

ANNUAL REPORT

Wilkes County Health Department

FY: 2019-2020

From the Public Health Director, Rachel Willard...

Wilkes County Health Department has had its share of changes and challenges this past fiscal year. As a community, we have experienced our first pandemic, COVID-19 in over 100 years. With COVID-19 we have experienced statewide restrictions on travel, limitations on group gatherings, schools closures, and closures on good and services like restaurants, movie theaters, and cancelation of youth sporting events. All things we took for granted, while looking back at simpler times in 2019. We have to social distance, wear face coverings, and wash our hands more frequently. We have had the challenge of creating a testing site for community members, setting up several mass testing sites within the community, as well as testing community members for seasonal flu and COVID-19 at the height of Flu season. We have faced outbreaks, and clusters of COVID-19 in our nursing homes, congregate living facilities, meat processing plants, and agencies on the front line of disasters. Now more than ever public health and the services we provide to our community are needed.

This past year has showed our strengths with community partners, as we work with the school system to help them navigate in what is for now “the new normal”. We have worked closely with our community partners, nursing facilities, processing plants, private agencies and businesses, Wilkes Community College, Wake Forest Baptist Health- Wilkes Medical Center, The Health Foundation, Wilkes Public Library, to heed the call. Partners that enable us to provided access to care through Duke Endowment grant, addressing social determinants of health, providing access to healthy fruits and vegetables for families. Without our partners these programs may not be available. We Thank you for making Wilkes County a better place to live, work, play, and worship.

The staff of the Wilkes County Health Department appreciates the opportunity to serve our community in efforts to promote health and prevent disease. This annual report is our opportunity to remind you of the types of services that we provide, but also to make you aware of the fact that public health impacts everybody, every day and everywhere.

*“Promoting
Health and
Preventing
Disease in
Our
Community”*



NORTH CAROLINA
Local Health Department
Accreditation



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Mental Health Update

Mental Health Task Force has been meeting since early 2010. The task force is focused on prevention and access to services. Goals include: community education, integration of physical and mental health, training in preventive mental health interventions, access to care, and drug overdose prevention. The Task Force works to identify gaps in service in mental health care in Wilkes County.

Project Lazarus and Community partners recently began planning the development of Prevention Bags and rack cards. Prevention Bags will contain resources for community members on vaping, food access, mental health and substance abuse.

Project Lazarus is also working with Wake Forest Baptist Health Wilkes Center Emergency Department to assist with substance use disorder.

Additionally, Wilkes Community Health Center continues to receive additional funding to tackle Mental Health and Substance Abuse. The center has a Licensed Professional Counselor to work with our patients and community.

These opportunities have been made possible in part through a HRSA Rural Communities Opioid Response Grant

Dental Health Update

The Wilkes Public Dental Clinic is there to serve the underserved and underserved children and adults of Wilkes (and the surrounding region on a space available basis) in need of dental care. We will accept Medicaid, Health Choice, Vocational Rehab, BROCC Head Start, private insurance, and self-pay patients. A sliding fee scale will be applied for self-pay patients.

The goal of the Wilkes Public Health Dental Clinic is to provide a private practice setting that makes our patients feel special and well cared for in a clinical environment. We want our children and adults to be pleased with the public health choice they have in Wilkes. With restrictions related to COVID-19 the dental clinic saw approximately 2,800 unduplicated patients and had over 4,000 visits. For more information please visit: <http://www.wilkespublicdentalclinic.com/>

Access to Care Update

The access to care task force continues to work with local healthcare entities to ensure access to comprehensive quality health care services. Through this collaboration, uninsured residents can continue to have established pathways to seek primary and specialty care services, outpatient services, care management services and prescriptions drug services. Mental health and dental health services are now available services to Community Health Center patients. The uninsured residents of Wilkes County have received over 7 million dollars in donated healthcare services.

Preparedness

Over the past year, Wilkes Health Preparedness has worked diligently with local and state partners in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Wilkes Health has been training over the past several years to prepare for the potential spread of high consequence pathogens, influenza, and novel viruses. Wilkes Health Epidemiology Team meets frequently to provide counter measures to slow the spread of the virus. Since early March, Wilkes Health has set up mass testing sites to assist local businesses and healthcare settings control the spread of the disease. The Covid-19 team has worked laboriously contact tracing, testing, and surveying the community for potential outbreaks and clusters.

Wilkes Health Preparedness has provided education to the community on how to protect themselves from Covid-19 by wearing a mask, waiting six feet apart from other people, and washing hands thoroughly. When the vaccine becomes available to the community, Wilkes Health is prepared to set up vaccination clinics throughout the county.

Environmental Health

Water Protection: Residents and businesses receive permits and evaluations for proposed, existing, or repaired wastewater systems.



Septic Permits: 532

Well Permits: 126

Complaints: 128

Water Samples: 342

Methamphetamine Lab Notification: 0

Food & Lodging: Unannounced inspections are conducted on facilities at a risk base frequency. Complaints are investigated to ensure compliance and promote public health. Foodservice employees are educated in safe food handling practices.

Restaurants: 184

Temporary Food Establishments: 13

Meat Markets: 8

School Lunchrooms: 23

Lodging Facilities: 9

Public Pool Facilities: 22

Child & Adult Care Centers: 31

Nursing/Rest/Group Home: 28

Tattoo Permits: 8



...You can now search online for Well and Septic Permits?

Visit www.wilkeshealth.com and click the [Environmental Health tab](#)

Want to View Restaurant Grades On-Line? Go to wilkeshealth.com and click the Restaurant Inspections box.

Chronic Disease and Prevention

With the help of a grant through the Health Foundation, Wilkes Health was able to continue our Market Vouchers program this year. A new site included the summer feeding program at Traphill Elementary School. In total we assisted 60 children from North Wilkesboro Elementary, 33 children at Wilkesboro Elementary, 62 children at Mulberry Elementary, numerous children through the Summer Reading Program at the Wilkes County Library, and continued to serve families through St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Each family received at least \$5.00/week throughout the market season to be spent on fresh fruits, vegetables, and plants. A grant was received from the Health Foundation to continue the Market Bucks program for another 2 years.

We are still offering Brenner FIT classes. The last cohort completed was held at East Wilkes Middle School. This cohort completed in November of 2019. This cohort graduated 2 families. 71% of the participants maintained their BMI, 29% of participants improved their BMI. Both families that completed the cohort reported increasing their fruit and vegetable intake, as well as increasing their physical activity levels.

A cohort was started in February 2020 at Lincoln Heights Community Center. There were 16 families, a total of 56 participants enrolled. Due to COVID-19 restrictions classes were suspended with the intention of restarting classes as soon as possible.

Care Coordination for Children

CC4C is a population management program that maximizes children's health ages birth up to 5 years old. The program is offered at no charge to children who have long term medical conditions, dealing with social issues, referred by the physician or has had a recent hospital visit. The goal is to improve the healthcare of children.

Wilkes County has approximately **2,375** Medicaid children ages 0-5.

Pregnancy Care Management

OB Care Management is a population management program for prenatal patients in Wilkes County. Nurses and Social workers work with prenatal women and the OB physician to ensure the best possible care during the pregnancy and after delivery. The goal is to help have a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby.

Wilkes County has approximately **2,421** Medicaid women age 14-44.

SuperSNAP

Addresses the cost of healthy food to improve health outcomes for SNAP recipients. SuperSNAP offers incentive funds for SNAP recipients to consume more fruits and vegetables by providing a dollar for dollar match for every SNAP-eligible food purchase at Food Lion, up to a maximum of \$40 per month.

Number of Wilkes Health SuperSNAP recipients: 112

Newborn/ Postpartum Services

A registered nurse with experience in postpartum and newborn care makes a one-time visit to new mothers and their babies in their homes following discharge from the hospital. Visits have been proven to play an integral part in providing continuity of care from the hospital to the home. Our goal is to ensure that our families in Wilkes County receive the best start possible to begin a healthy life for their newborns and a smooth transition for the family.

Newborn Visits: 1
Postpartum Services: 1



Breast & Cervical Cancer Screenings- Women are checked for breast and cervical cancers and further medical care is available for abnormal results.

Cancer Screenings: 77
Abnormal Results: 9
Cancer Identified: 0



Through other funding opportunities the health department was able to provide screenings for women who met certain criteria.

Cancer Screenings: 0
Abnormal Results: 0
Cancer Identified: 0

There were no Susan G. Komen funds received for FY 2019-2020

How We Served the Community

Adult Health- Adults age 21 and older receive well and sick care.

Patients: 4,778
Patient Visits: 10,420

Child Health- Children age 20 years and below receive well and sick care.

Patients: 2,071
Patient Visits: 3,157
Physicals: 547
Lead Screening: 47
Dental Screenings: 54

Diabetes and Nutrition Center- Registered Dietitians offer individual and group classes for Diabetes education. Medical Nutrition Therapy assists patients with Weight Management, Eating Disorders, Hypertension, Hyperlipidemia, Renal Disease, Celiac Disease, Food Allergies, Sports Nutrition and Other Diagnoses.

Diabetes Education/Medical Nutrition Patients: 410
Diabetes Education Visits/Medical Nutrition Visits: 410
After the three month follow-up:
35.7% of our patients are checking their feet daily
42.86% of our patients have a hemoglobin A1c of less than 7%
Average decrease of Hemoglobin A1c of 0.67 points

Laboratory- Wilkes Health patients receive lab work to assist with prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

Lab Tests Performed: 7,154

Family Planning- Teens and adults receive complete medical care and are provided with information and options about birth control choices including abstinence.

Patients Served: 446
Patient Visits: 851
Vasectomies: 0

Pharmacy- Wilkes Health patients may receive medications at reduced cost; or arrangements may be made through an agreement with Care Connection Pharmacy.

Total Medications Filled: 1,146
Prescription Medications Filled: 716
Over the Counter Medications Filled: 430

Vital Records- Birth and death records are registered and analyzed to discover local health issues, and possible prevention activities.

Live Births Recorded: 288
Deaths Recorded: 655

Women, Infants & Children (WIC)- Eligible women and children are provided nutrition education and coupons for supplemental foods. (Numbers reflect average totals from July 2019-April 2020)

Clients: 1,603



Board of Health Members:

- Carl Page P.E., Chair
- Susan Bachmeier, RN, Vice Chair
- Deborah Britton, Public Member
- Teana Compeau, Public Member
- David Gambill, Jr., County Commissioner
- Joseph Fesperman, MD
- Keaton Mash, DDS
- Robbins Miller, DVM
- Gary Nash, OD
- Marcia Reynolds– RPh
- Robert Ricketts, DDS
- Sylvia Robinson, Public Member

Mobile Expanded School Health (MESH)

High school students receive immunizations, sports physicals, sick and injury care, counseling and support. Teen parents also receive pre- and post-natal health information, support and referrals for other services.

Total Student Visits: 2,881
 Behavioral Health Visits: 2,140 (includes middle school and high school students)
 Medical Visits: 437
 Sports Physicals: 304

Communicable & Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Screening, monitoring, and treatment for certain communicable diseases is available. Coordination with health care providers and public education is provided.

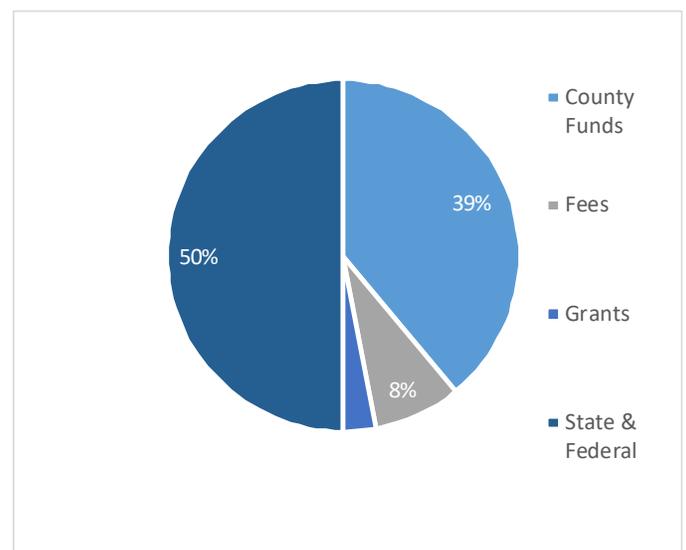
HIV Tests: 552
 TB Patients: 0
 Rabies Investigations: 32
 Reportable Diseases: 300

Immunizations (Shots/Vaccines)

Children receive vaccine management, monitoring, and administration. Boosters for employment, vaccines for international travelers, and flu and pneumococcal vaccines are also available.

Total vaccines administered: 2,800
 Total Hepatitis A vaccines: 260
 Total T-Dap vaccines: 279
 Flu vaccines administered: 143

Health Department Revenue



For More Information Please Visit Us On the Web at
www.wilkeshealth.com
 or
www.facebook.com/WilkesCountyHealth/