

2022 Forsyth County, NC State of the County Health (SOTCH) Report



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Introduction

The 2022 Forsyth County State of the County Health (SOTCH) Report provides an overview of changes in Forsyth County's population health since the 2021 Forsyth County Community Health Assessment (CHA) Report. It provides an update on each Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) that was implemented based on the 2021 CHA Report. The first CHIP aims to reduce Forsyth County's infant mortality and the second aims to reduce its infant mortality disparity ratio. The 2021 SOTCH also informs the Forsyth community about major changes in mortality and morbidity, and highlights emerging issues and new community health initiatives.

CHIP I: Reduce Infant Mortality

Aim: To improve overall preconception health in Forsyth County in the next 5 years.

Long term Goal: In the next 5 years, Forsyth County aims to reduce its infant mortality rate to 6.0.

Objective: Pilot a preconception health workshop (with faith-based community groups) between September 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023.

Performance Measures:

- Number of staff members who will complete the NC Community Health Worker Initiative and Core Competency Training [*Goal: 1 staff member by June 30, 2023*]
2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero staff trained as yet, but key staff vacancy was filled.
- Number of partner agencies who collaborate with and refer to the Preconception Health project [*Goal: 5 agencies by June 30, 2023*]

2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero agency at this time. However, several agencies have expressed an interest in a potential partnership.

- Number of workshop sessions on preconception health topics offered to the community [Goal: 10 sessions by June 30, 2023]

2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero at this time. The first session has been scheduled for April 2023.

- Number of individuals participating in one workshop session [Goal: 25 participants by June 30, 2023]

2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero at this time. The first session has been scheduled for April 2023.

- Percent of participants who attend all workshop sessions in a series [Goal: 52% of participants]

2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero at this time. The first session has been scheduled for April 2023.

- Percent of participants who receive multivitamins with folic acid [Goal: 100% of participants]

2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero at this time. The first session has been scheduled for April 2023.

CHIP II: Reduce Infant Mortality Disparity Ratio

Aim: To improve overall preconception health in Forsyth County Black, Non-Hispanic/Latino communities.

Long-term Goal (5 years): In the next 5 years, Forsyth County aims to reduce its infant mortality disparity ratio to 2.0.

Objective: Pilot a preconception workshop (with community influencers and mothers) during this fiscal year (2022/2023)

Performance Measures:

- Number of staff members who complete the NC Community Health Worker Initiative and Core Competency Training [*Goal: 1 staff member by June 30, 2023*]

2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero staff trained as yet, but key staff vacancy was filled.

- Number of partner agencies who collaborate with and refer to the Preconception Health project [*Goal: 5 agencies by June 30, 2023*]

2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero agency at this time. However, several agencies have expressed an interest in a potential partnership.

- Number of workshop sessions on preconception health topics offered to the community [*Goal: 10 sessions by June 30, 2023*]

2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero at this time. The first session has been scheduled for April 2023.

- Number of participants from zip codes 27101, 27103, 27105, 27106, 27107, and 27127 who attend at least one workshop session [*Goal: 25 participants by June 30, 2023*]

2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero at this time. The first session has been scheduled for April 2023.

- Percent of participants who attend all workshop sessions in a series [*Goal: 52% of participants*]

2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero at this time. The first session has been scheduled for April 2023.

- Percent of participants who receive multivitamins with folic acid [*Goal: 100% of participants*]

2022/2023 Accomplishment: Zero at this time. The first session has been scheduled for April 2023.

Changes in the Infant Mortality Rate and the Infant Mortality Disparity Ratio

Infant Mortality. Table 1 shows that Forsyth County's infant mortality rate exceeded the state's infant mortality rate each year from 2017 to 2021. From 2017 to 2021, Forsyth County's infant mortality rate has ranged from a high of 9.8 (2017, 2019) to a low of 7.2 (2020) (Table 1). In 2021, Forsyth County's infant mortality rate was 8.1 in comparison to the state's which was 6.8 (Table 1). Forsyth County 5-year rolling average infant mortality rate based

Table 1

Infant Mortality Rate, Forsyth County and North Carolina, 2017 to 2021

Jurisdiction	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Forsyth	8.1	7.2	9.8	8.3	9.8
North Carolina	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.8	7.1

Source: NC DHHS, Department of Public Health, State Center for Health Statistics

on race/ethnicity was highest among Black, Non-Hispanic/Latino populations (Table 2). Forsyth County's 5-year rolling average infant mortality rate for Black, Non-Hispanic/Latino (15.8), Hispanic/Latino (5.9), and White, Non-Hispanic/Latino populations (5.4) were each higher than the state's infant mortality rate for the corresponding population (Table 2).

Table 2

5-Year Rolling Average Infant Mortality Rate based on Race/Ethnicity for Forsyth County, NC, 2017-2021

Jurisdiction	Overall	Black, Non-H/L	Hispanic/Latino	White, Non-H/L
Forsyth County	8.7	15.8	5.9	5.4
North Carolina	6.9	12.6	5.4	4.8

Source: NC DHHS, Department of Public Health, State Center for Health Statistics

Infant Mortality Disparity Ratio. Forsyth County's 5-year rolling average infant mortality disparity ratio increased from 2.2 (2013-2017) to 2.9 (2017-2021) (Table 3). Table 3 shows that Forsyth County's 5-year rolling average infant mortality disparity ratio during 2016-2020 and 2017-2021 was higher than the state's in each period.

Table 3

5-Year Rolling Average Infant Mortality Disparity Ratio, Forsyth County and North Carolina, 2013-2017 to 2017-2021

Jurisdiction	2017-2021	2016-2020	2015-2019	2014-2018	2013-2017
Forsyth	2.9	2.8	2.4	2.1	2.2
North Carolina	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.4

Source: NC DHHS, Department of Public Health, State Center for Health Statistics

Trends in Other Major Mortality and Morbidity Factors

Mortality. Deaths due to cancers and heart diseases were the top two major causes of death in Forsyth County during the 5-year rolling average period, 2016-2020 (Table 4). Table 4 shows that Forsyth County's overall death rate (801.6) was higher than the state's (793.7). While

Table 4

5-year Rolling Average Race/Ethnicity-Specific and Sex-Specific Age-adjusted Leading Causes of Death Rates, Forsyth County and North Carolina, 2016-2020

Cause of Death	Forsyth	North Carolina
Overall	801.6	793.7
Cancer: All sites	156.3	154.6
Heart Diseases	147.2	156.1
Unintentional Injuries	50.5	43.2
Cerebrovascular Diseases	43.6	42.7
Chronic Lower Resp. Diseases	42.6	42.5

Forsyth County Department of Public Health, Epidemiology & Surveillance, Epidemiology & Surveillance Unit.

Source: NC DHHS, Department of Public Health, State Center for Health Statistics

Forsyth County's 5-year rolling average death rate for heart diseases (147.2) was lower than the state's (156.1), its 5-year rolling average death rate due to cancers (156.3), unintentional injuries (50.5), cerebrovascular diseases (43.6), and chronic lower respiratory diseases (42.6) exceeded the state's for the same period (Table 4).

Chronic Disease Health Disparity. In Forsyth County, Black, Non-Hispanic/Latino populations disproportionately experienced deaths due to cancers and heart diseases (Table 5). For example, for the 5-year rolling average periods 2012-2016 to 2016-2020, Black, Non-Hispanic populations experienced higher cancer and heart disease death rates than White, Non-Hispanic/Latino populations for all 5 periods (Table 5). The differences in their 5-year rolling average death rates ranged from a low of 28.2 (2013-2017, cancers) to a high of 53.5 (2012-2016, heart diseases) (Table 5).

Table 5

Health Disparity Based on the 5-Year Rolling Average Race/Ethnicity-Specific and Sex-Specific Age-Adjusted Top Two Leading Causes of Death, Forsyth County, NC, 2012-2016 to 2016-2020

5-Year Rolling Average Years	Cancer (all sites)		Heart Diseases	
	WNHL*	BNHL*	WNHL	BNHL
2016-2020	149.5	191.9	140.4	177.2
2015-2019	151.9	193.1	139.7	181.1
2014-2018	157.6	188.8	138.1	181.8
2013-2017	162.3	190.5	137.7	188.9
2012-2016	165.4	196.7	134.8	188.3

Source: NC DHHS, Department of Public Health, State Center for Health Statistics

*WNHL: White, Non-Hispanic/Latino, BNHL: Black, Non-Hispanic/Latino

Morbidity

Cancer. Forsyth County's number of new cancer cases is projected to increase from 2,295 in 2021 to 2,324 in 2022 (Table 6). Female breast cancer is projected to have the largest

Table 6

Projected Number of New Cancer Cases for Forsyth County, NC, 2018-2022

Year	Total	Colon/Rectum	Female Breast	Lung/Bronchus	Prostate
2022	2324	169	429	325	280
2021	2,295	171	419	327	273
2020	2,254	169	407	327	263
2019	2,207	168	397	325	255
2018	2,161	167	386	319	259

Forsyth County Department of Public Health, Epidemiology & Surveillance Unit, February 5, 2023

Source: NC SCHS, North Carolina Central Cancer Registry, 2022

increase in cases from 419 in 2021 to 429 in 2022. Forsyth County's colon/rectum cancer cases

is projected to decrease from 171 in 2021 to 169 in 2022 (Table 6).

Emerging Issues

Emergency department care of patient overdose of two or more drugs of interest continues to be an area of concern for the Forsyth Community. In 2022, 237 visits were made to the ED for polysubstance overdose. The majority of people who receive polysubstance overdose care were between ages 25 and 44 (Table 7).

Table 7

2022 Emergency Dept. Visits due to Polysubstance Overdose (Overdose on 2+ Drugs of Interest) for Forsyth County, NC Residents

Age Group	0-1 yr	2-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	15-18 yrs	19-24 yrs	25-44 yrs	45-64 yrs	65+ yrs
% of Visits	1.7%	1.7%	0.4%	2.5%	9.7%	11.1%	44.7%	24.1%	0.7%

Forsyth County Department of Public Health, Epidemiology & Surveillance Unit, February 21, 2023

Source: North Carolina Disease Event Tracking and Epidemiologic Collection Tool (NC DETECT)

New Initiatives

Cobblestone Farmers Market. Forsyth County’s Women, Infant and Children’s (WIC) Program has partnered with Cobblestone Farmers’ Market for it to have a fresh food market twice per month during Summer 2023 at the Department of Public Health. Having the farmers on site decreases some of the barriers that some WIC participants experience when seeking to access fresh fruits and vegetables. A significant number of WIC participants live in the zip code where the Health Department is located. Each eligible WIC participants receive a one-time amount of \$30.00 to shop at a qualified Farmer’s Market in NC. No extra funding is necessary and no additional staff is needed for this initiative.

Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center. Forsyth County WIC program is partnering with Novant Forsyth Medical Center maternal unit. A signed authorization allows a WIC Team (one nutritionist and one Dr.’s Office Assistant) to complete certifications for new babies and post-partum women while still at the hospital. In addition to the certifications, WIC will be able

to provide electric breast pumps for moms who have premature babies that are ing in the NICU unit.

Objectives. Reduce stress among new mothers by eliminating the burden of them having to come into the WIC clinic for services when they have just delivered and by being able to provide electric breast pumps for High-Risk premature babies. WIC needs additional staff to staff in order to fulfill this initiative.

Novant Health Waughtown Pediatrics and OBGYN. Forsyth County WIC is collaborating with Novant Health Waughtown Pediatrics and OBGYN clinic to have WIC team on site by Fall 2023. This clinic is located in an area that would be very beneficial for current and future WIC recipients. Currently WIC staffing limitations, and accommodations on site have influenced the delay to September 2023.

Head Start of Forsyth County. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Head Start of Forsyth County and WIC is forthcoming in the 2023/2024 fiscal year. The MOU will outline the collaboration of services/referrals between Head Start and WIC. Head Start provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and families in Forsyth County. All Head Start eligible participants are income eligible for WIC services. Both programs offer nutrition education and perform weights, heights and hemoglobin testing. With the two agencies working together the goal is to facilitate these services by sharing information and streamlining other requirements such as nutrition education. No additional funding is needed for this initiative, other than WIC funding for normal operations.

Expansion of the current Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Program at Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. WIC staff are able to provide Post-partum

certifications and add newborn babies at the hospital. In addition, WIC is able to provide electric breast pump to moms whose babies are in the NICU unit. As of September 2022, WIC has certified more than 355 women and babies and have issued more than 25 electric breast pumps. This collaboration has helped to reduce stress among new mothers by eliminating the burden of their coming to the Department of Public Health.

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