2023 State of the County Health Report

Progress on CHIPs

2023 updates can be found in the 'what is it?' note tab for each of the strategies.

Click below for updates on obesity priority strategies:

Haywood 4 Good Community Wellness Program

Offer evidence-based nutrition programming

Click below for updates on mental health priority strategies:

Community-level trauma-informed/ACEs education initiative

Promote and coordinate mental health trainings and awareness

Click below for updates on substance use priority strategies:

Participate in anti-stigma communications project

Morbidity and Mortality Changes Since Last CHA

Mortality

- The county experienced 772 deaths in 2023, a 5.5% decrease from 2022.   This is provisional data (NC DHHS, accessed February 2024).

- In 2022, 24 of the county's deaths were confirmed as 'Deaths of Despair.' Such deaths are caused by suicide, alcohol, drugs or more than one of these factors (Haywood County Health and Human Services, data provided February 2024).
    - Potential data limitation: Some deaths are pending investigation and it is unknown at this time whether these are Deaths of Despair.

Morbidity

- Confirmed cases of Chlamydia increased by more than 13% from the 2021-22 to 2022-23 fiscal years (Haywood County Health and Human Services, accessed February 2024).

- The number of emergency department visits for county residents with alcohol withdrawal symptoms decreased by 30% from 2022 to 2023. This may have not been the primary reason for a person's visit (NC DETECT*, accessed February 2024).

- The number of emergency department visits for county residents related to cannabis use increased by nearly 24% from 2022-2023. This may have not been the primary reason for a person's visit. (NC DETECT*, accessed February 2024).
    - Potential data limitation: Cases for residents of other counties sometimes appear in these reports by error.

    - *NC DETECT is a statewide public health syndromic surveillance system, funded by the NC Division of Public Health (NC DPH) Federal Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grant and managed through collaboration between NC DPH and UNC-CH Department of Emergency Medicine's Carolina Center for Health Informatics. The NC DETECT Data Oversight Committee does not take responsibility for the scientific validity or accuracy of methodology, results, statistical analyses, or conclusions presented.

Emerging Issues Since Last CHA

- **Food Security**
    - Food prices in 2023 increased by 5.8% (5% for 'food-at-home' and 7.1% for 'food-away-from-home' (United States Department of Agriculture, accessed February 2024).
- **Housing**
    - The county's housing costs increased 12.1% since January 2023 (Rocket Homes, accessed February 2024).
- **Youth Substance Use**

- The 2023 Monitoring the Future Survey collected Delta-8 THC use data for the first time. Nationally, 11.4% of 12th grade students reported past-year use (University of Michigan, accessed February 2024). According to the Food and Drug Administration, ''Delta 8 THC has psychoactive and intoxicating effects (FDA, accessed February 2022).''

- **Climate Health**
  - The year 2023 was the hottest in recorded history. Asheville experienced 21 'risky heat days' that year (WUNC 91.5, accessed February 2024).

- **Homelessness**
  - Haywood Pathways Center provided shelter to 295 unique individuals as compared to 233 unique individuals in 2022. It is worth noting that there are additional individuals who did not access this resource (Haywood Pathways Center; provided February 2024).

  - The national Point-in-Time Estimate showed that over 650,000 people experienced homelessness on one night in January 2023; this figure is up 12% from 2022 (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, accessed February 2024).

New/Paused/Discontinued Initiatives Since Last CHA

- **Access to Care**
  - Medicaid Expansion launched in North Carolina on December 1, 2023. Those enrolled in the limited family planning benefits were automatically enrolled in full Medicaid (NC DHHS, accessed February 2024).

- **Employment**
  - One of the county's largest employers, Evergreen Packaging, closed its Canton location in 2023 after more than 100 years. This affected several hundred workers in the county and businesses in other communities (WLOS, accessed February 2024). Subsidies helped displaced workers afford health coverage in between jobs (WLOS, accessed February 2024).

- **Food Security**
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients saw a decrease in benefits due to the ending of Pandemic EBT benefits (NC DHHS, accessed February 2024).

  - Free breakfast and lunch are available to all Haywood County Schools' students for the 2023-2024 school year (Haywood County Schools, accessed February 2024).

- **Mental Health**
  - Haywood County Health and Human Services (HHSA) was awarded a $24,000 mental health communications grant from the Haywood Health Foundation. The grant will fund projects such as radio and print ads and billboards in 2024 (The Mountaineer, accessed February 2024).

  - A social media/internet campaign through WLOS was viewed more than 227,000 times during December 2023/January 2024. A sponsored article was viewed more than 770 times (WLOS, provided February 2024). An e-mail ad through iHeart Media was opened by more than 6,700 individuals and a social media campaign was viewed more than 250,000 times (iHeart Media, provided December 2023). All ads focused on the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.
    - Potential data limitation: Some individuals may have seen multiple ads or viewed the same ads multiple times, leading them to possibly be counted more than once.