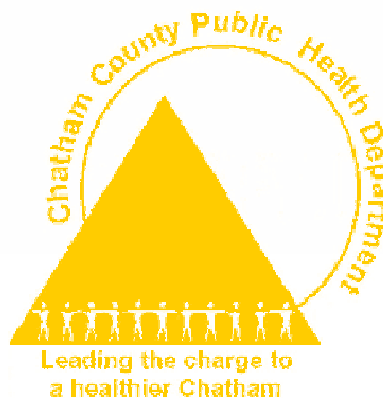
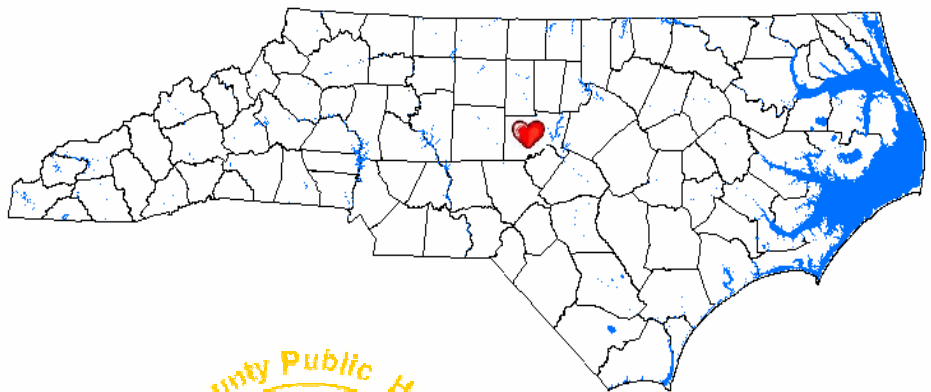


Health of Chatham

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2007



Chatham County Public Health Department

www.chathamnc.org/publichealth



Health Priorities

Purpose

This Health of Chatham 2007 report is used to update the community on the progress of the health priorities from the 2006 Community Health Assessment. The Health of Chatham report is published each year except in the year a Community Health Assessment is done. The last Community Health Assessment was completed in 2006 and released in 2007.

Health priorities

Health priorities help guide the planning of public health programs and activities in Chatham County. This document provides an update of progress made since the 2006 Health of Chatham report.

The current health priorities were identified at the end of the 2006 Community Health Assessment process. A group of agencies, organizations, and community members collected and reviewed information from surveys, focus groups, community interviews, and community forums to identify the top priorities.

The priority list included 15 quality of life issues, of which 9 current 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 community organizations working together to improve the health and quality of life of Chatham County residents, is focusing on the priority areas where they felt they could have the greatest impact. 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

Public Health - The Big Picture:

The Federal government has developed an assessment tool called Healthy People. Healthy People is a set of national health objectives to reduce threats to health. The state of North Carolina followed with Healthy Carolinians. Healthy Carolinians assesses different health issues, provides goals to strive for, and gets different agencies working on the issues. It also encourages all communities to do the same in the hope of improving the health of all people. Public health promotes a comprehensive approach to addressing health priorities. This Health of Chatham report is a part of that process.

We influence the world we live in and the world we live in influences us. One example is our health. You can make healthy lifestyle choices, but this is more difficult without support from the community, friends, families, workplace, environment, policies, or public health. One example of how your environment influences health and healthy lifestyles is by establishing a neighborhood farmer's market.

The above socioecological model addresses multiple levels of behavior influence, leading to a more comprehensive approach to health promotion. Focusing on the five levels— individual, interpersonal, organizational, community, and public policy is the most effective way to lead to healthy behaviors.



Message from the Health Director - Holly Coleman, R.S., M.S.

As Chatham County's Health Director, I am pleased to provide you with an update on the progress being made to address Chatham County's nine health priority areas, as determined during the 2006 Community Health Assessment. In keeping with our mission to protect and promote the health of the community, the health department addresses the health issues at multiple levels through our services, community collaborations, and through the policies and strategic plan adopted by the Board of Health.

We continue to be challenged by the growing number of Chatham County residents who are faced with diabetes, obesity, and lack of available, affordable healthcare. These issues are being addressed through the efforts of county agencies and Healthy Chatham, which is committed to addressing the health priorities of Chatham County.

Since 2006, the health department has had many

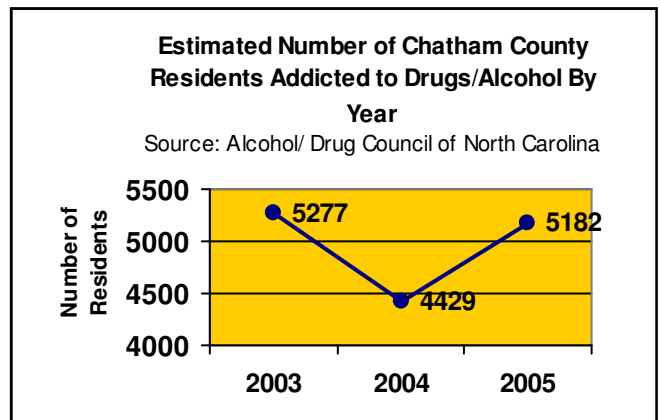
important accomplishments. Both Siler City and Pittsboro sites have undergone major renovations to better serve our clients. All health department offices are tobacco free within 50 feet of the building; a plan to address how pandemic influenza has been developed and practiced; Global Positioning technology is now used to document permitted onsite wastewater sites on properties; a Chatham County subsidized spay/neuter program aimed to reduce the population of unwanted cats and dogs is being unveiled; Active Chatham had its 3rd annual Reindeer Run race; and family and parenting skills courses are being offered to strengthen Chatham's families.

The community is crucial in what services the health department offers and drives many of our programs. I hope all of you will have a role in making Chatham County a healthier place to live, work, and play. Thank you for your support.

1. Alcohol and Other Drug Use



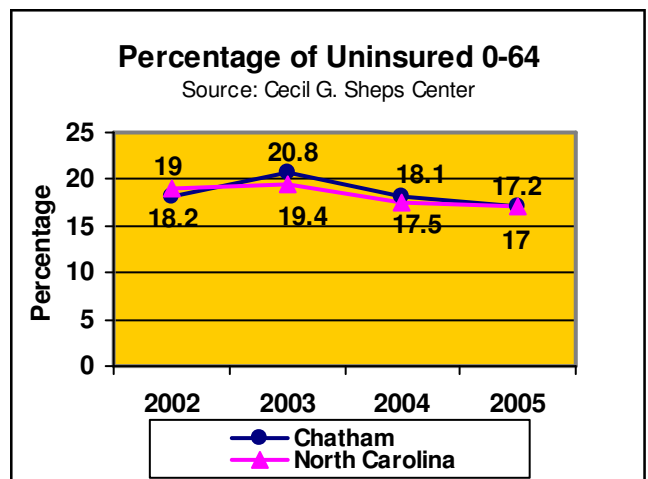
Description: In 2006, alcohol and drug use was the top health priority for those surveyed for the Community Health Assessment in Chatham County. Slightly over half of survey respondents (50.8%) thought alcohol and drug use was a big problem in the county. Current resources in Chatham County are limited to prevention programs for youth and counseling and residential facilities for pregnant women. It is estimated that in 2005, 5,182 residents of Chatham County were addicted to drugs or alcohol and 25,910 family members and loved ones were affected. The Orange-Person-Chatham (OPC) Area Program gathered substance abuse and mental health providers, county government, schools, and the criminal justice system to attend a substance abuse forum in late 2006. The group will continue to work together to develop steps to increase services and the coordination of services.



2. Lack of Affordable Health Insurance



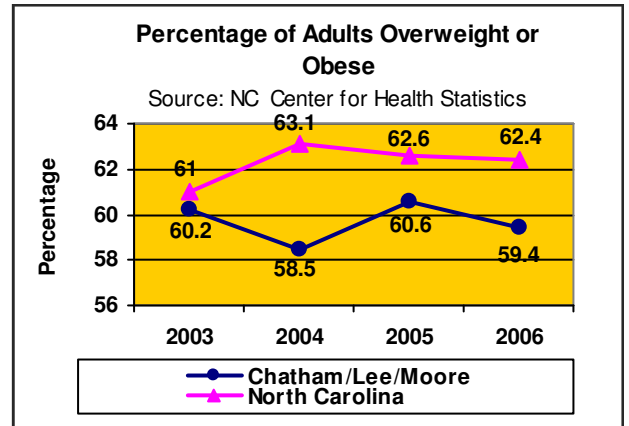
Description: The rise in cost of health insurance makes it harder for employers to offer health insurance to their employees. Nationally, most of the increase in the uninsured is due to the drop of employer offered insurance coverage. The percent of uninsured Chatham County and North Carolina residents has declined since 2003. In 2005, Chatham County ranked 26th out of 100 counties on percentage of residents without coverage. Seventy-four counties in North Carolina ranked lower.



3. Obesity



Description: Obesity is seen as a big problem by approximately 46% of people surveyed for the Community Health Assessment in 2006. There are many programs available in the county to keep adult and youth residents active. Fit Together, a partnership of the community and Chatham County organizations is working through policy and programming to get families more active and healthier together. LIGHT (Living in God's Holy Temple) Way is a gospel-based physical activity and nutrition program that focuses on policy and activities to improve the health of local church congregations. Five churches have been trained by the Chatham County Public Health Department to implement this program.



Future: The Healthy Chatham obesity task force- Team FIT (Families Interacting Together)- is focused on reducing the number of overweight or obese children and adults in Chatham County. The task force plans to advocate for policy changes and work with children in Chatham County schools. Team FIT also has plans to offer fitness programs to adults aged 25-35.

- Chatham Objectives:**
- 1) Decrease the number of adults who are overweight or obese by 10%.
 - 2) Decrease the number of children that are overweight or at risk for becoming overweight by 10%.

4. Water Quality

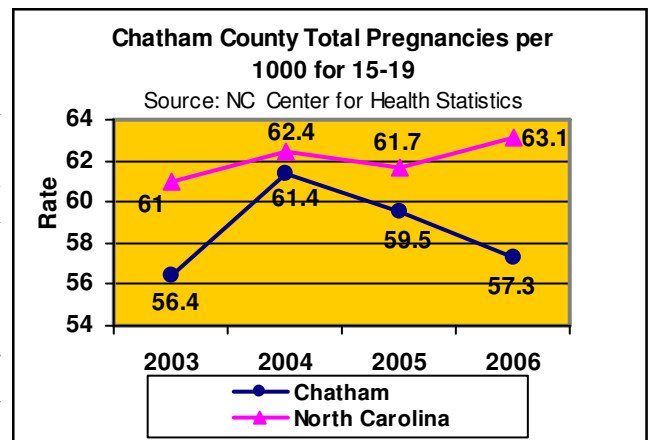


Description: Nearly one out of every three residents surveyed in 2006 felt that water quality was a big problem. There were 14 water quality violations in 2006 between the Chatham County, Siler City, and Pittsboro water departments. In 2006, the health department implemented a local Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control program to protect surface waters. There have been 38 violations of the ordinance in 2006 and 2007. Builders that violate the ordinance are given a set amount of time to come into compliance and remove sedimentation. Chatham County has adopted more stringent watershed buffers and other environmental regulations to ultimately protect water quality. The construction of private wells continues to be regulated by the health department, with new water quality sampling requirements to go into effect in 2008.

5. Unsafe Sex/Unintended Pregnancy



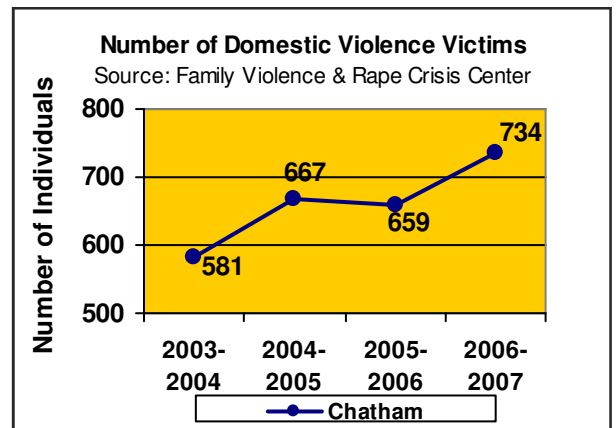
Description: In 2006, two out of every five persons that took the Community Health Assessment survey felt that unsafe sex/unintended pregnancy was a big problem. The Chatham Coalition for Adolescent Health is a non-profit organization focused on supporting and advocating for adolescent health. The coalition provides support and oversight for the Adolescent Parenting Program and the TeenWorks Teen Center after school program. The Chatham Coalition for Adolescent Health has worked closely with schools to create a new curriculum to provide teachers with the appropriate tools to teach healthful living and sexual health. The TeenWorks Teen Center continues to provide after school care and activities in the western part of the county for kindergarten through eighth grades. Teen pregnancy rates in Chatham County have declined over the past four years while the North Carolina rate has increased. Rates for AIDS cases, Syphilis, and Gonorrhea remain below the state average.



6. Family Violence



Description: Slightly over a third (35.7%) of 2006 Community Health Assessment survey respondents felt that family violence was a big problem. During the 2006/2007 time period, 734 domestic violence victims sought assistance from Family Violence and Rape Crisis Services (FVRC). The FVRC in collaboration with medical, law enforcement, and criminal justice agencies has implemented numerous outreach projects to prevent and increase awareness of domestic violence. During 2007, the FVRC trained over 100 community members on preventing domestic violence and expanded their prevention programs in schools. The FVRC plans to conduct an annual “Working Together to Keep Families Safe” conference focused on gang and youth violence. Domestic violence victims will continue to get support through a new parent and child therapy program and a Men of Strength Club at Northwood High School.



7. Affordable Health Care



Description: In 2006, 47% of those surveyed for the Community Health Assessment felt that affordable health care was a big problem. The North Carolina Institute of Medicine reports that health care costs have been rising steadily for the past several years due to: an increase in health insurance premiums; employers dropping health insurance coverage or passing the cost on to employees; a rise in hospital costs; and an increase in use and price of prescription drugs. In May of 2007, the Chatham CARES Community Pharmacy opened to offer access to quality pharmacy services for the low-income, uninsured, and underinsured residents of Chatham County.

Future: The Healthy Chatham affordable health care task force plans to survey all health care providers in the county about health care access and services they provide. A resource guide will be developed and distributed to Chatham County residents.

Chatham Objective: 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 Chatham County residents for more parks and recreational spaces. Since 2006, new recreational areas have been opened. The American Tobacco Trail runs 4.6 miles through the northeast corner of Chatham County and continues into Wake County. A shelter and new equipment have been added to Southwest Park in Bear Creek. Town Lake Park in Pittsboro is now more user friendly with park and trail signs and new boardwalks. Tennis courts and a basketball court near Pittsboro Elementary have been refurbished for public use. There are also recreation opportunities in the planning stages. The county has purchased 66 acres off Big Woods Road in northeast Chatham and a 118 acre property on Woody Store Road near Silk Hope that will eventually become public parks. Chatham County Parks and Recreation is currently updating their 1999 Master Plan to incorporate public input. A movie theater and bowling alley are planned for Pittsboro.

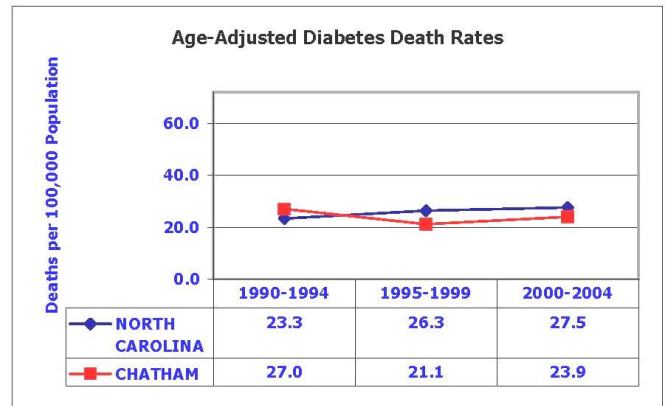
9. Diabetes



Description: According to the American Diabetes Association, diabetes currently affects 7% of all Americans. Nearly one third of people with diabetes do not know they have it. Type II diabetes is on the increase nationally and in Chatham County. Lifestyle choices, such as eating a low fat diet, exercising, and maintaining a healthy weight can help prevent type II diabetes. Once diagnosed with type II diabetes, management is important to reduce complications, including heart disease, nerve and kidney damage.

Future: The Healthy Chatham Diabetes task force is focusing on prevention efforts and increasing awareness of diabetes. The monthly diabetes support group in Siler City will continue to meet. A Diabetes Walk and Health Fair was held in November 2007 and will become an annual event. Awareness messages will appear in the Chatham News, WNCA, and on the Chatham County Public Health Department website- www.chathamnc.org/publichealth throughout the year.

Chatham Objective: Reduce the number of Chatham County adults diagnosed with type II diabetes through awareness efforts and emotional and medical support.



Source: NC Center for State Statistics

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.

How can I get involved?

You can join one of the Healthy Chatham task forces to address the priorities of affordable health care, diabetes, or obesity. You can also serve on the steering committee. Contact Marissa Jelks at 919-545-8517 or marissa.c.jelks@ncmail.net to learn more.

Resources Listed in

Health of Chatham Report Card

Adolescent Parenting Program— 919-548-4441

Chatham County American Tobacco Trail— 919-545-9104

Chatham Coalition for Adolescent Health— 919-545-8510

Chatham County Parks and Recreation— 919-542-8250

Chatham County Public Health Department Diabetes Support Group— 919-545-8520

Chatham County Public Health Department Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Program— 919-545-8343

Family Violence and Rape Crisis Services— 919-742-7320

Fit Together— 919-545-8518

LIGHT Way— 919-545-8520

TeenWorks Teen Center— 919-742-1318

Chatham County Public Health Department
 “Leading the Charge to a Healthier Chatham”
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