

2014 State of the County Health Report

Carteret County, North Carolina

Carteret County 2013-2017 Health Priorities

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- ⇒ Chronic Disease: Obesity, Cancer and Heart Disease
- ⇒ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Access
- ⇒ Improve Economic Development

BACKGROUND

Carteret County's Community Health Assessment is conducted every four years and during intervening years, a State of the County Health Report (SOTCH) is prepared. This report highlights activities implemented over the past year to address the selected priority health areas identified from the 2013 Community Health Assessment.

The 2013 Community Health Assessment Planning Team reviewed the data and voted on the top health priorities based upon North Carolina's 2020 Health Objectives. Subsequently, the Board of Health approved the three priority areas; Chronic Disease Control including Obesity, Cancer, and Heart Disease, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Access, and Improve Economic Development for years 2013-2017. A presentation of this report is given to the Consolidated Health and Human Services Board and a press release is issued to local media outlets.



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Mission: The mission of the Carteret County Health Department is to promote and protect the highest standards of healthy living for all county citizens.

County at a Glance

Carteret County is a coastal community often referred to as the “Crystal Coast.” Carteret is defined by water and covers approximately 1,064 square miles with a land area of 506.25 square miles.

According to the US Census Bureau, the 2013 population estimate for the county is ~68,434 residents. The county population is racially composed of 89.9% Caucasian, 6.3% African Americans, 3.8% Hispanic, 1.1% Asian, 0.6% American Indian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 2.0% identify with two or more races. The median age of the county residents is 45 years of age and a median income household income of \$47, 403, with a 13.1 % poverty rate.

The major industries in the county includes Tourism, Marine Trades, and Commercial and Recreational Fishing.

Consolidated Human Services Board

In 2014, the Carteret County Commissioners voted to consolidate the Health Department , Department of Social Services into a Consolidated Human Service Agency. A result of the consolidation, the Board of Health and DSS Board were abolished and a Consolidated Human Services Board was created.

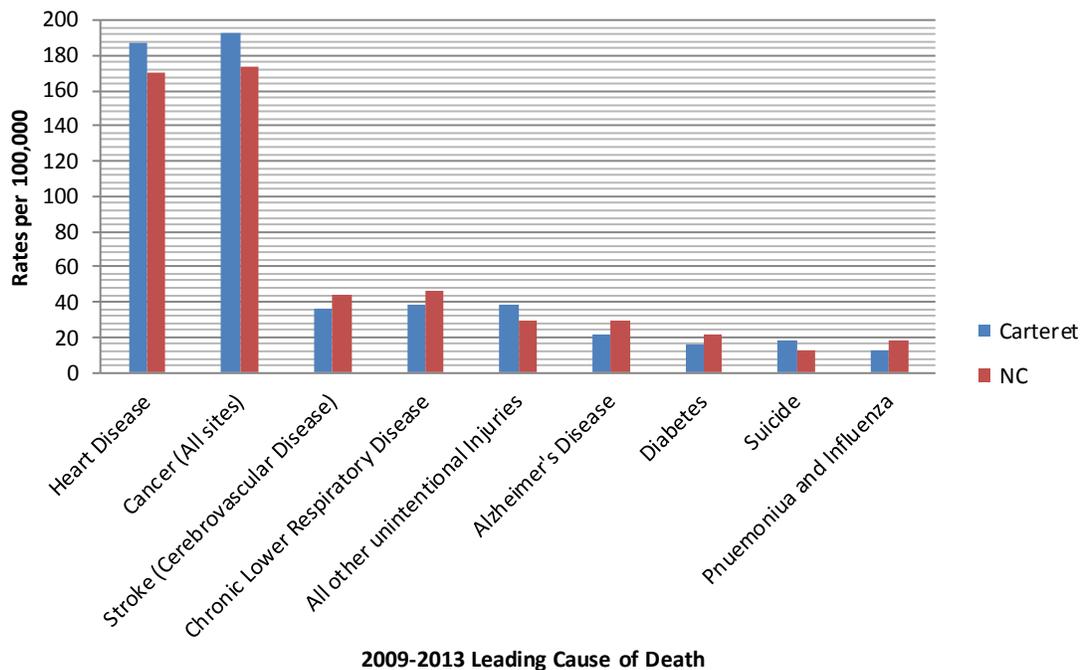
To learn more about the Consolidated Human Services Board, visit: www.carteretcountync.gov.

2014 LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH

Cancer, Heart Disease and Stroke remain the top three leading causes of death in Carteret County.

Carteret County is one of the top ten counties in NC for highest number of unintentional poisonings and overdoses due to prescription drugs.

When compared to North Carolina and peer counties, Carteret County has the highest death rate for all cancers.



Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, County-Level Data 2014

The above graph represents the leading cause of death in Carteret County compared to North Carolina during 2009-2013. Cancer is the leading cause of death followed by Heart Disease and Stroke for Carteret County and North Carolina. The majority of cancer deaths occur within five sites (categories): colon/rectum, pancreas, lung/bronchus, female breast, and prostate. When compared to North Carolina, Carteret County has higher death rates for cancer, heart disease, all other unintentional injuries and suicide.

An individual can increase their chance for developing one of the leading causes of death by various risk factors such as: high blood pressure, obesity/overweight, poor nutrition and limited physical activity, high cholesterol, tobacco use, and substance abuse. To address these diseases, the Carteret County Health Department has developed Action Plans to reduce the rates of chronic disease, and substance abuse.

In addition to reducing chronic diseases, substance abuse/mental health, the Carteret County Health Department and partners identified through the 2013 Community Health Assessment (CHA) the importance to improve Economic Development/Smart Growth for the county. There is a strong direct relationship between the economic outlook of a county and its impact on the leading causes of death. A county that flourishes economically helps to enhance the overall health of the county.

Additional Carteret County groups, coalitions, and organizations have also implemented programs and activities to address chronic disease, substance abuse/mental health access and improving economic development and many are outlined in this report.

Goals:

Increase the percentage of high school students who are neither overweight or obese.

Increase the percentage of adults getting the recommended amount of physical activity.

Increase the percentage of adults who consume five or more servings of fruits and vegetables.



Communities
Transforming

For a healthier North Carolina

Obesity (Physical Activity and Nutrition)

Overview:

Obesity has become a leading health issue over the years in Carteret County. According to the 2013 Carteret County Community Health Assessment, 41.3% of respondents surveyed answered “yes” to being overweight or obese.¹ Overweight or being obese can cause complications to existing health problems, creating higher risk for developing other diseases or health conditions, and can substantially reduce the quality of a persons life. Individuals who are overweight or obese are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, certain cancers, and stroke.²

According to the North Carolina Nutrition and Physical Activity Surveillance System (NC-NPASS) 15.5 % of children ages two to four years old are overweight and 16.7% of children two to four years of age are obese.³

Poor diet and lack of physical activity have a direct correlation to obesity. Having a healthy diet and regular activity can help people achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

Progress within Last Year

Carteret County Partnership for Children (Shape Carteret): The Health Department partnered with Shape Carteret to provide mini-grants to 19 childcare centers to promote physical activity or nutrition efforts. In addition, Shape Carteret helped fund a story book trail at Fort Benjamin to help promote physical activity. Shape Carteret is also working on implementing an “Exercise is Medicine” program for the county. This program will provide physicians the opportunity to prescribe physical activity to patients seen in their practices. The program will be implemented in early 2015.

Community Transformation Grant (CTG) Project: Carteret County Health Department received funding from 2012-2014 to design communities that support healthier lifestyles through policy, environmental and system changes. These initiatives include increase access to healthy foods, promote physical activity opportunities and promote tobacco-free living. CTG partners have implemented the following initiatives during 2013 –2014: a farmers’ market was established on the grounds of the Carteret County Courthouse to offer locally, grown foods to county citizens; funded supplies to support the Carteret County Parks and Recreation shared use policy; Carteret County Parks and Recreation updated their master plan; and individual farmers are able to accept SNAP (also known as food stamps) at their produce stand; and provided the farmers’ market with supplies to provide taste testing and nutritious recipes.

NC Cooperative Extension: Cooperative Extension offers an eight week SNAP education program called “Steps to Health” to 3rd graders providing nutrition lessons, basic nutrition skills and physical activity lessons. In the summer, “Kids in the Kitchen” camp is offered to children focusing on nutrition and cooking skills. Cooperative Extension offers a 4-H youth development program to children ages 5-19 to learn about healthy eating habits and life skills. In addition, Cooperative Extension is working with many partners to determine the interest of developing a local food advisory committee.

Goals:

Reduce the cardiovascular disease mortality rate.

Reduce the cancer mortality rate.

Increase the percentage of adults who are neither overweight or obese.

Obesity Continued...

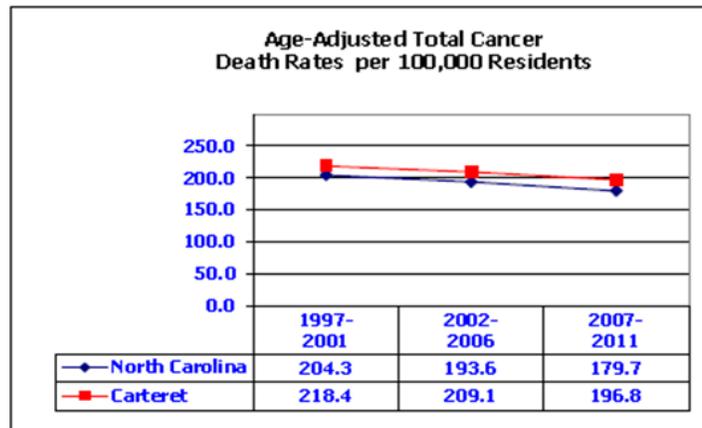
Progress within Last Year

Carteret County Schools (School Health Advisory Council (SHAC): All schools K-8 participate in the healthful living curriculum which focuses on health education and physical activity. In addition to this curriculum the school system is incorporating Rival Health live fit program. Students and staff participate in weekly nutrition lessons and health tips, and physical activities.

Cancer and Heart Disease

Overview:

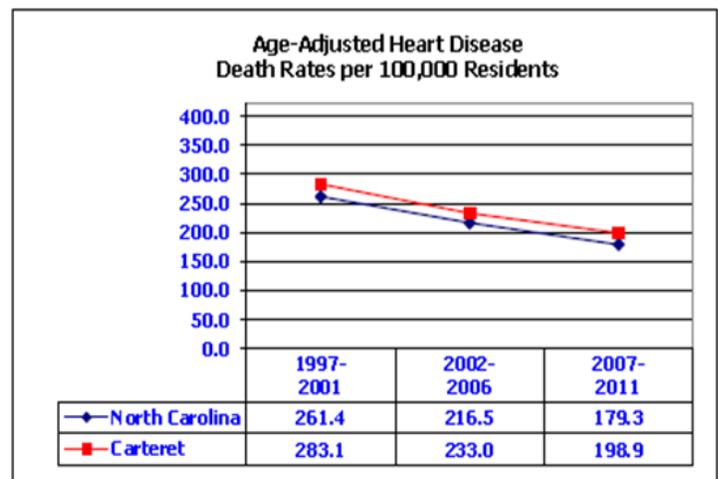
According to the North Carolina Center for Health Statistics, cancer is the leading cause of death followed by heart disease for Carteret County during 2009-2013.⁴ From 2009-2013, death rates due to cancer (192.7) have decreased slightly (196.8) since 2007-2011.⁵ Heart disease has seen a decrease in death rates from (198.9) during 2007-2011 to (187.6) from 2009-2013.⁵ Despite mortality rates declining in cancer and heart disease as observed in the graphs below, they continue to be the leading cause of death in Carteret County.



Like cancer, heart disease is impacted by modifiable factors such as personal lifestyles and environmental factors, such as smoking and weight management.

Source: State Center for Health Statistics:
Leading Cause of Death
<http://www.schs.state.nc.us/>

Cancer and heart disease can be prevented through reducing tobacco use and exposure, increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables, and increasing daily physical activity.



Cancer and Heart Disease

Progress within Last Year

Carteret County Health Department Outreach Initiatives: Carteret County Health Department partnered with the Raab Oncology Clinic to provide cancer screenings. Two clinics were offered, one for skin cancer which was held in May, and one for breast cancer in October at the Health Department. In addition, the Health Department provides educational materials, and media releases to the public for cancer awareness months and Heart month.



In October 2014, the Health Department was able to host the NC Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation Breast Health Project” Button Chair.” The Button Chair was on display for a week at the Health Department .



Health Education staff provide tobacco prevention presentations at High Schools and at health fairs.

Carteret General Hospital: The hospital provides a telehealth program for heart patients to help reduce readmissions. The telehealth program allows patients to complete a health check each day and answer symptom questions which is monitored by a registered nurse 7 days a week for approximately 45-60 days after discharge. The hospital hosted a health fair in February for Heart Month. Carteret General Hospital has partnered with UNC Health Care and Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center to enhance cancer services and care delivery for Carteret County and surrounding areas. This partnership will enhance services such as: improve cancer screenings, facilitate early detection and treatment, provide professional education through teleconferencing with oncologist, and streamline the process of patients who seek a second opinion to the UNC Care Center.

*Reduce your
Risk Factors*

Aim for these:

Blood Pressure

< 120/80

**Total
Cholesterol
< 200**

**Body Mass
Index (BMI)
< 25**

**Physical
Activity 150
minutes per
week**

**Half your plate
fruit and
vegetables**

Quit Smoking



1-800-QUIT-NOW

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Access

Overview:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health are major health problems in Carteret County. In Carteret County substance abuse specifically with prescription drug use (for non-medical purposes) among adults and teens is a growing problem. The 2013 National Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Survey (SAMHSA), reported that 15.3 million people aged 12 or older used prescription drugs non-medically in the past year and 6.5 million of those used in the past month. ⁶

Carteret County Schools PRIDE Survey Results in 2008 and 2013		
Substance	2008 (6th-12th graders)	2013 (8th,10th, and 12th graders)
Alcohol	25.3%	28.9%
Cigarettes	14.6%	17.8%
Marijuana	12.8%	19.8%
Prescription Drugs (for non-medical use)	7.8%	7.7%

In 2008 and 2013, Carteret County Schools conducted the Pride Risk and Protective Factor Questionnaire to survey students on substance use.

The table to the left portrays the percent of youth who reported using substances within the past 30 days in 2008 compared to 2013. As seen on the table, youth substance use has increased since 2008, specifically with cigarettes, marijuana, and alcohol.

Source: 2013 Community Health Assessment

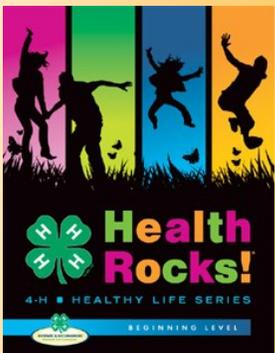
Mental illness continues to be identified as a major health problem for Carteret County. Suicide, substance abuse, and unintentional and accidental overdoses remain the top concerns in Carteret County related to mental illness. Suicide, a preventable public health problem, is in the top ten of leading causes of death for Carteret County. From 2009-2013, death rates due to suicide (18.5 % per 100,000 population) have increased slightly (17.9% per 100,000 population) since 2007-2011). ⁷

Progress within Last Year

Carteret County Substance Abuse Task Force: partnered with law enforcement to provide naloxone training to all sheriff deputies and secure permanent prescription drug drop off box locations. The boxes allow community members to dispose of unused, unwanted, and expired medications. Partnered with POE Center to offer the bedroom project to parents. This program teaches parents how to identify drugs and where to search for drugs in their home. Provide community education on proper and safe prescription drug disposal, as well as education for adults using the “Talk it up, Lock it up” campaign. Members of the task force along with Carteret County Sheriff’s Department offered a countywide “Pills Can Kill” drop off in September in Newport. To date the program has destroyed close to 1 million dosage units. Members of the task force hosted the annual “Kickin it for Recovery” where students and law enforcement come together to play a game of kick-ball and learn about substance abuse.

7.8% of middle and high school students report using prescription drugs in the past 30 days. -2013 Pride Survey

**Goal:
By 2017, Reduce to 7.0% of individuals aged 12-19 years of age reporting use of prescription drugs in the past 30 days.**



Substance Abuse and Mental Health Access

Progress with Last Year

NC Cooperative Extension Services– Health Rocks: Health Rocks, is a healthy living program that educates youth ages eight - fourteen on the consequences of tobacco, alcohol and drug use. This program is currently being offered in nine schools.

Carteret County has over 7,000 small “micro” businesses (5 employees or less).

Key Objective:

“Make Carteret County’s built environment as beautiful as its natural environment... this will be an incentive to business, tourism and our residents.”

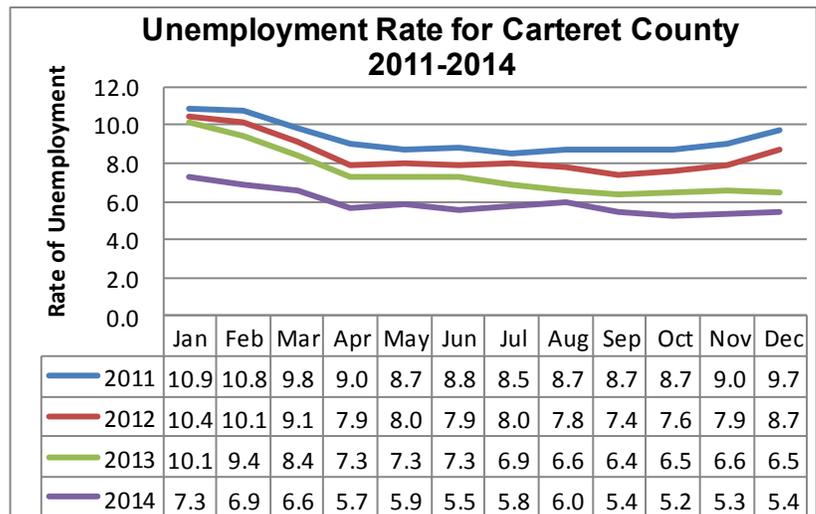
Economic Development/ Smart Growth

Overview:

In the 2013 Community Health Assessment, participants of the community opinion survey and the key informant survey identified Economic Development, specifically to increase job opportunities and increase opportunities for smart growth and economic development, as the third priority area to address in Carteret County.

Employment can have a huge impact on the health of an individual. According to a the National Health Center for Statistics, unemployed adults have poorer health and psychological distress than their employed counterparts.⁸

In addition, unemployed adults were less likely to receive medical



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics (not seasonal adjusted)

care or needed prescriptions due to cost compared to their employed counterparts.⁸ The table above shows the unemployment rates for Carteret County during 2011-2014.

Progress within Last Year

Carteret Economic Development Council: Partnered with East Carolina University and North Carolina Commerce to develop strategic economic development plans for municipalities including: Newport, Cape Carteret, Cedar Point, Emerald Isle, Pine Knoll Shores, Atlantic Beach, Beaufort, Morehead City and Down East. The strategic plans should be finalized in May/June 2015. In addition, the Economic Development staff is forming a county economic development strategic plan committee to identify: 1) opportunities that offer highest return of investment, 2) resources to support each opportunity, 3) market opportunity, and 4) incorporate the placemaking initiative.





How can you become involved?

Each of the health priorities identified in the SOTCH report are addressed by various coalitions in Carteret County. You can get involved by participating in one or more of these coalitions to address the health priority.

To learn more information about getting involved, contact **Diana Craft**, Carteret County Health Department at 252-728-8550.

Join us to help make your community healthier!



Emerging Issues/ New Initiatives

Emerging Issues

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services for Youth and Adults: There is a growing need for mental health services available to youth, adults and families in Carteret County. The Systems of Care Collaborative, a multi-sectorial partnership, is working to develop a comprehensive list of resources for youth, families and adults. In addition the collaborative is incorporating the Family Partners program, and Youth Move program to provide families and youth the tools and resources to access mental health services.

Emergency Department visits for dental care issues: Emergency Department visits for dental care issues has increased over the years since underinsured and uninsured adults have problems accessing dentist in the county.

Increase “e-cigarettes” use: E-cigarettes or “vapes” are growing in use among adults and youth. Contributing factors include ease of access, marketing strategies that target youth, and misconception that they are a tobacco-cessation product.

Public Transportation: Transportation continues to be a concern for residents in Carteret County. Carteret County Area Transportation System (CCATS) currently provides transportation routes from Beaufort to Morehead City and “call and ride.” They continue to identify ways to increase ridership, and services more convenient for users.

Disease Outbreaks/Ebola and Measles: In 2014, active Ebola and Measles cases developed in the United States. Health Department and other agencies’ staff prepared themselves to handle any future possibilities of a local case.

New Initiatives

Walk with a Doc program: Carteret County Parks and Recreation has adopted the “Walk with a Doc” program. This program is a partnership between parks and recreation and health professionals who educate residents on various health issues and promote physical activity while presenting.

Peer Recovery Center: The Peer Recovery Center opened in October of 2014 for individuals who have mental health and/or substance abuse issues through peer to peer communication, information and resources and provide a recovery– focused environment.

PetSmart Charities Grant: In June 2014, Carteret County Health Department Animal Control Division received a two-year grant. These funds are available for any Carteret County resident who needs to have their dog spayed or neutered.

Crossroads: Crossroads is a new WIC Management Information System (software) to help manage all facets of WIC operations, including client services and vendor management. The benefits to adapting this software will provide more efficient appointments for clients through easier scheduling, less paperwork, and food packages that address the needs of a family.

Carteret General Hospital: Ongoing projects include the new cancer center, remodeling and expansion of the Emergency Department, and recruiting new specialty physicians.

Immunization Requirements: Effective July 2015, there will be new changes in schedules for vaccine requirements.

Health Department Highlights:

Administrative: Became credentialed with CIGNA Health. Secured contract with CureMD, Electronic medical records for clinic services.

Animal Control: Implemented the PetPoint Microchip program during the World Rabies Day clinic and serviced 70 dogs and cats. This was offered to residents at a reduced price off \$15.00 per pet. Through the spay and neuter clinics, 1,219 dogs and cats have been vaccinated for rabies.

Clinical Services: The Health Department offers a variety of clinical programs to residents. The following indicates how many clients were seen last year in the various programs: 1) Family Planning served 533 clients, 2) Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program served 83 clients, 3) Adult Health served 449 clients, 4) Prenatal served 274 clients, 5) Pregnancy Care served 560 clients, 6) Newborn home visits served 75 clients, and 7) Care Coordination for Children (CC4C) followed 372 children last year. In addition to these programs the clinic provided 1,218 immunizations to residents last year.

Mobile Dental Clinic (Miles of Smiles): The dental clinic provided dental procedures and exams on 768 children (Medicaid, NC Health Choice, and uninsured). The dental clinic staff is creating a routine schedule for the schools on when the mobile dental clinic will be on their premises.

Environmental Health: Environmental Health offers variety programs and provides inspections in four main areas. The following indicates how many inspections were conducted: 1) 2533 Onsite wastewater (includes onsite and large wastewater systems), 2) 455 private wells, 3) 1925 Food and Lodging, and 4) Swimming pools 463. In July 2014, Environmental Health started implementing the new digital health department inspection documentation that enables data to be submitted electronically to the NC Division of Environmental Health.

Public Health Preparedness: The Public Health Preparedness Coordinator completed a comprehensive, county-wide Isolation and Quarantine Plan. Developed protocols and policies to address a suspected or confirmed Ebola case within Carteret County.

Health Education: The Health Education staff participated in 15 local health fairs throughout the county. Provided various presentations to local agencies and community groups on specific health topics.

WIC (Women, Infant, and Children): WIC department staff served 1,388 clients. In collaboration with Carteret General Hospital, the staff hosted the World Breastfeeding Event in August.

References:

1. Carteret County Health Department Community Health Assessment 2013
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention available at: www.cdc.gov/obesity
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Acknowledgements

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Thank you for your commitment and dedication to help improve the health of Carteret County residents.

— Carteret County Health Department, Health Education and Promotion Division