

2009 MCDOWELL SOTCH

State of the County Health Report

McDowell Health Department
McDowell County Health Coalition

Working Together For A Healthy Community



Overview

Every four years the State of North Carolina requires every local health department and North Carolina Healthy Carolinians Partnerships to conduct a community health assessment. A community health assessment is a process that allows the members of the community and stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the health needs and concerns of the community.

During the three interim years, the local health department is responsible for issuing the State of the County Health (SOTCH) report. The 2009 McDowell County SOTCH report is an annual review of the priority health issues that were chosen in the 2008 Community Health Assessment. The report serves to inform the community and stakeholders about the health status of our residents and provide an update of the past year's progress in addressing the health issues identified in the 2008 Community Health Assessment.

Review of Data

Over the past years, the majority of the leading causes of death have been chronic diseases. Despite the preventable nature, chronic diseases account for more than 75% of the nation's \$2 trillion medical costs. In McDowell County, the leading causes of death include cancer, diseases of the heart, cerebrovascular disease and chronic lower respiratory disease. These diseases can be prevented through behavioral changes, such as eating healthy, being physically active, and not using tobacco.

Leading Causes of Death	
McDowell County	North Carolina
Cancer	Diseases of the Heart
Diseases of the Heart	Cancer
Cerebrovascular Disease	Cerebrovascular Disease
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease
Other Unintentional Injuries	Other Unintentional Injuries
Alzheimer's Disease	Alzheimer's Disease
Diabetes	Diabetes
Pneumonia and Influenza	Pneumonia and Influenza
Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome, & Nephrosis	Motor Vehicle Injuries
Motor Vehicle Injuries	Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome, and Nephrosis

Priority Health Issues

In November 2008, the community voted and chose obesity, substance abuse and teen pregnancy as the top three priority health concerns of the community. In January 2009, the community voted to add access to care as a health concern.

Obesity

Obesity is a growing public health concern for the nation, North Carolina, and locally. Obesity is caused due to the lack of physical activity, lack of recreational facilities and pedestrian planning, and poor nutritional diet. Obesity increases the likelihood of someone developing certain chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, some types of cancer, heart disease and high blood pressure.

The McDowell County Health Coalition's community partners have worked together on the following strategies to combat the obesity epidemic at many levels:

Environmental Improvements

- McDowell County Partnership for Children's NAP SACC program provided training and technical assistance to 4 child care centers to improve nutrition and physical activity for children between ages 2 and 5.
- Marion Elementary and Old Fort Elementary planted a garden and edible landscape
- Marion Elementary School built a trail and outdoor classroom
- New shade shelter built for Marion's Farmers' Market
- Weekly farmer's market opened in Old Fort
- Work First Garden Project at McDowell DSS supplied senior nutrition sites with fresh vegetables
- Progress toward greenway development in Marion and Old Fort and Point Lookout Trail opened
- Safe Routes To School Master Plan is under development by the City of Marion
- Regional Greenway Master Plan is under development

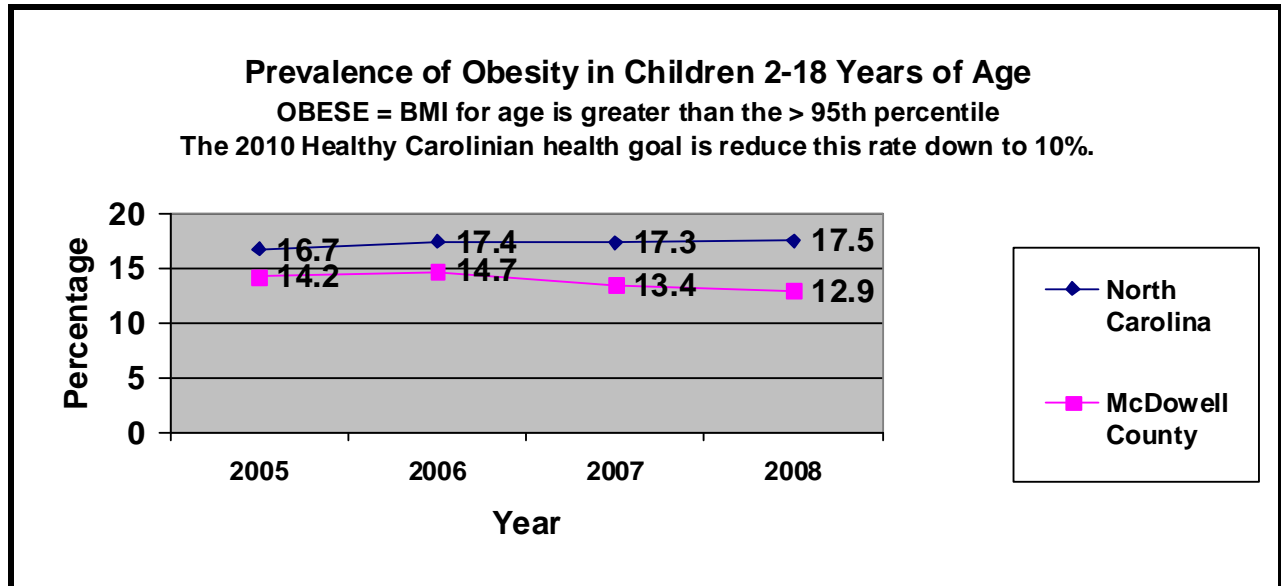
Health Promotion

- The McDowell Hospital and various other organizations have partnered together to launch Lighten Up 4 Life, a community-wide weight loss program
- Corpening YMCA's America on the Move Challenge logged 2.2 million steps in one week
- Free health education classes are offered to the community by The Open Door to Health
- Participants collectively walked from McDowell County to Jerusalem 2.7 times totaling 17,200 miles between January and Easter 2009.

Nutrition Education/Services

- NC Cooperative Extension is piloting a SNAP Ed nutrition education class at Eastfield Elementary School
- A local family physician employed a part-time nutritionist to provide services for obese patients

- Five health/nutrition educators were trained in Eat Smart Move More Weigh Less curriculum to offer weight loss classes in the community



* North Carolina-Nutrition and Physical Activity Surveillance System (NC-NPASS) includes data on children seen in North Carolina Public Health Sponsored WIC and Child Health Clinics and some School Based Health Centers.

Substance Abuse

Despite the complexity of substance abuse and the difficulty to obtain accurate, reliable data to convey the extent of the substance abuse problem in McDowell County, many residents still feel as though it is an issue.

Because of the complexity of the issue, the Substance Abuse Prevention Action Team has decided to do one large project that encompasses the larger realm of substance abuse and then focus specifically on alcohol related crashes and injuries. Since the 2001 mental health reform and recent changes in the state budget, many services are being cut or downsized. With the help of the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) grant, the Substance Abuse Prevention Action Team has published a resource guide that includes services related to substance abuse and other issues.

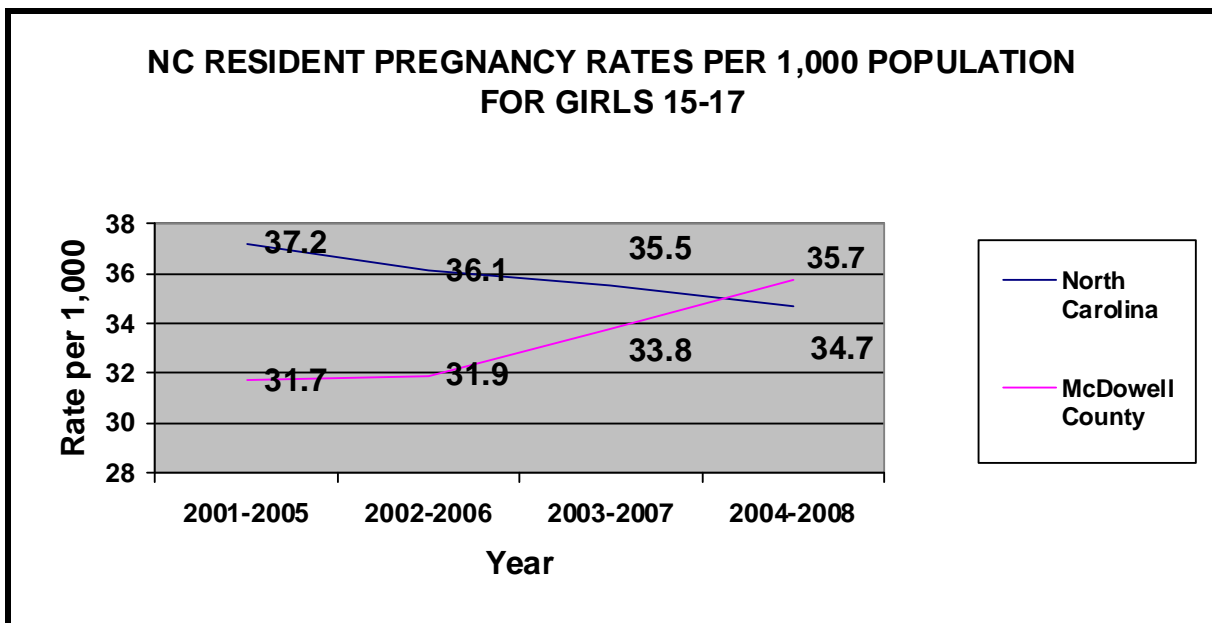
The Substance Abuse Prevention Action Team is also working very closely with the Voices in McDowell initiative to reduce drinking and driving. The Action Team has worked closely with the Community Advisory Panel (CAP) to help implement a media campaign. The media campaign increases awareness of the legal consequences related to driving under the influence (DUI), and addresses the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that contribute to drinking and driving.

Teen Pregnancy

A recent article in *The McDowell News* stated that North Carolina's teen pregnancy rate hit a 30-year low in 2008, with a 7% decrease from 2007. The article also stated that McDowell County's teen pregnancy rate is above the state's average. In 2008, McDowell County's teen pregnancy rate was 76.1 per 1,000, which accounted for 108 teen pregnancies between the ages of 15-19. Out of the 108, 27 of the pregnancies were repeat pregnancies.

McDowell County is a recipient of state funding for the Adolescent Parenting Program that helps teen parents stay in school and delay a second pregnancy. In order to prevent the first pregnancy, different agencies/organizations have become involved. Grace Community Church hosted a one-night event that challenged students to live Christ-centered lives in the area of sex and dating. The school nurse at McDowell High School has been going into the biology classes doing an activity called, "You Are The Doctor." The students are divided into groups and given a case that relates to a female/male reproductive issue or a STD.

At the beginning of the year, as the action team was convening to create an action plan to reduce the teen pregnancy rate in McDowell County, the General Assembly proposed a bill that would change the way students learn sexual education in the classroom. House Bill 88 was passed in June 2009. The bill requires each local school administration to provide a "reproductive health and safety education program" that teaches abstinence from sexual activity and offer more comprehensive information about contraception and disease prevention. A parent will have the option to withdraw his or her child from the comprehensive portion of the curriculum. McDowell County Schools have developed an Abstinence Development Committee that will develop an abstinence curriculum based on the Healthful Living Course of Study that will be offered in grades 4-12.



Source: NC-DHHS STATE CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS (www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/)

Access to Care

In 2005, it was estimated that 17.7% of the people in McDowell County between the ages of 0-64 are uninsured. The 2007 BRFSS Survey Results for Western NC report 25.4% with no health insurance coverage under the age of 65.

Health insurance affects a person’s financial well-being and access to medical care. Without health insurance, people delay or forgo medical care. To address the issue of access to care, McDowell County has:

- Hired a Preschool Dental Coordinator through a grant received by The McDowell Hospital. A dentist and the Preschool Dental Coordinator provide a limited oral exam for children ages 6 months to 5 years of age. If necessary the dental assistant will help find the child a dentist to provide further dental care. A community-screening event is being planned for the Hispanic community.
- Launched Nurse Family Partnership, an evidence-based nurse home visitation program that improves the health, self-sufficiency, and well being of first-time mothers and their children.
- McDowell Hospital received a Duke Endowment grant to install digital mammography and offer a cancer care program with a nurse navigator to help patients through the cancer process.
- CHAMP Program (Community Health and Mobility Partnership) has begun to improve balance, mobility and reduce the incidence of falls and fall-related injuries among older adults and people with disabilities.

Emerging Issues

In April 2009, a new strain of Influenza A virus H1N1 subtype was first detected in the United States and in June 2009 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). A vaccine was developed for the new strain of influenza, as well as the usual seasonal flu vaccine. As of November 16, 2009 the McDowell County Health Department had given out 1500 flu vaccines.

New Initiatives

HEALTH NAVIGATOR

The McDowell County Health Coalition and Access II Care of Western NC has received \$50,000 of HealthNet funding from the Office of Rural Health to better serve the needs of the uninsured between the ages of 18-64 that are at or below the 200% federal poverty level. The health coalition, McDowell Hospital and McDowell DSS are working together to hire a Health Resource Navigator, who will help place the uninsured and the underinsured into appropriate primary care settings.



COUNTY AND STATE POPULATION

Area	1990 Census Population	2000 Census Population	Percent Change 1990 to 2000	2010 Projected Population	Percent Change 2000 to 2010
McDowell	35,681	42,151	18.1%	48,664	15.5%
N.C.	,632,448	8,049,313	21.4%	9,491,374	17.9%

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY RACE BY PERCENT FOR 2000

Race	McDowell	North Carolina
White	92.2%	72.1%
Black/African American	4.2%	21.6%
American Indian & Alaska Native	0.3%	1.2%
Asian	0.9%	1.4%
Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0%
Hispanic or Latino	2.9%	2.3%
Some Other Race	1.6%	1.3%
Two or More Races	0.8%	4.7%

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