



2017 State of the County Health Report

Jackson County



Demographics

- 2016 Population Estimate: 42,241
 - White: 84.9%
 - American Indian/Alaskan Native: 9.5%
 - Hispanic/Latino: 5.4%
 - Black: 2.5%
 - Asian: 1.0%
- Percent change: 4.9% from April 2010 to July 2016

The median household income during 2011-2015 in Jackson County was \$38,015 compared to North Carolina's median household income of \$46,868.

Leading Causes of Death in Jackson County, 2011-2015

Rank	Cause	# Deaths	Death Rate
1	Cancer	403	159.3
2	Disease of Heart	354	152.3
3	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	124	50.8
4	All Other Unintentional Injuries	81	40.6
5	Cerebrovascular Disease	62	27.1
6	Alzheimer's Disease	57	26.2
7	Diabetes Mellitus	63	25.5
8	Pneumonia & Influenza	37	16.5
9	Suicide	37	16.4
10	Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome, & Nephrosis	30	13.4
11	Chronic Liver Disease & Cirrhosis	27	12.3
12	Unintentional Motor Vehicle Injuries	16	7.8
13	Septicemia	18	7.3
14	Homicide	7	3.2
15	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	2	0.9
	All Causes (some not listed)	1,703	734.6

Jackson County's top three leading causes of death are **identical** to the top three leading causes of death in North Carolina as a whole.

These leading causes of death in Jackson County have not changed in recent years.

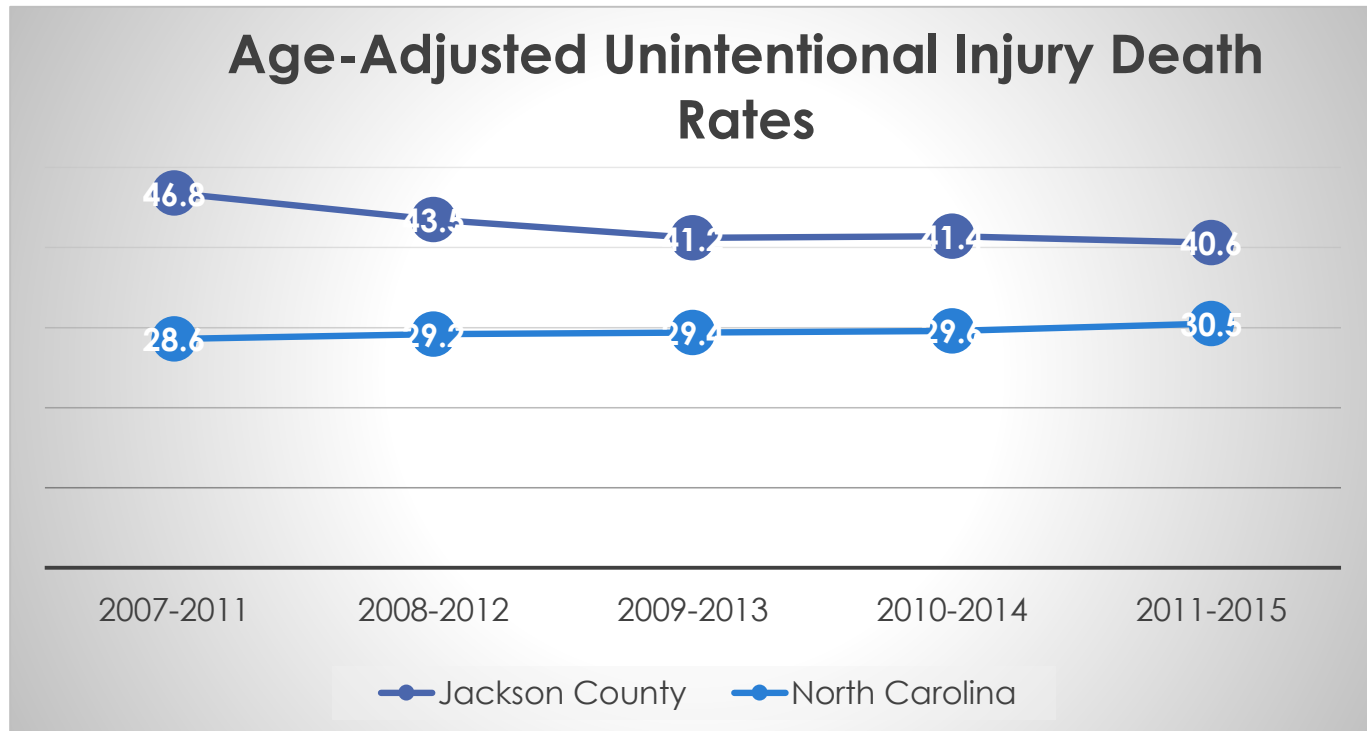
Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data

Cancer, Diseases of the Heart, Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease & Stroke

- In Jackson County during 2011-2015:
 - The total cancer mortality rate fell from 169.0 to 159.3 – **a 5.7% decrease**
 - The heart disease mortality rate fell from 164.7 to 152.3 – **a 7.5% decrease**
 - Males (182.9) consistently have a higher rate than females (124.5)
 - The chronic lower respiratory disease (CLRD) mortality rate increased from 46.4 to 50.8 – **a 9.5% increase**
 - The stroke rate stayed essentially the **same at 27.1**
 - Jackson County's rate is **37.1% lower** than North Carolina's rate (43.1)

Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data

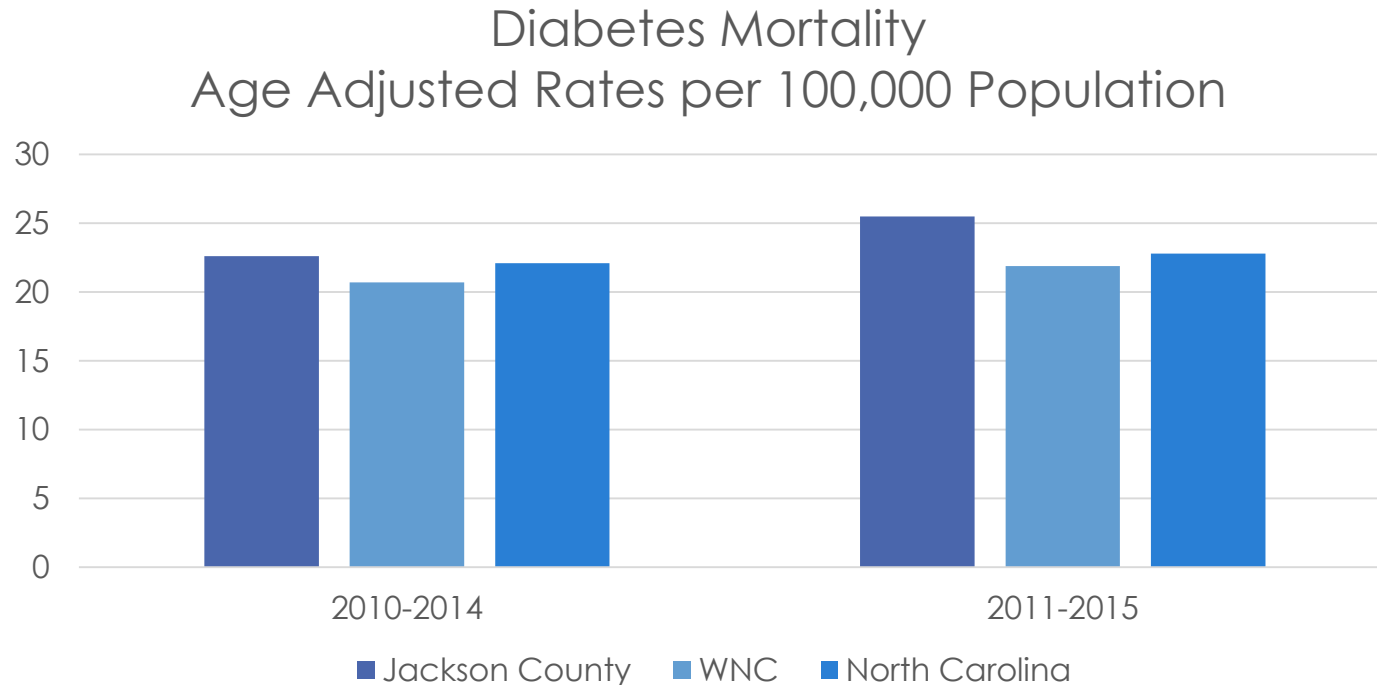
Unintentional Injury



The unintentional injury mortality rate (excluding motor vehicles) in Jackson County was **24.9% higher** than North Carolina's rate during 2011-2015.

Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data

Diabetes

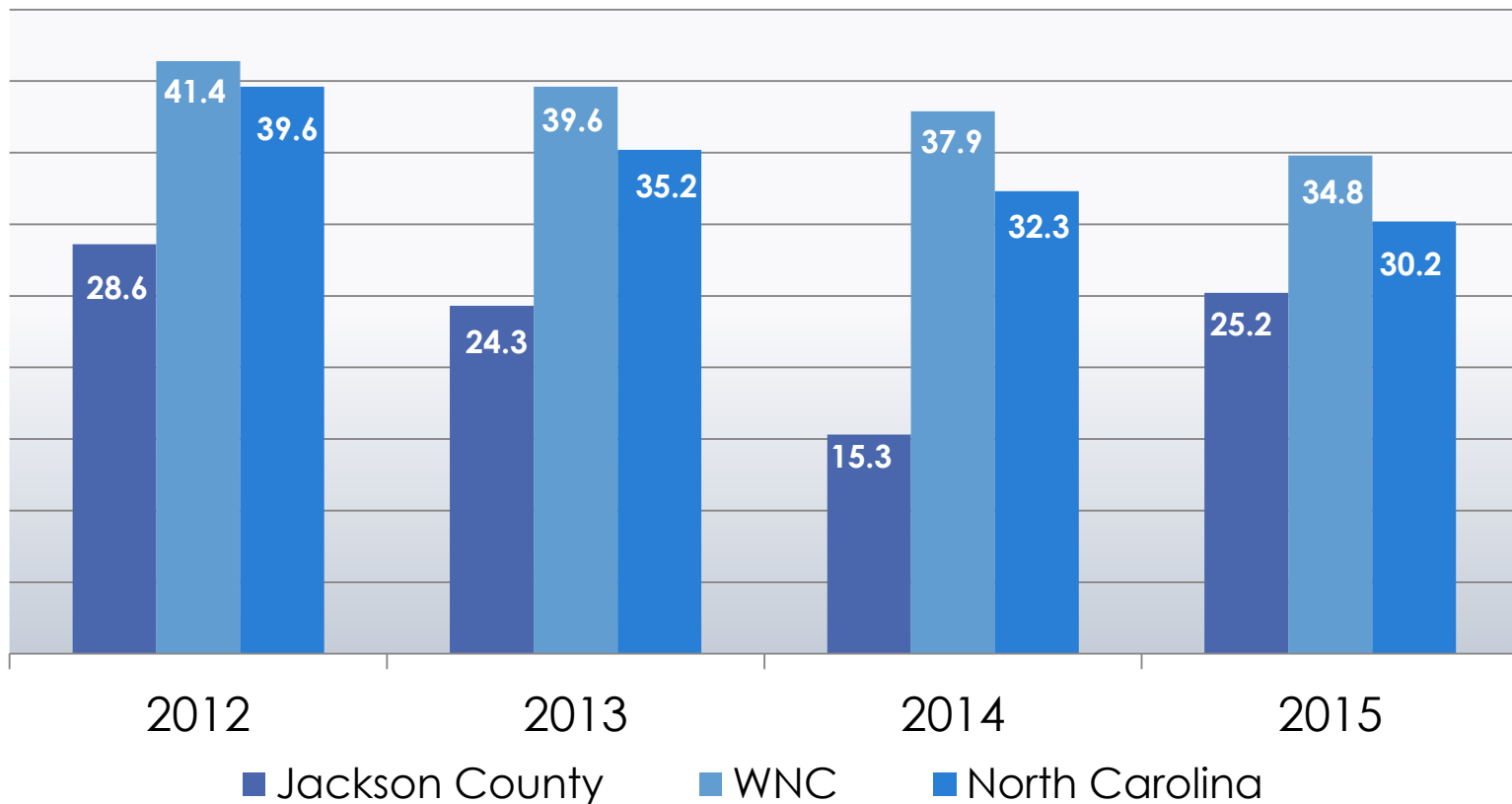


The graph above shows that Jackson County's diabetes mortality rate during the 2010-2014 and 2011-2015 aggregate periods is higher than both WNC's and North Carolina's rates. Since the 2009-2013 period, Jackson County has seen a 50% increase in diabetes mortality.

Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data

Teen Pregnancy

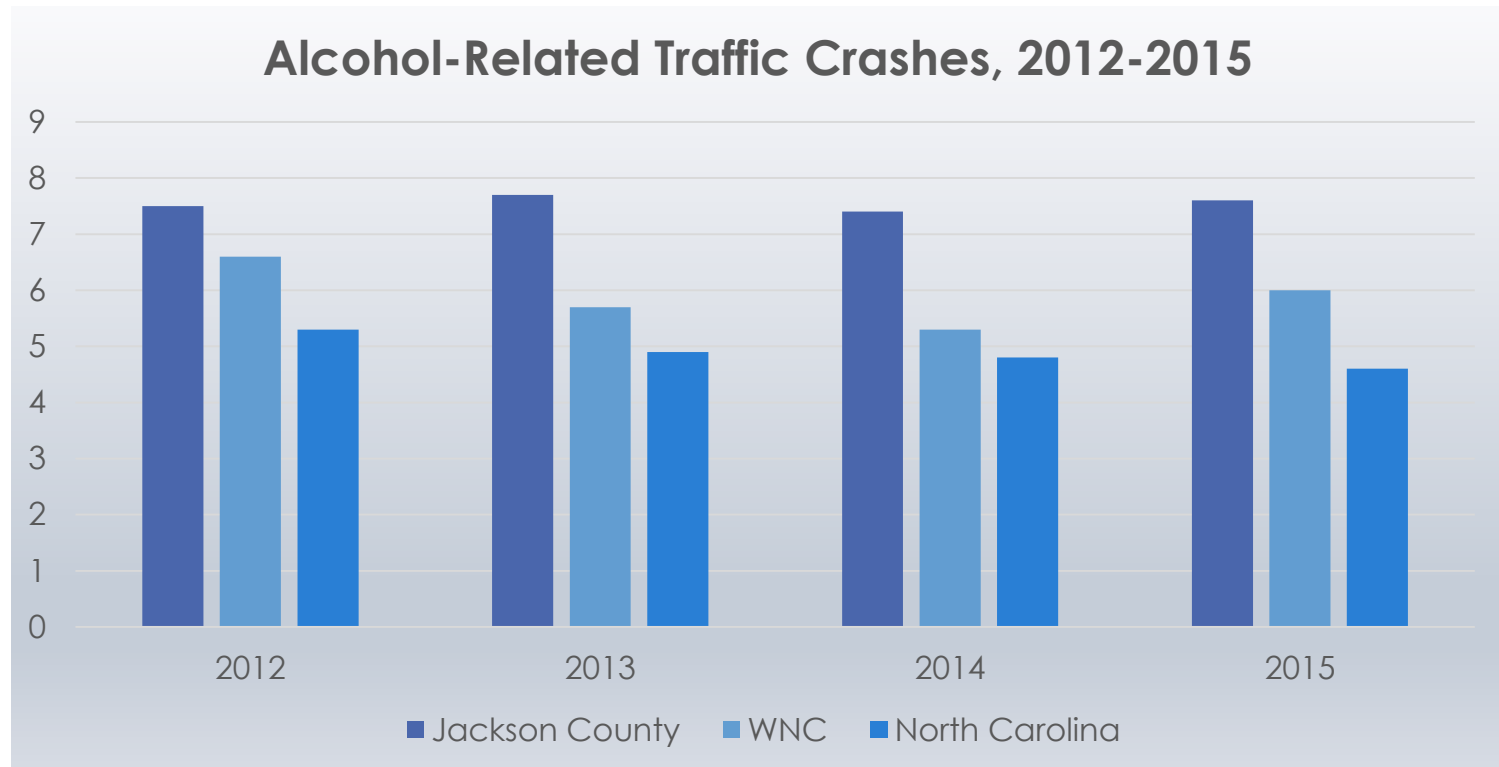
Teen Pregnancy, Ages 15-19
Rate per 1,000 Women



Source: NC SCHS Health Data Workbook, WNC Healthy Impact Secondary Data Workbook, SHIFT NC Data

Review of Morbidity/Mortality Data

Substance Abuse



More crashes are alcohol-related in Jackson County than in WNC or North Carolina-
21% more than WNC and 39.4% more than North Carolina in 2015.

Source: NC SCHS Health Data Workbook, WNC Healthy Impact Secondary Data Workbook

2015 Community
Health Assessment

Community Health
Improvement Plan

Physical Activity
& Nutrition
Action Plan 1

Injury & Substance
Abuse Prevention
Action Plan 2

Chronic Disease
Action Plan 3

Our Health Priorities



These priorities were selected
as a result of the 2015
Community Health Assessment.

Physical Activity & Nutrition

**Increase the prevalence of adults
at a healthy weight.**

**Increase the weekly fruit and
vegetable consumption of Jackson
County adults.**

**Increase the number of Jackson
County adults who meet the
Physical Activity
Recommendations.**



Progress Within Last Year

○ 7th Annual Healthy Snack Master Competition

- Cooking competition open to all Jackson County Public School Students held in March in honor of National Nutrition Month
- *Partners: School Health Advisory Council & Jackson County Public Schools*
- **10** participated in the competition
- Individual & group winners were awarded and other participants received superlative awards

○ 8th Annual Healthy Living Festival

- *Partners: Jackson County Cullowhee Rec Center, Senior Center, & local businesses*
- **131** participants and **28** vendors
- 44 individuals went through the screening room which included HbA1c, Blood Pressure, BMI, cholesterol, Hepatitis C, HIV & Syphilis testing
- All screenings were free thanks to donations from Harris Regional Hospital and the Jackson County Department of Public Health



Progress Within Last Year

o Get Fit Challenge

- o *Partners: Harris Regional Hospital, Western Carolina University, Jackson County Cullowhee Rec Center, local businesses*
- o 8 week annual fitness challenge open to county residents: 443 participants and 65 teams
- o Physical activity opportunities included
 - o Kick-Off Walk – 18 Participants; Crossfit Demo – 7 participants; Yoga Demo – 6 participants; End-of-Challenge Celebration – 14 participants



o Power of Produce Club

- o *Partners: Jackson County Farmer's Market, Harris Regional Hospital, Western Carolina University Dietetic Intern Program, Jackson County Dept of Public Health, and funded by the Great Smokies Health Foundation*
- o 3 Sessions, with a total of 42 children attending
- o Children participated in hands-on educational sessions and then received \$5 of POP Bucks to spend at the Farmer's Market
- o 21 children reported trying new foods that they liked



Progress Within Last Year

o Cullowhee Community Garden

- o *Partners: HIGHTS, Western Carolina University*
- o donation-based garden that grows produce for the purpose of food relief.
- o The Garden had a total of 530 individual volunteers throughout 2017 for a total of 2,120 hours – that is over \$51,176.80 worth of in-kind donations of time to the Garden.
- o Hosted Children's Day in June with 8 artists showcasing hands-on nature-based kids art projects; Over 100 attendees
- o Hosted Fall Harvest Festival in November with artists, live music, and local food vendor



o Tuesdays to Thrive

- o *Partners: Harris Regional Hospital, Swain Community Hospital, Mountain Projects, Vaya Health, Project Lazarus, Western Carolina University*
- o Monthly special events focusing on health topics
- o Topics featured in 2017: Substance Abuse & Mental Health, Healthy Heart, Physical Activity, Living Well Dying Well, Savory Swaps, and Diabetes Awareness
- o Typically have 15 people attend each session

o Kids Yoga & Sugar Shock Education

- o *Partner: Jackson County Public Library*
- o 2 yoga sessions for children with nutrition education and a healthy snack available afterwards
- o 30 children participated

Active Routes to School (ARTS)

Bike to School Day

- All 6 public schools and 1 faith based school participated
- 1737 participants total in Jackson County

Walk to School Day

- All 6 public schools and 2 faith based school participated
- 1389 participants total in Jackson County

Sustainable Programs in Jackson County

- All schools have sustainable walking programs
- Approximately 910 students walk on a weekly basis
- Approximately 450 students walk quarterly

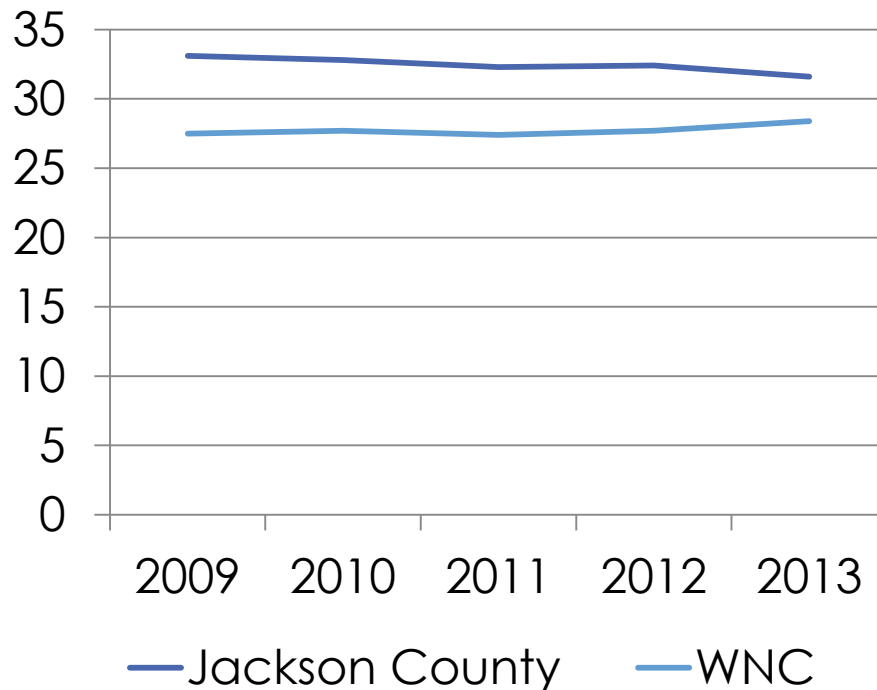
Policies/Procedures

- Fairview Elementary has a policy in place to have a 5 day/week walking program before school
- Jackson County Public Schools made it policy that all schools will teach the Let's Go NC Curriculum in PE classes.



Data Related to Progress

Trend: Adult Obesity Prevalence Estimate (CDC)



The adult obesity trend has been decreasing in Jackson County in small amounts, from 33.1% in 2009 to 31.6% in 2013. This shows a 4.05% decrease.

Jackson County adult obesity percentages are higher than the WNC average.

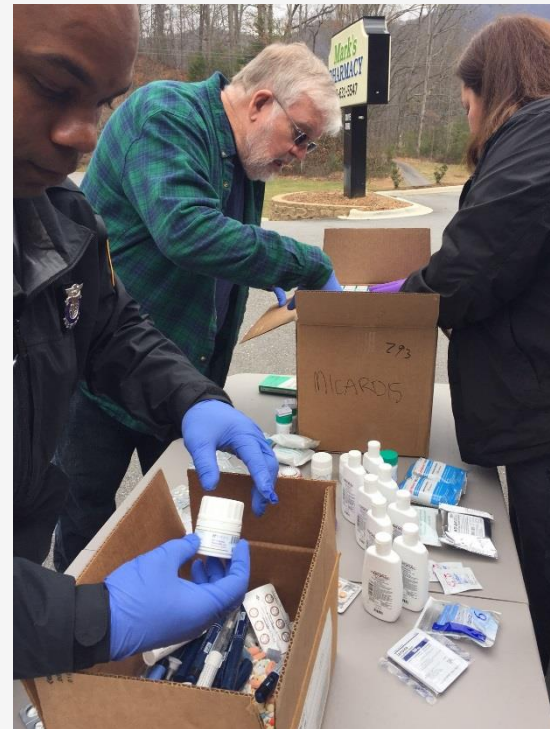
2013 is the most up-to-date obesity prevalence data available for Jackson County.

JACKSON COUNTY 2017

Injury and Substance Abuse Prevention

Decrease the unintentional injuries mortality in Jackson County due to poisonings, overdoses, and falls.

Increase knowledge and awareness about prescription drug abuse, reduce the presence of unwanted medication in our community, educate the public about naloxone, and reduce prescription drug overdose in Jackson County.



Progress Within Last Year

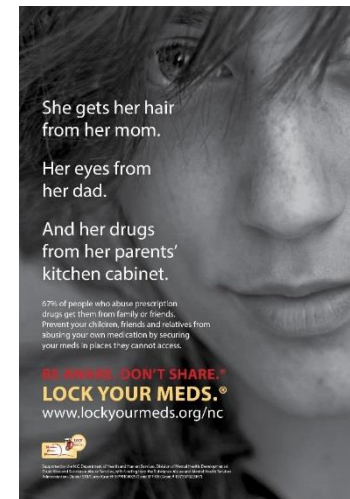
o Exercise Classes Promoting Balance

- o *Partners: Senior Center*
- o Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program: **1691** participants
- o Walk with Ease: **547** participants
- o Tai Chi for Arthritis: **558** participants
- o Otago: **64** participants
- o The Otago program is a partnership between the Senior Center and Western Carolina University Physical Therapy Department

*These numbers are duplicated

o Lock Your Meds Campaign

- o The Action Team received the NC Lock Your Meds Campaign grant (license to materials) to raise awareness about assessing, disposing, and securing prescribed medications properly in the home to reduce access.
- o The Action Team received magnets, rack cards, posters, and 50 medication lock boxes to provide to community members.
- o To promote the campaign, posters have been placed in the community, a news article and letter to the editor were submitted, an ad ran in the Sylva Herald Newspaper, and the campaign was discussed on WRGC Radio.



Progress Within Last Year

3 Medication Take Back Events

- Partners: Jackson County Sheriff's Office & Dept on Aging, NC Highway Patrol, Safe Kids, Mountain Projects
- Mark's Pharmacy – March 25
 - Collected 57,424 units
- Cashiers Valley Pharmacy – April 28
 - Collected 8,719.5 units
- Jackson County Senior Center – Nov 20
 - Collected 9,138.75



Drop Box

- The Action Team received a grant from Project Lazarus, which included a permanent medication drop box and \$1,500.
- The drop box is the 3rd in the county, and was placed in the underserved Cashiers community at the Sheriff's Office.
- The Action Team used the funds to promote the drop box in the community.



Progress Within Last Year

• Free Screenings

- *Partners: WNCAP, WCU*
- The Action Team helped with 2 free screenings in 2017
- 37 participants were screened for HIV, Hepatitis C, and Syphilis at the Healthy Living Festival
- 32 participants were screened for HIV and Syphilis at WCU on 11/30

• Media & Community Outreach

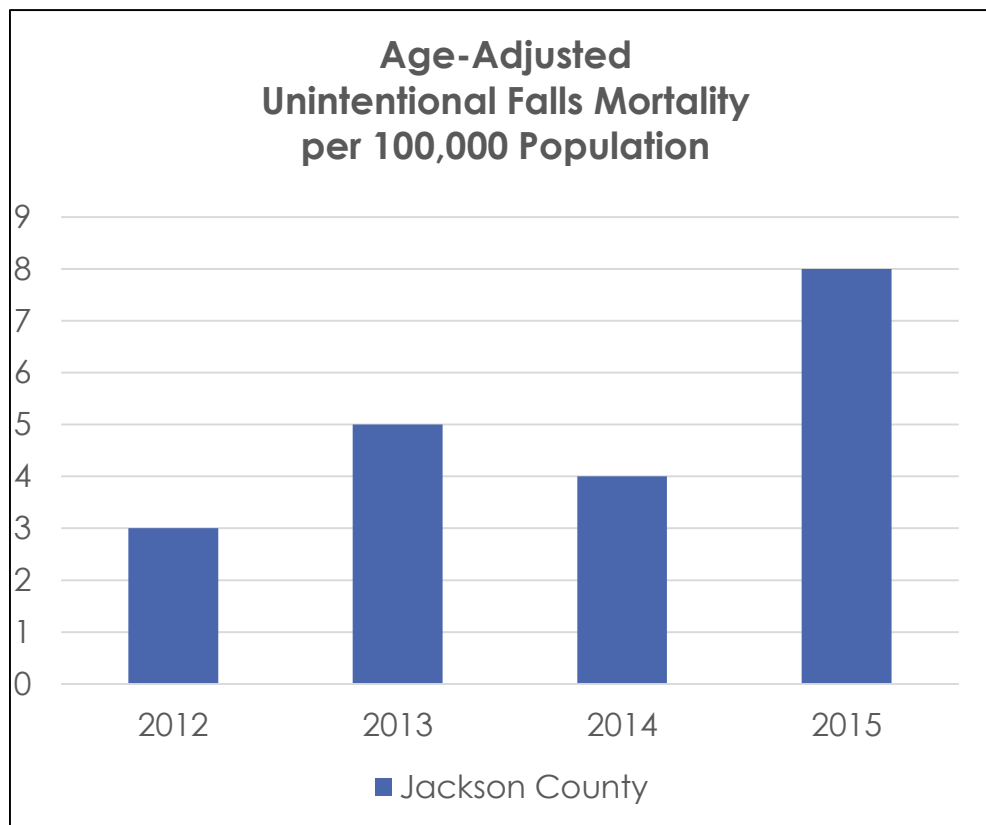
- News releases throughout 2017 include articles on substance abuse as a priority, medication take back events, fall prevention, and locking your medications, as well as all Lock Your Meds Campaign promotion.
- Action Team members presented to the Rotary Club of Cashiers Valley, and hosted booths at the Healthy Living Festival, Jackson County Farmer's Market, and the Senior Center dining hour.

• Jackson County Project Lazarus Website

- The Action Team maintains an up-to-date website with upcoming events, meeting agendas and minutes, articles and more.

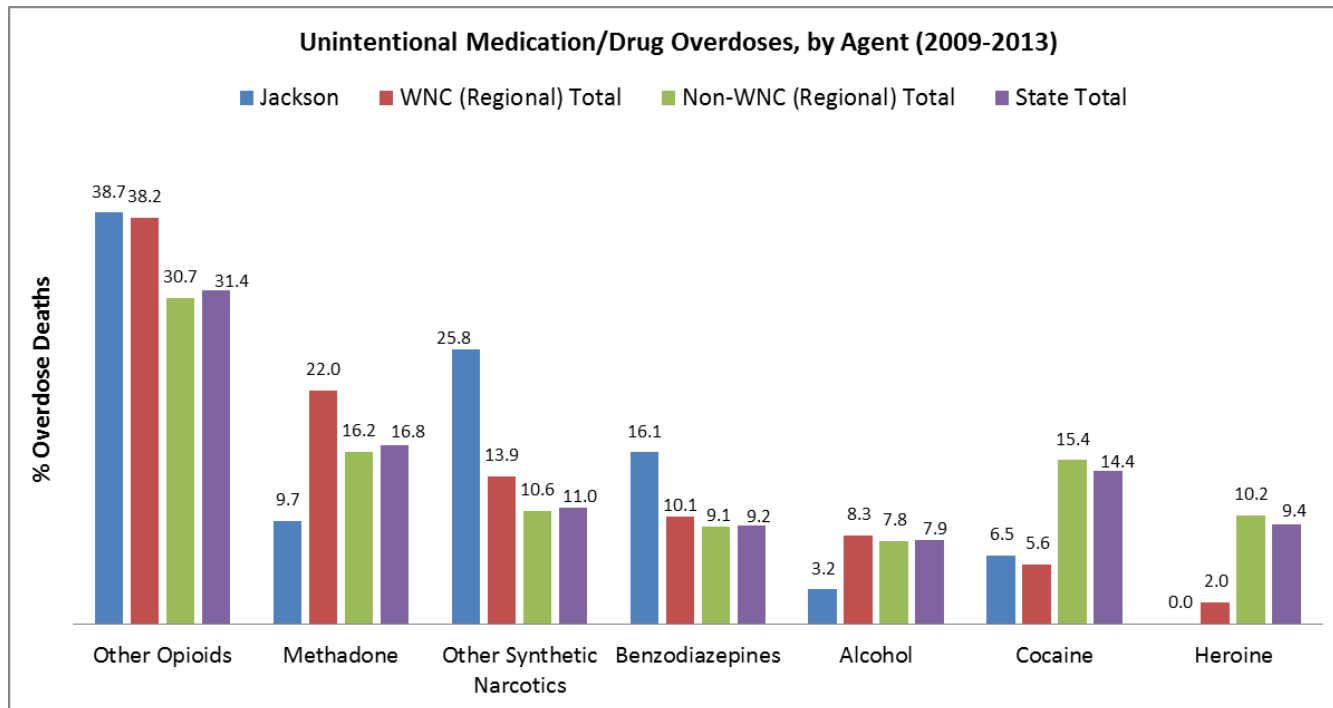


Data Related to Progress



As of July 1, 2015, it is estimated that 18.1% of Jackson County residents are 65 years or older. This number is projected to increase to at least 20% by year 2030.

Data Related to Progress



The newest data shows that Jackson County has a higher rate of Other Opioids and Other Synthetic Narcotics overdose rates than WNC, Non-WNC, and the State.

JACKSON COUNTY 2017

Chronic Disease Prevention

**Decrease the percentage
of adults with diabetes.**

**Reduce the colorectal
cancer mortality rate.**



Progress Within Last Year

○ **Diabetes Prevention Program**

- Year long class offered at the Health Department, beginning in January 2017 and ending December 2017
- 9 participants completed the course
- All lowered BMI, except 1. HbA1c decreased an average of 2 points.
- Participants lost on average 4.4% of their body weight

○ **Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME)**

- Health Department
 - 60 patients were seen and saw a decrease in their HbA1c by an average by 2 points
 - 125 patients were seen for Medical Nutrition Therapy, with 75 of them being diabetic
- Harris Regional
 - 90 patients across all locations
 - On average, patients saw a decrease in their HbA1c by an average of 2 points.

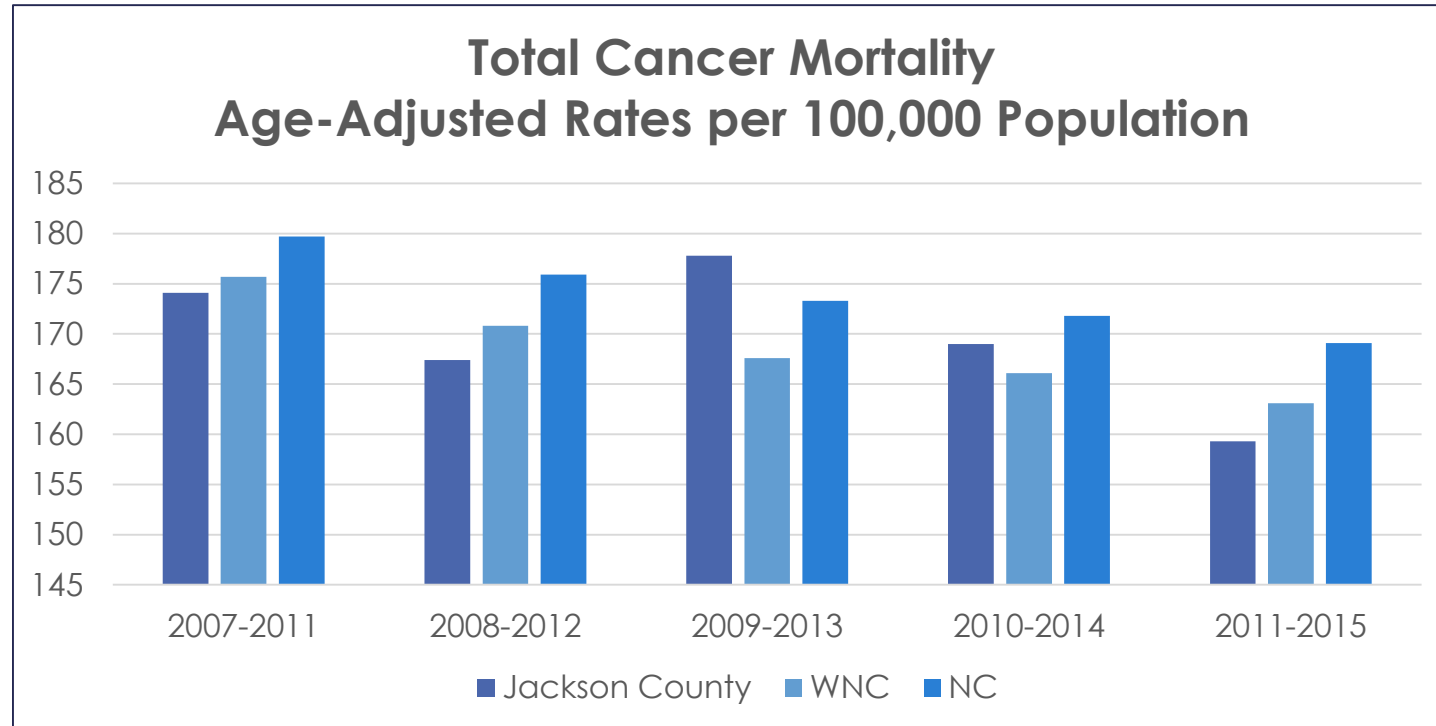
○ **Vecinos Farmworkers Health Program**

- Not-for-profit healthcare org. that serves individuals, and their families who have worked in agriculture in the past 24 months
- Jackson County is home to about 400 farmworkers each year
- Serves 117 patients with chronic disease through healthcare, case management, & health education

○ **Tobacco Cessation Program**

- Classes are offered at the Health Dept, and residents can meet with health educator for one-on-one counseling by appointment
- 3 participants in 2017

Data Related to Progress



In Jackson County during the 2011-2015 period, the most common cancer site was the lung/bronchus. The second was the colon/rectum, the third was the prostate, and the fourth was the female breast.

Changes in Data

- Since the 2016 SOTCH was submitted, there have been a few changes in data relating to our priorities.
- In the areas of healthy eating and physical activity, Jackson County's diabetes mortality rate increased from 22.6 to 25.5. There is currently not any updated data on the adult obesity prevalence in Jackson County. The last data we have is from 2013. During the 2018 CHA cycle, we hope to obtain updated information in this area, as well as the number of adults meeting the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity/week, and recommended consumption of fruits and vegetables. Updated data is not available for either at this time.
- For injury and substance abuse categories, unintentional fall mortality has doubled from 4 during 2014 to 8 in 2015. Though the data we have is newer, it is still lagging, with 2015 being the newest, so efforts taking place may be addressing fall mortality. Currently, there is not updated information regarding unintentional medication/drug overdoses by agent. The last time this data was updated was in 2013. We do know that the opioid epidemic is prevalent in our community and hope to have updated numbers in the near future.
- For chronic disease, Jackson County has good news. The total cancer mortality rate declined during 2010-2014 (169) and has continued that trend in the 2011-2015 aggregate period (149.3). This is a 5.74% decrease. Rates fell for both males and females.

New & Emerging Issues

- Western Carolina University –
 - Due to NC Promise (\$500 out of pocket tuition), WCU is expected to grow, meaning there will most likely be an increase in college students seeking healthcare in the county.
 - There has been an increase in drug related incidents, crime (2 shootings Fall 2017), and alcohol related issues
- Medicaid is transitioning from a fee-for-service structure to a managed care structure. The vision is to advance high value care, improve population health, engage and support providers, and establish a sustainable program with predictable costs.
- Hepatitis B and C cases are rapidly on the rise due to intravenous drug use, and western border counties in NC have seen the most impact.
- Youth tobacco rates have started to increase again due to non-cigarette products such as e-cigarettes, cigars, and hookahs. In our region, 27% of high school students and 10.4% of middle school students use tobacco products. There are now 2 vape stores located within walking distance to Smoky Mountain High School.

Local Changes

- The Jackson County Sheriff's Office and Western Carolina University Police Department are now carrying Naloxone rescue kits.
- The County is working towards renovating the current Health Department.
- Through collaboration of Western Carolina University and Jackson County Public Schools, a six through eighth grade lab school, The Catamount School, began in Fall 2017. This is Jackson County's first middle school.
- Blue Ridge Health, in partnership with the Good Samaritan Clinic, opened a Federally Qualified Health Center in April 2017, expanding Primary Care and Behavioral Health services for both adults and children. BRH provides family medicine, pediatrics, behavioral health, and a Medication Assistance Program. BRH recently added a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who provides one-on-one counseling. All patients are accepted regardless of insurance status and inability to pay.
- In Sylva city limits, residents and visitors can now purchase alcohol at 10am on Sundays. The former law permitted alcohol sales at 12 noon.
- County Commissioners voted to move forward with exploring consolidation of Public Health and Social Services. A public hearing and final vote will happen in January 2018.

New Initiatives

- The Jackson County Trails & Greenways Committee is creating a map with trails and walks in Jackson County that can be shared with residents and visitors.
- Individuals from The Catamount School, NC Fish & Wildlife, and WCU Parks and Rec Management received a grant to begin revitalization of the WildWatch outdoor classroom and trail at Fairview Elementary. Plans are to enhance the classroom space, update, and add additional trails, with the goal of connecting trails to the high school.
- The Jackson County Sheriff's Office has committed to annual alcohol compliance check activities in order to reduce access to underage drinking.
- The Jackson County Farmer's Market is working towards expanding their food stamp program to include Double Your Food Bucks program.

New Initiatives

- The Jackson County Dept of Public Health program, Care Coordination for Children (CC4C), has collaborated with the Dept of Social Services (DSS) to implement the Plan of Safe Care. DSS refers all infants affected by substance abuse to the CC4C program. The CC4C program averages 20 referrals/month from the Plan of Safe Care and other referral means.
- Jackson County Dept of Public Health now has a Baby Bucks incentives programs to encourage women to attend prenatal appointments.
- Blue Ridge Health plans to add a bi-lingual provider to its Jackson County team in 2018.
- The Health Department was awarded the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program grant, that specifically targets middle school aged students and teaches sexual health & pregnancy prevention.
- A Tobacco Treatment Specialist is now housed at the Health Department.

- The 2017 State of the County Health Report will be presented/available at the following:
 - Jackson County Department of Public Health Staff Meeting, January 2018
 - Jackson County Board of Health, January 2018
 - Healthy Carolinians of Jackson County Steering Committee, January 2018
 - Posted to the Jackson County Department of Public Health's website <http://health.jacksonnc.org>
 - Electronic copy sent to County Commissioners and County Manager
 - Press releases sent to the Sylva Herald, Crossroads Chronicle, and WRGC radio
 - Hardcopies will be available at the health department.



What Next?

Continued attention to collective action, and monitoring impact & data collection for the 2018 Community Health Assessment

For more information on the State of the County Health Report please contact Janelle Messer at 828-587-8238 or janellemesser@jacksonnc.org.