



Clay County, North Carolina

2017 State of the County Health Report-Clay County

WHAT IS THE STATE OF THE COUNTY HEALTH REPORT?

The State of the County Health Report (SOTCH) is a document published yearly by the Clay County Health Department. The SOTCH provides the citizens of Clay County with an update on the health status of the county, and what is being done to improve on the health of its citizens.

The 2017 SOTCH was compiled by the Clay County Health Department in partnership with the Clay County Partnership for Healthy Carolinians. WNC Healthy Impact assisted in the collecting of data used in this document.

The SOTCH is used as a way to inform the citizens of Clay County on the status of work completed on the health needs identified in the 2015 Community Health Assessment, and the work plans written into the Community Action Plans (CAP's).

2015 Community Health Assessment Priorities:

1. Chronic Disease Control and Prevention
2. Access to Healthcare
3. Cancer Control and Prevention

2015 COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

The Community Health Assessment is a process that is conducted every 3 years for the purpose of looking at the health needs of Clay County. In order to collect information surveys of 3000 citizens were conducted, along with the surveys of local providers, and other key informants in Clay County. Also, data was collected from the NC State Center for Health Statistics. Using this data, three priority areas needs were selected by Clay County stakeholders.

The priorities identified are: Chronic Disease Control and Prevention, Access to Healthcare, and Cancer Control and Prevention. The Clay County Health Department, in collaboration with local stake-holders, developed Clay County's Community Action Plan (CAP's) using these priorities.



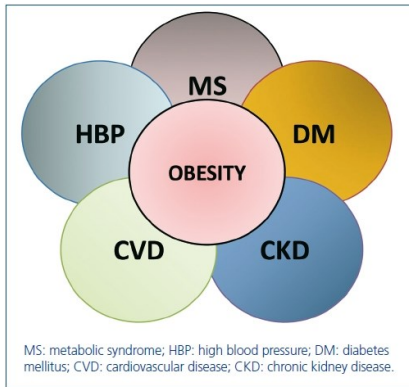
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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Heart Disease #1 Killer
- Smoky Mountain Medical Mission a Success
- 575 Pets Vaccinated for Rabies
- Cardiovascular Disease is the leading cause of hospitalization of Clay County Citizens

CHRONIC DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION



According to the World Health Organization, a chronic disease is a disease that is not communicable, develops slowly, and persist for long periods of time. Chronic disease has always been a major issue for Clay County, North Carolina and the United States as a whole. All of the top three causes of death for Clay County citizens— Heart Disease, Cancer, and Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease— are considered to be chronic diseases by WHO. This priority as also been identified in the 2008, 2012, and 2015 Community Health Assessments and most likely will be a continual priority for Clay County in the foreseeable future.

Work Conducted on Chronic Disease Control and prevention includes:

- Health Education and Promotion at local businesses, health fairs, and local businesses
- News Paper Articles on health issues, diet, nutrition, and diabetes
- Blood Pressure Education Classes and checks in the community
- Diabetes Self Management Education and Diabetes Prevention Program
- Creation of a Comprehensive List of Resources for Low Cost or No Cost Medical Care in the surrounding area.

“Chronic Disease Control and Prevention has been identified as a priority on the past Three Community Health Assessments and will likely be a continual priority for Clay County for the foreseeable future.”

HEPATITIS C OUTREACH

According to a news release by www.drugfree.org, the CDC has identified 220 counties across the United States that are at risk of outbreaks of HIV and Hepatitis C from injection drug use. Clay County was included as one of the rural counties identified in NC, along with 4 others. In response the Clay County Health Department worked to:

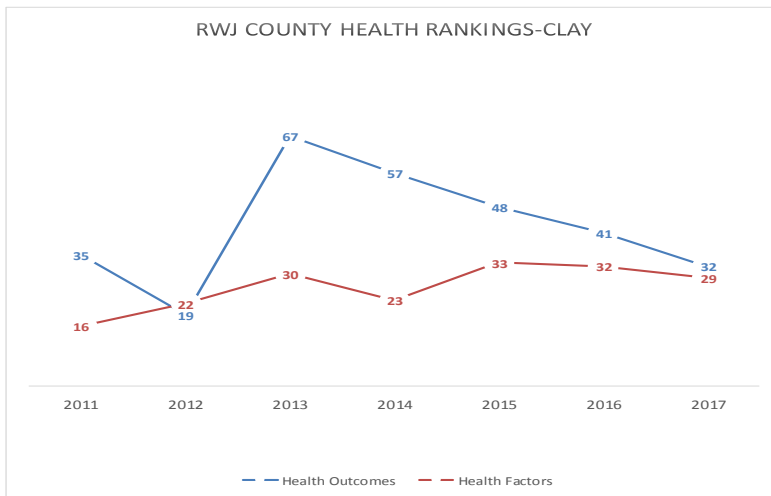
- Provide no-cost Hep C testing
- Established educational outreach with the goal of increasing the number of people getting tested. 25 flyers distributed in the community
- Establish a provider network for treatment
- Worked to provide Hep C outreach utilizing flyers and social media messaging 20 flyers distributed by local members of a community-based recovery group

LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH IN CLAY COUNTY

Rank	Cause of Death Clay County	# Deaths 2012-2016	Age Adjusted Death Rate 2012-2016
1	Disease of Heart	136	147.2
2	Cancer	151	145.5
3	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	50	47.2
4	Cerebrovascular Disease	43	41.8

2016 North Carolina Vital Statistics, Vol 2

The leading cause of death in Clay County has changed since the 2016 SOTCH. Diseases of the heart have surpassed Cancer as the leading cause of death based on the Age-Adjusted Death Rate. Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease (COPD, Emphysema) is third and Cerebrovascular Disease is fourth.



CLAY COUNTY'S HEALTH RANKINGS

The Robert Woods Johnson Foundation Ranks each county by Health Status every year. Two categories that are ranked are Health Outcomes (how healthy is the county) and Health Factors (what influences the health of the county). Clay County's health rankings have been trending to the positive since 2013 where 100 is the worst and 1 is the best. The 2017 health rankings have Clay at 22nd in the state for Health Outcomes and 29th in Health Factors.

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE- SMOKY MOUNTAIN MEDICAL MISSION

Access to quality healthcare is a need that Clay County has continually faced. In response, the Clay County Health Department and Swain County Health Department partnered to bring the Department of Defense's (DOD) Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program back to Western North Carolina. The IRT program utilizes Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard Dentist, Doctors, Veterinarians, and other medical staff to provide no-cost medical treatment in exchange for training opportunities inside the United States and abroad.

The Smoky Mountain Medical event of 2017 ran from August 2nd through the 10th at Hayesville High School. US Army, Navy, and Airforce Doctors, Dentists, and Veterinarians provided no-cost healthcare. Veterinarians provided vaccinations and spay and neutering services. Doctors and Dentists provided extractions, fillings, cleanings, and physicals and primary care services. Eye exams and glasses were also made for those who needed them.

Total #of hours of training=24,000

Total #of Patients Seen=5800+

Pairs of Glasses Produced=1200

Medical and Dental Procedures and Exams=14,500

Veterinary Services (spay/neuter, vaccinations, and exams) =1300

Total Cost Savings to the Community= \$1 million



EMERGING ISSUES- OPIOIDS

Clay County, North Carolina, and the United States as a whole is in the midst of an Opioid Crisis. As medical providers started restricting access to prescription opioids and access to those medications on the streets was reduced, users turned to injectable illicit drugs.

Clay County has worked on the opioid crisis in several ways. The Clay County Health Department received a grant to track drug overdose data and install a second prescription drug drop box at a local pharmacy. The Clay County Sheriff's Department worked to provide its Deputy's with Narcan. Clay County hosted a Leadership Forum to discuss the problems associated with the opioid crisis. An addiction treatment facility was established in Clay County.

The ground work for the re-establishment of the Coalition for a Safe and Drug-Free Clay County was laid with the intention of pursuing grant funding and further data collection.

Opioid education was performed on social media with 634 views.

PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO RABIES- 2017

Clay County saw a dramatic increase in the number of animals who tested positive for rabies at the beginning of 2017. In response, the Clay County Health Department worked with community partners to increase the number of rabies clinics in an effort to get more pets vaccinated per state law. Between March and August of 2017, the Clay County Health Department either organized or supported/promoted six vaccination clinics providing 575 rabies vaccines to area pets.

Rabies educational material posted on social media reached 8000+ individuals, confirming that social media continues to be an effective means of educational outreach.

CANCER CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Cancer is the second largest cause of death for Clay County residents and is the leading cause of death for the US as a whole. Because of the high rates of cancer diagnosis and deaths in Clay County, Cancer was given its own priority in the 2015 CHA.

Lung cancer still has the largest mortality rate amongst cancers. Prostate cancer is number two, followed by female breast cancer and then colorectal cancer.

The Clay County Health Department has worked to address Cancer by:

- Working with the Cooperative extension and to distribute Radon Test Kits 50 test kits given out.
- Promotion of the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program
- The HD switched from using the older Hemocult cards to the more accurate Hemosure iFob test for Colorectal Cancer screenings
- Local contractors were educated on how to educate their customers on the need for Radon Gas Mitigation.
- Efforts were initiated with the Building Department to distribute Radon Education Information for new home builds. These efforts will continue in conjunction with new building department staff.

DIABETES SELF MANAGEMENT EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

The Clay County Health Department sought to add a Support portion to our Diabetes Self Management Education program. The Health Department requested grant funding from Kate B. Reynolds to expand our DSME program to include a support group for those who have completed the program but would continue to benefit from ongoing support. Unfortunately, CCHD was not awarded the grant, however; new avenues and research of other means of creating a support group for diabetics in the area continue.

LEADING CAUSES OF HOSPITALIZATION IN CLAY COUNTY

The data for leading causes of hospitalization for Clay County residents have not changed since the 2016 SOTCH. Current data mirrors previous reports with the leading causes of death with the top two continuing as chronic diseases. These numbers only reflect the county residents who were seen at NC hospitals and do not count those who sought treatment in Ga.

Cause of Hospitalization	Total Cases	Average Cost/Case
Cardiovascular & Circulatory Disease	102	\$36,864
Heart Disease	81	\$40,429
Respiratory Disease	81	\$23,019
Injuries and Poisonings	65	\$33,786
Musculoskeletal Disease	63	\$44,980

NC County Health Data Book-2016

GREAT AMERICAN ECLIPSE OF 2017

On August 21st, 2017 Clay County was in the path of a Total Solar Eclipse that lasted approximately two and a half minutes. The Clay County Health Department prepared by providing education on the safe viewing of Solar events to prevent eye damage. The Health Department also facilitated applications for food vending permits for those looking to provide services to tourists visiting the area for the purpose of viewing the Eclipse. Clay County conducted Emergency Planning meetings in order to ensure the safety of the County which involved the County Manager, County Emergency Management, Clay County Rescue Squad and Volunteer Fire Departments, the Clay County Sheriff's Department, Clay County Health Department, Clay County Commissioners and others. The response planning proved successful in preventing negative outcomes during this momentous event.



“Community Health Grant awarded to Clay County Health Department to add mobile dentistry services to local Day Care, Head Start and other school programs.”

NEW INITIATIVES-CLAY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT AWARDED COMMUNITY HEALTH GRANT

Early in the Spring of 2017 former Clay County Health Director Janice Patterson applied for grant funding to increase Primary care and Dental Services in Clay County. The HD proposed to increase access to primary care by adding Family Nurse Practitioner hours to existing services to fully utilize the agency's clinical capacity. Furthermore, the grant would be used to purchase portable dental equipment adding mobile capabilities to the existing fixed site dental program. The portable equipment would allow dental staff to reach children in Clay County Schools, Head Start, and daycare centers providing primary dental health services to those not able to access the fixed dental clinic.

The Clay County Health Department was pleased to be awarded this grant. Since then, a second part-time Nurse

Practitioner and Dentist was added to the Health Department's services. Funds were also utilized to purchase mobile equipment, and portable dental services have been added to the Health Department's Dental Program.



SOTCH DISSEMINATION

The Clay County Health Department has and will continue to utilize many different ways to communicate this document to stakeholders, community partners, and the general population. Some of those ways include:

- The Clay County Health Department Website and Facebook Page
- Availability at Moss Memorial Library
- Copies placed in Health Department Lobby
- Presentation to Health and Human Services Board and Board of Commissioners

CLAY COUNTY CONSOLIDATES HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

In November 2017, Clay County Commissioners voted to consolidate the Clay County Department of Social Services with the Clay County Health Department. This consolidation restructured the Health Department and Social Services Department by creating the now recognized Department of Health and Human Services. Department of Social Services Director Debbie Mauney was designated as the new Health and Human Services Director. The Clay County Board of Health and Department of Social Services Board were combined to form a Health and Human Services Advisory Board with members consisting of individuals from both boards.

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