

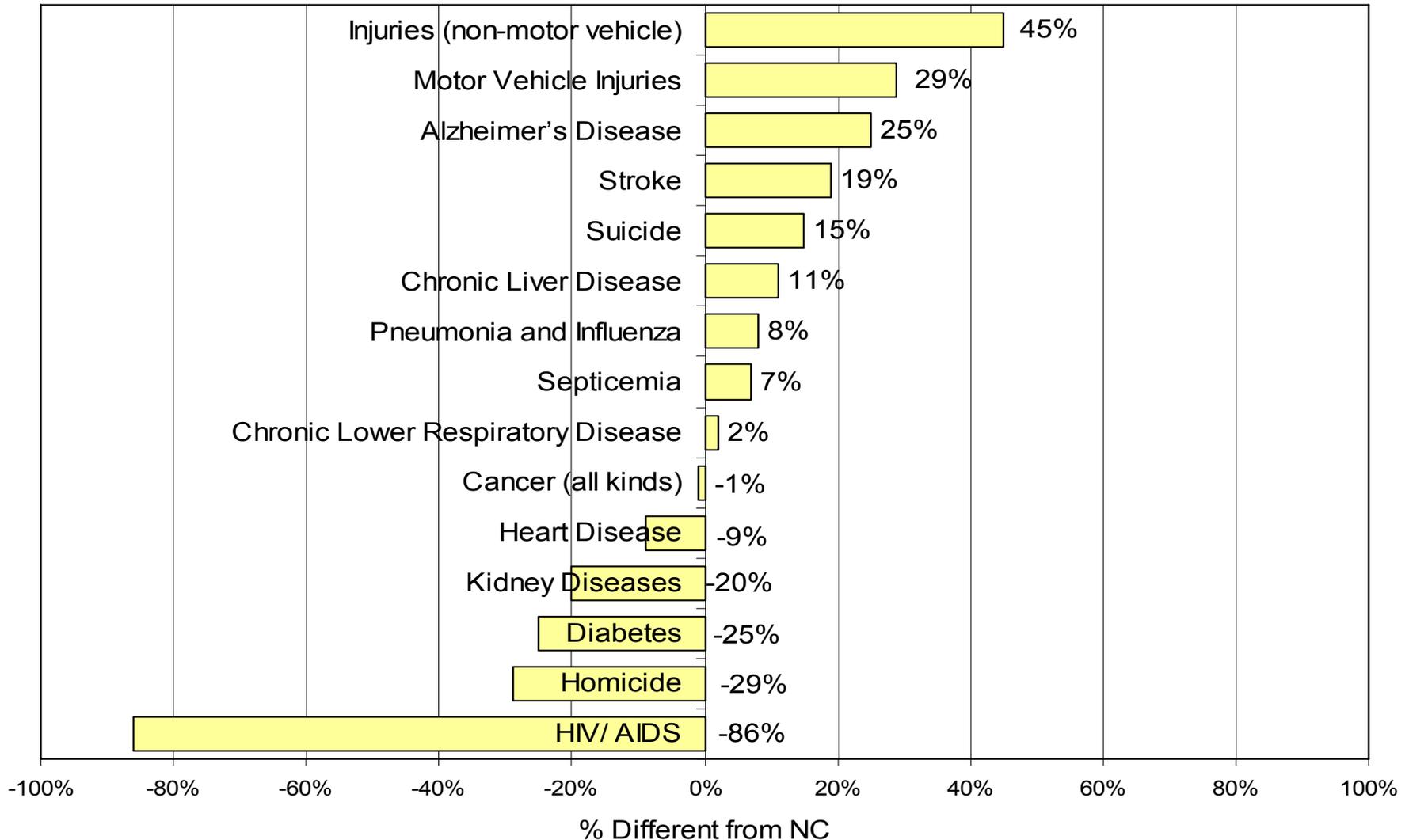
Leading Causes of Death in NC

	Wilkes #	Wilkes Rate	% Deaths Due To Cause
1. Heart disease	810	220.9	29%
2. Cancer (all kinds)	748	198.3	27%
3. Stroke	303	84.0	11%
4. Chronic lower respiratory disease	178	47.6	7%
5. Injuries (non-motor vehicle)	117	34.2	4%
6. Alzheimer's disease	107	30.1	4%
7. Pneumonia and influenza	96	26.9	4%
8. Motor vehicle injuries	81	25.0	3%
9. Diabetes	76	20.7	3%
10. Septicemia	55	15.0	2%
11. Kidney diseases	50	13.6	2%
12. Suicide	44	12.5	2%
13. Chronic liver disease	38	10.1	1%
14. Homicide	18	5.3	1%
15. HIV/AIDS	3	0.8	0%

Wilkes Comparison to NC

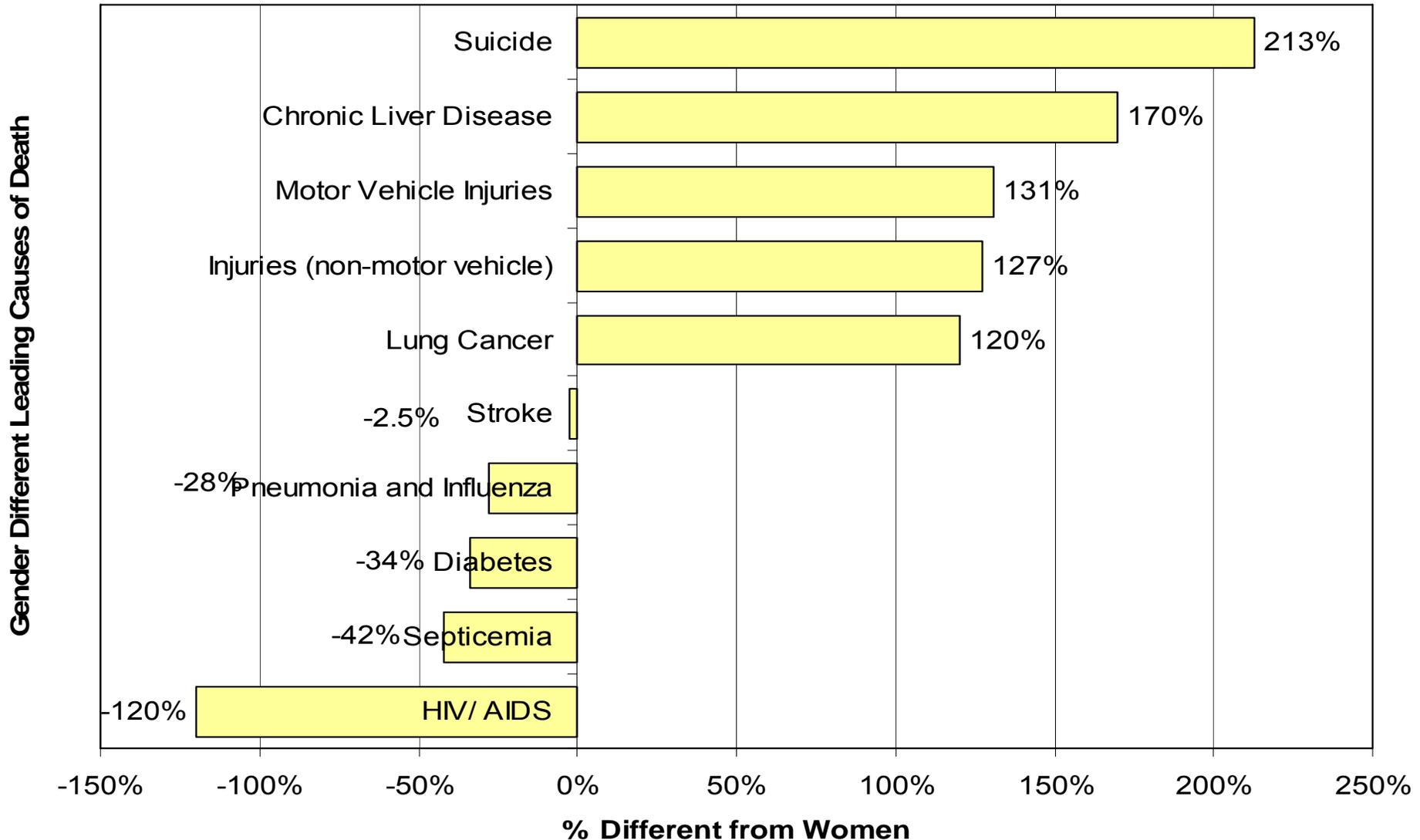
Comparison of Wilkes Deaths to the 15 Leading Causes of Death in NC

Top 15 Causes of Death



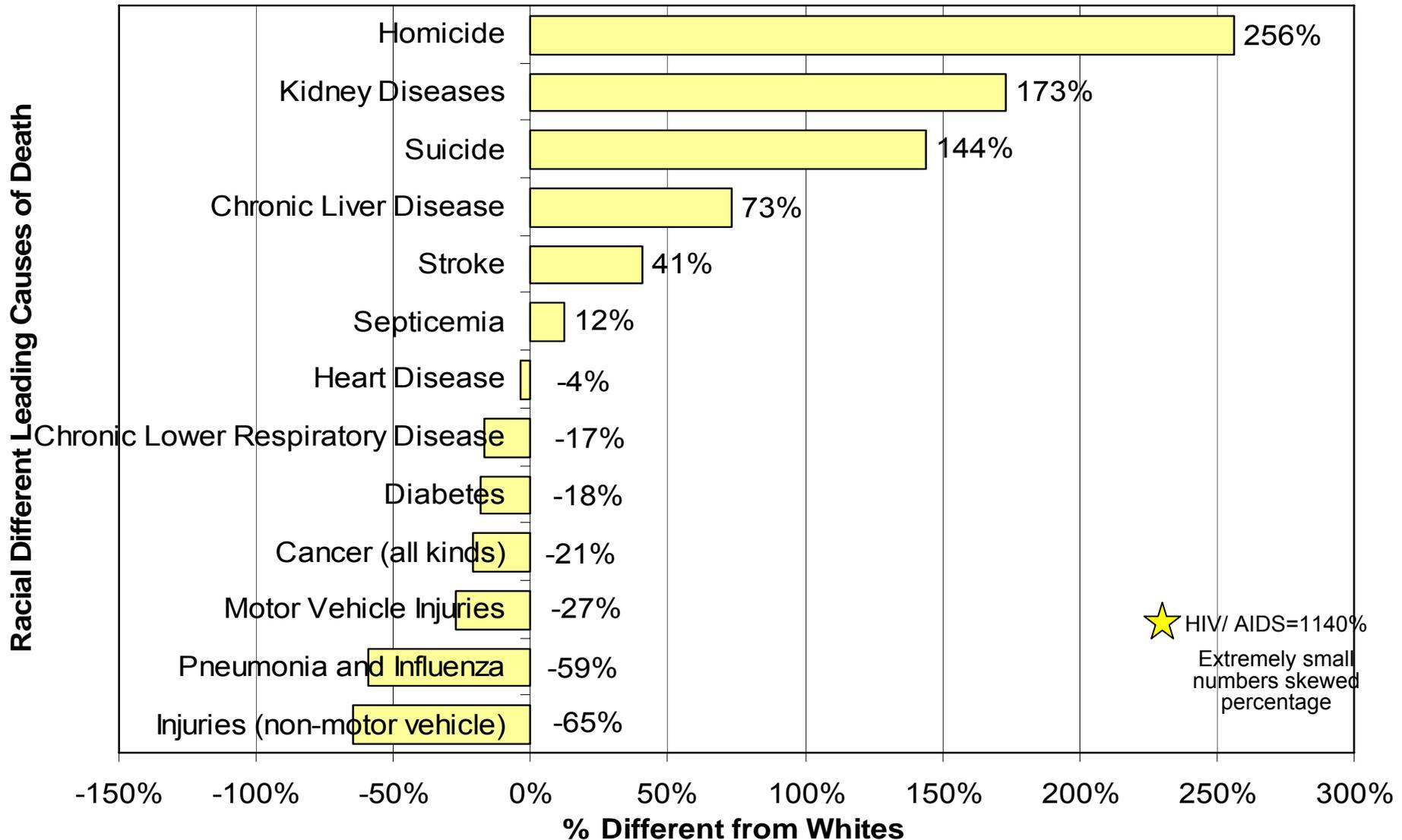
Wilkes Gender Differences

% Difference Men Die From Leading Causes of Death in Wilkes Compared to Women



Wilkes Racial Differences

% Difference Black-Americans Die From Leading Causes of Death in Wilkes Compared to Whites



Mortality Trends Since 1979

Wilkes County	Mortality
1. Heart disease	▼▼
2. Cancer (all kinds)	---
3. Stroke	▲
4. Chronic lower respiratory disease	▲▲
5. Injuries (non-motor vehicle)	▲
6. Alzheimer's disease	n/a
7. Pneumonia and influenza	▼
8. Motor vehicle injuries	▼
9. Diabetes	▲
10. Septicemia	▲▲
11. Kidney diseases	▲
12. Suicide	▼
13. Chronic liver disease	▲
14. Homicide	▼
15. HIV/AIDS	▲

Communicable Disease

- **Wilkes has less:**
 - Hepatitis A
 - Salmonellosis
 - Tuberculosis
 - Whooping cough
 - Gonorrhoea
 - Syphilis
 - Chlamydia
 - HIV/AIDS
- **Wilkes has more:**
 - Hepatitis B

Child Dental Health Compared to NC

- Kindergarteners in Wilkes have:
 - more untreated decay
 - fewer kids cavity-free
 - more decayed, missing or filled teeth per child
- 5th graders in Wilkes have:
 - less untreated decay
 - more kids cavity-free
 - more kids with protective sealants
- Both groups are *more likely* to have been screened

Mental Health Services 2004

- Number served in mental retardation centers (and change since 2000):
 - 22 (▲ 22%); Avg. NC County = 19 (▼ 17%)
- Number served in drug abuse treatment centers:
 - 30 (▲ 76%); Avg. NC County = 37 (▼ 8%)
- Persons in state psychiatric hospitals:
 - 118 (▼ 22%); Avg. NC County = 170 (▲ 1%)
- Percent population served by MH/DD/SAS area programs:
 - 3.9% (▼ 9% since FY 2001); Avg. NC County = 4.2% (▲ 6% since FY 2001)

Obesity in Wilkes

- Overweight and obese Children:
 - 20% 2-4 year olds (NC=15%)
 - 18% 5-11 year olds (NC=24%)
 - 24% 12-18 year olds (NC=27%)
- Overweight and obese Adults:
 - 37% overweight
 - 27% obese
 - = **54% overweight or obese (US=65%)**

Community Health Survey

“Most Important Health Issues”

“Most Important Health Issues”	Mortality Data
1. Cancer	1. Heart disease
2. Heart disease	2. Cancer
3. Aging problems	3. Stroke
4. Diabetes	4. Chronic lower respiratory disease
5. Obesity/overweight	5. Injuries (non-motor vehicle)
6. Motor vehicle accidents	6. Alzheimer’s disease
7. Teenage pregnancy	7. Pneumonia and influenza
8. Mental health	8. Motor vehicle injuries
9. Stroke	9. Diabetes
10. Lung disease	10. Septicemia
11. Dental health	11. Kidney disease
12. Asthma	12. Suicide

Health issues in blue are causes of death. Mortality data is shown just as a reminder. Note the similarities.

“Most Important Unhealthy Behaviors”

1. Drug abuse	9. Violent behavior
2. Alcohol abuse	10. Not using seatbelts
3. Smoking/tobacco use	11. Not getting dental checkups
4. Reckless/drunken driving	12. Not getting prenatal care
5. Lack of exercise	13. Not using child safety seats
6. Poor eating habits	14. Suicide
7. Not getting health checkups	15. Not getting immunizations
8. Having unsafe sex	16. “Other”

“Most Important Community Issues”

1. Unemployment	13. Homelessness
2. Low income/poverty	14. Elder neglect and abuse
3. Lack of/inadequate health insurance	15. Lack of recreational facilities
4. Affordability of health services	16. Pollution
5. Dropping out of school	17. Unsafe, un-maintained roads
6. Neglect and abuse	18. Availability of health food choices
7. Child neglect and abuse	19. Lack of health care providers
8. Violent crime	20. Transportation options
9. Animal control	21. Racism
10. Availability of child care	22. “Other”
11. Domestic violence	23. Bioterrorism
12. Inadequate/unaffordable housing	24. Lack of culturally appropriate services

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders' Health Concerns

- Access to health care
 - cost
 - fewer providers
- Health problems of school children
 - drugs
 - sex
 - injury
 - violence
- Chronic disease: heart disease, diabetes, obesity
 - access issues
 - behaviors
- Lack of specialized medical services

Stakeholders' Community Concerns

- Economy
- Education and educational system
- Civic leadership
- Senior services
- Municipal conflict
- Personal Responsibility

Health Priorities

- Wilkes Community Health Council 4-year Objectives
 - Substance Abuse (including tobacco) with emphasis on prescription drug use and abuse
 - Cardiovascular Health with emphasis on Obesity and Diabetes in coordination with WCHD Health Promotion Community Action Plan
- WCHD Strategic Plan
 - Access to Care
 - Injury Prevention
 - Rabies Prevention