2020
Lincoln County
State of the County Health Report

2020 Lincoln County SOTCH Report
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State Of The County Report

Report Completed by:
Community Health Division of the
Lincoln County Health Department
Lincoln County Partnership for Health

Who are we?
The Partnership for Health is a community-based partnership that brings together community members, leaders, and organizations to address local health issues.

Special Thanks to Partnership Organizations:
- Lincoln County Health Department
- Atrium Health-Lincoln
- Lincoln County Department of Social Services
- Lincoln County Schools
- Lincoln County Parks and Recreation
- North Carolina Cooperative Extension
- Partnership for Children of Lincoln and Gaston Counties
- United Way of Lincoln County
- YMCA
- Gaston Family Health Services
- Lincoln County Emergency Medical Services
- Lincoln County Transportation
- Lincoln County Child Advocacy Center
- Lincoln Economic Development Association
- Partners Behavioral Health Management
- NC Oral Health Section
- Ollie Harris Behavioral Health Center
- Denver Fire Department
- Keever Pharmacy

Are you or someone in your organization interested in joining the Lincoln County Partnership for Health?

Call to join: 704-736-2023
The 2020-2022 Health Priority Areas

Lincoln County’s most recent CHA was completed for 2019. The CHA document can be found online by visiting www.lincolncounty.org/index.aspx?NID=452 and choosing documents. After analyzing the available data and assessing available resources, the Lincoln County Partnership for Health chose the priorities that Lincoln County should work on for 2020-2022. Action plans were created to be carried out by the Partnership for Health to address the chosen priorities. The Lincoln County Board of Health approved the chosen priorities and action plans to be implemented in Lincoln County. The following priorities were chosen for the 2020-2022 working period:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Implementation Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Substance Use</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Provide targeted education strategies to: ● All community members beginning in middle school, especially students involved in sports and extra curricular activities. ● Pre- and post- partum parents and caregivers.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prevention</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Preparedness</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Provide education and resources to all community members regarding emergency planning and preparedness.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Promote county information and resources regarding emergency planning and preparedness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Provide education regarding recommended well-care visits and age appropriate preventative health and wellness screenings to all community members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Promote county specific resources that address primary care, mental health, and oral health needs to improve access to care.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information about the data:

- The Lincoln County health statistics in this report are compared to the State of North Carolina, BRFSS Piedmont region, BRFSS Region 4, bordering counties, or are used as stand-alone statistics.
- A majority of the data is pulled from the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics, United States Census Bureau, 2019 Lincoln County Community Health Assessment, and other independent data sources.
- Morbidity is the rate or number of people that are sick with a certain disease/illness.
- Mortality is the rate or number of people who die of a certain disease.
- BRFSS Piedmont Region (LCR) is comprised of Alamance, Alexander, Anson, Cabarrus, Caswell, Catawba, Chatham, Cleveland, Davidson, Davie, Durham, Forsyth, Franklin, Gaston, Granville, Guilford, Iredell, Lee, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Moore, Orange, Person, Randolph, Richmond, Rockingham, Rowan, Stanly, Stokes, Union, Vance, Wake, Warren, and Yadkin counties.
- BRFSS Region 4 is comprised of Alexander, Cabarrus, Catawba, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly, and Union counties.
- Emerging Issues will be emphasized in red font throughout this document.
Population
Lincoln County’s population continues to increase. In 2018 the population was estimated to be 83,770. This number represents a percentage increase of 3.4% from July 2015. Males and females held an even percentage of the total population at 49.6% and 50.4% in 2018, respectively.

-US Census Bureau 2018

Race and Ethnicity
Race and ethnicity are considered separate and distinct. Thus, in addition to race, all residents are categorized by membership in one of two ethnicities, which are "Hispanic" and "Non Hispanic".

-US Census Bureau 2018

Education
According to 2018 US Census Bureau estimates, 89.1% of Lincoln County residents aged ≥25 have at least a high school diploma and 25.5% have at least a bachelor’s degree. The 2019 CHO Survey indicated that 96.8% of respondents hold a high school diploma or GED and 51.6% hold a Bachelor’s Degree or higher. The Lincoln County Superintendent Report indicates that the district four-year graduation rate of 89.9% is higher than the state’s graduation rate of 86.3%, in 2017. The Lincoln County School’s dropout rate was 1.23 for the 2017-2018 school year, the Lincoln County Charter School’s dropout rate was 0.31 for the same time frame. Dropout rates are important because educational attainment level has been shown to have a direct link to many socioeconomic indicators including poverty status and household income, both of these indicators affect health outcomes.

-Lincoln County Charter School
The Substance Abuse Issue

Substance abuse is an important public health issue because it can influence many aspects of one’s life affecting the individual, family and community. Healthy People 2020 states that substance abuse plays a part in expensive social, physical, mental and public health issues (as cited in Lincoln County Community Health Assessment (LCCHA), 2019). Individuals with poor family, friend, and community ties are at an increased risk of substance abuse over their peers that have adequate support systems (LCCHA, 2019).

Illicit Drug Use and Prescription Drug Abuse

Drug abuse and overdose rates are on the rise. Opioid overdose is the cause of more than 60% of all overdose deaths in the United States. Studies have found that opioid prescriptions for Americans have increased, even though reported pain has not increased (as cited in LCCHA, 2019).

Naloxone is a medication that blocks receptor sites in the brain successfully reversing the effects of an overdose (SAMHSA). Naloxone works to prevent overdose by opioids including heroin, morphine, fentanyl, codeine, methadone, oxycodone, and hydrocodone. In 2017, 2018, and 2019, reported case counts of emergency department usage of naloxone to prevent overdose in Lincoln County residents was 12, 11, and 10, respectively (NCDETECT).

Tobacco Use

Smoking status in NC BRFSS Piedmont Region/Lincoln County Region (LCR) residents has remained fairly constant in all years reported (NC BRFSS, 2015-2018). This lack of improvement may show a need for more or improved tobacco prevention programming in the LCR. Healthy People 2030 reports that tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of early death and disease in the nation. E-cigarette use among young people has become an epidemic in the nation and poses a public health threat (as cited in LCCHA, 2019).

Alcohol Use

Binge drinking has been shown to have negative effects on the body and mental state, and lead to an increased likelihood of alcohol-related unintentional injuries and death. In 2018, 17.1% of NC Region 4 BRFSS respondents indicated that they have binge drank in the past (even once), compared to 14.8% of NC (NC BRFSS, 2018). The percentage of Region 4 BRFSS and NC respondents reporting binge drinking (even once) has increased for 2018.(BRFSS, 2018). This reported increase of binge drinking regionally and at the state level indicates a need for improved education and prevention strategies regarding the negative consequences associated with alcohol abuse and binge drinking. College students, males, those identifying as non-Hispanic white, and those who earn an income of ≥$50,000 per year are at a greater risk for binge drinking, thus targeted prevention programming should be considered.
Why is Emergency Preparedness Important?
Emergency Preparedness affects everyone from every background and social standing; the absence of emergency planning can prove catastrophic to individuals, communities, counties, states, and the nation. As a response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and other acts of terrorism that followed, the North Carolina Department of Public Health within the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services created the Public Health Preparedness and Response Branch (PHP&R) within the Epidemiology Section to monitor and strengthen the capacity of public health and healthcare organizations to prevent, protect, mitigate, respond appropriately, and aid in recovery when disaster strikes. Lincoln County is part of the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) Region field office of the larger PHP&R Branch.

Personal Preparedness
According to structural fire data provided by the Lincoln County Fire Marshal’s Office, smoke detectors were present 55% of the time and operated correctly 84% of the time between 2017 and 2019 in Lincoln County. These numbers indicate a need for increased awareness and education regarding the importance of having a functional smoke detector in homes and businesses. 2019 CHO Survey respondents indicated that they were 68.5% likely to have both smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors in their homes, while 28.9% indicated that they only had smoke detectors in their homes. Between 2017 and 2019, there were 12 injuries and 5 casualties reported from fire related calls from all 12 fire departments in Lincoln County. Lincoln County fire departments have participated in Smoke Alarm Saturday, which is held on the first Saturday in June, in recent years. Smoke Alarm Saturday is a North Carolina Department of Insurance Initiative out of the Office of the State Fire Marshal that aims to provide free smoke alarms to Lincoln County residents who need them. The Smoke Alarm Saturday Initiative hopes to increase the number of working smoke alarms in homes and decrease the number of injuries and casualties from fire related calls, because even 1 death that could potentially be prevented is too many.

Data Findings
Lincoln County houses 12 paid and volunteer fire departments. Data provided by the Lincoln County Fire Marshal’s Office indicates that of all the fire related calls that were responded to between 2017 and 2019, 54.4% were considered structural fires, 19.3% were wildfires, 11.6% were fires involving trash, rubbish or a landfill, and 14.7% were vehicle or mobile property fires. Additionally, of the weather related calls that the 12 fire departments responded to between 2017 and 2019, 52.8% of the calls were due to severe weather or a natural disaster, 43.0% were due to heavy winds, 1.7% were due to floods, 1.0% were due to lightning strikes with no fire, and 1.5% were due to other reasons.

Source: 2018 Lincoln County Emergency Operations Plan provided by the Lincoln County Department of Emergency Management
Why is Access to Health Services Important?
Access to health care impacts one’s overall physical, social, and mental health status and quality of life. To achieve the best health outcomes, gaining entry into the health care system, accessing a location where health care needs can be met, and finding a health care provider that can be trusted by the patient and offer a personal relationship is required. When considering access to health care, it is important to also include oral health care and obtaining necessary prescription drugs (Healthy People 2020).

Data Findings
55.13% of 2019 CHO Survey respondents believe there is good healthcare in Lincoln County when considering the cost, quality, and availability of healthcare in the county. A majority of respondents believe the service most needing improvement in Lincoln County is culturally appropriate health services.

Clinical Care and Access
Lincoln County has significantly fewer primary care physicians, dentists and mental health providers than the average county in North Carolina. This gap in access to care represents an organizational challenge when examining Lincoln County using a Socio-Ecological lens. This deficit of providers proves to be a great inhibitor to clinical care access since this would increase the likelihood that some county residents would be required to travel out of the county to see a medical provider. Increased driving distance to medical appointments can cause individuals to use more sick time or leave without pay to attend their appointments.

Health care coverage status has a major impact on an individual’s ability to receive and sustain comprehensive care. A lack of health insurance or inadequate health insurance can also exacerbate many chronic disease conditions. According to the 2018 BRFSS survey, 84.2% of NC Region 4 respondents indicated they had health insurance coverage, leaving 15.8% of NC Region 4 uninsured. Considering this statistic it should be noted that 15.8% of 2018 BRFSS NC Region 4 respondents also self-reported that there was a time in the past 12 months that they could not see a doctor when needed due to cost.

According to the 2018 Medicaid Annual Report, there were 17,598 (21.1%) Medicaid eligible persons living in Lincoln County. The number above accounts for 211 out of every 1,000 people that are eligible for Medicaid services in Lincoln County.
Primary Care
Lincoln County has a ratio of 2,080 people per 1 primary care physician compared to Catawba County and Gaston County’s ratio of 1,490:1 and 1,670:1, respectively. Having a primary care provider is beneficial to an individual’s quality of life and overall health. Primary care physicians can help their patients navigate good health by early detection of chronic disease and can provide guidance on how to manage current chronic disease conditions.

Mental Health
Mental health disorders can make it harder or impossible for an affected person to seek medical treatment and prevention services when needed causing an increased risk of chronic disease and illnesses, substance abuse, self-harm, and suicide. The mental health provider ratio in Lincoln County is 2,110:1 compared to Catawba County and Gaston County at 510:1 and 460:1, respectively. The mental health provider ratio in Lincoln County represents an unfavorable gap in services available to county residents.

Oral Health
According to the NC Oral Health Regional Snapshot, 48% of individuals living in Region IV under the age of 21 who were enrolled in Medicaid did not take advantage of the dental services provided to them through their insurance. Additionally, 72% of Region 4 children aged 1-2 did not receive preventative services (fluoride varnish) through Medicaid (NC DHHS, Division of Medical Assistance). The ratio for people per dentist in Lincoln County is 2,350:1 compared to Catawba County and Gaston County’s ratio of 1,900:1 and 1,800:1, respectively. Dental disease can affect many other aspects of an individual’s health, increasing one’s risk factors for heart disease, respiratory infections, and diabetic complications.

Health Behaviors affected by Access to Care
As per the 2018 NC BRFSS survey, Region 4 residents responded 77% of the time that they participated in physical activity or exercises (outside of their regular jobs) such as running, calisthenics, golf, gardening, or walking for exercise, compared to NC at 76.1% of the time. This is good news because research shows that adequate physical activity decreases your risk for many chronic health conditions including depressive disorders, heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, and stroke. In addition to physical activity, sleep quality and length are essential to good health. Inadequate sleep can exacerbate chronic conditions and negatively affect one’s day to day activities. Research reveals that adults aged 18+ should be getting 7-9 hours of sleep each night, while 6-17 year olds should get around 8-12 hours, 1-5 year olds should receive between 10-14 hours each night, while newborns and infants should get around 12-17 hours of sleep per day (including naps) (CDC-Sleep). Across NC and Region 4, 2018 NC BRFSS data reveals that 64.6% and 61.6% of individuals aged 18+ received the recommended 7 or more hours of sleep per day, respectively.
Continuing Initiatives and New Initiatives

Substance Abuse:
- The Lincoln County Partnership for Health chose to focus on two initiatives to positively impact the Substance Abuse strategy.

⇒ Continuing Initiative: Medication disposal
  *The purpose of this intervention is for local pharmacies to install drug disposal boxes in their facilities for customers to safely dispose of needles and syringes.
⇒ New Initiative: CATCH My Breath Curriculum

Emergency Preparedness:
- The Lincoln County Partnership for Health chose to focus on two initiatives to positively impact the Emergency Preparedness strategy.

⇒ Continuing Initiative: Smoke Alarm Saturday
⇒ New Initiative: Reporting System
  *The purpose of this intervention is to develop a reporting system that providers like EMS, DSS, etc. could Notify the fire department of the need for smoke detectors in specific households.

Health Services:
- The Lincoln County Partnership for Health chose to focus on two initiatives to positively impact the Health Services strategy.

⇒ Continuing Initiative: Parks Rx intervention program.
  * The purpose of this intervention is to increase the number of providers that prescribe their patients Park Rx prescriptions to encourage healthy outdoor activity, healthful eating and improve overall wellness to positively impact chronic disease conditions (verses using prescription medications, when appropriate).
⇒ New Initiative: Preventive Health screening opportunities

The Lincoln County Partnership for Health and the Lincoln County Board of Health chose and approved the initiatives that are being used to address the 2019 Community Health Assessment priorities. Action plans were submitted to the state of NC in July 2020.
References

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)—
http://www.schs.state.nc.us/data/brfss/survey.htm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—
https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/epidemic/

Lincoln County Health Department 2019 Community Health Assessment—

Lincoln County Schools Superintendent’s Letter—
https://www.lcsnc.org/domain/2119

NC State Center for Health Statistics—http://www.schs.state.nc.us/data/

US Census Bureau—https://www.census.gov/data.html