

# State of the County Health Report 2015



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## Lee County Board of Health Members

- Dr. Diane Schaller, Veterinarian, Chairperson
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- Dr. William E. Hall, Physician
- Mary Hawley Oates, RN
- Alice Hooker, Pastor, General Public
- Dr. Alex Martin, Optometrist
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- Martha Underwood, Engineer
- Dr. Teresa Wooddell, Dentist
- Dr. Andre Knecht, Commissioner Representative

## Purpose

The mission of the Lee County Health Department is to emphasize prevention as we: monitor and respond to environmental issues, provide access to health care for those who are in need, prevent and control the spread of disease, and promote healthy lifestyles in the community based on current patterns and guidelines. The 2015 State of the County Health Report for Lee County is used to update the community on the progress of the health priorities identified by the 2014 Community Health Assessment (CHA). As you analyze the 2015 State of the County Health Report (SOTCH Report), you will become aware of the progress made with the 2015-2019 Community Action Plans targeting Lee County's health priorities.



## Lee County Demographics

### Population Update

According to the U.S. Census Lee County's estimated population as of July 1, 2014 was 59,662 compared to the 2010 estimated population of 57,856. The primary races are White (75.2%), Black/African American (20.1%), and Hispanic/Latino (19.5%). Females make up 50.8% of the county population and males make up 49.2%.

	<b>Lee County</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>59,662</b>	<b>9,943,964</b>
<b>Percent White</b>	<b>75.2</b>	<b>71.5</b>
<b>Percent African American</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>22.1</b>
<b>Percent Hispanic/Latino</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>9.0</b>
<b>Percent American Indian and Alaskan Native</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.6</b>
<b>Percent Asian</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>2.7</b>
<b>Two or More Races</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.1</b>

Source: US Census Quick Facts

Lee County's median household income (2010-2014) was \$46,309 compared to NC's median household income of \$46,693. The percentage of persons living below poverty level (2010-2014) in Lee County was 18.5% compared to NC's 17.2%.

	<b>Lee County</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>
<b>Median household income (2010-2014)</b>	<b>\$46,309</b>	<b>\$46,693</b>
<b>Persons in poverty, percent</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>17.2</b>
<b>Unemployment (August 2015)</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>6.1</b>
<b>Percent Persons without health insurance, under age 65</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>15.2</b>

Source: US Census Quick Facts

## Lee County Health Priorities

Health priorities help in guiding the plans and actions for public health programs and initiatives in Lee County. During the 2014 CHA, the citizens identified the top three health concerns of the community: Obesity, Substance Abuse/Access to Mental Healthcare, and Sexually Transmitted Infections/Teen Pregnancy Prevention. The 2015 SOTCH Report discusses each listed health priority, and the actions being taken or planned to address each priority. In addition, according to the 2014 statistics, Lee County's top five leading causes of death were: Cancer, Heart Disease, Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease (COPD), Cerebrovascular Disease (stroke), and Alzheimer's disease, which are discussed in this report.

## Review of Major Morbidity and Mortality Data

Cancer was the number one cause of death in Lee County in 2013 and 2014, followed by heart disease at a close second. In 2013, motor vehicle injuries ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the leading causes of death for the county. Deaths from motor vehicle injuries decreased from twenty-three in 2013 to eleven in 2014. Alzheimer’s disease replaced motor vehicle injuries in 2014 as the fifth leading cause of death.

Leading Causes of Death in Lee County 2013/2014

Rank	Cause	2013	2014
1	Cancer	126	126
2	Diseases of heart	101	117
3	Chronic lower respiratory disease - COPD	33	36
4	Cerebrovascular disease (stroke)	35	24
5	Alzheimer’s disease	18	21
<b>Total Deaths – All Causes</b>		<b>526</b>	<b>541</b>

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics

Lee County experienced a slight decrease in heart disease and cerebrovascular disease death rates from 2009-2013 and 2010-2014. However, Lee County death rates for all leading causes of death were higher than the death rates for the state of NC.

Lee County Death Rates

Rank	Cause	2009-2013	2010-2014	North Carolina 2010-2014
1	Diseases of the Heart	185.8	183.5	165.9
2	Cancer – all sites	181.1	184.0	171.8
3	Chronic lower respiratory disease	46.6	46.4	46.0
4	Cerebrovascular disease	45.6	41.9	43.0
5	Diabetes Mellitus	27.4	26.0	22.1

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics – 2016 County Health Data Book

2010-2014 Infant Mortality Rate	Lee County	North Carolina
	8.8	7.1

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics

*For more detailed data on morbidity and mortality in Lee County, please view the 2014 Community Health Assessment on the Lee County Government Website at [www.leecountync.gov](http://www.leecountync.gov)*

## Obesity Reduction Update

Voices into Action: The Families, Food, and Health Project is a USDA-funded, five-year project based out of NC State University, NC A&T State University, and NC Cooperative Extension. Voices into Action's work includes research and outreach efforts focused on improving access to healthy, affordable food and physical activity in Wake, Harnett, and Lee counties.

During 2015, Voices into Action provided youth and family nutrition education programming in Lee County in collaboration with the Lee County Cooperative Extension. Classes included two youth summer camps focused on nutrition and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Education for youth 7-16 years old and a series of family nutrition education classes. All camps and classes provided hands-on cooking experiences that focused on nutrition education, encouraging healthy food choices, and building the knowledge and skills necessary to cook for oneself or one's family. The family classes also focused on making healthy, affordable, time-saving meals that can be prepared in advance and reheated at a later date.

Voices into Action also provides mini-grant opportunities to projects focused on improving community access to food and physical activity. In 2015, seven projects were funded in Lee County. 2015 mini-grant recipients included:

- Salvation Army Food Pantry who purchased new storage shelves and promotional materials to expand their service to low-income families
- Communities in Schools of Lee County who hosted a running club and nutrition education classes for middle school girls at San Lee Middle School
- Abundant Living Ministries who started a food pantry and bought a blood pressure machine in order to offer health screenings for pantry clients and church parishioners
- Stevens Center who started a community garden that is maintained by the Adult Day Program
- Peace and Unity Garden who expanded their community garden services
- Cameron Grove AME Zion Church who expanded their community garden services
- First Baptist Church of Sanford who expanded their low-cost Zumba classes by providing outdoor classes.



Family Nutrition Class



Zumba class at First Baptist Church

To learn more about Voices into Action's work in the community, please visit <http://voicesintoaction.org> or contact Zandra Alford at [zaalford@ncsu.edu](mailto:zaalford@ncsu.edu)

## Sexually Transmitted Infection/Teen Pregnancy Prevention Update

Lee County has seen a dramatic drop in total pregnancies reported. In 2013, our total number of pregnancies was 92. In 2014, there were 84 teen pregnancies. This is a great success! Lee County has also seen a drastic drop in repeat teen pregnancy rates. From 2013-2014, the repeat teen pregnancy rate decreased from 32% to about 23%.

The Coalition for Families teen pregnancy prevention programs made a big change last year when programming was moved from afterschool group sessions to in-school day sessions. This change has allowed the Smart Girls program and Teen Outreach Program (TOP) to serve more students than ever before. Between both programs, 280 students will be served during the 2015-2016 school year. This is a great increase from years past. At East Lee Middle School, Smart Girls is part of the student's health class, while TOP has paired with the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program at East and San-Lee Middle Schools. At West Lee Middle School, group sessions are held during 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade exploratory time. This is a great example of the wonderful partnership between the Coalition and the Lee County School System.

In the fall of 2015, the Coalition was granted the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) grant for another grant cycle. These grant funds allow the Coalition the opportunity to provide the TOP program in all of the county's middle schools.

## Mental Health Partners Update

In 2015, the Mental Health Partners taskforce continued to work to raise awareness of mental health issues and increase access to mental health and substance abuse treatment services in the county by publishing articles in the local newspaper and distributing the Lee County Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services brochure in the community.

In August of 2015, Law Enforcement Officers, including representatives from Sanford Police Department, Broadway Police Department, and Lee County Sheriff's Department participated in the fourth annual Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training. CIT is a nationally recognized training that trains law enforcement how to react appropriately to situations involving mental illness. The 40-hour training educates police officers on mental health conditions and medications, and introduces police to mental health resources in the local community.

In collaboration with NAMI Cumberland, Harnett and Lee County's Crisis Intervention Team, the first annual CIT awards ceremony was held. This awards ceremony recognizes CIT trained officers who have effectively utilized CIT training in their line of work as well as community members who promote CIT locally, at state, and or national levels.



CIT Awards Ceremony 2015

## New Initiatives

### Project Lazarus

The state of NC has experienced an alarming increase in the number of deaths due to opiates from 150 deaths in 1999 to 790 deaths in 2013. Lee County experienced 57 deaths due to opiates from 1999-2013 and there were 106 emergency department visits attributed to opiate poisoning from 2008-2013. In 2015 Lee County received funding from Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC) to implement Project Lazarus, a community-based prescription drug overdose prevention project.

A community coalition was formed including representatives from Lee County Health Department, local law enforcement, emergency management, EMS, Central Carolina Hospital, medical providers, mental health/substance abuse providers and other community partners. The coalition worked together to identify the following strategies to address prescription abuse, misuse and overdose in the county.

- Naloxone kit distribution by law enforcement and public health department
- Increasing community awareness through advertising with County of Lee Transportation System (COLTS) and television and radio public service announcements
- Increasing the number of pill drop boxes in the community



### Tobacco Ordinance

In late 2015 Lee County Commissioners revised the county tobacco ordinance. The ordinance now bans smoking on county property, not just in buildings. Prior to this revision the smoking ordinance only addressed smoking on health department grounds. The ordinance also now includes e-cigarettes as a tobacco product. Members of the public can be cited for not following the rules. A copy of the ordinance can be viewed on the Lee County Government website.

### QuitlineNC

QuitlineNC provides free cessation services to any North Carolina resident who needs help quitting tobacco use. Quit Coaching is available in different forms, which can be used separately or together, to help any tobacco user give up tobacco.

Telephone Service is available 24/7 toll-free at  
1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)  
<http://www.quitlinenc.com/>



## New Initiatives Continued

### Dental Healthcare

Due to the restructuring of the NC Oral Health Section, Division of Public Health, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, there has been no Public Health Dental Hygienist in Lee County since September 2013. In October 2015, the NC Oral Health Section reassigned a position to cover Region 6 of the state which includes Anson, Cumberland, Harnett, Hoke, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, Richmond, and Scotland counties. The new regional Public Health Dental Hygienist is housed in the Lee County Health Department.

Tooth decay continues to affect more children than any other chronic childhood disease, in spite of the fact that it is almost entirely preventable. Children free of pain are able to sleep well, have higher self-esteem and arrive at school ready to learn. Only prevention can reduce tooth decay. In the spring of 2013, the NC Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Oral Health Section screened third graders in a random sample, which included Deep River Elementary School, as well as others across the state. Information was collected as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Oral Health Surveillance System. The results of this random sample screening showed that North Carolina has already surpassed the *Healthy People 2020* goals for third graders in three areas! Only 41.9% of third grade students have ever had dental disease (the national 2020 target is 49% or less). Only 14.3% had untreated cavities (the national 2020 target is 25.9% or less), and 45.3% of third grade students have preventive dental sealants (the national target is 28.1% or more).

According to the [Revised Statewide Oral Health Strategic Plan](#) (2014), the major components of the statewide oral health program will include the reorganization of the NC Oral Health Section (serving regions vs. individual counties), strategies for reducing oral health disease through education and prevention, surveillance, support for community water fluoridation, dental sealant promotion and utilization, establishing a dental home, and a pilot program to address oral care for the frail and elderly.



Give Kids a Smile! Event at Central Carolina Community College

## Changes in Data

The Health Department, in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club of Sanford/Lee County, implemented the Making Proud Choices! Program to 33 middle school students during the last calendar year. In addition, the Coalition for Families in Lee County also saw growth in their teen pregnancy prevention programs. The Smart Girls program and Teen Outreach Program now serve more students than ever before! This school year, between both programs, 280 students will be served. This great increase from years past is attributed to the switch from afterschool to in-school programming.

## Emerging Issues in Lee County

### Communicable Disease Trends

In 2015, the Lee County Health Department saw an increase in all sexually transmitted disease (STD) rates. Of particular interest was the rise in the number of cases of Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, HIV and Syphilis in Lee County, as well as in many other North Carolina counties. North Carolina is currently experiencing a syphilis outbreak. The rise in these STDs has been correlated with an increase in the use of “hook-up” applications used on smartphones. GPS based dating/”hook-up” apps which allow people to meet and exchange sexual acts anonymously have made it difficult to track down, test, and treat contacts for sexually transmitted diseases.

Another trend we are seeing is the rise in Acute Hepatitis C infections. Lee County saw 3 more cases of Hepatitis C between 2014 and 2015. While this may not seem like a significant increase, it does follow State and National trends. Between 2010 and 2014, the number of reported Hepatitis C infections for North Carolina increased by 187%, and nationally by 273% (*North Carolina Department of Public Health – Epidemiology Section and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*). This increase also correlates with a 565% increase in heroin overdose deaths in North Carolina during the same time period. Since Hepatitis C is often spread through blood-to-blood contact when an infected individual shares syringes with an uninfected individual, it makes sense to see an increase in Hepatitis C cases as heroin use increases. As we continue to monitor this trend, we will explore ways to reduce Hepatitis C infections, including community education and syringe exchange programs.

<b>Disease/Condition</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>Campylobacter</b>	8	6
<b>Chlamydia</b>	267	274
<b>Gonorrhea</b>	58	76
<b>Hepatitis C</b>	0	3
<b>HIV</b>	4	4
<b>Pertussis</b>	5	1
<b>Salmonellosis</b>	15	14
<b>Shigellosis</b>	1	1
<b>Syphilis</b>	6	10

Source: NC Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NCEDSS)

## Emerging Issues in Lee County

### Zika Virus

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the first confirmed Zika virus infection in Brazil was reported in May 2015, and on Feb 1, 2016, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Zika virus a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). Since then, cases of Zika virus have been reported in many other countries and territories, and the virus is likely to continue to spread to new areas. In recent weeks, cases of Zika virus have begun to present in North Carolina.

Zika virus was first discovered in 1947, and is named after the Zika forest in Uganda. The first cases of the virus in humans were detected in 1952, and since then, outbreaks have been reported in Southeast Asia, tropical Africa, and the Pacific Islands. It is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito, or through sexual contact with a man who is infected with the virus.

Symptoms of Zika virus include rash, conjunctivitis (red eyes), fever, and joint pain. However, most people who contract the Zika virus will not show any signs or symptoms of having the virus. If someone develops symptoms, they are encouraged to see their healthcare provider, and to inform them if they have traveled recently and where they went. There is no vaccine for the virus, and common treatment includes rest, drinking fluids in order to prevent dehydration, taking medicines, such as Tylenol (acetaminophen), to reduce fever and relieve pain, and avoidance of aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

Zika virus effects pose the most serious risk for unborn children. According to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, “a pregnant woman infected with Zika virus can pass the virus to her unborn baby. A serious birth defect of the brain called microcephaly, and other adverse pregnancy outcomes have been reported in some mothers who were infected with Zika virus while pregnant.”

Ways to prevent the spread of Zika virus include:

- Getting rid of any sources of standing water around your home (ex. bird baths, children’s wading pools, old tires) where mosquitos may breed.
- Wearing light-colored, long-sleeved shirts and long pants to help prevent mosquito bites.
- Applying Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents, and using as directed.
- Helping to prevent spreading Zika from sex by using condoms the right way every time you have sex. Not having sex is the best way to be sure that someone does not get sexually transmitted Zika virus.

*For more information, please visit <http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/diseases/zika.html> or [www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika)*

### How You Can Get Involved

LeeCAN meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month quarterly. For more information about LeeCAN or how you can become involved in working to address one or more of the health priorities identified in this report, please contact Ashley Graham, Lee County Health Education Supervisor at [agraham@leecountync.gov](mailto:agraham@leecountync.gov)

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- The Coalition for Families in Lee County
- Marilyn Gilliam – LeeCAN Mental Health Partners, CIT Planning Committee
- Zandra Alford – Voices into Action – NCSU
- Tessie Castillo – NC Harm Reduction Coalition
- Sid Evans – NC Department of Health – State Center for Health Statistics



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