

# 2017 State of the County Health Report

## Craven County, North Carolina



### BACKGROUND

Every three to four years local North Carolina health departments conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) as required by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and the North Carolina Local Health Department Accreditation Board. In addition, not-for-profit hospitals are required by the Internal Revenue Services (IRS) to conduct a CHNA every three years.

The purpose of the CHNA is to examine the health issues and status of the community and determine what health priorities will be implemented in the community over the next three to four years following the assessment. In 2014, Craven County Health Department, Jones County Health Department, Pamlico County Health Department and CarolinaEast Medical Center partnered to complete the CHNA. The team collected community opinions related to health through a community opinion survey adapted from the North Carolina Division of Public Health Community Assessment Guidebook. In addition, secondary data regarding leading cause of death and illness was collected, reviewed and compared to data from North Carolina and peer counties.

This data was presented to the CHNA team and stakeholders who reviewed the data and voted on the top health priorities for Craven County. The top health priorities selected were: 1) Substance Abuse, 2) Obesity, and 3) Behavioral/Mental Health for years 2014-2017.

The State of the County Health Report (SOTCH) is comprised annually between CHNAs to highlight activities that address the selected health priorities. This report was completed in 2018 and reflects activities that were implemented in 2017.

To review the complete 2014 CHNA or 2017 SOTCH reports, please visit the website at <https://www.cravencountync.gov/153/Health> or contact Diana Vetter Craft at 252-636-4920 ext. 2128 or [dvettercraft@cravencountync.gov](mailto:dvettercraft@cravencountync.gov).

### Craven County 2014-2017 Health Priorities

- ⇒ Substance Abuse
- ⇒ Obesity
- ⇒ Behavioral/Mental Health





## Craven at a Glance

Craven County is located in the coastal plains region of Eastern North Carolina at the confluence of the Neuse and Trent rivers. Geographically the county is defined by land and is approximately 708 square miles with a water area of 65 square miles. Surrounding counties include Beaufort to the northeast,

Pamlico to the east, Carteret to the southeast, Jones to the southwest, Lenoir to the west and Pitt to the northwest. Craven is comprised of eight (8) municipalities with New Bern being the county seat.

According to the US Census Bureau, the 2016 population estimate for the county is ~ 104,190 residents.

The top ten employers in the county are: Department of Defense, Craven County Schools, CarolinaEast Medical Center, BSH Home Appliances Corporation, Wal-Mart, Moen Incorporated, Marine Corps Community Service, Craven County Government, Craven Community College, and Holden Temporaries, Inc.<sup>2</sup>

## Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Craven County Health Department to build upon the history of public health while responding to the dynamics of the growth of our county and the changing priorities of the health system.

We strive to improve the health status, and thereby the quality of life our citizens by providing:

- 1) Prevention, screening, treatment, referral and education services
- 2) A doorway of access to the medical community
- 3) Environmental services to ensure a safe community in which to live
- 4) Assistance to employees in their professional growth and recognizing them for their accomplishment
- 5) The highest quality of services at the most efficient costs.

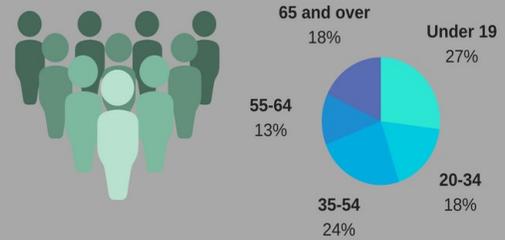
## Take a Look Inside

- ◇ Leading Causes of Death
- ◇ Progress towards Community Implementation Plans
- ◇ Emerging Issues/New Initiatives



## CRAVEN COUNTY RESIDENTS AT A GLANCE

### AGE DISTRIBUTION



# 36.1

2016 MEDIAN AGE



50.7% MEN  
49.3% WOMEN

### Race/Ethnicity



- 70.5% Caucasian/White
- 21.5% African American/Black
- 7.0% Hispanic
- 2.7% Asian
- 2.7% Two or more races
- 0.7% American Indian and Alaska Native
- 0.1% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander

### Income

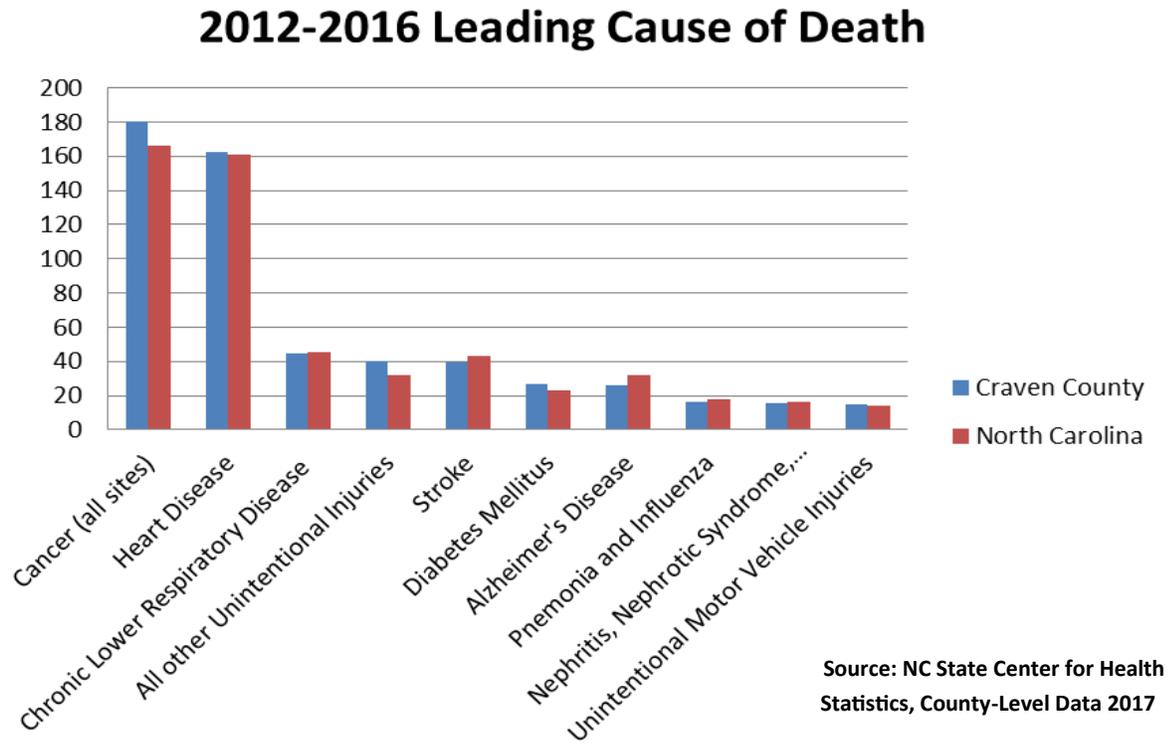
- Median Household Income \$47,957
- Mean Household Income \$61,466
- Poverty Rate 15.2%
- 14.5 % Food Stamps/SNAP Benefits
- Unemployment rate 4.3%



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder

# Leading Causes of Death

*In 2017, Cancer was the Leading Cause of Death in Craven County followed by Heart Disease and Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease.*



The above graph represents the leading cause of death (age-adjusted rates) for Craven County in comparison to North Carolina during 2012-2016. *Data for 2017 will not be available until the fall of 2018.* In 2017, Cancer was the leading cause of death followed by Heart Disease and Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease in Craven County. Cancer deaths occur within five sites (categories): colon/rectum, pancreas, lung/bronchus, female breast, and prostate.

In comparison to North Carolina, Craven County had higher death rates for cancer, heart disease, chronic lower respiratory disease, all other unintentional injuries, diabetes, and unintentional motor vehicle injuries in 2017. Though stroke is still a top leading cause of death for Craven County, rates have decreased from 43.8 per 100,000 population in 2016 to 39.7 per 100,000 population in 2017.<sup>3</sup> Craven County rates for all other unintentional injuries increased from 32.8 per 100,000 population in 2016 to 40.2 per 100,000 population in 2017.<sup>3</sup>

High blood pressure, elevated cholesterol, diabetes, overweight/obesity, poor nutrition and limited physical activity, tobacco use, and substance abuse are prevalent risk factors that increase the chance of an individual developing several of the leading causes of death. To address these diseases and injuries, the Craven County Health Department developed community action plans to focus primarily on improving risk factors associated with chronic disease and behavioral health.

In addition to the Health Department, Craven County groups, coalitions, and organizations also implement programs and activities that support or address improving the risk factors associated with chronic disease and behavioral health. This report outlines progress that was made within the past year towards the chosen health priorities.

Every attempt has been made to summarize the major activities occurring within Craven County to address the priority health areas, but some programs may not be represented in this report. Please contact Diana Vetter Craft, Craven County Health Department at 252-636-4920 ext. 2128 or [dvettercraft@cravencountync.gov](mailto:dvettercraft@cravencountync.gov) to ensure your information regarding your programs is included in future reports.

# Health Priority: Obesity (Physical Activity and Nutrition)

**Goal #1: Reduce the incidence of obese adults in Craven County from 34% to 30% of the population.**

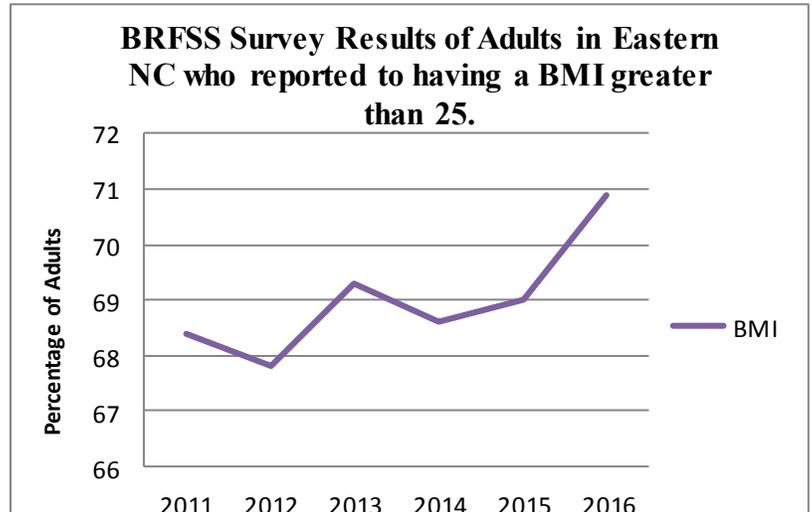
**Goal #2: Reduce the rate of individuals (Eastern North Carolina including Craven County) who report that they have a Body Mass Index (BMI) greater than 25, from 69.3% to 67.3%.**

Obesity is a leading health concern in Craven County and North Carolina. In the 2014 Community Health Needs Assessment, 28.4% of Craven County residents responded to being overweight or obese.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, North Carolina conducts a statewide Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

(BRFSS) survey, to ask residents about behaviors and factors that contribute to chronic disease and behavioral health issues. One question in particular asks for adults to report having a Body Mass Index greater than 25. The graph above shows the percentage of adults in Eastern North Carolina including Craven County who reported to having a Body Mass Index greater than 25 over the past five (5) years. The graph shows a slight decline in year 2012 and 2014 of adults who reported to having a BMI greater than 25. However, in 2016 the percentage of adults increased in reporting a higher BMI.

Obesity can result from a combination of causes including individual behaviors and genetics as well as contributing factors. Behaviors can include dietary patterns, physical activity or inactivity, medication use and other exposures.<sup>5</sup> Contributing factors can include socioeconomic status, the physical environment, and food environment.



## Activities:

**Minority Diabetes Prevention Program (MDPP):** This program is designed to increase minority participation in a diabetes prevention program because our minority populations are at higher risk to develop Type 2 Diabetes. The Craven County Health Department offered two separate programs (a 12 month comprehensive lifestyle change program) to prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 Diabetes. Participants learn how to eat healthy, cope with stress, and incorporate physical activity into their daily activities.

**Parks and Recreation:** Partnered with Craven County Health Department to promote healthy eating and physical activity tips through message boards located to Creekside, Havelock, Rocky Run, and West Craven parks.

**Cooking Healthy on a Budget:** Craven County Health Department and Craven Terrace Apartments partnered to offer cooking classes on how to cook healthy while being on a budget.

**Craven County Cooperative Extension: 4-H Youth Development Program:** Cooperative Extension offers children (ages 5-19) a program that teaches about healthy eating habits along with life skills. **Extension Master Gardener Program:** Extension staff train volunteers on skills to enhance their own garden or landscape.



# Health Priority: Substance Abuse

**Goal #1: To decrease unintentional drug or medication overdoses.**

**Goal #2: Increase the number of prescribers and dispensers who are using the NC Controlled Substances Reporting System (CSRS) from 158 to 183.**

**Goal #3: Decrease the percentage of students (8th, 10th and 12th grades) from 6.5% to 4.0%, who reported using prescription drugs in the past 30 days.**

Substance Abuse continues to be a major health problem nationally and locally. The National Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) conducts a national survey annually on drug use and health for indicators of substance use and mental health among people aged 12 years old or older. In the 2016 national survey, 28.6 million people aged 12 and older reported using an illicit drug within the past 30 days, which corresponds to about 1 in 10 Americans overall.<sup>6</sup> Regardless of the respondents age, the illicit drug use continues to be driven primarily by marijuana use and the misuse of prescription pain relievers for 2015 and 2016 survey.<sup>6</sup> In 2016, an estimated 11.8 million misused opioids in the past year, including 11.5 million pain reliever misusers and 948,000 heroin users.<sup>6</sup> In addition to the national data, North Carolina and Craven County are seeing similar trends with the misuse of prescription pain relievers.

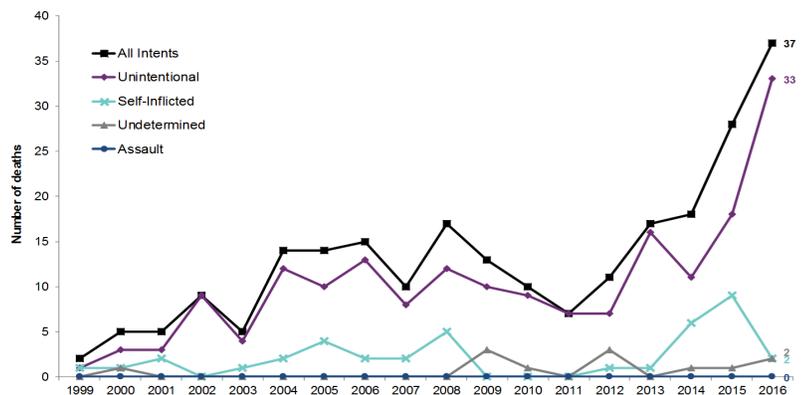
In North Carolina and Craven County, deaths due to medication/ drug overdoses have been steadily increasing since 1999, and the vast majority of these are unintentional.<sup>7</sup> The following graph shows the medication and drug overdose intent for Craven County from 1999 to 2016.

From this graph, the majority of the medication and drug overdoses was classified as unintentional for Craven County from 1999 to 2016.

Opioid-related deaths involving pain medications have historically been the leading cause of unintentional overdose deaths.<sup>7</sup>

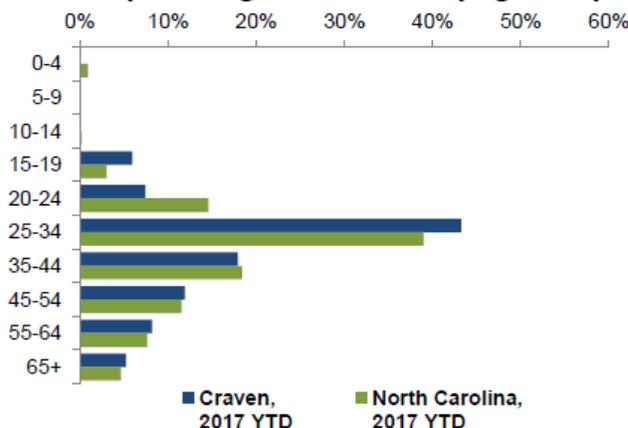
**County Medication & Drug Overdose Deaths by Intent**

Craven County Residents, 1999-2016



Source: NC Injury and Violence Prevention Branch

**Opioid Diagnosis ED Visits by Age Group**



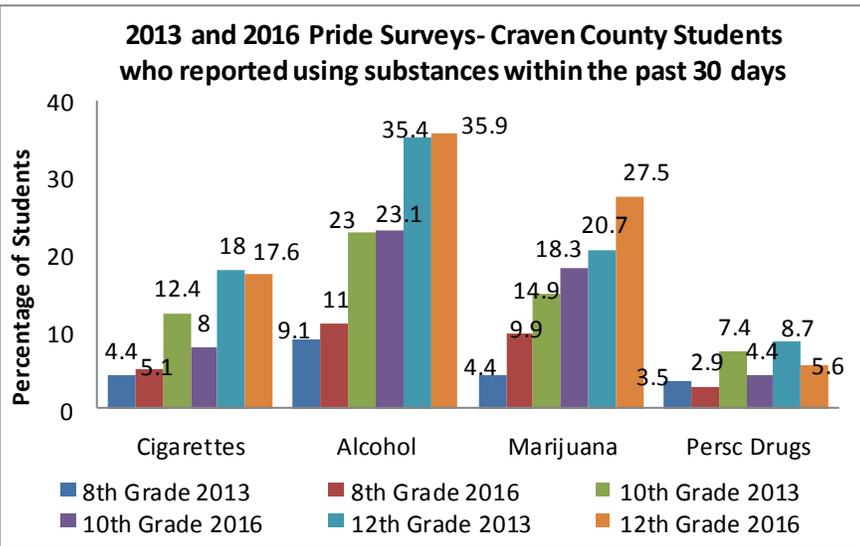
Source: NC Injury and Violence Prevention Branch

Additionally, opioid overdoses are a leading cause of emergency visits as well for Craven County and North Carolina. In 2017, Craven County had 134 opioid overdose emergency department visits compared to the 94 visits in 2016. The chart to the left shows the opioid overdose emergency visits by age group for Craven County and North Carolina in 2017. From this graph, the highest age group was amongst the 25-34 year olds for Craven County and North Carolina. When comparing to North Carolina, Craven County had a higher percentage of 15-19 year olds for 2017. In addition to opioid overdoses, Craven County continues to have misuse and abuse of alcohol, illicit drugs, and tobacco among adults and youth.



# Continued Health Priority: Substance Abuse

In 2013 and 2016, Craven County Schools conducted the Pride Risk and Protective Factor Questionnaire to survey students on substance use and safety. The graph below compares the 2013 and 2016 survey of the percentage of students who reported using alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana and prescription drugs (for non-medical use) within the past 30 days.



In 2013 and 2016, alcohol use was the leading substance that students reported using within the past 30 days, followed by marijuana, cigarettes and prescription drugs.

The majority of students reported in 2013 and 2016, using these substances either at their home or at a friend's house.



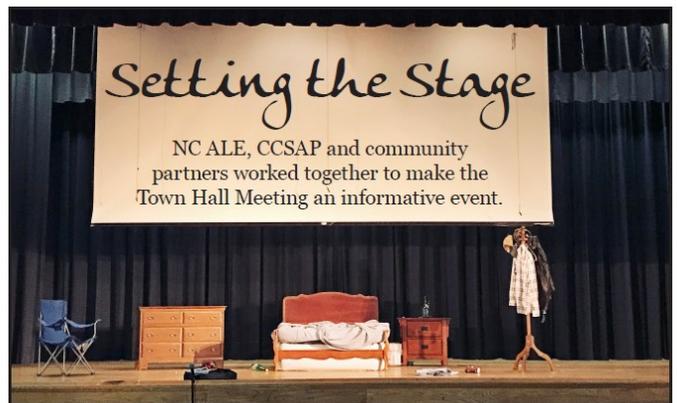
## Activities

**Coastal Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention (CCSAP)- Craven County Task Force:** The CCSAP-Craven County Task Force partnered again with Havelock, New Bern and West Craven High School to encourage students to participate in the "Prom Pledge." Hundreds of High School students read the pledge and chose to sign it, promising to refrain from drinking alcohol and drug use on prom night. **When Love is Not**

**Enough:** Craven County Task Force, NC ALE and community partners hosted the "When love is not enough: No Empty Chairs" program. This was a town hall meeting style event that addressed the underage

drinking and substance abuse epidemic that is occurring in the community. **Alcohol Purchase Surveys:** CCSAP conducted alcohol purchasing surveys to identify stores that asked for identification when purchasing alcohol products.

**Operation Medicine Drop Off:** Local Law Enforcement offer residents medicine drop off events throughout the year to collect unused or expired medicine.



**Embrace for Recovery:** The Community Coalition for Craven County Children (C5) partnered with community organizations to host the second annual recovery rally. This event provided education to the community about recovery from addiction.

**Opioid Leadership Forum:** Craven County Administration hosted an opioid forum for County Commissioners, Municipality Leaders and State Representatives. This forum was to educate leaders on the opioid epidemic and talk about possible solutions to help combat the epidemic at the county level.

*Save the Date!*

**Embrace Recovery Rally @ Union Point**

September 30th 2017  
3:00pm - 7:00pm

We want your organization to be a vendor!  
More details to come soon!

Community Coalition for Craven County Children

**2nd Annual**

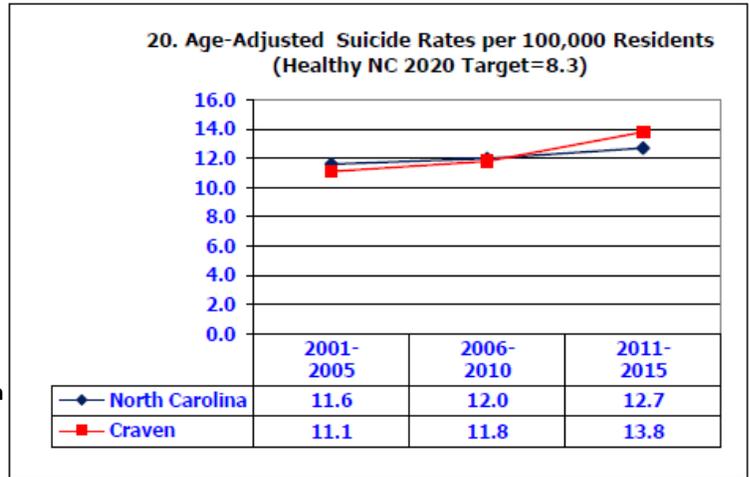
# Health Priority: Behavioral Health

Behavioral Health is major health problem for Craven County as well as North Carolina. Substance use and abuse, unintentional and accidental overdose, suicides, and the accessibility of behavioral health providers can impact the behavioral health issues in Craven County. In 2017, the suicide rate was the 11th leading cause of death amongst Craven County residents.

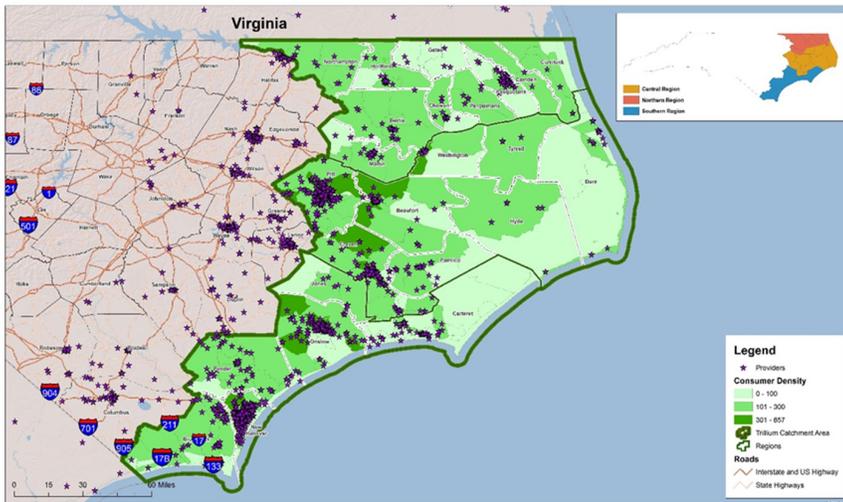
The chart to the right is a comparison of suicide rates for North Carolina and Craven County since 2001. During 2011-2015, Craven County had an increase in suicide rates, 13.8 per 100,000 population compared to 11.8 per 100,000 population during 2006-2010.

Additionally, both North Carolina and Craven County are still higher than the target Healthy People 2020 goal of 8.3 per 100,000 population.

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, Health Indicators 2017



Trillium Health Resources Consumer Density with Provider Locations In-Catchment Area SFY16



The map to the left, portrays Trillium’s Gaps Assessment conducted last year 2016. The shades of green show the consumers and the purple stars show the provider locations. In western part of Craven County (i.e. Vanceboro, etc), the consumer density is higher with a lower number of provider locations. According to this map the majority of providers are located in the New Bern area. Location is an important factor when discussing consumer’s access to behavioral health providers.

JICT ADDICTION & Training Consulting ASSOCIATES

## Activities



**Mental Health First Aid:** Craven County Health Department, Trillium and Latitude Church offered the Mental Health First Aid course to church members. This course provides individuals with the skills and knowledge to handle someone who may be experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge.

# Emerging Issues/ New Initiatives

## Emerging Issues:

**Mental Health and Substance Abuse services for youth and adults:** Craven County continues to have a need for behavioral health services, including mental health and substance use, available to youth, adults and their families. The Systems of Care Collaborative, a multi-sectoral partnership is working to develop a behavioral health network for local resources. Additionally, the collaborative works with youth, adults and their families on how to access behavioral health resources.

**Substance Abuse services:** Craven County continues to need more substance abuse services including providers and a detox facility close for residents.

**The STOP Act:** In June of 2017, Governor Cooper signed into law aimed at curbing the misuse and abuse of opioids, specifically prescription drugs. The act is intended to reduce the supply of unused opioids, reduce “doctor shopping” and improve care by requiring prescribers to use the Controlled Substance Reporting System (CSRS).

**Increased in Heroin use:** According to the North Carolina Disease Event Tracking and Epidemiologic Collection Tool (NC DETECT), Craven County had 109 Heroin overdoses emergency visits in 2017 compared to the 93 emergency visits in 2016. Since 2012, heroin overdoses has increased every year.

**Increased in “E-cigarettes” use:** Electronic nicotine devices also known as “E-cigarettes,” and “vapes” are becoming a huge issue amongst youth and adults. Contributing factors include ease of access, marketing strategies that target youth, and misconceptions that they are a tobacco-cessation product.



## New Initiatives:

**Craven County Community Health Center– Havelock Site:** In April 2017, the Craven County Health Department and Community Health Center opened a second office in Havelock to provide primary care for adults and children. In addition to offering primary care, the satellite office will co-locate Women, Infants and Children (WIC) to provide WIC services to military clients and residents in Havelock and surrounding areas.

**Craven County Opioid Abuse Prevention Task Force:** After the opioid leadership forum, one of the solutions mentioned was to create a task force focused on the epidemic. The Task Force is a multi-sectoral partnership that will develop goals and objectives to help with the opioid epidemic.



**Law Enforcement with Narcan Kits:** During December 2017, the Health Department and Craven Community College partnered to train local law enforcement on Narcan and CPR. In 2018, Craven County Deputies will have Narcan Kits in their patrol cars. In addition, other municipalities have also taken actions to acquire Narcan Kits for their law enforcement staff.

# Health Department Highlights 2016/2017

**Administration:** Secured Medical Access Point (MAP) funding with Merci Clinic to help pay for visits for underserved and uninsured patients. Secured Integrated Targeting Testing (ITTS) funds to conduct HIV, Hepatitis C and Syphilis testing in high risk areas. Opened the second Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in Havelock in April 2017.

**Animal Control:** The expansion of the shelter broke ground in February of 2017. The shelter staff was able to coordinate 743 rabies vaccines and 625 microchips given to county cats and dogs.

**Clinical Services:** During the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the total visits for adult health and adult primary care was 6,369 and the total physicals for children were 1,848. Implemented a new long lasting birth control called Skyla (IUD).

**Dental Services:** The Smile Mobile provided dental procedures and exams for 1,882 patients.

**Environmental Health Services:** Secured funding for mosquito surveillance. Environmental staff monitored the disinterment of 98 unmarked gravesites on hospital property and their reinterment at a local cemetery. Provided presentations about the Zika Virus to various groups.

**Hospice:** Had the highest patient census in program history. Continues to educate staff on new Medicare requirements.

**Health Education:** Participated in 43 health fairs and events throughout the county. Additionally, offers two Minority Diabetes Prevention programs to individuals throughout the county who are pre-diabetics.

**Women, Infants and Children (WIC):** The average monthly caseload was 3,032 participants. In addition, the Health Department offers nutrition counseling. Two hundred and one (201) individuals (WIC or non-WIC) were counseled during this time.



## How can you become involved?

Each of the health priorities identified in the State of the County Health (SOTCH) report are addressed by various coalitions and groups in Craven County.

You can get involved by participating in one or more of these coalitions or groups. For more information, contact Diana Vetter Craft at 252-636-4920 x. 2128.

*A special "Thank You" to all community partners and staff who provided information for the State of the County Health Report! Thank you for your commitment and dedication to help improve the health of Craven County Residents.*

## References

1. U.S. Census Bureau, Craven County Fact Finder, available at: [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community\\_facts.xhtml?src=bkml](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml?src=bkml)
2. Craven County Economic Development: <http://cravenbusiness.com/Strategic-Advantages/Largest-Employers.aspx>
3. North Carolina Division of Public Health, State Center of Health Statistics, County Level data. Available at: <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/>
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