

State of the County Report

Transylvania County

The purpose of the State of the County's Health Report is to share current information on the health status of the county. It also serves as a yearly update of health concerns and the actions taken to address them.



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Morbidity Data

The data below indicates that diseases of the heart continue to be the leading cause of death for the county and the state followed by cancer, and cerebrovascular disease. The most common in-patient hospitalization utilization was cardiovascular and circulatory disease, particularly heart disease, followed by musculoskeletal system disease.

Age Group	N.C. Leading Cause of Death	NC Rank	Transylvania County Leading Cause of Death	TC Rank	TC # of Deaths	TC % of Deaths	NC Overall Rate	TC Overall Rate
Total All Ages	Diseases of the Heart	(1)	Diseases of the Heart	(1)	68	22.0	217.9	172.5
	Cancer	(2)	Cancer	(2)	61	19.7	196.4	162.6
	Cerebrovascular Disease	(3)	Cerebrovascular Disease	(3)	35	11.3	61.1	56.8
	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	(4)	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	(4)	20	6.5	47.1	42.2
	Diabetes Mellitus	(5)	All Other Unintentional Injuries	(5)	14	4.5	27.1	22.1
	Other Unintentional Injuries	(6)	Alzheimer's Disease	(6)	11	3.6	27.0	36.1
	Alzheimer's Disease	(7)	Influenza & Pneumonia	(7)	9	2.9	27.7	37.2
	Pneumonia and influenza	(8)	Intentional Self Harm/ Motor Vehicles	(8)	6	1.9	22.5	14.2
	Motor Vehicles Injuries	(9)					19.1	22.9
	Nephritis, nephritic syndromes, nephrosis	(10)	Chronic Liver Disease & Cirrhosis/ Diabetes	(10)	5	1.6	18.2	9.6
All Other Causes					69	22.5		

** Highlighted numbers indicates that Transylvania County is higher than the state average.

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Mortality Data

The chart below shows a comparison of the leading causes of death in Transylvania County for the last three years. The three leading causes of death have remained consistent over the time period.

	2008	2007	2006
Leading Causes of Death by Rank	Disease of the Heart	Disease of the Heart	Diseases of the Heart
	Cancer	Cancer	Cancer
	Cerebrovascular Disease	Other Ischemic Heart Disease	Cerebrovascular Disease
	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	Cerebrovascular Disease	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease
	All Other Unintentional Injuries	Cancer of the Trachea, Bronchus and Lung	Alzheimer's Disease
	Alzheimer's Disease	Acute myocardial Infarction	Other Unintentional Injuries
	Influenza and Pneumonia	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	Diabetes Mellitus
	Intentional Self Harm/Motor Vehicles	Alzheimer's Disease	Pneumonia & Influenza
	Chronic Liver Disease & Cirrhosis/Diabetes	All Other Unintentional Injuries	Motor Vehicle Injuries
		Female Breast	Septicemia/Nephritis, nephritic syndrome & nephrosis

Infant Mortality

The Child Fatality Prevention Team and the Community Child Protection Team continue to review abuse, neglect cases and the Child Fatality Prevention Team reviews child deaths in the county. The teams are very pro-active and made up of multi-agency representation. The Department of Social Services promoted an informational session for hospital staff, particularly Emergency Department staff, at the Transylvania Regional Hospital during 2008. The event is scheduled to occur again in the spring of 2009.

2007 Infant Mortality Report									
	White Infant Deaths	Minority Infant Deaths	Total Infant Deaths	White Birth	Minority Births	Total Births	White Rate	Minority Rate	Total Rate
Transylvania County	3	0	3	277	20	297	10.8	0.0	10.1
North Carolina	594	513	1,107	94,073	36,813	130,886	6.3	13.9	8.5

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Hospitalization Data

The chart below show the leading causes of hospitalization in the county. Additional information is included to show discharge rates, average days of stay and charges. The leading cause of hospitalization was infectious and parasitic disease.

Inpatient Hospital Utilization & Charges By Principal Diagnosis 2006							
Transylvania County							
Diagnostic Category by Rank	Total Cases	Discharge Rate per 1,000	Average Days Stay	Days Stay Rate per 1,000 Population	Total Charges	Average Charges Per Day	Average Charges Per Case
Infectious & Parasitic Disease	112	3.7 (3.4)	5.5	20.2	\$1,572,387	\$2,565	\$14,039
Malignant Neoplasm							
Colon, Rectum, Anus	13	0.4	6.8	2.9	\$407,949	\$4,584 (\$3,839)	\$31,381
Female Breast	13	0.4 (0.2)	1.5	0.7	\$134,345	\$6,717 (\$5,416)	\$10,334

Prostate	8	0.3	2.1	0.6	\$123,245	\$7,250	\$6,426	\$15,406
Cardiovascular & Circulatory Disease	653	21.5 (18.6)	4.5	96.4 90.8	\$16,777,067	\$5,732 \$5,613		\$25,692
Heart Disease	469	15.4 12.7	4.3	66.7 60.2	\$13,619,017	\$6,725 \$4,059		\$29,038
Cerebrovascular Disease	110	3.6 3.1	4.9	17.9 16.3	\$1,357,745	\$2,500		\$12,343
Chronic Liver Disease/Cirrhosis	9	0.3	4.7	1.4	\$240,772	\$5,733 \$3,722		\$26,752
Musculoskeletal System Diseases	277	9.1 6.0	4.1 4.0	37.0 24.1	\$6,757,238	\$6,017		\$24,394

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Other Health Data

In the chart below is information on mothers who smoked during pregnancy. The FISH Program will end December 2008. Plans are under way to train doctor's office staff on the 5A Cessation Program. Other strategies including becoming a partner in the Incentive Project with DHHS are under way.

Percentage of Resident Live Births Where Mother Smoked During Pregnancy			
	Number and % Smoking		
	1992-1996	1997-200	2002-2006
Transylvania County	26.0	21.0	20.0
North Carolina	17.0	14.4	12.4

** Highlighted numbers indicates that Transylvania County is higher than the state average.

Additional Information

The information in the chart below is information on other programs/care for children. Note that Transylvania County is better than the state average in several areas.

	Transylvania County	North Carolina
Child Health Insurance		
No Insurance	10.3%	11.3%
Public Health Insurance receiving preventive care	45.5%	38.0%
Preventive Care: Medicaid enrolled Children receiving preventive care (ages 0-18)	79.3%	73.5%
Early Intervention: Children age 0-3 enrolled in early intervention services to reduce effects of developmental delay, emotional disturbance and/or chronic disease	9.1%	4.2%
Dental Health: Medicaid –eligible children who use dental services		
Ages 1-5	22.5%	23.8%
Ages 6-14	48.0%	47.7%
Ages 15-20	29.3%	32.6%
Teen Pregnancies: ages 15-17 (2005)	42.3%	35.6%
Overweight Children : ages 2-20	16.5%	17.4%
Low Birth Weight Infants (2005)	8.8%	9.2%
Deaths Due to Child Abuse	1	34

Information courtesy of Action for Children www.ncchild.org ; Highlighted numbers indicates Transylvania County is better than North Carolina average.

The Transylvania County Department of Public Health completed the Community Assessment in 2005. Currently, plans are underway for the 2009 Community Health Assessment. Staff continues to work toward meeting accreditation standards. The state site visit team will be here April 21-23, 2009.

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Review of Changes Guiding Selections

Priorities were selected using the most recent data available and from information gathered during the Community Health Assessment process. Selected priorities were dental care, mental health, obesity and public trust/accountability.

Community Health Priorities

The 2005 Community Health Assessment initiated community wide discussions about health priorities in our community. The principal platforms for those discussions centered around a strategic planning process with the Transylvania County Board of Health and establishment of priorities by the Land of Waterfalls Partnership for Health (Healthy Carolinians Task Force).

The priorities established for both groups are listed below.

Board of Health	Partnership for Health
Obesity	Substance Abuse
Child health (additional school nurses)	Senior Care
Access to Dental Care	Access to Care
Mental Health	Mental Health
Accountability (Accreditation)	

Since subsequent State of the County's Health Reports (annual updates in 2006 and 2007) did not demonstrate substantial differences with health outcomes, the priorities have remained the same for both groups. It is interesting to note that access to care and mental health were common issues due to extraordinary challenges in those realms.

The following updates are provided for each:

Obesity

The Transylvania County Department of Public Health initiated a collaborative project with Transylvania County Schools. Initial steps were creation of a BMI database for elementary school populations and promotion of certain opportunities for school staff including "Energizers" training for elementary school teachers. An initial purchase of 250 pedometers have been distributed to 5th grade classes for utilization to track physical activity and to promote enhanced opportunities for exercise in the school setting and home environment. A recent "Turkey Trot" event was held at the Transylvania County Recreation Center and was promoted by Transylvania Regional Hospital, Boys & Girls Club and the Transylvania County Department of Public Health. Multiple media pieces and articles about nutrition and challenges associated with overweight status have been disseminated in the media. The department is currently pursuing a proposal with Cooperative Extension to establish a shared position to teach nutrition and physical activity curriculum within the schools.

Child Health (School nurse ratio)

Strong support by the Transylvania County Schools/Board of Education and the Transylvania County Board of Health resulted in acquisition of an additional school nurse in FY 09. We now have one full time school nurse for the exceptional children population (500) and two full time school nurses for the general student population (3,300). The boards of commissioners have been advised that we need to achieve a ratio of one nurse to every 750 students consistent with recommendations from the NC Division of Public Health and the NC Department of Public Instruction.

Access to Dental Care

The department continues to support a regular meeting of the Transylvania Dental Society and has their unanimous support to establish a dental clinic. The target service population would be Medicaid, Health Choice and uninsured adults. Currently, the office has a request submitted to the NC Office of Rural Health to examine if we are eligible to be designated a Dental Professional Shortage Area (DPSA). The incoming board of commissioners will re-visit our request to afford space within the Community Services Building to establish the clinic.

Mental Health

The department is currently in its third year of administering grant funding (\$75,000) from the Office of Rural Health and Community Care to promote mental health services for the uninsured and underinsured. We also encourage community dialogue and input by holding a "Mental Health Services Stakeholders Meeting" every other month with representation from Transylvania County Schools, Social Services, Public Health, private sector providers, county administration, Transylvania Regional Hospital, Transylvania County Volunteers in Medicine, NAMI, and Transylvania Advocates for Mental Health and many more. Mr. Steve Smith (Department of Public Health Director) and Mr. Artie Wilson (County Manager) also represent Transylvania County on the regional local management entity board (Western Highlands Area Authority).

Although many challenges still exist, Transylvania County continues to fare better than most rural counties with the availability of mental health services. Grant funding and the dedication of Maintenance of Effort dollars continue to provide stabilization for the array of services available. A recent significant development has been the establishment of mobile crisis services for our jurisdiction. It is hoped that this will decrease the numbers of individuals presenting at the emergency department and free clinic with serious mental health needs.

Accountability (Accreditation)

The management team of the department began preparations for accreditation almost six months ago. Recently, the director participated in a site visit to another county. Information has been shared with the local board of health and it is expected that the county will demonstrate their effectiveness and commitment to the ten essential services of public health.

Access to Care

The Certificate of Need for a kidney dialysis unit was submitted January 2008 and approved. The Center is slated to open July 2009. The Land of Waterfalls Partnership for Health, The Department of Public Health, and Transylvania Regional Hospital led the campaign for the center to be located in the county. Patients were are often gone for the entire day to receive treatment due to distance, mountainous terrain and travel over 2-4 lane road which increase travel time and other factors.

The Department of Public Health is expanding the size of the department and will move clinic operations to the 3rd floor of the Community Services Building in late 2008. This will facilitate increased services and patient care to the citizens of the county.

Other Changes in the Community Affecting Health Concerns

With the ongoing economic concerns, local resources are being affected. The Volunteers in Medicine (VIM) free clinic continues to grow with additional clients. Additional hours of operation have been added. All government and community agencies in the county are reporting increased requests for basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter and transportation.

Transylvania County was honored to be chosen as one of four pilot counties to administer the FluMist vaccine to all school age children free of charge. In cooperation with the Transylvania County School system the 1st dose was administered in November 2008. Second doses and a time for make-up will be scheduled as soon as possible.

The Environmental Health Section of the Department of Public Health has successfully adopted the 15 ANCAC 02C Section .0300 *Permitting and Inspection of Private Drinking Water Wells* as well as 15ANCAC 18A .3800, *Private Drinking Water Well Sampling Rules* effective July 1, 2008.

New and Emerging Issues

As of October 8, 2008, Transylvania Community Hospital became Transylvania Regional Hospital. The hospital serves individuals from surrounding counties as well as Transylvania County residents. Transylvania Regional Hospital became a tobacco free facility in 2007. The Department of Public Health will present a proposal to the Board of Health at the December 2008 meeting to initiate a 50' tobacco free radius around the Community Services Building.

The Land of Waterfalls Partnership for Health and the Department of Public Health will hold their annual meeting in November 2008. The Community Forum will be held in early spring 2009 to educate the community on health care concerns, advances and needs in the county. Information on the Community Health Assessment will be shared at the annual meeting. Recruitment for membership in the Land of Waterfalls Partnership for Health will occur at both the annual meeting and the Community Forum. At the spring 2009 Community Forum the participants will be informed of progress of the 2009 Community Health Assessment.

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Plans are currently underway to train all hospital owned medical practices, dental offices and Volunteers in Medicine staff in the 5A model of tobacco cessation. This is collaboration between the Department of Public Health, Transylvania Regional Hospital, Volunteers in Medicine and the Tobacco Control Branch of DHHS.

Involvement of Community Members

Citizen's input and involvement is welcome as attempts are made to meet the public health needs of Transylvania County. The Board of Health allows public participation at each meeting. Input from all segments of the community is actively solicited to ensure the health care needs of the county are addressed.

Dissemination of the SOTCH Report

This SOTCH report will be disseminated through the following outlets in accordance with accreditation activities 1.2 and 1.3. The members of the Transylvania County Board of Health will receive a copy at the December meeting. The report will be posted on the Transylvania County website (www.transylvaniacounty.org) by December 15, 2008 and the Transylvania County Department of Public Health website (presently under construction) by January 2009. The report will be available at the Community Forum sponsored by the Land of Waterfalls Partnership for Health meeting in the spring of 2009. Copies will be made available at the Transylvania County Public Library beginning December 1, 2008. As other dissemination possibilities arise, the report will be made available.

What Does All This Mean

A tremendous amount of work has gone in to making Transylvania County a better and healthier place to live. Partnerships with local agencies have formed and new ones are being encouraged to meet needs of the county. Priorities have been set, action plans developed and work is being done, however, the work and the partnerships must continue. The Department of Public Health and its partners will continue to monitor, track and be responsive to the needs of the citizens of the county.

Appendices

Chart 1

2002-2006 NC Resident Race and Sex-Specific Age-Adjusted Death Rates
Standard = Year 2000 U.S. Population; Rates per 100,000 Population
County Data Book

Chart 2

Unadjusted Death Rates per 100,000 Population 2006 and 2002-2006
County Data Book

Chart 3

2007 North Carolina Infant Mortality Report, Table 1
North Carolina 2007 Final Infant Death Rates (per 100,000 live births)
County Data Book

Chart 4

Inpatient Hospital Utilization and Charges by Principal Diagnosis and County of Residence, North Carolina, 2006
Excluding Newborns and Discharges from out of state hospitals.
County Data Book

Chart 5

North Carolina Statewide and County Trends in Key Health Indicators: Transylvania County
County Data Book

Chart 6

2007 Child Health Report: Transylvania County Card
Action for Children