

2018 State of the County's Health Report

EVERY COUNTY



The 2016 Community Health Assessment Priorities are:

- 1. Substance Abuse Prevention and Increasing Availability/Access to Mental Health Services**
- 2. Unhealthy Living Behaviors/ Lifestyle Habits**
- 3. Cancer**

The 2018 SOTCH will be communicated to stakeholders, community partners, and the general population in the following ways:

- Presented to the Toe River District Board of Health
- Presented to Healthy Carolinians of Avery County Partnership Steering Committee
- Posted on the local WECR radio website: www.wecr1130am.com
- Placement at the Avery County Public Library
- Posted on the Toe River Public Health District website: www.toerverhealth.org

Next Steps:

- In 2019, Toe River Health District will be conducting the Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

2018 State of the County's Health Report Scorecard - Avery County



The following SOTCH Scorecard was created and submitted **Monday, March 4th, 2019** in order to meet the requirements for the **Avery County** Annual State of the County's Health (SOTCH) Report.

The **2016 Community Health Assessment** priority areas are:

Priority 1: Substance Abuse Prevention & Increasing Ability/Access to Mental Health Care

Priority 2: Unhealthy Living Behaviors/Lifestyle Habits

Priority 3: Cancer

The following resources were used/reviewed in order to complete the SOTCH:

- [WNC Healthy Impact](#)
- [2017 County Health Data Book](#)

Substance Abuse Prevention and Increasing Availability/Access of Mental Health Services

R Avery Residents of Avery County are not misusing or abusing illegal & legal substances

Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
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Progress Made in 2018

Intervention #1- YRBS

- The Avery County YRBS was conducted throughout the county and school system, but unfortunately seen a low response rate relative to student population. This will be addressed and attempted to be redistributed throughout the school system in order to be reported on at a later date. Even with low results, one concerning issue that came from the responses was the number of students experiencing depression.

Intervention #2- Convenient Store Checks with Underage Kids

- The Underage Buyer (UB) program is an ongoing effort by the local ABC board to visit alcohol and tobacco retailers throughout the local stores to verify compliance with the state age requirements—18 for tobacco and 21 for alcohol sales. Special agents, who are sworn officers from Law Enforcement, accompany underage operatives during attempts to purchase cigarettes or alcohol at grocery stores, convenience stores, restaurants and other businesses, including Avery County's ABC stores. The purpose of this program is not to trick businesses. In fact, it is the hope of the ABC board that 100 percent of the businesses comply with state law by not selling to the underage buyer. Law Enforcement selects operatives who look their age, making it easier for clerks and servers to request ID and avoid the sale. Operatives are instructed not to alter their appearance or mannerisms or mislead clerks in any way while attempting to make a purchase. Operatives carry their own valid identification. If the store clerk asks for ID, the operative presents his or her own valid identification.

Intervention #3- Media Ready Curriculum

- There are currently two campaigns circulating throughout Avery County with importance to substance abuse prevention:
 - Avery County YMCA is currently doing a stop underage drinking campaign this campaign will be distributed via newspaper ads, social media, and local TV. Currently the campaign has been in both the Avery Journal and Avery Post and is encouraging parents to start the conversation about underage drinking and the dangers involved.
 - Health Page Initiative- Healthy Carolinians of Avery County, along with the Toe River Health District, implemented a new health page with the Avery Post. This health page is submitted once a month with health topics that are important to the community. Community organizations are brought together to give ideas and things to distribute for that month.

Intervention #4- Celebrate Recovery Program

- Heaton Christian Church have started a Celebrate Recovery Program that is modeled after the intervention model from Bear Creek Baptist Church in Mitchell County. This is a Christ centered 12 step program that is open to anyone in the community and surrounding areas. This group meets every Sunday at 6 o'clock at Heaton Christian Church for approximately two hours.

Intervention #5- Naloxone and Defibrillators Training

- Law enforcement agencies continue to equip officers with the proper policy and training to respond with naloxone and defibrillators if needed when called to incidents. Each law enforcement car is armed with both of these life saving devices.

Intervention #6 Law Enforcement Intervention Programs while incarcerated, ranging from parenting, alcohol, drug abuse, to job attainment

- No progress has been made at this time

Intervention #7 Triple P Parenting Program

- ACHD has 3 providers trained in Triple P Parenting. These providers have assisted 58 families with this positive parenting approach.

Intervention #8 Cannon Memorial Hospital Expanding Behavioral Health Department

- The Cannon Memorial Hospital is expanding the behavioral health services by 27 beds in the next three years. This add on is possible through a \$6.5 million grant from the state. In addition to the expanding of these services, the hospital will also construct eight to ten in-patient medical rooms. Currently Cannon Memorial Hospital is opening 5-7 substance abuse beds to provide more recovery opportunity to the community. Cannon Memorial has also hired two full time psychiatrist's one outpatient and one inpatient to help deal with substance abuse and drug addiction, they are also renovating the outpatient behavioral health area to allow for more providers in the hospital.

Additional Initiatives/ Interventions:

- Avery County distributes lockboxes to the community via the health department, senior center, local YMCA, etc. These lockboxes are given to any community member who wants to protect their prescription drugs from children or other individuals.
- Avery Cares is a newly formed community group that meets once a month to help community members deal with substance abuse problems and provides a community supported environment for people to recover and deal with their addiction. The group is led by the county manager.
- Kiwanis club held a community forum in Banner Elk. Avery County providers and law enforcement agency attended this forum where past drug users gave personal testimony and answered questions. Local government was there to answer community questions asked by the group as well in a forum based interview layout.
- Avery County Schools has formed an intensive unit home service that works with children at home or in the school system setting through DayMark Recovery Services. This program offers children psychiatric treatment and access to therapists.
- Avery County has a mobile crisis worker offered through DayMark Recovery that can go into the community and help someone whenever there is a call to these services.
- Crossnore School has added therapy to their range of services for adolescents in the area which is available to the community via an appointment.
- VAYA Health has a kiosk in the Sloop Medical Building that helps with all mental health issues such as depression and substance abuse.
- Several Avery County citizens have participated in mental health first aid training; ranging from health department staff to other community agencies and volunteers.

 Avery	% Self-report use of illicit drugs	2015	3.1%	→	1	0%	→
 Avery	Current Smokers	2016	19.0%	↘	1	-10%	↓
 Avery	Meth Labs	2017	#17	↗	1	55%	↑
 Avery	Number unintentional poisonings	2016	#17	↗	1	-39%	↓
 Avery	% Self-report sharing of prescription medications	2015	7.1%	→	0	0%	→
 Avery	Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change		
 Avery	Convenient Store Checks with Undercover Kids	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change		

P	Avery	Health Priority 3 - Program/Intervention/Strategy 3	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	Media Ready Curriculum	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	Celebrate Recovery Program	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	Naloxone and Defibrillators Training	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	Law enforcement Intervention Programs while incarcerated	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	Triple P Positive Parenting Program	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	Cannon Memorial Hospital Expanding Behavioral Health Department	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change

Unhealthy Living Behaviors/Lifestyle Habits

R	Avery	Residents of Avery county adopt healthy living behaviors and lifestyle habits	Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
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Progress Made in 2018

Intervention #1- Expansion of YMCA with New Facility

- Avery County YMCA is currently remodeling and constructing new facilities for those of interest that will serve the community in multiple ways:
 - Avery County YMCA is currently constructing a youth community building in the Chapman Center. This building is giving teenagers a place to go after school in order to attempt to limit their risk behaviors. The building will provide golf simulators, indoor basketball courts, pickle ball, and other fun activities for the youth.
 - Avery County YMCA provides an afterschool program that helps children have a positive place to go after school until their families can pick them up this program also provides meals. The Avery YMCA also provides a summer program that provides children in the community with breakfast and lunch. These opportunities is all free of charge to the families through grant funding.

Intervention #2- Playground Project at Old Public Pool Site

- A new community playground has been completed in Avery County. This playground was a community swimming pool, but was recently torn down and constructed to become a new place for children to play and live a healthy lifestyle. The playground consists of a jungle gym equipped with slides, monkey bars, and other fun loving physical activity equipment. The playground is adjacent to the Hodges Turbyfill Baseball Complex. Many children within the community have already been to the playground multiple times to play as reported by the Avery Journal. Phase two of the project will be starting in the Spring; adding a picnic shelter and restrooms.

Intervention #3- Senior Wellness and Enhanced Fitness

- EnhanceFitness (the name of the program) is a proven community-based senior fitness and arthritis management program offered by the local YMCA. It helps older adults become more active, energized, and empowered for independent living. EnhanceFitness has been nationally recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US Department of Health and Human Services, US Department on Aging, and the National Council on Aging. Watch the video testimonial below. The program focuses on cardiovascular endurance, strength, flexibility, and balance which can help reduce the severity of arthritis symptoms in an atmosphere that encourages social interaction - a vital part of health and well-being for older adults.

Intervention #4- Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program

- One in three American Adults have high blood pressure. Participants work with trained Healthy Heart Ambassadors for the duration of the four-month program. The program currently helps patients in this format. The participants take their own blood pressure at least two times per month, then attend two consultations with a YMCA Healthy Heart Ambassador per month (no appointment necessary), and also attend a monthly nutrition education class. They record their blood pressure readings using an easy-to-use tracking tool of your own choosing. The Y provides options for participants who need a home blood pressure monitor.

Intervention #5- Diabetes Prevention Program

- The YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program helps adults at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes reduce their risk for developing the disease by taking steps that will improve their overall health and well-being. The program consists of 25 one-hour sessions delivered over the course of a year. Research by the National Institutes of Health has shown that programs like the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program can reduce the number of new cases of type 2 diabetes by 58%, and 71% in adults over the age of 60. Adults 18+ at risk for or who have been diagnosed with Prediabetes are referred by their physician based on BMI, fasting or 2-hour Plasma Glucose, A1c level, or a previous diagnosis of gestational diabetes. If blood tests are not available, a qualifying risk score is based on a combination of risk factors. The program meets the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) diabetes prevention recognition program standards.

Intervention #6- MANNA Backpack Program for Students of ACS

- Avery County Schools have taken part in the MANNA Backpack Program for students in the county. MANNA is an Asheville-based food bank that distributes food to other nonprofits in Western North Carolina which includes Feeding Avery Families, which distributes to thousands of clients each week. MANNA also has created the backpack program which currently serves 200 kids in Avery County who are low-income children and gives them food to take home.

Additional Initiatives/ Interventions:

- Avery County local food pantry hosts the Hunger Walk to help raise money. Avery County Health Department helped plan the walk along with a committee. The hunger walk offered fun activities and helpful resources to the community before, during, and after the event.
- Avery's Back to School Bash was held in August of 2018 where children were given a sloe of supplies and resources for the start of school. Car seat safety was presented to parents. All families were told about the services available at local agencies. Several families who did not have health insurance or a provider were reached. Several families, who had not seen a provider in a long time, were served after this event for well child checkup; just to name a few.
- Avery County YMCA started the annual "Reindeer Run" 5k event in Banner Elk which is open to the community in hopes to get people out and active.
- Avery County has started a "lunch with moms" program that connects children and families in an attempt to make children in the community start having a healthy diet.
- The Avery County Health Department participated in Cranberry Middle School and Avery Middle School's health fair and provided a class on sex education and puberty to all 6th graders.
- Participated with Crossnore School and Children's Home in a health fair for their teenagers. The morning was focused on Wellness activities. The afternoon the teens were provided information on sexually transmitted infections, relationship, sex education, etc.
- Avery County YMCA held Healthy Kid's Day. Families were given information on nutrition, car seats, services provided locally, and referrals were made to at-risk families to obtain resources.
- Avery County Schools hosted a 9th grade Health Fair. All 9th graders were given bags that included information on healthy relationships, STD's, female facts, male facts, birth control facts, folic acid, etc.
- Avery County Health Department attended Sibelco's, a local mining industry, health fair; providing flu vaccines, smoking cessation, and blood pressure checks.
- Crossnore School and Children's Home invited local agencies to an employee health fair providing health information, car seat safety checks, smoking cessation, and other resources
- Avery County Health Department continues to partner with Crossnore School and Children's Home to provide medical care to all the children who are living there. Children who are in foster care have been exposed to toxic stress and need more frequent and in depth care. Children ages 2 and older are seen every 6 months for a well child exam, because they are more prone to illnesses from the adverse childhood events they have been exposed to. Children under 2 are seen even more often.
- Avery County Employee Health Fair was provided on Halloween to all county employees who wanted to attend. Resources such as provided flu shots, blood pressure checks, lab work, and vision screening were provided.
- Avery County Schools employee health fair was hosted on a Teacher Work Day providing flu shots and lab work.
- Avery County YMCA offers a variety of services to individuals that live in this community that include Delay the Disease (Parkinson's Disease help), Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring, Enhance Fitness (Senior Fitness), LIVESTRONG (Cancer Survivors), and a Diabetes Prevention Program.
- Avery County received a Maternal Child Health Initiative Grant that provided \$15,000 for the purchase of long acting, reversible contraceptives. (IUD's and Implants) through the Avery County Health Department.

I	Avery	Diabetes Prevalence	2015	10.6%	→ 0	0% →
I	Avery	Obesity Rate	2015	25.9%	→ 0	0% →
I	Avery	Access to Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	2015	37.0%	→ 0	0% →
P	Avery	Expansion of YMCA	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	Playground Project at Old Public Pool Site	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	Senior Wellness Enhanced Fitness Program	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP)	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	MANNA Backpack Program for Students of ACS	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change

Cancer

R	Avery	Residents of Avery County adopt healthy behaviors to prevent cancer	Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
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Progress Made in 2018

Intervention #1- Livestrong Program

- Avery County's leading cause of death is cancer, closely followed by heart disease. LIVESTRONG is a small-group program designed to help cancer survivors from the point of diagnosis through the balance of life reclaim their health and well-being. The two 90-minute sessions per week, for twelve weeks' curriculum promotes a welcoming environment where participants develop supportive relationships. Survivors improve their conditioning, strength, balance, and flexibility, which diminishes the severity of therapy side effects. Instructors are trained in cancer survivorship, post-rehabilitation exercise and supportive cancer care.

Intervention #2- FreshStart Tobacco Cessation Program

- Classes were held weekly for one month with the intent to help walk participants through the different stages of Tobacco Cessation, while aiding in building a community of peers that they could lean on once the program was finished. The initial class had five people attend the initial class and less follow up the next week. The number kept decreasing until there weren't people coming and the program discontinued. However, there is data that clearly shows a need in the county and the YMCA is working with AppHealthCare to push through the barriers they face.

Intervention #3- Comprehensive Cancer Prevention Media Campaign

- No progress has been made as of this document.

Additional Initiatives/ Interventions:

- The Avery County Health Department offers the BCCCP program. This is a Breast & Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) that includes breast self-exam, mammograms, and PAP smears, and referrals for abnormal test.
- Avery County has become a tobacco free and smoke free county.
- Pink Day at Cannon Memorial Hospital is held annually to create awareness and educate event participates.
- The Wilma Redmond fund offers free mammogram to women through Appalachian Regional Healthcare to the community in Avery County.
- Avery County Health Department is working with RHA Health Services to implement a program in the school system titled "Catch My Breath" this program looks to inform and educate the children in the school system on the dangers of tobacco addiction and the long term effects such as Cancer that it can have on the body.

I	Avery	Total Cases of Cancer	2016	948	↓ 1	-1% ↓
I	Avery	Cancer Rate	2016	456.6	↓ 1	-4% ↓

P	Avery	LIVESTRONG Program	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	FreshStart Tobacco Cessation Program	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
P	Avery	Comprehensive Cancer Prevention Media Campaign	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change

New and Emerging Issues and Initiatives

R	Avery	Monitoring New and Emerging Issues	Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
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2018 Notes

These are the new or emerging issues in our community that were not identified as priorities in our 2016 CHA.

- Vaping & E-Cigarettes- (2017 North Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey Results)
 - According to SCHS, the adult smoking rate in WNC is 23.4% vs. 17.2% for the state.
 - The adult e-cig rate (in Regions 1 & 2) is 2.6% vs. 1.8% for the state.
 - According to the NC Youth Tobacco Survey, high school use of e-cigs in WNC was 19.5% compared to 16.9% for the state as a whole

Given this data and the firsthand accounts that have been discussed in meetings throughout the county it is obvious that e-cigs are of growing concern for Avery County. Many individuals in the school system have discussed confiscating e-cigarettes throughout the school and even have seen three to four teenagers sharing one e-cig between them so that they can't confiscate them all at once.

- Higher Incidence of STD within Avery County- Despite the fact that fewer young people are having early sex, and pregnancy rates among teens are at historic lows, teens and people in their early 20s are nonetheless contracting sexually transmitted diseases in North Carolina; and we see this eventually becoming a local problem with increased appointments made among high school students at the local physician offices.
 - North Carolina has some of the highest rates of chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis in the U.S. according to recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
 - According to a report published, young people in the U.S., on average, have sex for the first time at about age 17. But between that time and the time they tend to marry in their 20s, they may be at heightened risk for unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
 - Rates of chlamydia, gonorrhea and HIV all ticked up in North Carolina last year.
 - Last year, North Carolina had 16 babies born with congenital syphilis and two babies were stillborn as a result of syphilis.

This is on the radar for most parents in Avery County already according to community input.

Leading Causes of Death in North Carolina 2017

Location:AVERY

Race:all

Gender:both

Hispanic Origin:all (Hispanic, Non-Hispanic, and Unknown)

Age:0 - 99 years

Note: Age 99 indicates age 99 years or older.

Rank	Cause	Number	%
1	Diseases of heart	51	24.1
2	Cancer	45	21.2
3	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	17	8
4	Influenza and pneumonia	8	3.8
5	All other unintentional injuries	7	3.3
6	Cerebrovascular diseases	7	3.3
7	Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis	7	3.3

8	Alzheimer's disease	5	2.4
9	Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	4	1.9
10	Diabetes mellitus	4	1.9
	All other causes (Residual)	57	26.8
Total Deaths -- All Causes		212	100

Source: State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina

R Avery Keep Track of New Initiatives, Current Initiatives & Community Changes

Most Recent Period Current Actual Value Current Trend Baseline % Change

2018 Notes

The following are new initiatives or changes in our community in 2016.

- A community Flu Shot Clinic was provided to several agencies at their site of choice where flu shots were conducted. Some of these sites included Grandfather Children's Home, Elk Park School Apartments, Head Start children in Avery and Watauga, Avery County Schools, senior Center, and local industries, etc.
- WIC rolled out the new NC eWIC card that works like a debit card. This rolled out May 2018 and WIC served 149 people that month. The month of December 2018 WIC numbers had increased to 164. WIC provided 1877 visits for the year.
- Our annual Healthy Halloween health fair took place the Thursday before Halloween allowing agencies across Watauga, Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey Counties coming together to sharing health information to approx. 550 children and families.
- Taste of the Blue Ridge was hosted by local Partnership for Children to raise money for Imagination Library book program. There was approx. \$30,000 raised that night.
- Avery County is currently training officers to be adept at the DARE program. This program will look to be re-implemented into the school system once these officers have been properly educated in this program. This will take place in all 5th grade classrooms in Avery County Schools.
- Avery County has continued and expanded drug court within the county. The program is usually reserved for high-risk offenders, usually with felony charges or convictions, and provides deferment. What exactly that deferment consists of can vary. For instance, it could be either prosecution or sentencing deferment, or an addition to probation. Avery County has noted that those who complete the program have a significantly reduced recidivism rate.
- Avery County Health Department has provided no cost car seats and booster seats to 37 children over the past year. Some were provided to newborns. The others were replacements for expired or car seats in very poor condition. These car seats were installed by our care coordinator who has been trained to perform installations.
- Avery County began a State of the Child Forum. This forum revolves around child traumatic events and calls for community members to come together and help children in the area. This forum hosted a guest speaker, and provided many teachers, providers, and other individuals who deal with children everyday to come together and learn more about how to better help children suffering from trauma. The presentations of the event were as follows- What Trauma Looks Like in Avery County, Brain Chemistry (Age Matters), Reconnect for Resiliency, Response to Allegations of Child Abuse, Trauma in the Classroom, Managing Stress, Impact of Intimate Partner Violence on Children, Internet Safety for Children and Youth, and Resilient Communities.
 - Avery County Health Department held a series of reproductive life planning commercials to the public. These commercials reached more than 5000 people via social media and other news outlets.
 - Avery County Health Department obtained the Delta Dental Grant which provided funds to acquire dental equipment in the forms of toothbrushes for all ages, and dental floss for the children as well. ACHD was also able to conduct dental screenings and varnishing to every Early Head Start student in the county.
 - High Country Community Health who is a dental provider in Avery County received a \$99,000 from a grant program of the US Health and Human Services Administration. The funds were part of \$3,248,124 that were distributed throughout North Carolina. These funds will be used to improve quality, efficiency, and the effectiveness of healthcare in the communities that HCCH serves.
- All 7th graders are required to have a Tdap and Meningitis vaccination. A nurse from the Avery County Health Department went to the schools and gave these to the children who had signed up. This saves parents from having to take off work to take their child to their provider.
- Avery County High School now has a community liaison for students and the community to help offer services as they see the need or are approached.

All three health departments (Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey) that are apart of the Toe River Health District promote health in the community based on current need. Although it is not captured through a specific event, our public health employees work very closely with community agencies weekly on outreach addressing circumstances they are facing or are seeking guidance about.