



State of the County Health Report

March 2018

In North Carolina, the state requires each local health department to conduct a Community Health Assessment (CHA) every three or four years. During the years between health assessments, health departments submit an abbreviated **State of the County Health report** (SOTCH) report.

In Harnett County, this report consists of an overview of selected health indicators presented in tables and charts. Sections include information on demographics, maternal and child health and leading causes of morbidity and mortality.

Throughout this report, local programs and initiatives will highlight progress in addressing the top three health issues as identified by Harnett County residents. These snapshots of progress support the Healthy North Carolina 2020 goal of making North Carolina a healthier state.

Assessment is one of the core functions of public health. Periodically, local health departments are expected to comprehensively assess the health of the community and make recommendations regarding actions and programs that will prevent diseases and injuries, promote active and healthy living, and develop health-related policies for the greatest benefit to the public.

The Community Health Assessment (CHA) process began with the initial meeting of the Community Health Assessment Team (CHAT). Core members of the Team included representatives from Healthy Harnett (a community coalition), Harnett Health, Harnett County Department of Public Health, Cape Fear Valley Health Systems, and Campbell University Department of Public Health. The CHA report provides a look at what has been affecting the health of the community in order to move forward and make healthy effective and safe changes for all. For more information about the CHA report or to download a copy log onto the Health Department’s web site located at: www.harnett.org/health or call the Health Department at 910-893-7550.

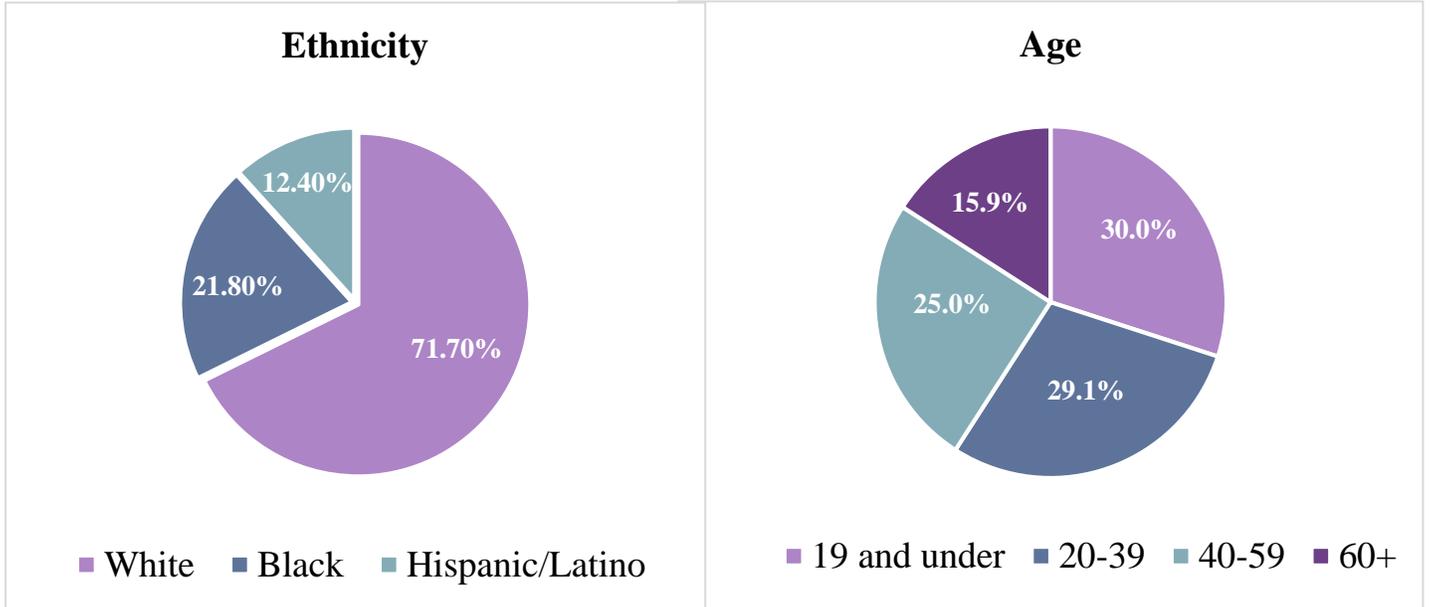
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Harnett County is the 5th fastest growing county in NC -Harnett County Economic Development

Demographics

Harnett has an estimated population of **130,243**. The population of Harnett County increased by **10.4%** between 2010 and 2014. By 2019, the total population for Harnett projects to be **146,067**. Veterans comprise of approximately **11,990** of the population (2012-2016).



*Hispanic/Latino may be of any race

Poverty Rate:

The overall county poverty rate is **18.2%**
(Decrease from 20.5% in 2015)

Insurance:

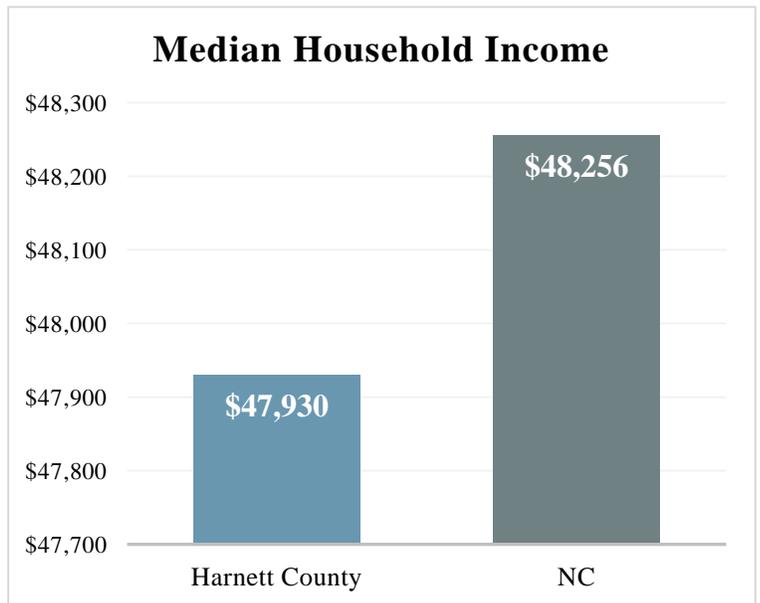
Persons without health insurance **19%**
(Under age 65 years)

Gender:

Female **51.3%** and Male **48.7%**

Education:

High School Degree or higher **84.8%**
(Includes Some College, Associate's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, & Graduate/Professional Degree)



Mortality Data

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (CDC) chronic diseases are responsible for seven of 10 deaths each year. Of the 984 deaths occurring in Harnett in 2016, approximately 50% were caused by heart disease, cancer and stroke.

Heart Disease and **Cancer** continue to be ranked as the leading causes of death. For the year 2016, 442 deaths were equally divided for heart disease (221) and cancer (221). *Source: NC DHHS, State Center for Health Statistics.* Followed by Chronic lower respiratory diseases (#2), and Cerebrovascular disease-Stroke (#3).

The 10th annual “**Go Red Lunch and Learn**” educational session are held during the month of February. The sessions are made possible through a partnership with the Health Department and Harnett Health Hospital. In 2017-2018, over 200 residents attended the sessions.

For more information, call the Health Department at 910-893-7550 or 910-814-6196.

Cancer:

The opportunity for disease control and for reducing the number of cancer deaths rests with prevention and early detection so that treatment of the disease can be effective. The mortality rate for female breast cancer in Harnett County has **decreased** since 2000 by **21.9%** and the NC rate has decreased by almost 14% over the same period. Evidence indicates early detection increases survival. The Health Department provides access to mobile mammography screenings with a partnership with Rex Mobile Mammography, which provides a funding assistance program for uninsured. Approximately, 250 women annually, utilize this program, **51 percent** of the women screened are either uninsured or underinsured. The program is funded in part through grant funding from the Susan G. Komen North Carolina Triangle to the Coast Affiliate. For more information, contact the Health Department at 910-893-7550.

Faith-based initiatives:

Faith-based organizations are vital to the communities in which they are located. The Health Department continues to partner with local churches to provide health information and health promotion programs in areas such as diabetes, weight loss, cancer prevention and awareness, in efforts to provide preventive health to at-risk populations. Partnerships between faith-based organizations and public health are a viable strategy to achieve the vision of “healthy individuals in healthy communities”, a vision where everyone benefits. When faith-based organizations and health care organizations partner, the entire community benefits. **Progress:** Annually over **50 churches** participate in various health initiatives in collaboration with the Health Department to promote health. For more information contact the Health Department through the Health Education Division at 910-893-7550.

Leading Causes of Death-2016

Heart Disease & Cancer

Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases

Cerebrovascular Disease (Stroke)

Unintentional Injuries

Diabetes

Unintentional Motor Vehicle Injuries

Alzheimer’s Disease

Primary Hypertension & Hypertensive

Renal Disease

Pneumonia and Influenza

Heart disease risk reduction: you can decrease your risk for heart disease by not smoking, managing conditions such as high blood pressure, eating food low in trans-fat & salt, and staying active (at least 150 minutes per week).

Mortality Data



Infant Mortality

A decline in the County’s Infant Mortality Rate: The Health Department is committed to improving birth outcomes. Infant mortality is the death of a baby before its first birthday. In Harnett County 1,861 live births were recorded for the year 2016.

Infant mortality rates are the number of infant deaths for every 1,000 live births within a given timeframe, usually a year. North Carolina’s infant mortality rate in 2016 is 7.2 deaths per 1,000 births. The infant mortality rate for **Harnett decreased to 5.9** deaths per 1,000 live births.

The two major causes of infant deaths, prematurity and low birthweight remain significant. Prematurity (born too early) and low birthweight (born too small) have not changed much in the last few years. The Health Department provides prenatal care, for more information or to make an appointment please call 910-893-7550.

Infant Mortality			
Deaths(per 1,00 live births)			
	2016	2015	2012-2016
NC	7.2	7.3	7.2
Harnett	5.9	7.2	8.2

New Initiative-Diabetes Prevention

Minority Diabetes Prevention Program: Diabetes is the 6th leading cause of death (age-adjusted) in Harnett County. The Health Department participated in the Regional Minority Diabetes Prevention Program. The goal is to increase minority access to, and participation in, diabetes prevention programs in NC. The program consist of several components: awareness and marketing campaign in minority communities, community screenings for prediabetes, and Prevent T2 lifestyle classes (CDC curriculum). The Health Department began offering the Prevent T2 lifestyle classes in February 2017. Participants work in a group with a trained lifestyle coach to learn the skills needed to make lasting changes. The Prevent T2 group meets for one year—once a week for 4 months, every other week for 2 months, and then once a month for 6 months to maintain healthy lifestyle changes. The Prevent T2 program is based on research that found people with prediabetes could cut their risk of developing type 2 diabetes in half by losing 5 to 7 percent of their body weight. **Progress:** The Health Department had 8 participants in the program. The class has lost a total of 63 pounds. For more information, contact the Health Department through the Health Education Division at 910-814-6196 or 910-893-7550.

New Initiative-Smoke Free Public Housing

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is requiring all Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) in the US to become Smoke-free. On December 5, 2016, HUD published a final rule for each Public Housing Agency administering low-income, conventional public housing to initiate a smoke-free policy. All PHAs must have a smoke-free policy in place by July 31, 2018. The Health Department –Health Education Division in partnership with the Region 6 Tobacco Control Manager are working with Dunn Housing Authority on the implementation of the new smoke free policy. A listening session was conducted by Dunn Housing Authority staff in August 2017 to help residents prepare for the new policy. The Health Department staff participated in the listening session and provided information on the health impacts of smoking and secondhand smoke, QuitlineNC information, and the possibility of on-site cessation classes. The smoke free policy at Dunn Housing Authority will go into effect in July 2018.

New Initiative- eWIC

WIC Electronic Benefit Transfer: A departmental change for the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. The North Carolina WIC Program is moving from a paper-based method of WIC benefit issuance to an electronic benefit transfer system (eWIC). Instead of paper food instruments, WIC food benefits will be issued into an electronic benefit account at the local WIC clinic. Families will use their eWIC card to access their food benefits at the grocery store. This change was implemented February 2018, at the Health Department. The eWIC is simple, safe, and convenient. The WIC program has established three full service sites across the county located in Dunn, Lillington and Anderson Creek. The number of participants increased by 1,128 more clients in 2016. For more information, contact the WIC office at 910-893-7570.

New Initiative-Environmental Health

Zika virus in NC

The first travel associated case of Zika virus in NC was reported in February 2016

“**Tip and Toss**” is the message the Health Department was sharing to encourage residents to protect themselves against mosquitoes. Different mosquitoes spread different viruses and bite at different times of the day. Mosquito-borne infections including, LaCrosse encephalitis and West Nile virus, are common in North Carolina. These diseases are diagnosed across the state and can be acquired at any time of year, though the majority of infections occur from June to September.

The Health Department implemented a “**Tip and Toss**” program and provided resources to help residents reduce the mosquito population. An educational outreach campaign was launched which included brochures, newspaper public service announcements, web and social media postings. Larvicides are products to help control mosquitoes they work by killing mosquito larvae. The Health Department provided free mosquito insecticide to county residents. The Health Department distributed over 250 free mosquito insecticide to county residents. For more information, contact the Health Department through the Environmental Health Division at 910-893-7547.

Track Your Permits:

New Environmental Health Software. In 2018 the Environmental Health Division of the Health Department in conjunction with the Planning Department and Central Permitting, will be implementing software upgrades. The upgrades will help both staff and customers. The goal is to improve customer service, reduce response time on inquiries, and create a permanent, searchable database. The new mobile feature allows site inspectors to spend more time conducting inspections because they can now post reports remotely. For more information, contact the Health Department through the Environmental Health Division at 910-893-7547 or log onto the Health Department’s web site located at www.harnett.org/health

Re-Accredited

The Harnett County Health Department was Re-Accredited, by the NC Local Health Department Accreditation Board (NCLHDA). The goal of the North Carolina Local Health Department Accreditation (NCLHDA) program is to improve and protect the public’s health by assuring the capacity of N.C. local health departments to perform basic public health services. The core functions of assessment, policy development and assurance are defined through 41 benchmarks and 148 activities that are based on the 10 Essential Public Health Services. Harnett was accredited through the pilot process in 2005 Reaccredited in 2009, 2014, and most recently in 2018. The next Accreditation Assessment Cycle is scheduled for the fall of 2021. For more information, contact the Health Department at 910-893-7550.

New Initiatives

County Leadership Forum on Opioid Abuse: The purpose of the County Leadership Forum on Opioid Abuse is to engage local elected leaders in an informed discussion about the opioid epidemic, and develop collaborative strategies that enhance prevention, education, and treatment. Harnett held the forum September 20, 2017 with the State Attorney General Josh Stein in attendance along with numerous elected leaders from across the county. **Initiatives to Address Opioids & Heroin:** The Health Department has implemented media campaigns with the goal to increase awareness.

Mediums used for campaign: Radio, Newspaper, and Digital (Social Media, Online Ads).

Outcomes: Seventy-seven messages have been on social media, radio, and television. (70 radio Ads, six Facebook posts, and one television, feature on WRAL TV-Harnett County resident featured along with Health Department staff member “WRAL’s On the Record” to discuss opioid abuse and how it affects families.

- Newspaper: Front-page media coverage: “Naloxone/Narcan can be bought at drug stores” Daily Record.
- Medication messages posted on County vans

Other community programs include

- Permanent Drop boxes: Harnett County Sheriff’s Office
- Conducted a series of Medication safety sessions: Healthy Harnett

For more information, contact the Health Department at 910-893-7550 or log onto www.harnett.org/health

Infant Plan of Safe Care Initiative:

In an effort to address the increased issues associated with Opioid Abuse among pregnant women, the Harnett County Health Department Care Coordination for Children program (CC4C) has implemented the **Infant Plan of Safe Care Initiative** in collaboration with the Harnett County Department of Social Services. Research confirms that in utero substance exposure can cause or contribute to premature birth, low birth weight, increased risk of infant mortality, neurobehavioral and developmental complications. Policies and procedures are in place that require health care providers to notify the child protective services system if they are involved in the delivery of an infant born and identified as being affected by substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, or a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. The Department of Social Services refers these children to the CC4C program before initiating a screening. The Health Department CC4C staff provide quality services to this population of infants and their families to reduce the adverse outcomes and promote healthy home environments to enhance the well-being of these children and their families. For more information, call the Health Department at 910-893-7550.

Community Health Medical Access Program (MAP) grant:

In 2017, the Health Department received the Community Health Medical Access Program (MAP) grant from the Office of Rural Health. The grant was awarded to local health departments to assure access to primary care and preventive care for vulnerable, underserved and medically indigent patients. The grant provided funding for the Maternal Health program to implement evidence based strategies that are proven to improve the overall health status of pregnant women, and improve birth outcomes. Through partnerships with Harnett Health Hospital, clients can receive ultrasounds, evaluations, and delivery services. Clients may also receive and have access to our in house services for WIC and Pregnancy Care Management service as determined by assessment and risk screening. The initiative provides funding that will assist with improving pregnancy and birth outcomes as we work to increase the number of pregnant women who obtain initial prenatal care in the first trimester. For more information, contact the Harnett County Health Department at 910-893-7550.

Priority Areas



Healthy Harnett is a group of several organizations and residents whose goal is to identify the health care needs of Harnett County residents and work to meet those needs through coordinated efforts and services. The group meets each month at the Health Department for more information or to learn how you can become involved please call 910-814-6196 or 910-893-7550.

Harnett County's current health priorities are (1) Nutrition & Physical Activity, (2) Maternal & Child Health, and (3) Motor Vehicle Safety. In these priority areas, Harnett's performance on health indicators differs substantively from peer counties and from the state of North Carolina. In addition, community members have rated these concerns as significant with regard to the urgency, severity, and feasibility of improvement efforts. Two of the three priorities (Nutrition & Physical Activity and Maternal & Child Health) are specifically aligned with the priorities of Healthy NC 2020, while the third (Motor Vehicle Safety) represents a community health concern in which the progress being made statewide with reducing fatal crashes is not being paralleled in local data.

Priority Areas 2016-2020

Nutrition &
Physical Activity

Maternal & Child
Health

Motor Vehicle
Safety

Nutrition & Physical Activity:

Maintain Don't Gain Holiday Challenge: The Holiday Challenge is a free six-week program that began on Tuesday, November 21st and concluded on January 2, 2018. The program included weekly educational sessions related to healthy eating and physical activity, weight checks, and tips to maintain your weight during the holidays. The program was conducted at two locations: Erwin Public Library and Boone Trail Community Center. Twelve participants completed the program. According to the National Institutes of Health, holiday eating can result in an extra pound or two every year. Although those are small gains, most people who gain weight during the holidays never manage to return to their pre-holiday weight. The pounds add up year after year. For more information on the Maintain Don't Gain Holiday Challenge, contact the Health Department at 910-814-6196 or 910-893-7550.

Maternal & Child Health:

The Health Department in partnership with a number of organizations are encouraging women to take advantage of opportunities to improve their health not only during, but also prior to and after pregnancy. This requires the Health Department working together with health care providers, communities, and partners to reduce infant deaths. This joint approach can help address the social, behavioral, and health risk factors that affect birth outcomes and contribute to infant mortality. Efforts are ongoing to improve the health of all women of childbearing age because healthier women are more likely to have healthy babies. A "Special Delivery" pregnancy health fair is scheduled for May 8, 2018 from 4:00-6:00pm. For more information, contact the Health Department at 910-893-7550 or log onto the Health Department's web site located at www.harnett.org/health.

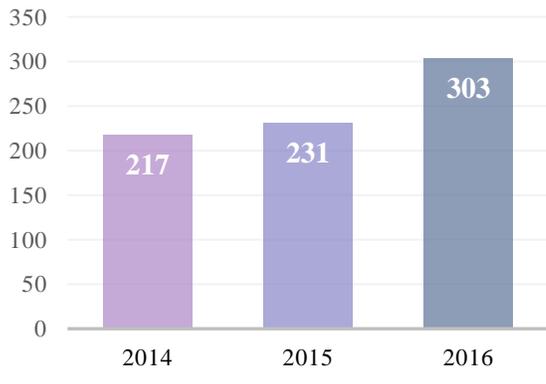
Motor Vehicle Safety:

In 2015, almost half (45.5%) of fatal crashes in Harnett County were alcohol related and Harnett County ranks 13th highest among counties in NC in the percentage of alcohol related crashes (5.7% overall). In the community health improvement planning process, specific attention will be given to alcohol use and the prevention of alcohol-related motor vehicle accidents, in addition to broader prevention efforts aimed at increasing seat-belt use and reducing distracted driving. **Progress:** The Child Fatality Prevention Team featured a series of posts on social media reaching over 500 persons through "likes" and "shares".

Newspaper articles were featured during National Teen Driver Safety Week. For more information, call the Health Department at 910-893-7550.

Morbidity Data: Communicable Disease

HIV Cases



Source: 2016 NC HIV/STD/Hepatitis Surveillance Report

HIV Testing: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) supports two primary models of HIV testing: (1) routine testing in clinical settings, and (2) targeted testing in nonclinical settings. The primary goal of testing is to increase the number of persons living with HIV who know their status and linked to prevention, care, and treatment services. The Health Department provides targeted testing in nonclinical settings, which includes testing in the community and during non-traditional hours that include evenings, nights and weekends. **Progress:** From June to December of 2017, 187 people were tested for HIV and syphilis at thirteen testing events. This program is conducted by the Health Department with grant funding from the N.C. HIV/STD Prevention and Care Branch. The Health Department was awarded this grant in June of 2017. For more information, please call the Health Department at 910-814-6195 or 910-893-7550.

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Women and their infants are uniquely vulnerable to the consequences of sexually transmitted infections (STI). Rates of reported cases of chlamydia among women is increasing steadily. If left undiagnosed and untreated, they can have serious health consequences.

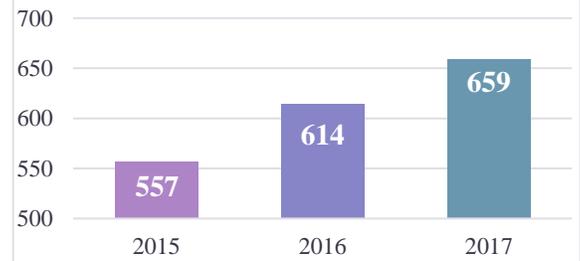
Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) that can infect both men and women. In Harnett County, there were 659 newly diagnosed cases of Chlamydia in 2017. Like chlamydia, gonorrhea in women often fails to show noticeable symptoms. Therefore, gonorrhea screening is an important strategy for the identification of gonorrhea among women. In 2017, there were 178 cases reported in Harnett County. This was an increase in comparison to the number of cases reported in 2016.

The number of chlamydia and gonorrhea cases have been increasing for the past three years. Chlamydia and gonorrhea disproportionately affect women. The numbers are staggering, but Public Health Officials are working to decrease the steady climb in STD rates. Strategies to improve the early detection and treatment of chlamydia and gonorrhea.

Targeted efforts include:

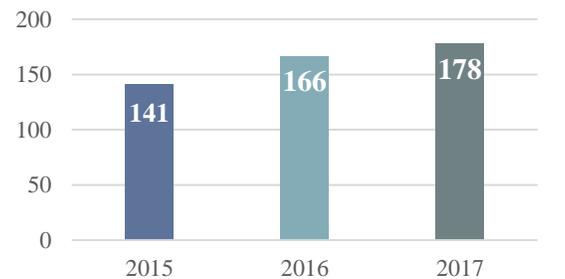
- Increasing the number of STI screening clinics: *Providing access to free STI prevention and treatment services are key to reducing STI.*
- Expanding community education and outreach efforts
- Promote prevention and risk reduction.
- Conduct ongoing Disease surveillance, and Disease investigation. For more information, contact our office at 910-893-7550 or log onto the Health Department's web site www.harnett.org/health

Chlamydia Cases



Source: NC Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NC EDSS)

Gonorrhea Cases



Source: NC Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NC EDSS)

Emerging Issue: Influenza (flu):

Influenza (also known as “flu”) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. While seasonal influenza (flu) viruses can be detected year-round in the United States, flu viruses are most common during the fall and winter. Flu activity has increased sharply in the United States in recent weeks, with widespread activity reported in 49 states. The (CDC) has issued a health advisory to notify the public and medical providers about a spike in influenza cases. Most cases of influenza can be prevented with the seasonal flu vaccine.

- In the 2016, CHA 53% of survey respondents indicated that they had received the seasonal flu vaccine. In NC, the total number of influenza-associated deaths as of March 2018 is 276, according to state statistics. Public Health Officials with the Health Department have vaccinated over 1,989 persons with the Influenza Vaccine, both children and adults, this flu season. For more information, contact the Health Department at 910-893-7550.

Medicare Open Enrollment:

Every year Medicare beneficiaries have a chance to change their Prescription Drug coverage during the Medicare Open Enrollment Period from October 15th through December 7th. This year the Harnett County Division on Aging served 987 beneficiaries providing a total yearly savings of \$1,650,031.00. The Division on Aging utilized SHIP volunteers, RSVP volunteers and Campbell University Pharmacy students trained through the Department of Insurance. Through these collaborative efforts, Harnett County seniors were able to make an informed decision about their prescription drug coverage. For more information, contact the Division on Aging 910-893-7578.

Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns about Falls: Each year, millions of older people—those 65 and older—fall. Many falls do not cause injuries, but one out of five falls does cause a serious injury. Health Department staff have been trained to provide the evidence-based “A Matter of Balance”: Managing Concerns about Falls program. Classes have been conducted at various locations in the county including Dunn Senior Center, Coats Senior Center, Anderson Creek Senior Center, and the Governmental Complex Commons Area. This eight week structured group intervention emphasizes practical strategies to reduce fear of falling and increase activity levels. The classes were provided to 55 seniors in 2017. Classes are offered in partnership with Health Education Division and the Division on Aging. For more information, contact the Division on Aging at 910-893-7578 or the Health Education Division at 910-814-6196.

Public Health Preparedness:

In the CHA, 60% of respondents indicated that they have an emergency supply kit, with supplies for approximately seven days. Most 79% also report that they would evacuate if a mandatory evacuation order were given. Hurricane Matthew brought devastating flooding, to NC on October 8-9, 2016. Fifty of NC’s 100 counties experienced health, economic and social impacts from Hurricane Matthew, including Harnett County. Two shelters opened serving approximately 150 county evacuees. Several roads and bridges require extensive repairs that are still underway a year later after the event.

Potassium Iodide (KI): Health Department staff were on site, in March 2017 at Duncan Junction distributing potassium iodide (KI) tablets to county residents located within the 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) of the Harris Nuclear Power Plant. Approximately 698 tablets were distributed during the four-hour event. Potassium Iodide (KI) pills are also available at the Health Department during regular business hours. For more information, please call the Health Department at 910-893-7550.

Emerging Issues

Substance Abuse-Opioids: Like other parts of the country, Harnett is experiencing an increase in opioid related overdoses and deaths. This is an alarming trend and requires a variety of collaborative efforts involving public health, substance abuse prevention and treatment providers, police and medical providers. Respondents to the Community Health Survey named Substance Abuse Prevention one of the top “health behaviors that the community needs more information about.” Substance Abuse Prevention was a key priority that emerged from the previous Community Health Assessment. Several programs are being planned and implemented to address this community health issue.

Emerging Issues

Substance Abuse-
Opioids

Communicable
Diseases

Communicable Diseases: Influenza (also known as “flu”) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. In NC, the total number of influenza-associated deaths as of March 2018 is 276, according to state statistics. In the 2016, CHA 53% of survey respondents indicated that they had received the seasonal flu vaccine.

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) that can infect both men and women. In Harnett, there were **659** newly diagnosed cases of Chlamydia in 2017, in comparison to 614 for 2016 and 557 for 2015.

New Heart Cath Lab in Harnett County: In January 2018, Central Harnett Hospital announced their capability to offer cardiac catheterization due to the addition of new equipment including digital cardiovascular and interventional X-ray imaging. This will allow patient to receive catheterization services within Harnett County rather than being transferred to larger hospitals out of county. Harnett Health collaborated with Cape Fear Valley Heart and Vascular Center, Ferncreek Cardiology, and Fayetteville Heart Center in order to provide these services. Central Harnett Hospital opened its doors January 2013.

Next Steps:

The **State of the County Health Report** will be disseminated to key stakeholders and community partners including the Harnett County Board of Health, Healthy Harnett Partnership and others. Copies of the report will be available at the Health Department for the public.

For more information about the State of the County Health report, the Community Health Assessment (CHA), or to learn how to get involved contact: Harnett County Health Department at 910-893-7550.

Copies of these reports are available on the Health Department’s website at www.harnett.org/health.

Data sources: *NC State Center of Health Statistics-2016 County Health Data Book, US Census Bureau-Quick Facts, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) NC Department of Commerce, 2016 NC HIV/STD Surveillance Report. NC Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NC EDSS), Harnett County Economic Development.*

