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# STATE OF THE COUNTY HEALTH REPORT

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**2015**



*Teresa C. Ellen, RN., MPH*  
*Health Director*

*Matthew A. Hojatzadeh, MPH*  
*Public Health Educator II*

**Wilson County Health Department**  
**1801 Glendale Dr. SW**  
**Wilson, NC 27893**

## PURPOSE

The 2015 State of the County Health Report (SOTCH) is a report completed annually in the years between our full Community Health Assessment. It provides an update on the progress made toward our priority health concerns identified in the 2013 Community Health Assessment. In addition it provides the most recent mortality and morbidity rate. The Wilson County priority health issues are 1) Obesity, 2) Access to Care, and 3) Substance Abuse. Community Coalitions and partners such as Wilson 20/20, The Wilson County Substance Abuse Coalition, Wilson County DSS, and The Wilson County Health Department are working together across the county to address these issues.

## DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC

	Wilson County	North Carolina
Population, 2014 estimate	81,401	9,943,964
White	57%	71.5%
Black	39.8%	22.1%
Asian	1.1%	2.7%
Hispanic or Latino	10.1%	9.0%
Two or More Races	1.5%	2.1%
Percent high school graduate or higher	79.1%	85.4%

*\*Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts.*

This year Wilson County was upgraded to a Tier 2 county due to improvements in our economic status. According to data from the US bureau of Labor Statistics Wilson County is one of five counties where salaries are within 10% of the statewide average. This gives a deceiving picture of the true socio-economic outlook of the county as a whole. We are privileged to have three pharmaceutical companies as well as large businesses such as Firestone and BB&T. These higher paying salaries often inflate the average salary for the county. We continue to have higher unemployment rates than statewide averages and the education statistics consistently ranks much lower than statewide averages. As a result we have a large population that is uninsured and underinsured in Wilson County. The loss of the Tier 1 status decreased the opportunities to apply for funding to support many of our healthcare needs.

## LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH IN WILSON COUNTY 2014

**TABLE 1: Top 10 Leading Causes of Death in Wilson County, 2014**

Rank	Cause of Death	# of Deaths	Wilson Co. Rate
1	Cancer (All Types)	203	25.2
2	Heart Disease	164	20.3
3	Cerebrovascular Diseases	32	4.0
4	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	31	3.8
5	Diabetes Mellitus	28	3.5
6	Unintentional Injuries	24	3.0
	Alzheimer's Disease	24	3.0
8	Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome and Nephrosis	21	2.6
	Septicemia	21	2.5
10	Influenza and Pneumonia	20	2.5
	All other causes (Residual)	239	29.5
	<b>Total Deaths—All Causes</b>	<b>807</b>	<b>100.0</b>

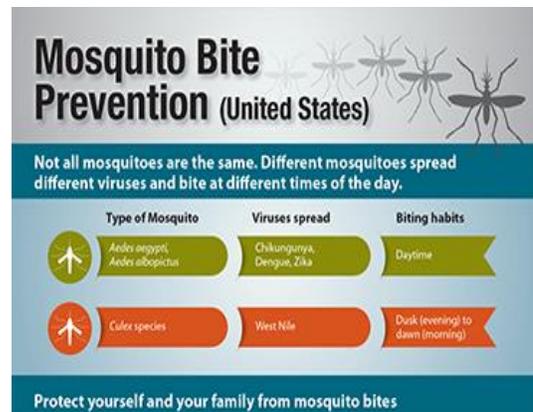
*\*Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics*

The top 3 leading causes of death in Wilson County (Table 1) continue to be cancer, heart disease, and cerebrovascular disease. Cancer remains the top cause of death in the County, with Lung Cancer the most common in both men and women. Health disparities and lifestyle behaviors such as smoking, physical inactivity and poor diet are linked to many of these leading causes of death.

## EMERGING TOPICS AND NEW INITIATIVES

**Zika virus** is spread to people through mosquito bites. The most common symptoms of Zika virus disease are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting from several days to a week. Severe disease requiring hospitalization is uncommon. Recently, the disease entered Brazil, and health experts are pointing to the United States becoming a new home for local transmission. The virus's arrival in the United States means travelers should be especially careful and take extra precautions to avoid infection. Much like dengue fever, there is no vaccine, cure or preventative medication for Zika virus outside of repellents and taking normal anti-mosquito measures. There have been reports of a serious birth defect of the brain called microcephaly (a condition in which a baby's head is smaller than expected when compared to babies of the same sex and age) and other poor pregnancy outcomes in babies of mothers who were infected with Zika virus while pregnant. Knowledge of the link between Zika and these outcomes is evolving, but until more is known, CDC recommends special precautions for women who are pregnant (in any trimester) and women who are trying to become pregnant.

*(Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)*



***Opiate and Heroin Overdoses:***

The CDC says heroin use is at epidemic levels and young people 18 to 25 are most susceptible.



Between 2002 and 2013 nationally, the rate of heroin-related overdose deaths nearly quadrupled, and more than 8,200 people died in 2013. In 2014, Wilson police made 799 drug-related arrests and so far this year there have been 425 arrests. According to Wilson County EMS officials, overall overdose numbers have been steady for several years. In 2014, EMS responded to 164 overdose calls, one almost every other day.

***Affordable Care Act:***

We are providing opportunities across Wilson County for our citizens to enroll for the ACA health insurance plans. What we are finding is that the majority of these plans are catastrophic plans with large deductibles. Therefore when these patients present for primary care at the health department they end up on the sliding fee scale. Many others are simply choosing not to enroll and instead pay the penalty because the premiums are just too high. This keeps the access to care issue on the forefront here in Wilson County.

***School based Health Center:***

The Wilson County Health Department in partnership with the Wilson County DSS, the Wilson County Schools and the Wilson 20/20 Youth Master Plan health and wellness committee are seeking grant funding for a School based health center. Our initial plan is to pilot at one middle school here in the county and expand as funding allows. This would provide immediate access to the students for urgent health issues, nutrition counseling, health education, and behavioral health counseling. We can address all three of our priority health issues of Obesity, Access to Care and Substance Abuse by implementing a school based clinic.



***Eat Smart Move More:***

A recent survey conducted by the Wilson 20/20 Beyond 21 health and wellness committee revealed that Wilson County citizens feel there is a need for increased access to walking trails and improved nutrition. As a result the local YMCA, The Wilson County Health Department and the Wilson County DSS are taking the lead to implement the Eat Smart Move More initiative county wide. Eat Smart Move More is an evidenced based physical activity and nutrition program that utilizes

many different avenues to improve the health of our citizens. Some of those avenues include media, faith based initiatives, and work site wellness.

## PRIORITY #1 OBESITY

According to the University of Wisconsin County Health Rankings 37% of the adults in Wilson County are Obese. This compares to the NC average of 29%.

### ***Wilson Tobs project:***

The Wilson County Health Department entered into a partnership with the Wilson Tobs baseball team to increase the number of healthy options at the games. The 2015 baseball season was a success and we plan to offer the same options and nutritional information during the 2016 season. Please come out to one of the games and see our project in action.

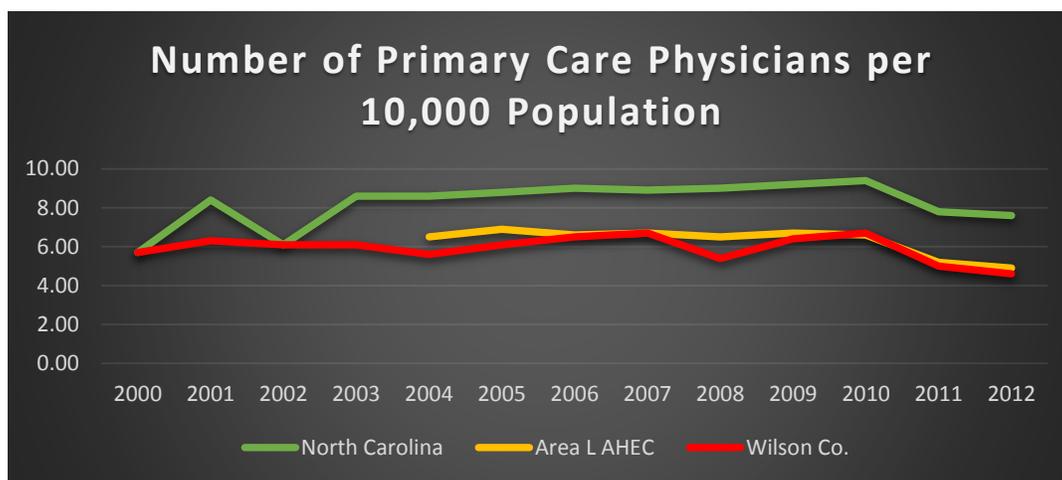
### ***Wilson 20/20 Beyond 21 Health and Wellness Committee:***

The Health and Wellness committee a part of the Beyond 21 initiative has included in its plan implementation of the Eat Smart Move More Evidenced Based programs and also has plans to support the expansion of the walking trails/bike paths available to the citizens of Wilson County.

## PRIORITY #2: ACCESS TO CARE

### ***Wilson Medical Center:***

This past year, Wilson Medical Center (WMC) has added to two primary care practices and an orthopedic practice. They have as part of their continued priorities for 2016 added additional physicians to their staff.



***Area L AHEC includes the counties of: Edgecombe, Halifax, Nash, Northampton and Wilson***

*\*Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics*

### ***Wilson County Health Department:***

Wilson County Health Department added a primary care physician in September of 2015; as a result, increasing access to primary care for the uninsured and the underinsured. In addition, the health department entered into a partnership with Wayne County Health Department to bring their mobile dental unit to Wilson County, therefore increasing access to dental care for our elementary school children.

## **PRIORITY #3: SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

### ***Wilson County Substance Abuse Coalition:***

The Wilson County Substance Abuse Coalition has entered into a partnership with the Wilson County Health Department to implement Project Lazarus. This funding provides access to the opioid antagonist Naloxone to prevent overdoses. The Wilson County Sheriff's deputies are trained and will carry Naloxone with them. They are often the first on the scene in the outer reaches of the county for an overdose. The Wilson County Health Department will have Naloxone on site to dispense to family members, friends, and those known to be addicted to opioid medications.

The Wilson County Substance abuse coalition in partnership with EastPoint is providing training to area pediatricians and family practice physicians and encouraging implementation of a substance abuse screening tool for adolescents.

### ***Drug Drop Boxes***

Drug drop boxes have been available at both the Wilson County Sheriff's office and the City of Wilson Police Department for two years. Over the past year they have collected over 1,000 pounds of discarded medications.

### ***Project Alcopop Sticker Shock***

The Substance abuse coalition is also partnering with local merchants and teen volunteers to place stickers on their flavored alcoholic drinks. The stickers remind retailers and customers that it is illegal to sell these alcoholic drinks to minors.