

# ANNUAL REPORT



Wilkes County Health Department

2015

## From the Public Health Director...

I want to highlight a few of the many accomplishments we were proud to achieve this year. As you can see by our numbers in this report our programs and services were busy serving the county in the midst of decreased funding from several grantors. This year was a year of many achievements. We were able to achieve re-accreditation from the NC Local Health Department Accreditation Board for another four years. We are proud we met 146 of 147 activities.

In addition, we were fortunate to receive a second CDC Associate through the Public Health Associate Program. Public Health Associate Program (PHAP) is a competitive, two-year, paid training program with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. PHAP associates are assigned to a state, tribal, local, or territorial public health agency and work on prevention alongside other professionals across a variety of public health settings.

The health department is completing its triennial Community Health Needs Assessment partnering with Wilkes Regional Medical Center and the Health Foundation. The results will drive many of our efforts towards making Wilkes a healthier community. Our Community Health Summit will be held in the early spring. Our results and priority setting activities will occur at this event.

Environmental Health and Health Promotion Sections received NACCHO grants to provide improved services to our community. Our clinics, Diabetes and MESH programs received several grants through the Office of Rural Health and other grantors to increase access to care and improve patient outcomes. With this funding, we have been able to extend hours in our clinic, increase provider days on the MESH unit, provide Diabetes visits and expand our mental health counseling in the schools. In addition, through partnerships with Wake Forest Baptist and a grant with the Health Foundation, we are providing tele-health in our Diabetes and Nutrition Center by offering the Brenner FIT program and the Brenner FIT Academy for children and families in Wilkes County.

The recent Chipotle outbreaks, Zika virus mosquito outbreak in South America and the lead contamination in Flint, Michigan highlight the need for a strong public health system in capacity and response to protect the public health of Wilkes County.

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 BOARD



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## Mental Health Update

The Mental Health Services 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 has been working to expand access to health care and increase coverage for mental health issues, discussing and identifying gaps in service in mental health care in Wilkes County and working to reduce the burden of mental health in emergency care centers through the use of mobile crisis centers. It continues to advocate for and work toward integration of care and information sharing, as well as addressing mental health and substance abuse issues with relevance to youth, particularly with input from Wilkes County Schools and Project Lazarus. Project Lazarus is collaborating with WCS and WCHD to conduct a Youth Risk Behavior Survey to assess emerging and continuing issues among young people in regard to mental health and substance abuse.

## Dental Health Update

The Wilkes Public Dental Clinic is there to serve the unserved 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.

The number of unduplicated patients served in the dental clinic this year was 6,144 and a yearly total of 17,580.

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 proper availability of primary and specialty care for the uninsured. In 2015 \$ 485,951 of care was donated. Since 2009 over 5 million in donated services have been provided to the uninsured residents of Wilkes County. Through this collaboration, uninsured residents can continue to have established pathways to seek primary care, specialty care, outpatient services, and prescription drugs. Several new initiatives have been implemented, in 2011 an annual free dental clinic was started as a result, \$60,000 in free dental care has been provided. In 2013 FaithHealthNC was introduced and started to manage and improve healthcare outcomes through partnerships between the faith community and the healthcare system. The new aim for the task force is to apply for a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)

## Preparedness

The health department along with several community partners completed a Public Health Preparedness Exercise in November of 2015. This exercise was designed to test WCHD's emergency plan in order to make improvements to the plan that will allow us to better serve our community in the event of a Public Health emergency or disaster. Public volunteers from our community were invited to encourage community awareness and involvement in disaster preparedness.



Currently, the health department is working collectively with the Local Emergency Planning Committee to possible exposures to Ebola and other emerging infectious diseases.

## Environmental Health

**Water Protection:** Residents and businesses receive permits and evaluations for proposed, existing or repaired wastewater systems. (2014-2015 fiscal year)



**Septic Permits:** 484

**Well Permits:** 82

**Complaints:** 43

**Water Samples:** 211

**Methamphetamine Lab Notification:** 16

**Food & Lodging:** Certain facilities are inspected routinely and if complaints are filed to ensure safety against possible disease transmission. Workers at these facilities are also educated in food handling safety measures. (2014-2015 fiscal year)

**Restaurants:** 198

**Temporary Food Establishments:** 29

**Meat Markets:** 11

**School Lunchrooms:** 22

**Lodging Facilities:** 9

**Public Pool Facilities:** 23

**Child & Adult Care Centers:** 43

**Nursing/Rest/Group Home:** 43

**Tattoo Permits:** 3

Want to View Restaurant Grades On-Line? Go to [wilkeshealth.com](http://wilkeshealth.com) and click the Restaurant Inspections box.

## Chronic Disease and Prevention

The health department and Cooperative Extension successfully implemented its second season of cooking demonstrations at the Wilkes Open Air Market and Wilkes County Farmers Market. The demonstrations took place during the market season on the third weekends of the month.

With the help of a grant through the Health Foundation, the health department was able to provide Market Vouchers to 68 families from North Wilkesboro Elementary. Each family received \$50.00 spread out throughout the market season to be spent on fresh fruits, vegetables, and plants.

The health department in partnership with the Northwest Regional Tobacco Manager provided tobacco and smoking education to students in all five High Schools.

With the continued support of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) grant, the health department was able to implement 3 Chronic Disease Self Management (CDSMP) classes. Through these classes 25 community members were reached.

The health department has also received a grant from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to increase our capacity to recruit new healthy corner stores (HCS). Currently Wilkes County has 3 healthy corner stores, all located in food deserts. The goal with HCS is to increase the availability of healthy food options in local run in stores.

## Care Coordination for Children

CC4C is a population management program to maximize children's health outcomes. The program will target the highest risk and highest medical cost children for care management. These services are provided for Medicaid children birth to 5 years of age in Wilkes County.

Wilkes County has approximately 2,578 Medicaid children ages 0-5.

## Pregnancy Care Management

OB Care Management is a population management program for prenatal patients in Wilkes County. The care managers help mothers and babies be as healthy as possible. These services are provided for all Medicaid pregnant women in Wilkes County and who are determined to be at high risk and qualify for services.

Wilkes County has approximately 2,917 Medicaid women age 14-44.

## Health Check

Wilkes County families are contacted to ensure their children receiving Medicaid benefits get a complete physical each year.

Number of children eligible for Health Check: **8863**

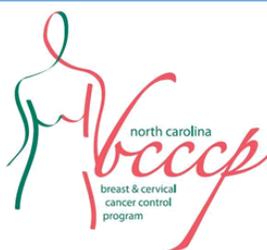
Number of children eligible receiving an annual physical: **4933**

Participation Rate: 67.4%

## Newborn/ Postpartum Services

New mothers receive postpartum and newborn health assessments, counseling for breastfeeding and nutrition, household safety inspections, parenting education, and screening for genetic or developmental disorders.

Newborn Visits: **122**  
Postpartum Services: **108**



*Breast & Cervical Cancer Screenings-* Women are checked for breast and cervical cancers and further medical care is available for abnormal results.  
Cancer Screenings: 71  
Abnormal Results: 19  
Cancer Identified: 2



*Susan G Komen for the Cure Grant Funding-*Women are checked for breast cancers and further medical care is available for abnormal results thanks to grant monies provided from Susan G. Komen for the Cure.  
Cancer Screenings: 28  
Abnormal Results: 14  
Cancer Identified: 0

## How We Served the Community

*Adult Health-* Adults age 21 and older receive well and sick care.  
Patients: 1,617  
Patient Visits: 4,501

*Child Health-* Children age 20 years and below receive well and sick care.  
Patients: 1,245  
Patient Visits: 1,855  
Physicals: 498  
Lead Screening: 50  
Dental Screenings: 58

*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: 558  
Diabetes Education Visits/Medical Nutrition Visits: 1,035  
After the three month follow-up:  
77.9% of our patients are checking their feet daily  
54.3% of our patients have a hemoglobin A1c of less than 7%  
Average decrease of Hemoglobin A1c of 0.7 points

*Laboratory-* Health Department patients receive lab work to assist with prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.  
Lab Tests Performed: 5,731

*Family Planning-* Teens and adults receive complete medical care and are provided with information and options about birth control choices including abstinence.  
Patients Served: 575  
Patient Visits: 1,042  
Vasectomies: 1

*Pharmacy-* Health department patients may receive medications at reduced cost; or arrangements may be made through an agreement with the WRMC Care Connection Pharmacy.  
Medications Filled: 870

*Vital Records-* Birth and death records are registered and analyzed to discover local health issues, and possible prevention activities.  
Live Births Recorded: 452  
Deaths Recorded: 578

*Women, Infants & Children (WIC)-* Eligible women and children are provided nutrition education and coupons for supplemental foods.  
Clients: 1,735



## 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.

Behavioral Health Visits: 656  
 Student Visits: 864  
 Sports Physicals: 365

## Board of Health Members:

- Don Manus, RPh– Chair
- Joseph Fesperman, MD– Vice Chair
- Sandra Sheppard, RN
- Eyda Bennett, Public Member
- Robert Ricketts, DDS
- Robbins Miller, DVM
- David Gambill, Jr., County Commissioner
- Teana Comeau, Public Member
- Brenda Sales, Public Member
- Robert Taylor, OD
- Carl Page, Engineer

## Communicable & Sexually Transmitted Diseases

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

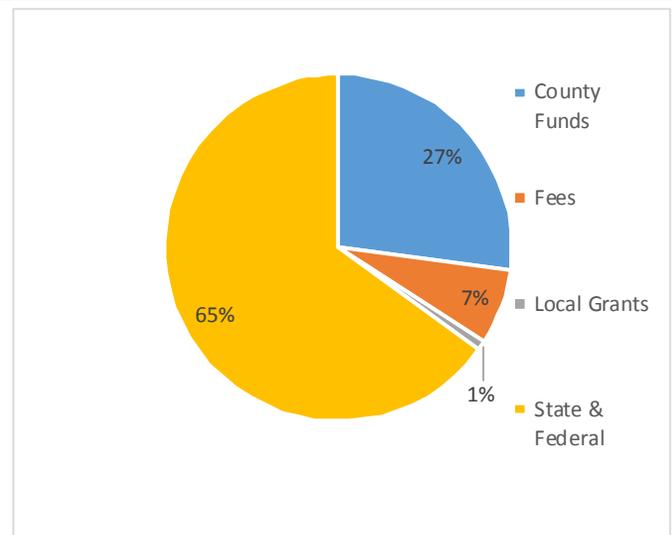
HIV Tests: 552  
 TB Patients: 2  
 Rabies Investigations: 72  
 Reportable Diseases: 262

## 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: 2,429  
 Total Hepatitis A vaccines: 210  
 Total T-Dap vaccines: 263  
 Flu vaccines administered: 808

## Health Department Revenue



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[www.wilkeshealth.com](http://www.wilkeshealth.com)  
 or  
[www.facebook.com/WilkesCountyHealth/](https://www.facebook.com/WilkesCountyHealth/)