

Health of Chatham

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2009



Chatham County Public Health Department

www.chathamnc.org/publichealth



Health Priorities

Purpose

Health of Chatham 2009 is a report of current information on the health status of Chatham County as compared to the 2006 Community Health Assessment. The report updates the actions taken to address the priorities of the assessment. Preparations are now underway to prepare for the next Community Health Assessment in 2010.

Health Priorities

Defining the community's health priorities is what drives the planning of Chatham County public health programs and activities. This year's Health of Chatham report is an update on progress made in 2009.

The nine current health priorities (seen at right) were identified during the 2006 Community Health Assessment process. A group of agencies, organizations, and community members worked together to review and analyze quantitative health data (statistics) and qualitative data (surveys, focus groups, community interviews and forums) to establish the top priorities.

The priority list included 15 quality of life issues. From this list, nine health priorities emerged. The full 2006 Community Health Assessment can be viewed at www.chathamnc.org/publichealth.

The health department in collaboration with Healthy Chatham, a county-wide coalition of human service organizations and community members working together to improve the health and quality of life of Chatham County residents, has prioritized three areas with potential for the greatest impact given the resources available. These priority areas are: **affordable health care, diabetes, and obesity.**

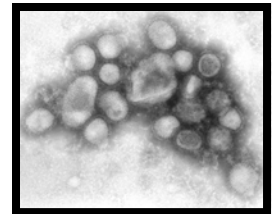
Current Health Priorities

(In order of importance)

1. Alcohol and Other Drug Use
2. Lack of Affordable Health Insurance
3. Obesity
4. Water Quality
5. Unsafe Sex/Unintended Pregnancy
6. Family Violence
7. Affordable Health Care
8. Recreation
9. Diabetes

H1N1 and Public Health Response

While not included in the priorities of the 2006 assessment, the H1N1 influenza outbreak is currently a health issue demanding a major public health response by the Chatham County Public Health Department. H1N1 first struck in the U.S. in April 2009. Early cases appeared in just a few states, but the novel flu strain quickly spread throughout the entire country by summer time. The strain has a combination of genes from flu viruses that normally circulate in pigs in Europe and Asia, bird genes and human genes. Officials felt that this could lead to a more severe 2009-2010 flu season.



H1N1 Flu Virus

Between April and September 26th, Chatham County recorded one H1N1 death and 20 confirmed cases. The state had a total of 13 deaths and 267 hospitalizations attributed to laboratory confirmed H1N1 during that time. On September 27th, North Carolina discontinued reporting flu statistics exclusively for H1N1 and county level H1N1 data. As of mid-November, there have been 45 additional flu deaths in North Carolina since September 27th..

The Chatham County Public Health Department has implemented several strategies to best serve the public during the 2009-2010 flu season.

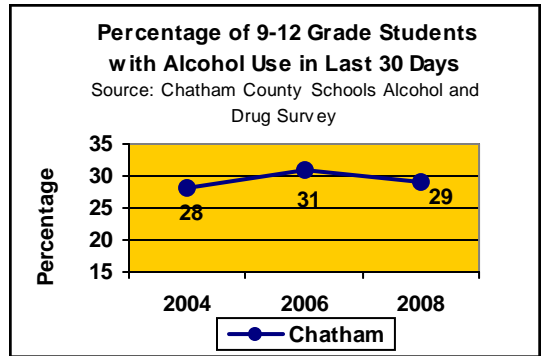
- **Vaccines:** The Health Department has partnered with private health care providers to vaccinate residents. H1N1 vaccinations are given by appointment only to individuals in priority groups based on availability of the vaccine. Priority groups include pregnant women, household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age, healthcare and emergency medical services personnel with direct patient contact, all people from 6 months through 24 years of age, and persons aged 25 through 64 years with underlying health conditions.
- **Outreach:** The health department has provided education to the public about proper hygiene and how to prevent getting the H1N1 flu through: press releases to local media, health department website postings at www.chathamnc.org/publichealth, presentations to local school classes, civic organizations and agencies, informational brochures distributed at various outreach events, and information specifically targeting high priority groups has been given to operators of childcare centers, businesses, medical providers, institutions, community and civic organizations, and Spanish speaking populations.
- **Updates:** The health department updates the public about the availability of its vaccine supply multiple times a week through its website, the H1N1 hotline at 545-8397, press releases sent to local media, and notices sent to local medical providers.
- **Funds:** The health department has received approximately \$138,000 in federal funds to aid in the planning and delivery of vaccinations. Additional staff will be hired to assist with clinics and public health response.

Though there is a large increase in demand for the H1N1 vaccine, the Chatham County Public Health Department is prepared to serve the public during the 2009-2010 flu season.

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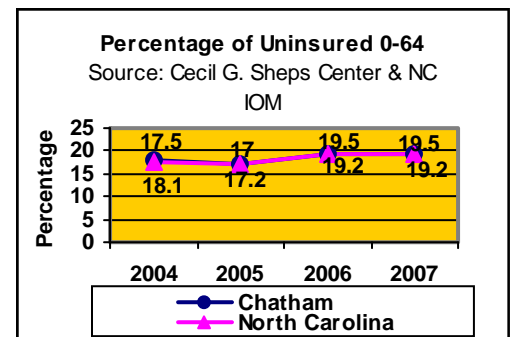
1. Alcohol and Other Drug Use

Description: In 2006, alcohol and drug use was the top health priority of those surveyed for the Community Health Assessment in Chatham County. Based on responses to the 2008 Chatham County Schools Alcohol and Drug Survey showed that 29% of Chatham County high school students had used alcohol in the past 30 days, placing them in the “habitual user” category. The North Carolina Youth Risk Behavior Survey found that in 2007, nearly 38% of youth across the state had used alcohol within the last 30 days. In 2005, the percentage was 42% and in 2003, 39%. Many Chatham County schools participated in red ribbon week during the last week of October 2009 to support the message of a drug prevention and education. The Chatham Community Alcohol and Drug Free Youth (CCADFrY) is active in the community to prevent to help reduce underage drinking and drug use.



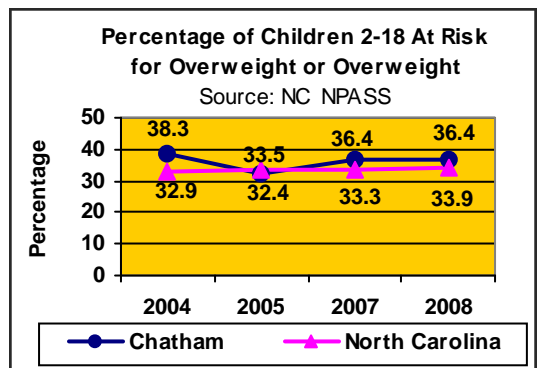
2. Lack of Affordable Health Insurance

Description: The nation’s health insurance system is mainly built on employer-based coverage. Through September 2009, Chatham County’s unemployment rate for the year was 8.0%. The average unemployment rate for 2008 was 5.0%. Chatham County’s overall uninsured rate in 2007 (the last year for which data was available) didn’t change from the previous year. Chatham’s rate of 19.2% places Chatham County in the middle range among all counties in the state. At least 50 counties have higher uninsured rates for 0-64 year olds. Chatham’s percentage is slightly misleading because the rate is high for 0-18 year olds and low for adults aged 19-64. Due to the economy, it is expected that the uninsured rate in 2008 will increase due to Chatham County job losses. Employers often offer health insurance as a benefit.



3. Obesity

Description: Obesity is seen as a “big problem” by approximately 46% of people surveyed for the Community Health Assessment in 2006. For the 2010 fiscal year, the Board of Commissioners prioritized coordinating obesity efforts as a goal in their workplan. The Chatham County Public Health Department took the lead in this goal by bringing county agencies, organizations, and community members together to develop a comprehensive obesity prevention plan. At a series of meetings, the attendees discussed current obesity prevention programs and policies in place across the county, developed ideas on how to best address the obesity effort and coordinate efforts, and detailed what the best strategies are for implementing these ideas. Results and recommendations will be compiled in a report and presented to the Board of Commissioners. Over the past year, the health department has worked with six county organizations to help them commit to improving food options during all of their meetings and events by adopting a Healthy Foods Policy.



*2006 data was not comparable

2009: The Healthy Chatham Obesity Task Force- Team FIT (Families Interacting Together) worked with Bonlee School during the 2008-2009 school year to implement a wellness program with 45 staff members. The challenge promoted promote physical activity and good nutrition among staff as well as for students. Of participants who took a pre and post survey, 38% reported increasing their number of daily fruit servings.

Chatham Objectives: 1) By 2020, decrease the number of adults who are overweight or obese by 10%. 2) By 2018, decrease the number of children that are overweight or at risk for becoming overweight by 10%, from 36.4% to 26.4%.

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4. Water Quality

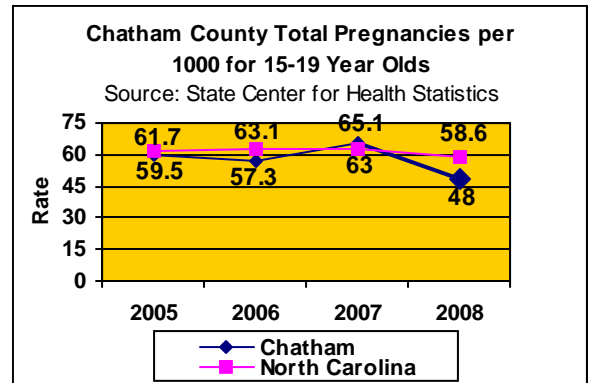


Each year, Chatham County Utilities, the Town of Siler City and the Town of Pittsboro release an annual Water Quality Report listing violations for each water district. In 2008, each district reported at least one violation. To read the county's complete report, along with corrective actions, go to <http://www.chathamnc.org/Index.aspx?page=383>. (Reports for Siler City and Pittsboro can be obtained from the municipality.) On a positive note, during the annual American Water Works Association meeting in November 2009, Chatham County Utilities came in third out of twenty-seven districts in a water tasting competition. New private drinking water wells in the county are currently being tested for certain inorganic chemicals, metals, nitrates and bacterial indicators. A major concern in the past year has been the number of positive bacteria results. Thirty-five percent of new wells tested in the past year, were positive for bacteria. Follow up sampling after chlorination revealed a significant reduction in the number of positive samples. The Environmental Health staff is making efforts through educational workshops and developing literature to educate the public and well drillers on the importance of proper chlorination. Please visit our website at <http://www.chathamnc.org/Index.aspx?page=650> for more information on water quality testing available through the health department.

5. Unsafe Sex/Unintended Pregnancy



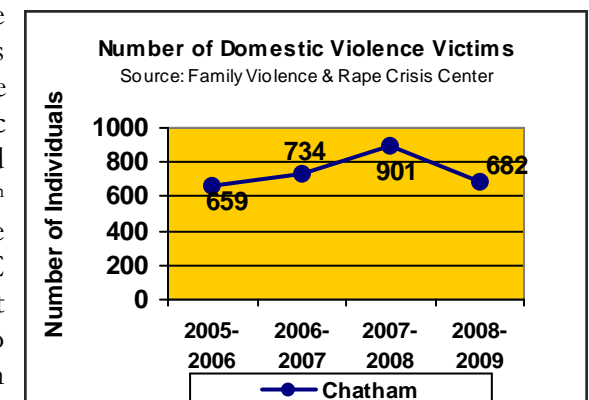
Description: Teen pregnancy rates for 15-19 year olds in Chatham County dropped by over 25%, while the North Carolina rate decreased by 7% between 2007 and 2008. While this is a promising change, caution should be taken when looking at one year differences in rate changes. Data over several years gives a better picture. Chatham County rates for HIV, syphilis, and gonorrhea remain below the state average. To address pregnancy rates among teens, the non-profit Chatham Coalition for Adolescent Health, focuses on supporting and advocating for adolescent health. The coalition provides support and oversight for the Adolescent Parenting Program and advocates for policy level changes. In 2009, North Carolina state government passed the Healthy Youth Act that allows for comprehensive sex education to be taught to all 7th, 8th, and 9th graders in the state starting in the 2010-2011 school year. The new curriculum will include information on contraception, sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS, and the consequences of unwanted teen pregnancy. The abstinence until marriage curriculum will still be taught along the comprehensive curriculum.



6. Family Violence



Description: During the 2008/2009 time period, Family Violence and Rape Crisis Services (FVRC) served 682 clients through its services. The center reached more through outreach. Over 100 people attended FVRC's annual conference which focused on the impact of domestic violence on children. Between 2008 and 2009, FVRC provided prevention programs to 2238 Chatham school students in 4th, 7th 8th and 9th grades. The prevention programs concentrated on age appropriate child abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault. FVRC worked with Jordan Matthews and Northwood high schools to start Men of Strength clubs. The groups encourage high school men to take leadership in ending domestic and sexual violence. Even though the number of domestic violence victims has decreased since last year, Family Violence and Rape Crisis Services has noticed that they are seeing more serious cases and that people are staying in the shelter longer. The average length of stay increased by 40%.



7. Affordable Health Care

Description: In 2006, nearly half of those surveyed for the Community Health Assessment identified affordable health care as a “big problem.” According to the Kaiser Family Foundation’s website, www.statehealthfacts.org, health care expenditures for North Carolina grew by an average of 8.6% each year between 1991 and 2004 (the last year data was available). Affordable health care has become a top priority for the federal government as they work on a bill to make sure all Americans can purchase affordable health care plans.

2009: The Healthy Chatham Affordable Health Care Task Force held a Health Care Access Fair in September 2009 in Siler City. The purpose of the event was to provide free health screenings to individuals without health insurance and to help those individuals find a medical home. Among the screenings offered were blood pressure, blood glucose, mental health, vision, HIV/AIDS, and basic dental. The task force worked with the Chatham County Public Health Department and Piedmont Health Services to ensure that persons tested would have access to needed follow up care.

Chatham Objective: By 2020, Increase awareness of health care services for the uninsured.

8. Recreation

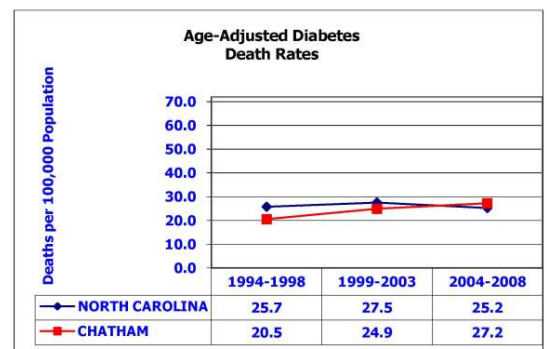
Description: Lack of recreational facilities and opportunities were cited by many as a problem in Chatham County during 2006. Participants in focus groups did not feel there were enough activities to keep adolescents occupied. There was also a desire from residents for more parks and recreational spaces. **Recreation for Youth-** In June 2009, the TeenWorks Teen Center after school program closed due to state budget cuts. Community members are working to open a Boys and Girls Club in western Chatham County in 2010. The Chatham YMCA launched its PrYme Time After School Program at 11 sites during the 2009-2010 school year, for a total of 12 sites. The program provides homework assistance and offers physical activity games and character building activities for youth. **Parks and Resources-** Since last year’s Health of Chatham report, many Chatham County facilities have been updated and improved. Through an Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina grant, the Chatham County Public Health Department funded a new playground for children ages 0-5 at Curt Askins Memorial Park. The Town of Pittsboro made several improvements to Kiwanis Park including shade trees, a shelter, and new playground equipment. The town has also begun building Town Park at Powell Place. In 2009, Pittsboro adopted the Pittsboro Pedestrian Transportation Plan which will improve conditions for pedestrian safety, access, and mobility. Chatham County purchased land for Northeast Park in 2007. The park off Big Woods Road, near Jordan Lake is scheduled to open in late 2010. The 4.67 mile Chatham County portion of the American Tobacco trail was completed in November 2009.

9. Diabetes

Description: According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), 1.6 million cases of diabetes are diagnosed each year in the United States. Type II diabetes is increasing nationally and in Chatham County. Once diagnosed with type II diabetes, management is important to reduce complications, including heart disease, nerve and kidney damage.

2009: The Healthy Chatham Diabetes Task Force has been working on a diabetes resource guide for recently diagnosed diabetics that will be made available in 2010. The guide will include information on managing diabetes, nutrition, and local resources. A diabetes support group sponsored by the Chatham County Public Health Department and one from the Eastern Chatham Senior Center continue to meet monthly. The third annual Diabetes Walk and Health Fair was held in November 2009 with over 100 participants. During 2009, the health department began offering North Carolina American Diabetes Association self-management classes. To date, 100% of patients that have gone through the Diabetes Self-Management Education Program have decreased their A1c levels. The Chatham Hospital diabetes program continues to offer ADA certified self-management classes at its office in Siler Business Park.

Chatham Objective: By 2020, Reduce the number of Chatham County adults diagnosed with type II diabetes by 10%, from 4100 to 3,690 through awareness efforts and emotional and medical support.



Source: NC Center for State Statistics

Chatham County Snapshot

Chatham County Demographics

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

2008 Population Estimate	63,077
2006-2008 Median Household Income	\$54,874
2006-2008 Per Capita Personal Income	\$28, 189
2006-2008 Families Below Poverty Level	9.7%
2006-2008 Individuals Below Poverty Level	13.3%

Chatham County Leading Causes of Death 2004-2008

Source: North Carolina Center for Health Statistics

1. Heart Disease
2. Cancer
3. Cerebrovascular Disease
4. Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease
5. Unintentional Motor Vehicle Injuries
6. Diabetes Mellitus
7. All Other Unintentional Injuries
8. Alzheimer's Disease
9. Pneumonia and Influenza
10. Suicide

Healthy Chatham "Collaborating for Healthier Communities"

What is Healthy Chatham?

Healthy Chatham is a county-wide coalition of the community, agencies, and organizations working together to improve health and quality of life for Chatham.

What does Healthy Chatham do?

Healthy Chatham is currently focusing on three priority areas of *obesity, diabetes, and affordable health care*. This will be done by carrying out programs and implementing long-term solutions and policies.

Healthy Chatham is also in the process of completing the 2010 Community Health Assessment.

How can I get involved?

To join a task force, the steering committee, or help with the Community Health Assessment, contact Marissa Jelks at 919-545-8517 or marissa.jelks@chathamnc.org to learn more.

Major Healthy Chatham Accomplishments

- Facilitated a wellness incentive program for Bonlee School staff and offered exercise classes after school.
- Distributed health care resource guide with provider discount information to Chatham County agencies and Chatham residents.
- Attended outreach events across Chatham County to spread the word on healthy lifestyles and Healthy Chatham.
- Held a health care access fair to offer free health screenings and help uninsured residents find a medical home.
- Distributed NACo Prescription Drug Discount Program cards to residents throughout the county
- Held a series of meetings with Chatham residents and agencies in order to develop a coordinated and comprehensive plan to address obesity.

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