

# ANNUAL REPORT



Wilkes County Health Department

FY: 2015-2016

## 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. The health department completed 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 four priority areas are obesity and chronic disease, mental health and substance abuse, access to care and tobacco and smoking.

We were able to achieve successful joint monitoring of our Women's and Children's Health Programs, and Administrative Monitoring which included for the first time coding and billing audits. Women, Infant and Children (WIC) program successfully moved to space that is twice the size of our location at the health department and convenient to the Diabetes and Nutrition Center and centrally located for our families close to physician offices, pharmacies and the hospital thanks to our partnership with the Health Foundation.

Environmental Health and Health Promotion Sections received grants to provide improved services to our community including food safety and prescription drug abuse. 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. We just graduated our first Brenner FIT Academy class this year. **Fourteen** families completed this six-month program.

The recent massive flooding in Eastern North Carolina from hurricane Matthew and the Zika virus mosquito outbreak now spreading to Florida 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"*



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LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT ACCREDITATION BOARD



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## Mental Health Update

The 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 and is planning to hold a Community Resource Forum in Fall 2016 to educate the community on mental health and substance abuse crisis and recovery services to help reduce the burden of mental health in emergency departments. Project Lazarus and Wilkes County Schools are reliable partners in addressing mental health & substance abuse among youth in Wilkes County. The Youth Behavior Risk Survey and PRIDE Survey have been implemented in grades 6-12 of WCS and the data has been presented to the schools and various community partners. Project Lazarus leads a Community Coalition as of early 2016, which aims to address substance abuse and accidental overdose in Wilkes County, and a sub-committee of this ground, the Youth Coalition, has been active since 2015 in addressing substance abuse issues among adolescents. A Health Educator from the Health Department serves as Chair for the Youth Coalition and there is significant representation of public health in both groups. Additionally, the Mobile Expanded School Health unit (MESH) has expanded mental health services to Wilkes County middle schools.

## 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 5,978 and a yearly total of 16,495.

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.

Between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016 \$543,886 was donated in free health care. Since 2009 over 5.5 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, care management services and prescriptions drugs. The 6th annual free dental clinic was held in 2016 in which over \$80,000 in free dental care has been provided since 2011. In July 2016, an application for a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) was submitted to expand healthcare to the residents of Wilkes County.

## Preparedness

WCHD 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 serves as the Deputy Chief of Operations in the EOC during the Zika Response. Our Associates add to WCHD's capacity in Emergency Preparedness because of their experience participating in large-scale, international public health emergencies of emerging infectious diseases.

WCHD has worked collectively with local emergency response agencies to develop a plan for responding to Ebola and Other Highly Infectious Disease emergencies. The WCHD along with several community partners will be conducting an Emergency Preparedness Tabletop Exercise in October of 2016 designed to test this plan. Exercises like this allow us to improve our plans and allow us to better serve our community in the event of an infectious disease emergency.

Currently, the WCHD is developing a public health messaging plan for mosquito control to help inform Wilkes County residents on ways to help prevent Zika transmission

## Environmental Health

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

**Septic Permits:** 448

**Well Permits:** 102

**Complaints:** 65

**Water Samples:** 176

**Methamphetamine Lab Notification:** 3



**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:** 171

**Temporary Food Establishments:** 45

**Meat Markets:** 10

**School Lunchrooms:** 22

**Lodging Facilities:** 9

**Public Pool Facilities:** 23

**Child & Adult Care Centers:** 43

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

**Tattoo Permits:** 5

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 successfully implemented its third 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 80 families from North Wilkesboro Elementary, 30 families at Wilkesboro Elementary, 53 families at Mulberry Elementary, 18 families in Brenner FIT, and 10 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.

The health department in partnership with the Northwest Regional Tobacco Manager assisted Woodfield Apartments, Walden Ridge Apartments Grandview Apartments in implementing smoke free policies.

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. We just graduated our first Brenner FIT Academy class this year. Fourteen families completed this six-month program.

## 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 **2,528** 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 **2,723** 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. (FY 2012)

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

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

Participation Rate: **67.4%**

## 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: **101**  
Postpartum Services: **78**



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

Cancer Screenings: 86  
Abnormal Results: 11  
Cancer Identified: 1



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

Cancer Screenings: 13  
Abnormal Results: 2  
Cancer Identified: 0

## How We Served the Community

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

Patients: 1,636  
Patient Visits: 4,754

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

Patients: 1,516  
Patient Visits: 2,279  
Physicals: 483  
Lead Screening: 70  
Dental Screenings: 47

*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: 399  
Diabetes Education Visits/Medical Nutrition Visits: 1088  
After the three month follow-up:  
54% of our patients are checking their feet daily  
48% of our patients have a hemoglobin A1c of less than 7%  
Average decrease of Hemoglobin A1c of 0.4 points

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

Lab Tests Performed: 4,544

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

Patients Served: 603  
Patient Visits: 1,090  
Vasectomies: 0

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

Total Medications Filled: 1,148  
Prescription Medications Filled: 907  
Over the Counter Medications Filled: 241

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

Live Births Recorded: 475  
Deaths Recorded: 564

*Women, Infants & Children (WIC)-* Eligible women and children are provided nutrition education and coupons for supplemental foods. (Numbers reflect average totals from July 2015-April 2016)  
Clients: 1,697



## 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: 1,907  
 Behavioral Health Visits: 678  
 Medical 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.

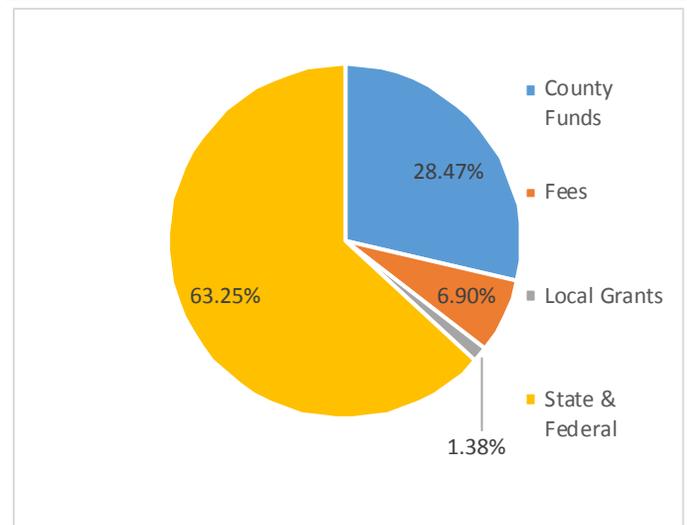
HIV Tests: 552  
 TB Patients: 2  
 Rabies Investigations: 72  
 Reportable Diseases: 262

## 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/)