

2008 Onslow County Community Health Assessment Summary

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Preparing for the Road Ahead

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Introduction

Community Health Assessment Defined

“A community health assessment is a process by which community members gain an understanding of the health, concerns, and health care systems of the community by identifying, collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information on community assets, strengths, resources, and needs.”

- Healthy Carolinians

Why conduct a Community Health Assessment?

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services requires that all local health departments complete a community health assessment every four years. Regular assessments allow public health practitioners and officials to look for health trends in the community and to set goals and plan for ways to continue to meet the needs of the community and special populations.

Over the past year, members from the Onslow County Health Department and the Community Health Assessment Team have worked to assess our community's health. This was done by looking at all the factors that influence whether an individual and the community will be healthy, by gathering Onslow citizens' opinions and data from a variety of local, state, and national resources.

Who conducted the Community Health Assessment?

Onslow County Health Department spearheaded the assessment and worked in conjunction with the Community Health Assessment Committee, made up of the following organizations:

- ◆ Greater Shekinah Gospel Ministries
- ◆ Marine Corps Community Services
- ◆ Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune
- ◆ Coastal Carolina Community College
- ◆ Town of Swansboro
- ◆ Town of Holly Ridge
- ◆ Town of North Topsail Beach
- ◆ Onslow County Sheriff's Office
- ◆ Onslow County Farmers' Market
- ◆ New River Foundation
- ◆ Onslow Carteret Behavioral Healthcare
- ◆ Onslow County Planning Department
- ◆ Onslow County Schools
- ◆ Onslow Hispanic Latino Association (OHLA)
- ◆ City of Jacksonville
- ◆ NC DPH, Oral Health Section
- ◆ Onslow Memorial Hospital
- ◆ Onslow Community Ministries
- ◆ Onslow County Senior Services
- ◆ Onslow CHIP



Health Defined

What is health and how is it monitored?

There are many definitions of health, but the major public health organizations agree that health is more than just the absence of disease. Ultimately, health is influenced by an individual's genes and behaviors, the environment, and whether they live in a safe community with adequate opportunities for work, transportation, and education.

Healthy People, a national organization, and Healthy Carolinians, a state organization, are partnerships that establish and track public health objectives and work on improving public health by promotion and prevention. Healthy Carolinians established 2010 Health Objectives modeled after the 2010 Healthy People Objectives. These objectives fall in the following areas and were used by the Community Health Assessment Committee to evaluate the health of the community:

- ◆ Access to Health Care
- ◆ Chronic Disease
- ◆ Community Health
- ◆ Disability
- ◆ Environmental Health
- ◆ Health Promotion
- ◆ Infant Mortality
- ◆ Infectious Disease
- ◆ Injury
- ◆ Mental Health
- ◆ Older Adult Health
- ◆ Oral Health

What did the Community Health Assessment Team look at?

To define the health of the community, we looked at several aspects with special attention on the 2010 Healthy Carolinians Objectives. These areas included:

- ◆ Physical Health
- ◆ Mental & Behavioral Health
- ◆ Lifestyle & Health Behaviors
- ◆ Economic Health
- ◆ Environmental Health
- ◆ Safety
- ◆ Education

Areas of Evaluation

Physical Health
Mental & Behavioral Health
Lifestyle & Health Behaviors
Economic Health
Environmental Health
Safety
Education



Community Thoughts

Community Survey Responses

Top 5 Community Concerns

Cancer
Diabetes
Overweight/Obese Adults
Overweight/Obese Kids
Teen Pregnancy

Most Important Issues for County to Address

Cigarette Smoking
Alcohol & Drug Treatment
Recycling
Illegal Drug Activity
Transportation

What do Onslow County citizens think of their community?

The Community Health Assessment Committee gathered data from a statistically significant random sample of 213 Onslow County citizens aged 18 or over. The survey addressed what citizens think about certain health issues and their opinion of the health of the community. Most citizens rated the following as the “major problems” in their community:

- ◆ Cancer
- ◆ Diabetes
- ◆ Overweight/ Obesity Adults
- ◆ Overweight/ Obesity Kids
- ◆ Teen Pregnancy
- ◆ Eating Habits/ Nutrition
- ◆ Tobacco Use
- ◆ Alcohol Abuse
- ◆ Illegal drug use/ substance abuse
- ◆ Mental health problems inc. anxiety and depression
- ◆ Job opportunities
- ◆ Public transportation
- ◆ Drinking and driving

The second section of the survey asked participants to choose the most important issue for their community to address in six different categories. According to respondents, the most important issues that need to be addressed are:

- ◆ **Lifestyle Issues**
 - Cigarette Smoking 22%
 - Exercise 21%
- ◆ **Behavioral & Mental Health Issues**
 - Alcohol & Drug Treatment 39%
 - Suicide 20%
- ◆ **Environmental Issues**
 - Recycling 20%
 - Sewage 15%
- ◆ **Safety Issues**
 - Illegal Drug Activity 31%
 - Assault 18%
- ◆ **Economic Issues**
 - Transportation 34%
 - Poverty 16%
- ◆ **Education Issues**
 - Afterschool/ Summer Programs 21%
 - Children Prepared for Kindergarten 20%
 - Overcrowded Schools 18%



Areas of Celebration

What are Onslow County's areas of celebration?

Health

- ◆ **Infant Mortality:** In comparison to the state and Healthy Carolinians 2010 targets, infant mortality rates are low.
- ◆ **Prenatal Care:** A greater percentage of pregnant women within Onslow County receive prenatal care in the first trimester as compared to the state and Healthy Carolinians 2010 target.
- ◆ **Smoking During Pregnancy:** The percentage of mothers that smoke during pregnancy is lower than the State of North Carolina rate.
- ◆ **AIDS and HIV:** Rates of new HIV and AIDS infection remain low within Onslow County.
- ◆ **Child Dental Health:** The majority of Kindergarteners and Fifth Graders have been screened and 98% of 5th graders are free of decayed teeth.
- ◆ **Physical Activity and Nutrition:** Physical activity and proper nutritional intake remains high within the county according to self-reported BRFSS data

Safety

- ◆ **Safety:** The county has a low crime rate, including homicide rates that are lower than both the state rate and the Healthy Carolinians 2010 target

Economics

- ◆ **Employment:** Unemployment remains low within the county and there are few business closings.

Environment

- ◆ **Food Safety:** 100% food and lodging establishments are inspected and there is a high average inspection grade throughout the county.
- ◆ **Good Environmental Health:** The county has excellent ambient air quality and offers adequate access to waste disposal. There is also a local chapter of Keep America Beautiful—an organization dedicated to expanding recycling programs and educating the public about recycling and waste management.

Education

- ◆ **Educational Attainment:** The percentage of individual's with a high school education or higher is over 85% and has increased since 1999. The percentage of individual's with a Bachelor's degree or higher has also increased since 1999. Finally, the county had the lowest dropout rate in Eastern North Carolina for the 2006 – 2007 school year behind Pamlico and Wayne Counties.

Infant Mortality Rate

Onslow	7.9 per 1,000
NC	8.4 per 1,000

Mothers that Receive Prenatal Care in 1st Trimester

Onslow	91.6%
NC	83.0%

5th Graders with Decay Free Teeth

Onslow	98.0%
NC	96.0%

History of Mammogram, Women 50+

Onslow	87.0%
NC	83.7%

Alzheimer's Death Rate

Onslow	17.8 per 100,000
NC	27.7 per 100,000



Areas of Concern

Top 5 Causes of Death - Onslow

1. Heart Disease
2. Cancer
3. Cerebrovascular Disease
4. Lower Respiratory Disease
5. Diabetes

Teen Pregnancy, Girls 15—19

Onslow	83.5 per 1,000
NC	62.5 per 1,000

Substantiated Child Maltreatment

Onslow	19.1 per 1,000
NC	11.4 per 1,000

Heart Disease Death Rate

Onslow	226.4 per 100,000
NC	217.9 per 100,000

Stroke Death Rate

Onslow	66.0 per 100,000
NC	61.1 per 100,000

Cancer Death Rate

Onslow	214.3 per 100,000
NC	196.4 per 100,000

Diabetes Death Rate

Onslow	34.4 per 100,000
NC	27.1 per 100,000



What are Onslow County's areas of concern?

The 2008 Onslow Community Health Assessment uncovered several areas of concern, including:

Health

- ◆ **Chronic Disease Death Rates:** Although death rates for heart disease, cancer, and cerebrovascular disease have decreased since 1992, county rates are still higher than NC rates. The diabetes death rate has continually increased since 1992 and is higher than the NC rate.
- ◆ **Adult Obesity:** 65-69% of adults in Onslow County are considered overweight or obese.
- ◆ **Childhood Obesity:** The percent of overweight children in Onslow County is less than that of NC, but has increased steadily since 2005.
- ◆ **Sexually Transmitted Diseases:** Rates of Gonorrhea and Chlamydia have remained high over the last several years, and at times, even twice the NC rate.
- ◆ **Childhood Asthma:** Hospitalization rates were higher than NC rates during the last 2 years. In addition, county rates of hospitalization have increased since 2003 while the state's rates have decreased steadily since 1995.
- ◆ **Suicide:** Onslow rates are slightly higher than NC rates.
- ◆ **Tobacco Use:** Tobacco use in the county remains higher than the state.

Safety

- ◆ **Alcohol Use and Related Car Crashes:** Onslow citizens report high alcohol use, including heavy and binge drinking, and 6.9% of all car crashes between 2000 and 2006 involved alcohol.

Economics

- ◆ **Access to Care:** The percentage of Onslow citizens without health insurance remains slightly below the state percentage and there was no change between 2002 and 2005.

Environment

- ◆ **Recycling:** Although this was the top environmental issue that residents felt the county needed to address, many do not utilize available recycling services.

Education

- ◆ **Early Child Education and Childcare:** The number of family care homes has recently decreased due to new evaluation guidelines. Access to affordable and available child care is a problem for many residents.

Health Priorities

How were Health Priorities chosen?

The community assessment process often uncovers a range of community concerns. Each is important, but the availability of resources and interest in the community limits the number of issues that can be addressed at a given time. The community must prioritize issues to focus on and decide how to best use community resources to solve problems. Both community survey results and secondary data collected were used during the prioritization process.

What are our Health Priorities for the next 4 years?

Overweight & Obesity - Adults

Obesity is a risk factor for many diseases. Available information shows that Onslow County residents are physically active and eat healthy, yet other data shows that 65 – 69% of residents are overweight or obese. This is an area that requires further study.

Overweight & Obesity - Kids

Same as with adults, obesity in children is a risk factor for many diseases and also sets a weight pattern for life. The percentage of children who are at-risk-for or are overweight in Onslow County is below state averages, but has risen continuously in recent years.

Chronic Disease Management

Unmanaged chronic diseases can lower quality of life and increase the risk of further complications and disability. In Onslow County, rates of cardiovascular disease, hypertension, cerebrovascular disease, and certain cancers have dropped steadily since 1992, but they are still higher than the state in most areas. Additionally, diabetes death rates have steadily grown since 1992.

Childhood Asthma

Asthma is a leading chronic illness in kids that impacts their sleep, school attendance, physical activity, and general health. Asthma cannot be cured, but it can be controlled. Asthma hospitalizations decreased in Onslow County from 1995 through 2002, but they increased significantly from 2003 through 2006.

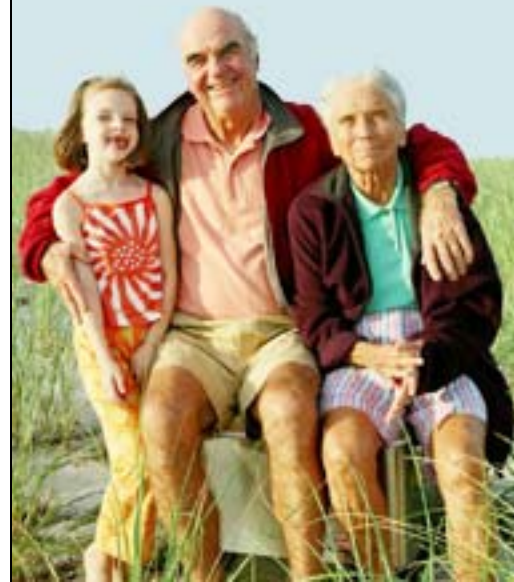
Top Health Priorities for Next 4 Years

Chronic Disease Management

Overweight/Obese Adults

Overweight/Obese Kids

Childhood Asthma



Next Steps

For More Information

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To View the Full Report Please See:

<http://www.onslowcountync.gov/>

[health/default.aspx](http://www.onslowcountync.gov/health/default.aspx)

What are the next steps?

The ultimate goal of the Community Health Assessment process is to share and utilize information and to influence strategic planning across the community. It is our hope that resources within our community will partner and actively seek and find ways to utilize their programs, services and resources to address the identified needs as is appropriate to their stated missions.

Onslow County Health Department, in conjunction with local partners like Onslow CHIP and the Student Health Advisory Council, will continue to communicate information learned during the process with county agencies, business partners, and the public. By June 2009, specially formed committees will develop Community Health Action Plans for each health priority. The Health Department, in conjunction with local partners, will continue to engage in ongoing evaluation and encourage collaboration between agencies and community groups to achieve the best possible health outcomes.

Join us!

If you would like to volunteer to join an Action Team in order to create healthy environments for all citizens in Onslow County where they live, learn, earn, play and pray, please call today. Or, if your group or organization is already working on these issues, please let us know.

Data in this document was taken from the Onslow County 2008 Community Health Assessment—a report issued by the Onslow County Health Department.

Full report available at <http://www.onslowcountync.gov/health/default.aspx>