

2016 State of the County's Health Report

Transylvania County



Results Scorecard Terminology



Results Scorecard

A strategy and performance management software that is accessible through a web browser and designed to support collaboration both inside and outside organizations. It focuses on defining results you want to accomplish, indicators to determine if those results are being improved and defining programs or agencies that can help you achieve your goals through tracking their performance measures. All of this is done with powerful tools and methodology techniques to support your work.

Scorecard

A scorecard is a canvas that other scorecard objects (Results, Indicators, Programs, and Performance Measures) are placed onto. Scorecards allow you to create collections of similar information for reporting and presentations.

Result R

A condition of well-being for children, adults, families, or communities (stated in plain language).

Indicator I

A measure that helps quantify the achievement of a result.

Program P

A program, agency, or service system responsible for helping reach the stated Results.

Tags Tag

In various lists and reports you can use tags as a filter for finding the scorecard objects you want. Tags also help you keep track of scorecard objects that have the same name but belong to different geographical regions, departments, etc.

2016 Transylvania County SOTCH Scorecard



This SOTCH Scorecard will be created and submitted by **March 6, 2017** to meet the requirements for the **Transylvania County** annual State of the County's Health (SOTCH) Report.

The 2015 Community Health Assessment priority areas are:

- Priority 1: Substance Abuse
- Priority 2: Mental Health
- Priority 3: Nutrition, Physical Activity & Weight

The following resources were used/reviewed in order to complete the SOTCH:

- [2017 County Health Data Book](#)
- Transylvania Public Health's 2016 Annual Report
- C.A.R.E. Coalition 2016 Annual Report

Health Priority #1 - Substance Abuse

R

Substance Abuse

A healthy, vibrant Transylvania County, free of substance abuse and underage drinking

Time
Period

Actual
Value

Target
Value

Current
Trend

Baseline
% Change

Why Is This Important?

Substance use and abuse are major contributors to death and disability in North Carolina. Addiction to drugs or alcohol is a chronic health problem, and people who suffer from abuse or dependence are at risk for premature death, comorbid health conditions, injuries, and disability. Therefore, prevention of misuse and abuse of substances is critical. Furthermore, substance abuse has adverse consequences for families, communities, and society, contributing to family upheaval, crime rates, and motor vehicle fatalities. (Healthy NC 2020)

Substance abuse is linked to a number of poor health outcomes in Transylvania County. Key informants reported that the most problematic substances for the county were prescription drugs and alcohol.

The entire WNC region sees high mortality rates due to unintentional poisoning related to medication and drug overdose. However, the most recent rates of unintentional poisoning related to drug overdose in Transylvania County were approximately 35% higher than the regional rates and 1.8 times the state rates. (Professional Research Consultants, Inc., 2015) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013)

A second cause of higher-than-expected mortality is liver disease: although the percentage of "excessive drinkers" in Transylvania County falls below the state average and the Healthy People 2020 Target, there is a strong association between alcohol abuse and chronic liver disease and cirrhosis.

In addition, substance abuse is associated with suicide, which is the third cause of death in which Transylvania County rates are higher than the state rates.

Action Plan

Develop and disseminate messages about safe storage and disposal of prescription medications

- Work to develop clear guidance messages about safe storage options for patients who bring prescription drugs

home.

- Develop partnerships with prescribers and pharmacists to disseminate clear, consistent messages about safe storage and disposal for prescription medications and co-prescribe naloxone where appropriate.
- Conduct a community campaign to echo messages being disseminated by prescribers and pharmacists about safe storage and disposal of prescription medications

Progress Made in Last Year

The following progress was made in 2016 on Substance Use in Transylvania County.

- Transylvania Public Health continued its partnership with the C.A.R.E. Coalition to reduce misuse of prescription medication through safe storage and disposal messages.
- Coalition members presented medical staff at Transylvania Regional Hospital with North Carolina Medical Board recommendations on opioid prescribing and use of the Controlled Substances Reporting System. The hospital has since revised its opioid prescribing policy.
- An Opiate Overdose Prevention palm card was developed in December 2016, with information on local naloxone availability, signs of overdose, and instructions on what to do in case of an overdose. The card was distributed electronically to community and coalition members, and printed in small batches for distribution at partner pharmacies and a community health fair. (UPDATE, January 2017: Coalition members are now working with representatives from Mission Hospitals to co-brand and mass produce a similar palm card for distribution by physicians and other providers to patients receiving opiate prescriptions.)
- An Rx Safety palm card was developed in December 2016, with instructions for safe use, storage, and disposal of prescription medications. The card was distributed electronically to coalition members and other community members, and is expected to be produced for distribution at local pharmacies in spring 2017.
- A Drug Take-Back Event was held in October 2016 and promoted through a media campaign that also included safe storage and disposal messages. Approximately 155 pounds of unused and expired medications were collected at the take-back event and from dropboxes located at local law enforcement offices in 2016.
- More than 200 lockboxes were distributed to county residents in 2016, along with instructions for safe storage and disposal; additional funding was received from a local church to purchase additional lockboxes. Lockboxes are important in reducing the availability of prescription medications in the community, and C.A.R.E. Coalition members followed up with previous lockbox recipients to see if they are actually using the lockboxes according to recommendations.

C.A.R.E. works toward creating a healthy, vibrant Transylvania County, free of underage drinking and substance abuse. Members include representatives from schools, law enforcement, health care, media, youth-serving agencies, civic and volunteer organizations, religious groups, mental health/substance use treatment programs, parents, and youth. C.A.R.E. is the recipient of a 5-year Drug-Free Communities grant and was awarded a new 4-year STOP grant for further work to prevent underage drinking.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| I | OverdoseDeaths | Unintentional Medication and Drug Poisoning Deaths per 100,000 Population (5-year aggregates) | 2015 | 21.8 | 12.3 | ↗ 1 | 263% ↗ |
| P | RxStore&Dispose | Create and distribute educational materials about safe storage and disposal of opiate medications | Time Period | Actual Value | Target Value | Current Trend | Baseline % Change |
| P | RxStore&Dispose | Develop partnerships with prescribers and pharmacies to educate patients about safe storage and disposal and provide naloxone | Time Period | Actual Value | Target Value | Current Trend | Baseline % Change |
| P | | | Time Period | Actual Value | Target Value | Current Trend | Baseline % Change |

Health Priority #2 - Mental Health

R

MentalHealth

Transylvania County supports the physical, emotional, and social well-being of all its residents

Time
PeriodActual
ValueTarget
ValueCurrent
TrendBaseline
% Change

Why Is This Important?

Mental health is a new health priority for Transylvania County, related to mortality and morbidity statistics, an understanding of the relationship between substance abuse and mental health issues, and a lack of necessary mental health treatment and counseling options in the county, especially for those who have little income or no insurance.

Mental health is closely tied with many other health issues. One study suggested that more than 68 percent of adults with a mental disorder had at least one medical condition. (Goodell, Druss, & Walker, 2011) Medical disorders may lead to mental disorders, mental conditions may place a person at risk for certain medical disorders, and mental and medical disorders may share common risk factors. It is also closely tied with our first priority: substance abuse, and with our three causes of death that rate higher than the state average.

Transylvania County has experienced much economic turmoil in the past decade, resulting in a lack of good-paying jobs for those without higher education. Although some sectors of the community are quite wealthy and the county attracts many tourists and retirees, many others in the community are stuck in poverty with no job prospects and no way to improve their life circumstances.

Mental health issues in Transylvania County are compounded by the lack of adequate mental health care facilities, especially for those who have additional barriers to care such as lack of health insurance, poverty, and lack of transportation. When talking to employers, social workers and law enforcement, the issues of mental health and substance abuse are often identified as problems that have not been adequately addressed in Transylvania County or North Carolina.

Action Plan

Support improvements to mental health care through screening, referrals, and collaborative care

- Educate providers on available community resources for mental health services; update resources on a bi-annual basis
- Provide training and support for local primary care providers and ob/gyns (and their staff) to improve routine screening for mental health disorders and referral to treatment
- Improve clinical and community support for active patient engagement in treatment goal setting and self-management

Provide information about navigating the mental health care system to community members

- Engage local mental health providers to participate in a community forum to educate patients and families on navigating and overcoming challenges in the mental health care system
- Produce easy-to-understand printed and electronic resources for patients and families describing available services, how to access them, and when to access them
- Update and disseminate resource list on at least a bi-annual basis

Progress Made in Last Year

The following progress was made in 2016 on Mental Health in Transylvania County.

- Transylvania Public Health partnered with Transylvania County Commissioners and Vaya Health to host a community forum on mental health services in the county in October 2016. A panel of providers shared information about the services offered by their agencies, how to contact them, and when to seek support. Panelists represented Vaya Health, RHA Health Services, Meridian Behavioral Health Services, Mission Health, Blue Ridge Health, local private

practitioners, and the local affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. In addition, 25 mental health and behavioral health providers were available for one-on-one questions and discussion with attendees after the panel presentation. The forum was attended by 42 community members.

- Based on information gathered at the forum, Transylvania Public Health compiled a listing of services offered by the providers who attended in November 2016. This listing was supplemented with other resources, including data from Vaya Health and professional listings from Psychology Today (as recommended by one of the local providers). This listing will be shared with the United Way 2-1-1 referral system and published for distribution.
- Transylvania Public Health and Transylvania County Commissioners partnered with Vaya Health in efforts to bring a mental health screening kiosk to the county. The kiosk offers anonymous screening of six common mental health concerns, gives feedback on screening results, and provides referrals to treatment, including a direct VoIP line to the Vaya Health customer call center. The same screening tool will be available online for use in other places. (UPDATE, February 2017: The MindKare mental health screening kiosk was installed in the first floor lobby of the Community Services Building located at 106 E. Morgan St. in downtown Brevard. The kiosk was unveiled at a presentation with remarks from Vaya Health CEO Brian Ingraham, Transylvania County Commissioner Page Lemel, Transylvania County Commissioner Chair Larry Chapman, and Transylvania County Health Director Elaine Russell. In addition to media coverage of the event, posters, palm cards, and social media have been used to promote use of the kiosk and online screening tools.)

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|---|-----------------|--|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| I | MentalHealth | Emergency department visits for affective symptoms, suicide thoughts, and drug or alcohol use (per 100,000 population) | 2015 | 1.4% | — | → 0 | 0% → |
| P | MHForum | Host a community forum to educate patients and families on navigating mental health system | Time Period | Actual Value | Target Value | Current Trend | Baseline % Change |
| P | MHListing | Create and publish a comprehensive listing of mental health services in Transylvania County | Time Period | Actual Value | Target Value | Current Trend | Baseline % Change |
| P | Screen&Refer | Support provider training and support for routine screening for mental health disorders and referral to treatment | Time Period | Actual Value | Target Value | Current Trend | Baseline % Change |
| P | PatientEngagemt | Support active patient engagement in clinical and community settings for treatment goal setting and self-management | Time Period | Actual Value | Target Value | Current Trend | Baseline % Change |

Health Priority #3 - Nutrition, Physical Activity & Weight

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|---|---------------|---|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| R | HealthyWeight | All Transylvania County residents achieve health through a nutritious diet and active lifestyle | Time Period | Actual Value | Target Value | Current Trend | Baseline % Change |
|---|---------------|---|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|

Why It Matters?

Nutrition, physical activity, and health are closely related to cultural norms and traditions, and well as geography and the economy. A rural county with a limited number of well-paying jobs and high cost of housing results in long commutes, less money for groceries and recreation, and limited access to stores that sell nutritious foods.

Although we have an environment conducive to outdoor activity, a large percentage of our community does not have an active lifestyle. Bike riding is a popular recreational activity and actually draws a number of visitors to the county, and some residents are drawn to the county based on the downtown’s “walkability.” However, among some populations, riding a bicycle or walking as a form of transportation may be seen as evidence of being unable to afford a car.

Transylvania County has a long history of self-sustenance, and it is popular to grow a small garden for fresh herbs and vegetables and visit the thriving Farmer’s Market. However, for some of the population, eating out is still a symbol of prosperity. For others, a busy lifestyle, long distances to and from work, and lack of knowledge about how to properly prepare nutritious foods contribute to a “fast-food culture.” Cooking home-style foods with an emphasis on red meat and potatoes may be expected and appreciated by others. Families who are stretching their grocery budget may not see how they can afford nutritious food, or may not be able to travel to stores that sell nutritious items. Families who must rely on food pantries may not have access to much more than the shelf-stable items available from those sources.

This issue, too, is related to the other selected health priorities. Stress contributes to weight gain and a desire for foods that fill an emotional rather than nutritious need. However, physical activity can reduce stress and contribute to better mental health.

Action Plan

Provide Social Support for Physical Activity

- Recruit volunteers to coordinate walking groups
- Group leaders will recruit group participants, select physical activity goals, and coordinate groups to achieve those goals
- Provide encouragement to group leaders and check on participants’ progress
- Lead group discussion about negative views of exercise and other barriers to change

Support the Local Corner Store Initiative

- Identify at least one small retail store owner willing to stock fresh fruits and vegetables
- Collaborate with MountainWise to assist interested store owners in implementing sales of fresh produce in their stores
- Develop or reproduce marketing materials to promote the purchase and consumption of fruits and vegetables in retail stores and community venues

Progress Made in Last Year

The following progress was made in 2016 on Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Weight in Transylvania County:

- Transylvania Public Health is working with the Hunger Coalition of Transylvania County to support its efforts in providing healthy foods to outlying areas of the county identified as food deserts. The Hunger Coalition is developing partnerships with leaders of local food pantries located in these areas to deliver fresh produce (as well as milk, eggs, fresh bread, and other pantry staples) to supplement non-perishable goods. (UPDATE, January 2017: The first Mobile Food Truck delivery was made to seven food pantries located in remote/food desert areas of Transylvania County.)
- The Hunger Coalition held an Action Organizational Meeting in November 2016 to provide direction for the coalition's efforts and form groups to address the administrative functions of marketing, funding, volunteer recruitment and coordination, and resource distribution.
- Transylvania Public Health has continued to assist the Hunger Coalition by updating its Food Pantry Map with distribution schedules, contact information, and locations for all food pantries in the county. The Hunger Coalition and its partners distributed electronic and print copies of the maps to low-resourced families in Transylvania County.
- Efforts to recruit volunteer coordinators of physical activity/walking groups are being planned for spring 2017.

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|---|---------------|---|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| I | HealthyWeight | Adults at a healthy weight (measured as a BMI score of 18.5-24.9 calculated from the self-reported height and weight) | 2012 | 37% | 38% | → 0 | 0% → |
| | | | Time Period | Actual Value | Target Value | Current Trend | Baseline % Change |
| P | SocialSupport | Encourage social support for physical activity | | | | | |



Support increased access to fruits and vegetables at small retail stores and community venues

Emerging Issues



Review major morbidity and mortality data and identify new and emerging issues that affect community health status

Notes

NEW AND EMERGING ISSUES

The following new or emerging issues have affected Transylvania County since the 2015 CHA.

- Transylvania County experienced suicides by well-known and beloved citizens, which brought even more attention to the topic of mental health. County commissioners began working with Smoky Mountain LME/MCO to demand transparency in spending, and task force groups were formed to bring additional mental health resources to Transylvania County.
- Smoky Mountain went through a name change to Vaya Health and an associated rebranding effort. New materials are easier to read and understand, but efforts are still ongoing to complete the change. The name change may present a barrier to potential clients who are unsure where to go for help.
- Following the November 2016 elections, changes in politics may lead to changes that directly affect public health. Republicans have promised to "repeal and replace" the Affordable Care Act. This may have implications on the number of residents who are able to afford or be eligible for health insurance, and could in turn limit access to preventative screenings, early diagnosis, and health care treatment. The ACA also includes funding for public health initiatives that include work to increase access to healthy foods, reduce tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke, promote worksite wellness activities, and prevent falls among older residents. If this funding source is eliminated, it could directly affect the work of local public health practitioners in general as well as ongoing efforts to address Transylvania County's top health priorities and other health concerns.

MORTALITY DATA

The 2015 CHA reported that Transylvania County's age-adjusted death rates were lower than the state rates in 2009-2013 for all causes of death except for All Other Unintentional Injuries (67% higher), Suicide (57% higher), and Chronic Liver Disease/Cirrhosis (18% higher).

The rates have changed slightly, but the trends are similar for the years 2010-2014 and 2011-2015. In 2011-2015, Transylvania County continues to have lower age-adjusted death rates for all causes except All Other Unintentional Injuries (42% higher), Suicide (61% higher), and Chronic Liver Disease/Cirrhosis (23% higher). Note that All Other Unintentional Injuries includes accidental poisonings such as medication overdoses. The rate is improving compared to 2009-2013 rates, but is still much higher than the state rate. Death rates for Suicide and Chronic Liver Disease/Cirrhosis are continuing to rise.

In 2011-2015, Cancer surpassed Heart Disease as the number one cause of death, with 445 deaths vs. 427. Deaths from Diabetes and Pneumonia rose in the ranking, while deaths from Nephritis/Nephrotic Syndrome/Nephrosis, Chronic Liver Disease/Cirrhosis, and Unintentional Motor Vehicle Injuries fell in the ranking.

Age-Adjusted Death Rates by County of Residence

| 2011-15 Rank | Cause of Death | Number of Deaths | Age-adjusted Rate per 100,000 | Difference from State Rate | Change from 2009-13 Rate |
|--------------|--|------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Cancer | 445 | 142.1 | -16% | 3.6% |
| 2 | Diseases of Heart | 427 | 128.1 | -22% | -13.3% |
| 3 | All Other Unintentional Injuries | 84 | 43.3 | 42% | -11.6% |
| 4 | Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases | 119 | 35.4 | -23% | -5.1% |
| 5 | Cerebrovascular Disease | 105 | 31.4 | -27% | 1.3% |
| 6 | Alzheimer's disease | 74 | 20.5 | -32% | -9.3% |
| 7 | Suicide | 33 | 20.4 | 61% | 6.3% |
| 8 | Diabetes Mellitus | 45 | 14.8 | -35% | 29.8% |
| 9 | Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome, and Nephrosis | 46 | 14.3 | -12% | 18.2% |
| 10 | Pneumonia and Influenza | 43 | 12.9 | -28% | 17.3% |
| 11 | Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis | 29 | 12.4 | 23% | 10.7% |
| 12 | Unintentional Motor Vehicle Injuries | 21 | 11.2 | -18% | 0.0% |

MORBIDITY DATA

For 2014 (the most recent data available), hospital utilization and discharge rates for Transylvania County residents are higher than state rates for 7 of the top 10 diagnostic categories. Rates per 1,000 residents are lower for Pregnancy/Childbirth, Infectious/Parasitic Diseases, and Endocrine/Metabolic/Nutritious Diseases. It is important to note that "Other Diagnoses (including Mental Disorders)" has risen in the ranking from 5th in 2009 to 2nd in 2014, which could indicate an increased need for mental health services in Transylvania County.

Inpatient Hospital Utilization by Principal Diagnosis and County of Residence

| 2014 Rank | Diagnostic category | Total cases in 2014 | County discharge rate (per 1,000) | State discharge rate (per 1,000) | Difference from State Rate |
|-----------|--|---------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | Cardiovascular & circulatory diseases | 614 | 18.6 | 15 | 24% |
| 2 | Other diagnoses (including mental disorders) | 492 | 14.9 | 9.2 | 62% |
| 3 | Digestive system diseases (including diabetes) | 356 | 10.8 | 8.8 | 23% |
| 4 | Respiratory diseases | 324 | 9.8 | 8.9 | 10% |
| 5 | Injuries & poisoning | 322 | 9.7 | 7.6 | 28% |
| 6 | Pregnancy & childbirth | 291 | 8.8 | 12.2 | -28% |
| 7 | Musculoskeletal system diseases | 288 | 8.7 | 6.1 | 43% |
| 8 | Infectious & parasitic diseases | 188 | 5.7 | 6.2 | -8% |
| 9 | Genitourinary diseases | 181 | 5.5 | 4.4 | 25% |
| 10 | Endocrine, metabolic & nutritious diseases | 124 | 3.8 | 3.9 | -3% |
| | All conditions | 3,559 | 107.7 | 94 | 15% |

New Initiatives

R

NewInitiatives

Identify new initiatives and other changes that effect health concerns, including economic, political, or funding changes

Time Period

Actual Value

Target Value

Current Trend

Baseline % Change

Notes

The following are new initiatives or changes in our community in 2016:

- The Transylvania County Employee Wellness Center moved to a new location with up-to-date facilities and space for

physical activity. The county signed an agreement with the City of Brevard to allow city employees to use the Wellness Center, expanding the reach of its prevention, sick care, and overall wellness services.

- The C.A.R.E. Coalition received a 4-year, \$47,145/year federal grant for additional efforts to prevent underage drinking. In addition, the coalition worked with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to create policies to reduce the availability of alcohol sales to minors by checking retail outlet compliance with existing alcohol sales laws. Only 67% of stores passed early checks, but pass rates are improved with return visits. Early onset of alcohol consumption is linked to alcoholism and excessive drinking later in life, which is linked to liver disease and cirrhosis; these efforts may contribute to reducing chronic liver disease and cirrhosis death rates in Transylvania County in years to come.
 - Healthy Communities funding and a partnership with the Land of Sky Regional Council supported a falls prevention class for older adults at Silvermont Activity Center. This is an important issue for Transylvania County due to the county's high proportion of older adults and the need to address physical injury and the affects of self-imposed limitations on movement (e.g. not drinking enough water in order to avoid visiting the restroom) associated with the fear of falling.
 - Transylvania Public Heath's dental program staff and the NC Oral Health Section worked with Transylvania County Schools to begin weekly fluoride rinse programs at all county elementary schools. This effort is designed to reduce the amount of dental caries seen in elementary students, since there is no source of fluoridated drinking water in Transylvania County.
 - Transylvania County was selected as one of 16 counties by the NC Division of Public Health to conduct mosquito surveillance and assist with developing an accurate and up-to-date map of mosquito species in the state. Transylvania County has one of the highest rates of vector-borne encephalitis in the state, and additional surveillance, awareness, and tracking of mosquitoes may help reduce rates of infection.
-