



2009

# State of the County Health Report

## Health Department Welcomes New Health Director

In July 2009 a new Health Director, Dr. Christopher Szwagiel, was hired at the health department. Dr. Szwagiel is actively working to increase services and programs offered by the health department for the county.

## Community Health Priorities

The state of North Carolina requires that local health departments conduct a community health assessment (CHA) every four years. In December 2007, the Franklin County Health Department produced a CHA, which can be found by going to [www.franklincohealth.org](http://www.franklincohealth.org) and clicking on the Health Education link. This document presents primary data from a community health survey completed by citizens of Franklin County as well as secondary data from the NC Center for Health Statistics.

In the three years between each CHA, health departments are expected to submit a State of the County Health Report (SOTCH report). The purpose of the SOTCH report is to track priority issues identified in the CHA, identify emerging issues, and highlight new initiatives in the county.

Based on findings from the CHA, the following health priorities have been identified in Franklin County for 2008 through 2012:

- **Overweight and obesity** (physical activity and nutrition)
- **Chronic diseases** (Diabetes, Cancer, Arthritis)
- **Youth health** (physical activity, nutrition, asthma)
- **Access to care** (underinsured, uninsured, and indigent populations)

Franklin County will conduct its next community health assessment in 2011.

## Franklin County Facts

- Created in 1779, covers 494 square miles, and located 21 miles northeast of Raleigh
- Three world-class research universities, Duke, UNC Chapel Hill, and NC State, are located within an hour's drive
- Five municipalities: Bunn, Centerville, Franklinton, Louisburg, and Youngsville.
- 2009 Estimated population: 58,858 (Source: NC LINC)
- 2008 Median household income: \$43,508 (Source: NC Budget and Tax Center)
- 2005 Uninsured persons: 18.1% (Source: NC-CATCH)
- \*2008: Overweight persons: 33.6% Obese persons: 32.9% (Source: BRFSS)

## Efforts to Address Health Priorities

### Overweight and Obesity:

- FCHD, VIM, Franklin County Schools, FRMC, churches, and industries hosted health fairs.
- A TOPS (Taking Off Pounds Simply) chapter was formed for all Franklin County employees to promote healthy weight loss
- The Franklin County Employee Wellness Center is undergoing renovations to increase square footage and space to hold more exercise equipment
- Multiple venues for exercise & weight loss including Curves, Weight Watchers, and Parks and Rec complexes

### Access to Care:

- See Partnerships and Initiatives section for information about the Franklin County Health Care Collaborative

### Chronic Diseases:

- Education and information about breast cancer prevention was offered at Ladies Night Out at FRMC as well as through the Louisburg Senior Center and local churches
- The annual Diabetes Expo and Heart Health event were offered at the senior center for all county residents
- FRMC offers monthly diabetes education
- *Ray of Hope* newsletters continue to be distributed bi-monthly to local churches to encourage healthy lifestyle choices and give information about chronic disease
- VIM sponsored Rex Mammography drive
- An exercise program for seniors with arthritis was started at the senior center

### Youth Health:

- A walking trail is being created at the Louisburg Boys and Girls Club to promote physical activity among youth
- A presentation entitled *Healthy Active Kids* was given to parents at an elementary school PTA meeting
- 6 schools are now participating in the Alliance for a Healthier Generation Program
- All Franklin County elementary and middle school teachers received Energizer training and several teachers received training on how to successfully teach health
- Community Care Partners help address asthma in youth
- In honor of World Aids Day, a presentation on STDs and HIV was given at Louisburg College

# Health at a Glance

In 2008, the Franklin County Health Department provided:

- 358 Maternal Health services
- 1,841 children served in the Child Health clinic
- 620 clients on average per month seen through WIC
- 604 restaurant inspections
- 97 Head Start dental screenings

## Teen Pregnancy (ages 15-19) and Infant Mortality\*:

- Teen pregnancy decreased from a rate of 59.7 in 2007 to 57.1 in 2008. The teen pregnancy rate in Franklin County remains below the state rate of 58.6 in 2008.
- Infant mortality increased significantly from a rate of 2.9 per 1,000 in 2007 (2 deaths) to 9.0 in 2008 (7 deaths) and is now above the 2008 state rate of 8.2. This data should be interpreted with caution as rates based on fewer than 10 deaths are unreliable.

## Health Priority Statistics

- The age adjusted cancer death rate increased from 195.6 per 100,000 in 2006 to 230.7 in 2007 in Franklin County\*\*
- Obesity increased from 28.7% in 2007 to 32.9% in 2008 while overweight decreased from 34.5% to 33.6%.\*\*\*
- 6.6% reported being told by a doctor that they had diabetes in 2007 while 9.2% reported the same in 2008.\*\*\*
- 79.4% reported having exercised in the last month in 2007 while 81.5% reported the same in 2008.\*\*\*

|           | 2007 | 2008 |
|-----------|------|------|
| Chlamydia | 149  | 127  |
| Gonorrhea | 101  | 42   |
| Syphilis  | 4    | 3    |
| HIV       | 3    | 14   |

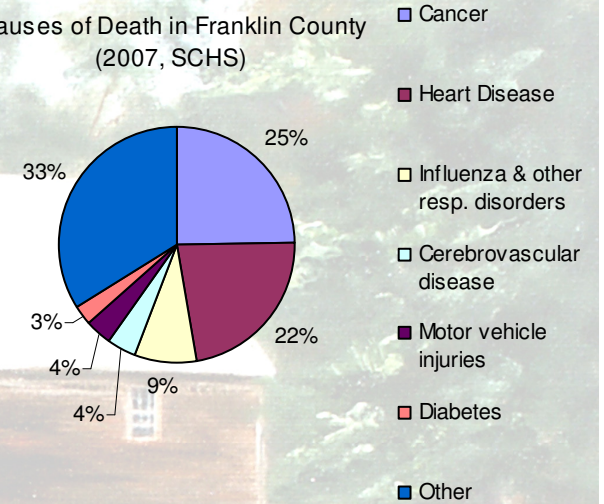
Source: NCDHHS Comm. Disease

## STDs/HIV

- It is important to note that the number of HIV cases increased significantly in 2008 due to changes in state reporting of previously diagnosed cases. These are not necessarily new cases.

The following chart shows the leading causes of death in the county in 2007. The main difference from 2006 is that cancer now leads heart disease as the leading cause of death.

Causes of Death in Franklin County (2007, SCHS)



# Emerging Issues

- H1N1 flu and seasonal flu have received much attention in Franklin County in 2009. In an effort to educate the public and prevent the spread of flu, informative posters and handouts were distributed around Franklin County through schools, libraries, newspapers, local radio and television stations, private providers, daycares, nursing homes, county agencies, and other healthcare providers. In addition, multiple flu clinics have been held at the health department that offered the H1N1 vaccine to the CDC's target priority groups.
- New legislation was passed in North Carolina requiring all bars and restaurants to go smoke-free on January 2, 2010. A grant was procured to purchase coasters for local restaurants and bars that advertise the new law and phone number and website resources for people who want to quit smoking

# Changes in Franklin County

- The economy of Franklin County, like the state of North Carolina and the United States as a whole, continues to struggle, leading to an increase in the number of unemployed citizens in 2009. Unemployment in Franklin County jumped from 6.8% in August 2008 to 9.9% one year later in August 2009. Food stamp participation also increased in the county from 6,719 in September 2008 to 8,063 in September 2009. (source: NC Budget and Tax Center)
- Per the office of Economic Development, Franklin County has one of the fastest growing populations in NC. Business and industry is increasing with a number of new businesses. For example, Palziv, a foam manufacturer planning to come to Franklin County, will create 72 jobs. Additionally, Murphy Oil Co. is constructing a new service station and Ribeyes, a new steakhouse, is set to open.

# Partnerships and Initiatives

Here are some examples of partnerships taking place in Franklin County:

- The Franklin County Health Department is a partner collaborating with the **Franklin County Health Care Collaborative** to identify resources and provide medical care for the uninsured and underinsured population in Franklin County. This group also includes representatives from Volunteers in Medicine, Franklin Regional Medical Center, Franklin County Department of Social Services, 5 County Mental Health, Franklin Community Health Services, NC Office of Rural Health, Care Share, Rural Health Group, Inc., and Shepherd's Way.
- The **Louisburg Senior Center, Volunteers in Medicine, FCHD, and FC Cooperative Extension** continue to offer the Diabetes Expo and a Heart Health event yearly
- The **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** continues to meet in order to improve the health of the students who attend Franklin County Schools
- The health department is working with the **Louisburg Boys and Girls Club** to construct a walking trail to increase physical activity and provide educational sessions

# Become Involved

This document will be disseminated to libraries, Chambers of Commerce, Board of Health, County Commissioners, FRMC, schools, and other community venues. To find out how you can become involved in the initiatives you have read about here, for more information about this report, or to obtain a copy of the 2007 CHA, contact FCHD at the address below or visit [www.franklincohealth.org](http://www.franklincohealth.org).