

State Of The County Health Report 2014



Alamance County Demographics At A Glance

Below you will find the demographics for Alamance County and the state of North Carolina according to the US Census¹, The Annie E. Casey Foundation-Kids Count Data Center², Alamance County Department of Social Services³ and the Employment Security Commission of North Carolina⁴. Alamance County consists of nine municipalities. Burlington is the most populated city in the county and Graham is the County Seat and second most populated city.

Demographics	Alamance County	North Carolina
Population (2013 est.) ¹	154,378	9,848,060
White ¹	75.8%	71.7%
African American ¹	19.3%	22.0%
Hispanic Latino ¹	11.8%	8.9%
Asian ¹	1.5%	2.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native ¹	1.4%	1.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander ¹	0.1%	0.1%
Median Household Income (2009-2013) ¹	\$43,043	\$46,334
Per Capita Income (2009-2013) ¹	\$23,166	\$25,284
Persons Below Poverty Level (2009-2013) ¹	18.3%	17.5%
Persons without Health Insurance (2009-2013) ¹	16.6%	16.2%
Children Living in Poverty (under 18yrs old) (2012) ²	29.2%	25.8%
Households that Received Food Stamps ³ (September 2013)	11,919	773,720
Unemployed (November 2014) ⁴	5.2%	5.3%
Student Eligible for Free & Reduced School Lunch (2011-2012) ²	55.6%	56.0%

This SOTCH Report will be disseminated directly to the Alamance County Board of Health, Alamance County Board of Commissioners, Healthy Alamance Board of Directors, Alamance County United Way, Alamance County Community Council Members, Alamance County Libraries, Alamance-Burlington Schools, and Alamance Regional Medical Center. The information compiled in this report will be posted on the Alamance County website, www.alamance-nc.com, and the Healthy Alamance website, www.healthyalamance.com. A press release will be issued to all local media summarizing the contents of this report. To obtain more information about this SOTCH please contact Alamance County Health Department (336) 227-0101. To become more involved with the local initiatives, please contact Healthy Alamance (336) 513-5590. Your time in reading this report is appreciated.

STATE OF THE COUNTY HEALTH REPORT

PRIORITY AREA PROGRESS

In 2011, Alamance County conducted a community-wide assessment looking at the health and social status of residents in the community. The assessment identified the top health concerns as indicated by the community. The priorities identified in the 2011 Community Assessment were Obesity, Access to Care, Substance Abuse, and Mental Health. The following sections update the progress made in those four priority areas in the last year.

Access to Healthcare

Changes in Data/Trends:

The Alamance County community overwhelmingly believed that access to healthcare was a paramount health issue in 2011. According to the 2011 Community Assessment, more than 75% of those polled believed that access to health care was very important to the overall health of people. According to the most recent Census data, 16.6% of those living in Alamance County are without insurance compared to 16.2% at the state level. At the time of the 2011 Community Assessment, roughly 18% of Alamance County residents were uninsured. The number of physicians in the community has increased slightly from 262 physicians in 2011 to 277 in 2012 according to the UNC Sheps Center NC Health Professions Data System (18.1 physicians per 10,000 compared to 22.3 physicians per 10,000 for the state). Alamance County's activity efforts in this priority area have been focused on increasing access to public transportation, primarily.



Progress Made:

Transportation is clearly still an important issue to Alamance County residents as those polled considered the issue a top concern for the county, ranking it fourth in issues of importance (Elon Poll, 2014). After discussing the transit system since the mid-2000s, the Burlington City Council unanimously voted in June 2014 to develop a public bus transit system. The city plans to secure six buses which will travel throughout the city and possibly extend to the towns of Elon, Gibsonville, Mebane and Graham. In December 2014, the Burlington City Council tabled the decision to fund the transit system through \$5 vehicle tax until March 2015.

Activity around the Affordable Care Act has recently become more prominent as the 2014-2015 enrollment period deadline nears. The first enrollment period of the Affordable Care Act proved successful for Alamance County. At the time of the first enrollment period, it was estimated that approximately 25,000 non-elderly individuals were uninsured in Alamance County (NC Institute of Medicine, 2013). Of that 25,000, roughly 10,000 were believed to be eligible for Medicaid or the federal marketplace. Through a community effort of awareness, outreach and education, and in partnership with local Legal Aid federal navigators and certified assistance counselors located at area Federally Qualified Health Centers, approximately 5,000 individuals enrolled in either Medicaid or the marketplace during the first enrollment period (Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2014). This indicates that approximately 50% of those eligible successfully enrolled. As of January 16, 2015 over 6,000 individuals had already enrolled or re-enrolled in the federal marketplace (Enroll America, 2015).



[Burlington City Council Public Comment](#)

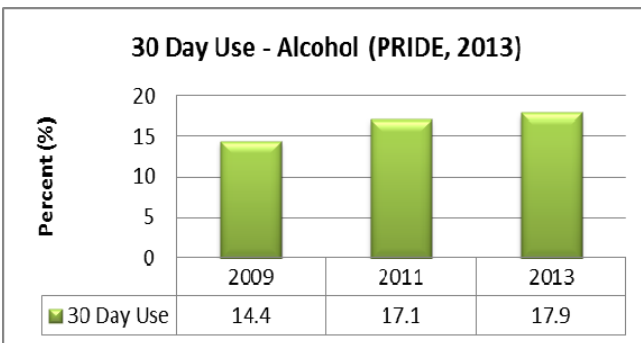
STATE OF THE COUNTY HEALTH REPORT

PRIORITY AREA PROGRESS

Substance Abuse

Changes in Data/Trends:

Much of the substance abuse prevention and intervention work as been centered on youth in Alamance County. Tobacco use among minors continues to be a concerning health issue for Alamance County. At the time of the 2011 Community Assessment, approximately 3.5% of 6th graders surveyed stated that had used tobacco products in the past 30 days (PRIDE survey, 2009). Additionally, 28.8% of 12th graders stated that they had used tobacco in the previous days (PRIDE survey, 2009). According to the most recent PRIDE survey conducted in 2013, the percentage of 6th graders who stated they used tobacco in the last 30 days dropped to 0.7% and 12th graders stating use of tobacco in the last 30 days dropped to 24.9% (PRIDE survey, 2013). In the past the NC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) was used to track the smoking rates of adults in Alamance County. The last available county level data from BRFSS was 2011 and county level data is no longer available for more recent years. The Alamance County Health Department is currently tracking smoking rates through the County Health Rankings. The smoking indicator in the County Health Rankings is defined as percent of adults that report smoking greater than or equal to 100 cigarettes and are current smokers. The current smoking rate among Alamance County adults is 24% (County Health Rankings, Alamance Snapshot, 2014). This has essentially stayed the same compared to 23% of adults in 2011 (County Health Rankings, Alamance Snapshot, 2011).



While tobacco use among school-aged individuals appears to be decreasing over time, the use of alcohol among the same population has increased over that same time (see graph). Additionally, current PRIDE data suggest there is a significant increase in 30 day use of alcohol from middle school to high school. From 7th grade to 9th grade, a two-year difference, there is roughly a two-fold increase in the use of alcohol among student survey participants. In 2013, roughly 40% of 12th graders surveyed indicated that they used alcohol in the last 30 days.

Progress Made:

Since the tragic death of an area high school student to accidental prescription drug misuse in 2011, a renewed passion and awareness for reducing the risk of prescription medicine misuse has emerged. After several years of work and through a partnership of Cone Health, Alamance Regional Medical Center, Safe Kids Alamance County, Alamance Citizens for a Drug Free Community and Healthy Alamance, two permanent Medicine Drop Boxes were installed at local police departments in August 2014. Since their installations, the Mebane site alone has collected more than 797 pounds of expired and unused medicine.



Health Department staff, as well as Healthy Alamance and Region V Community Transformation Grant staff, worked throughout 2014 to change smoking policies at local multi-unit housing complexes. Approximately, 40 multi-unit housing complexes were surveyed regarding tobacco-free policies. Six of those surveyed were smoke-free and two expressed interest in implementing tobacco-free policies. Beginning October 1, 2014, those two Burlington multi-unit housing complexes will implement 100% tobacco-free policies. In addition, the local minor league baseball park, home of the Burlington Royals, went 100% tobacco-free for the 2014 season. This policy change will no longer allow tobacco products to be used in the ballpark. Community Transformation Grant funds were used to assist in the purchasing of signs and tip cards for patrons.

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PRIORITY AREA PROGRESS

Mental Health

Changes in Data/Trends:

According to the 2011 Community Health Assessment, about 21% of those polled stated they did not know where they would recommend a friend to go for mental health help. In contrast, according to a 2014 Elon Community Poll, about 10% of respondents stated that they or someone they knew could not or did not know where to get mental health services. According to a 2014 community poll conducted by Elon University, approximately 51% of those polled indicated that a family member or close friend was dealing with a mental health problem (Note: similar indicator was not included in 2011 assessment).

Progress Made:

Cardinal Innovations, the mental health provider in Alamance County, hosted more than 10 Mental Health First Aid trainings to providers in 2014. Mental Health First Aid is a full day course that teaches community members and service providers how to help someone they may find experiencing a mental health problem. On May 28, DHHS Deputy Secretary Dave Richard visited Burlington and met with trainees. At that meeting, he stated that the training was key in helping the average person understand how to respond to those in mental health crisis. Over 50 community members and service providers were trained in Mental Health First Aid in 2014.



Mental Health First Aid - May 28, 2014



In addition to committing to mental health resources for adults, Alamance County has dedicated resources to helping children and families get healthy starts from the beginning. Project LAUNCH is the prevention arm of the early childhood behavioral health activities in Alamance County. In 2014, Project LAUNCH trained 40 service providers in Triple P (Positive Parenting Program). Also, the project continues to support two early childhood mental health teams in two private pediatrician offices in the community. Through that public-private effort, the project has reached 1148 children and families. In August 2014, Project LAUNCH supported the development of an early childhood mental health team in the Alamance County Health Department. Children 0-8 years and their families receiving care or services at the health department now have access to Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) and behavioral health services provided through a co-located family centered navigator and licensed clinical social worker team. The early childhood mental health team at the health department reached 208 families with Triple P in 2014.

Alamance Alliance for Children and Families is the intervention arm of the early childhood mental health activity in the community. Some achievements of the Alliance in the last year have included providing 11 trainings on early brain development and early childhood trauma to more than 220 attendees, training 17 supervisors from 10 child-serving agencies on implementing early childhood mental health core competencies with their staff, and training 10 licensed clinicians on how to complete trauma informed assessments. Outcome data collected by the grant shows that by 18 months of service children showed improved initiative and self-control, and attention and aggression problems decreased significantly by 20 percentage points. Twenty-four month data collected from caregivers indicates less overall distress and less difficult interactions with their children.

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PRIORITY AREA PROGRESS

Obesity

Changes in Data/Trends: At the time of the 2011 Community Assessment, 18.5% of Alamance County children and adolescents were obese according to the North Carolina Nutrition and Physical Activity Surveillance System (NC-NPASS, 2009). Unfortunately, 2009 was the last year county level data was available for all child age groups on NC NPASS. Obesity rates of 2-4 year olds from 2009 and 2012 are still available through the data set. In 2009, 17.8% of young children ages 2-4 years were identified as obese in Alamance County. According to the 2012 NC NPASS, the most current obesity rate for 2-4 years old is 17.5%, indicating no significant change. Adult obesity rates for Alamance County are no longer available through the NC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey; however, data is available from the County Health ranking site. According to the 2014 County Health Rankings, 34% of Alamance County's adult population is obese. This has slightly increased compared to the 2011 rankings in which 31% of adults in the county were obese.

Progress made: With assistance from Community Transformation Grant funding, the cities of Burlington and Graham have begun work on their Comprehensive Land Use plans and are including a section about health. The Alamance County Trail Plan is also being completed with the same funding assistance. The Alamance County Trail Plan is a long-range plan that strives to work with municipalities, citizens, business owners, and landowners to identify and prioritize opportunities to create recreational trails throughout Alamance County. While some parts of Alamance County have ready access to recreation, additional passive recreation options such as trails and greenways can provide numerous benefits while not over-burdening existing staff resources. The Alamance County Board of Commissioners is set to vote on the plan in January 2015. Also, in 2014, Community Transformation grant funding assisted in the enhancement of local farmers' markets and provided promotion with billboards and recipes cards for the 2014 season. In total, six farmers' markets were impacted through the efforts including markets in Mebane, Downtown Burlington, Haw River, North Park, Elon, and Saxapahaw.

In the last year, the Alamance County Health Department received funding through the United Way of Alamance County to revamp the Physical Activity and Recreation Challenge (PARC) Passport program to include social media platforms as a means to market and encourage visits to local parks. The PARC Passport program is designed to draw interest to four parks in the county through a scavenger hunt-like activity. This year's enhancements allowed participants to "check-in" via Four-square and also share their adventure through Facebook. More than 150 individuals participated in the 2014 PARC Passport challenge.



Flowering squash at Hawfields CDC

The Alamance County WIC program teamed up with the local newspaper, Burlington Times-News, to feature healthy eating and active living guest commentaries throughout 2014. These articles featured easy recipes to add flavor but not additional calories to the readers' diets. Articles also encouraged healthy living through physical activity and movement in the community.

The health department assisted Hawfields Childcare Development Center in the implementation of a preschool garden maintained by three and four year-olds attending the center. More than 50 unduplicated children participated in the pilot program that included hands-on planting, tending, harvesting and sampling of produce. In addition, children participated in farm-to-table activities, plant science education, healthy eating and active living activities. Prior to the program, the facility served 5.3 fresh veggies and fruits per month and during the course of the garden program the facility served 5.8 fresh veggies and fruits per month (indicating a 9.4% increase in fresh produce served).

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EMERGING ISSUE

Communicable Disease and Preparedness Planning

Chikungunya is a viral disease that is transmitted to people by mosquitoes. In late 2013, chikungunya was found for the first time in the U.S. on islands in the Caribbean. The most common symptoms of chikungunya are fever and joint pain. North Carolina reported the first travel acquired case of the illness in June 2014.

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) is viral respiratory illness first reported in Saudi Arabia in 2012. On May 2, 2014, the first U.S. imported case of MERS was confirmed in a traveler from Saudi Arabia to the U.S. Most people who have been confirmed to have MERS-CoV infection developed severe acute respiratory illness.

Enterovirus D68 can cause mild to severe respiratory illness. It likely spreads from person to person when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or touches a surface that is then touched by others. The most likely time of year to get infected is in the summer and fall. Cases of EV-D68 were first confirmed in September 2014 in North Carolina.

Ebola is a rare and deadly disease spread primarily through direct contact with body fluids of an infected person. In September 2014, the CDC confirmed the first travel-associated case of Ebola in the US. The 2014 Ebola epidemic is the largest in history. As of January 2015, more than 21,000 individuals have been infected and more than 8400 have died worldwide.

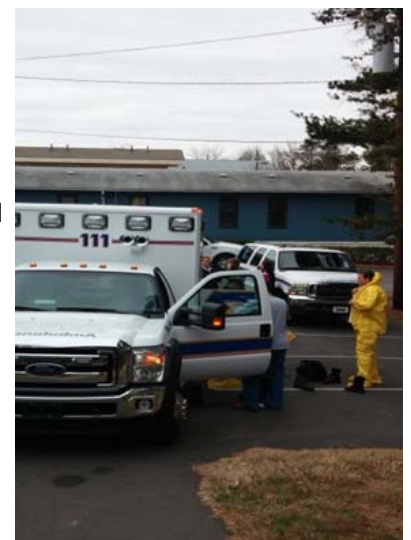
Public health is an ever-changing landscape. More than 100 years ago, the greatest causes of sickness and death among Americans were infectious diseases. As vaccines and better infection controls were introduced throughout the 20th century, chronic diseases moved to the forefront of causes of morbidity and mortality. That being said, infectious diseases and the preparedness procedures and prevention measures to inhibit their spread do still make up a great deal of the work performed by public health.

In 2014 alone, local public health workers added four new words to their vocabulary: Chikungunya, MERS, EV-D68 and Ebola. Each of these new emerging infections created an opportunity to expand the knowledge base of local public health workers and those with whom they work through continuing education, local meetings, statewide partner calls, table top exercises, full scale exercises, webinars, and practice.

Over the last decade, public health preparedness has become increasingly more important and prominent in local public health departments. The role of preparedness programs is to plan and coordinate responses to public health threats in a community. Local public health activities include disease surveillance, public education, response planning, and disease prevention. In Alamance County, preparedness work includes the health department, Alamance County Emergency Medical Services, Alamance County Emergency Management, Alamance County Central Communications, county and municipality law enforcement, Alamance Regional Medical Center, Cone Health System, Alamance-Burlington School System, and county management.

In 2014, local public health providers and partners dedicated more than 2000 hours to public health preparedness and response planning including weekly partner calls and a full scale Ebola preparedness exercise with EMS and Cone Health System.

Alamance County EMS participating in a preparedness exercise – November 2014



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MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY

Unadjusted Death Rates per 100,000

Cause of Death	Alamance County	NC
Cancer – All Sites	(1) 214.3	(1) 188.1
Heart Disease	(2) 203.1	(2) 178.9
Chronic lower respiratory Diseases	(3) 62.9	(3) 48.4
Cerebrovascular Disease (stroke)	(4) 52.5	(4) 45.2
Alzheimer's Disease	(5) 38.8	(5) 29.9
Other Unintentional Injuries	(6) 31.2	(6) 29.0
Kidney Disease	(7) 27.4	(7) 23.3
Diabetes	(8) 26.2	(8) 18.4
Pneumonia & influenza	(9) 20.7	(9) 18.3
Septicemia	(10) 17.8	(10) 14.0
Total Deaths All Causes	973.7	830.0

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/schs/data/databook/>

Leading Causes of Death (2009-2013)

The top 3 leading causes of death in Alamance County (AC) continue to be cancer, heart disease, and chronic lower respiratory diseases. AC and North Carolina (NC) have the same top 9 causes of death, AC has a higher overall unadjusted death rate (per 100,000 population) when compared to NC and the total death rate from all causes is significantly higher in AC.

Communicable Diseases

(rate per 100,000 population)

Disease	Alamance County 2012	North Carolina 2012	Alamance County 2013	North Carolina 2013
Gonorrhea	166.3	146.9	89.7	140.1
Primary & Secondary Syphilis	2.6	3.4	2.6	4.3

Source: North Carolina 2013 HIV/STD Surveillance Report <http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/stds/figures/std13rpt.pdf>

Maternal and Child Health

	Alamance County 2012	North Carolina 2012	Alamance County 2013	North Carolina 2013
Infant Mortality (Rate per 1,000 Live Births)	8.5	7.4	10.1	7
Teen Pregnancy (Rate per 1,000 Females ages 15-17)	37.1	39.6	34.9	35.2

Source: North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics Reported Pregnancies 2012 & 2013 <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/schs/data/pregnancies/2012/preg1519.pdf>
<http://www.schs.state.nc.us/data/vital/pregnancies/2013/preg1519.pdf>

STATE OF THE COUNTY HEALTH REPORT

NEW INITIATIVES

Alamance Baby Closet

The Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Alamance County is creating a brand new Baby Closet! The Alamance Baby Closet (ABC) is located at the Alamance County Health Department and is designed to promote active participation in prenatal care among pregnant women, as well as engaging in healthy behaviors during pregnancy through education. Clients can earn points to spend in the Baby Closet by keeping their prenatal appointments, participating in Centering, bringing their baby in for well-baby check-ups after delivery, breastfeeding, and coming in for their postpartum visits. This program is completely free to clients and made possible by the generous donations of our community partners!

Safe Kids Alamance County

Safe Kids Alamance County is a coalition of public and private agencies committed to the reduction and elimination of preventable childhood injuries in children 0-19 years of age. Beginning in 2014, the Alamance County Health Department now serves as the lead agency for the Safe Kids Alamance County Coalition. Around the world, a child dies from an unintentional injury every 30 seconds, and millions of children are injured in ways that can affect them for a lifetime. Safe Kids Alamance County is dedicated to preventing injuries in children, the number one killer of kids in the United States. Every year in North Carolina, approximately 200 children die from accidental injuries and another 45,000 visit a doctor's office for treatment of such injuries (Safe Kids Worldwide, 2015). These injuries can be prevented.

Early Childhood Literacy Environments

In 2014, the Alamance County Health Department implemented Literacy-Rich Waiting Rooms for children and families served. The implementation was based on the Reach Out and Read national model. The first five years of a child's life are critical in the growth and development of emotion and cognition. Children that experience little or insufficient exposure to language and reading are more likely to arrive at kindergarten without basic literacy skills and those arriving to kindergarten not ready are more likely to perform poorly in school. The long reaching effects of poor school performance can have a lasting impact on social, emotional, financial and physical health for individuals and families.

The literacy rich waiting rooms provide children and families an opportunity to explore books and materials that promote parent-child relationships, support early literacy, and support healthy brain development. Children and families are provided age appropriate books at well-child visits and are also encouraged to take books home that they enjoy. In 2014, more than 552 books were distributed to children through the health department's program.

Safe Kids Alamance County Activities

- **S'more Dangerous than You Think:** An initiative to raise awareness about hyperthermia and the dangers of leaving children alone in a car, even for just a minute.
- **International Walk to School Day and Be Safe Be Seen on Halloween:** These are events to help raise awareness about pedestrian safety.
- **Car Seat Safety:** Help to educate the community, new parents, and child care providers on the importance of children being buckled up!
- **Fire Safety:** Provide support and incentives for fire safety initiatives throughout the year including receiving a grant from Kidde to install smoke detectors in homes.
- **Cuddly Comforts:** A stuffed animal collection drive to donate to first responders to give to children in crisis situations.
- **Poison Prevention:** Safe Kids Alamance County is proud to have partnered with Alamance Citizens for a Drug Free Community and Alamance Regional Medical Center to install two permanent medication drop boxes.
- **Home Safety:** The Coalition partnered with Burlington Junior Women's Club to raise awareness about the dangers of TV and Furniture tip-overs in the home.
- **Bike Safety:** Safe Kids partnered with Safe Routes to School who donated over 90 bike helmets for a back to school event in August.

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ANNUAL PERFORMANCE NUMBERS

	2013	2014
Total Immunizations	3,904	3,818
WIC Counseling Sessions	14,227	9,596 (January-August 2014)
Family Planning Visits	4,923	4,276
Maternity Clinic Visits	4,646	4,250
Child Health Visits	269	224
Dental Clinic Visits	7,468	7,424
HIV Tests	3,567	3,483
STD Clinic Visits	3,078	3,083
Care Coordination Contacts	8,021	8,490
Total Flu Vaccine Administered	2,441	2,105
Environmental Health Inspections	2,011	2,010
Health Hazard Inspections	228	210
Well Inspections	121	128
Rabies Vaccinations	457	253
Soil/Site Evaluations	285	344
Collected Water Samples	788	628
Specimen for Rabies Collected	45	44
Environmental Health Community Trainings	63	25
Health Education Encounters	5,700	5,794
Health Education Grants Received	\$62,854	\$5,300
Lab Test Performed		
	State Lab 4,053	9,714
	In House 8,200	7,692
	Lab Corp 6,898	6,618
Healthy Alamance	9,721	*Data unavailable at time of printing



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If you would like further information or would like to be involved in health activities, please call Alamance County Health Department at (336) 227-0101 or Healthy Alamance at (336) 513-5590.