

# COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

## 2018 Mitchell County

### WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT?

The Community Health Assessment, or CHA, leads to a better understanding of the health of our county's residents.

The CHA helps local agencies and organizations working on health issues to ensure that the most pressing health concerns are being addressed, and to plan and coordinate their efforts. It is also used by our Health Department in its strategic planning process.

Collaborating agencies in western NC have chosen to repeat this cycle every three years.



### Health Priorities

#### Health Priority 1: Substance Abuse and Increasing Availability/ Access to Mental Health

Substance abuse prevention and increasing availability/access to mental health services was identified as a top health priority in both the 2009, 2013, and 2015 CHA. Substance abuse can include alcohol, prescription drugs, and illicit drugs. Mitchell County has had annual Drug-Take Back Days and has drug drop-boxes placed throughout the county. The Mitchell County Health Department also got new drug drop boxes placed in their facility. There is also a part-time Substance Abuse Coordinator for a two county area (Mitchell and Yancey Counties). Improvement has been made on preventing substance abuse and increasing mental health services, but much more is to be done.

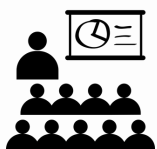
#### Health Priority 2: Healthy Living Behaviors/ Lifestyles and Chronic Disease Prevention

Healthy living behaviors/lifestyles and chronic disease prevention go hand in hand. Healthy living behaviors/lifestyles was also a health priority in the 2015 CHA. It is important to adapt healthy behaviors and lifestyles to prevent diseases from occurring. Primary prevention is the most effective form of prevention. Mitchell County has a high prevalence and incidence of many chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, respiratory diseases and cancer. It is important to combat these diseases to promote the health and well-being of the citizens of our County.

#### Health Priority 3: Access to Healthcare/ Social Determinants

Access to healthcare has now been a priority on the 2013, 2015, and 2018 Community Health Assessments with social determinants of health being added to the most recent. Employment rate, poverty level, amount of education and income, and lack of resources needed all play a role in the health status of citizens. Availability of resources to meet daily needs such as food and clean water are a necessity to not only surviving. It is also important for citizens to have education job opportunities in order to make livable wages to be able to afford healthcare, food, and transportation.

The CHA is a collaborative effort between **Mitchell County** and **Toe River Health District** and **Blue Ridge Regional Hospital**



The **Steering Committee** led the CHA process and determined health priorities.



**Mitchell County residents** shared their input through surveys and additional local data collection.

### WHO'S INVOLVED?

Support of this process was provided by **WNC Healthy Impact**, a partnership between hospitals and public health agencies to improve community health in western North Carolina.

WNC**HEALTHY**IMPACT

# Highlights

**Health Priority #1-** 61.5% of Mitchell County residents stated that their life has been negatively affected by Substance Abuse in some way; this is compared to 47.4% of Western North Carolina and 37.3% in the United States.

**Health Priority #2-** 16.9% of Mitchell County residents meet physical activity recommendations; lower than both the WNC region and the state (21.3%% and 18.9% respectively). Mitchell County has seen a steep decline in physical activity recommendations: in 2015 47.5% stated they meet activity recommendations and in 2018 16.9% of Mitchell County stated they meet the recommendations.

**Health Priority #3-** When asked if they were limited in activities in some way due to a physical, mental, or emotional problem, 36.8% Mitchell County residents responded that they were. This is more than WNC (30.7%) and greater than NC (21.6%). Many citizens in Mitchell County are un- or under-insured: 11.9% of respondents in Mitchell County said that they lack healthcare insurance coverage. This is less than WNC (19.8%) and NC (17.1%), but still alarmingly high.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO GET INVOLVED...

Access the full Community Health Assessment at Toe River Health District's Website:

**[www.toeriverhealth.org](http://www.toeriverhealth.org)**

Action Plans for the Community Health Assessment will be coming soon!

## PARTNERS

Mitchell Community Health Partnership  
Blue Ridge Regional Hospital  
Blue Ridge Partnership for Children  
Partners Aligned Toward Health  
Mitchell County Sheriff's Department  
Intermountain Children Services  
Mitchell County Cooperative Extension  
Mitchell County Transportation Department  
Center for Rural Health Innovations  
Mitchell County Senior Center

***"Families in Mitchell County are healthy and safe; this county, and the health workers in it strive to do the most for the individuals who reside here. We will not stop until everyone in the community is thriving and living their life to the best of their ability."***

