

Orange County 2017 State of the County Health Report



Purpose

This 2017 State of the County Health Report (SOTCH) provides an update on health concerns and the actions being taken to address them. It uses the most recent data to highlight the leading Orange County (OC) causes of death and disease, and progress towards addressing the leading health concerns identified in the 2015 Community Health Assessment (CHA).

The prioritized health issues are: 1) Social Determinants of Health with priority around access, transportation and poverty; 2) Physical Activity and Nutrition with priority around chronic disease prevention, and 3) Mental Health and Substance Abuse. Community coalitions and partners, such as Healthy Carolinians of Orange County (HCOC), the Orange County Health Department (OCHD) and the Orange County Board of Health (BOH) are addressing these issues at both the community and policy levels.

The complete 2015 Community Health Assessment can be viewed at www.orangecountync.gov/healthycarolinians



Leading Causes of Death in Orange County (2012-2016)

The top 10 leading causes of death in OC are represented below, with the top 3 being cancer, heart disease, and cerebrovascular disease. OC has a lower age-adjusted death rate (per 100,000 population) than North Carolina (NC) averages in all categories.

Cancer remains the top cause of death in the County. Trachea, bronchus, and lung cancers are the most common cancers experienced in OC, followed by prostate cancer with a rate of 18.6, and breast cancer, with a rate of 15.7. Health disparities and lifestyle behaviors such as smoking, physical inactivity, and poor diet are linked to many of these leading causes of death.

Age-adjusted Death Rates (per 100,000 population)¹

Age Group	Rank	Cause of Death	# of Deaths	Death Rate
Total: All Ages	1	Cancer	935	146
	2	Heart Disease	712	118.2
	3	Cerebrovascular Disease	186	31.4
	4	Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	160	26.8
	5	Alzheimer's Disease	149	26.7
	6	Unintentional Injuries	154	25.4
	7	Diabetes	101	17
	8	Septicemia	76	11.8
	9	Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome, and Nephrosis	65	11.1
	10	Pneumonia and Influenza	61	10.6

Results from the 2015 Community Health Assessment were prioritized on the basis of importance and changeability. The health priorities determined to be of greatest concern to the Orange County community, are 1) Social Determinants of Health with priority around access, poverty, and transportation; 2) Mental Health & Substance Abuse, and 3) Physical Activity and Nutrition with priority around chronic disease prevention. Below you will have a chance to learn about the 3 priority areas and the work that is currently being done, or planned, around each.

Priority #1: Social Determinants of Health

Transportation

TRY TRANSIT!

Why Try Transit?

Reason #1: Public transit provides personal mobility and freedom for people from all walks of life.

Reason #2: Transit users walk to and from bus stops, walking more than the average driving commuter.

Reason #3: A household can save over \$10,000 by taking public transit and living with 1 car.

Reason #4: Public transit increases social connections. Travel time by car reduces social connections by 70%.

Reason #5: Public transit helps to maintain and create jobs. It also takes people to and from their jobs.

Reason #6: Transit lessens gas use and reduces pollution.

Reason #7: For every 10 million dollars of transit investment made, business sales increase by thirty-two million dollars.

Reason #8: 87 percent of public transit trips positively impact the economy.

Reason #9: When faced with natural or man-made disasters, public transit systems provide comfort, safety, security, and rescue.

Reason #10: Ride the Bus on 420 and the Orange-Chapel Hill Midday Connector is fare free Oct. 23-28th.

Share your experience: [#TryTransitOC](#)

HCOC's Access committee hosted its very first Try Transit Week (TTW) from October 23-28, 2017. The week was implemented in response to transportation being a priority for the OCHD, HCOC, and the BOH. Prior to the TTW, the committee partnered with Orange Public Transportation, Go Triangle, Chapel Hill Transit and the

Each Academy taught the basics of local and regional transit so that service providers would have the necessary knowledge and tools to be able to help their clients connect to low-cost/no cost transportation services and/or serve as a site for an information kiosk.

The Academies, together, reached over 40 service providers. The providers represented: UNC Physicians Network, UNC Health Care, UNC Highway Safety Research Center, Chapel Hill Carrboro City Schools, Orange County Health Department, Orange County Department on Aging, Department of Social Services, Family Success Alliance, Orange County Public Library, District Court Judge's Office, the Criminal Justice Resource Department, and CWS Global.

Department on Aging and held two Transportation Academies. One on October 10, 2017 at UNC Hospital in Hillsborough and one on October 13, 2017 at the Seymour Center in Chapel Hill.

After each Academy, participants were encouraged and given the opportunity to take a ride on local transit, free of charge. During TTW, the 420 route and the Chapel Hill Midday Connector, offered rides

free of charge. HCOC hopes that this is the start of increased access for our local transportation.

Access

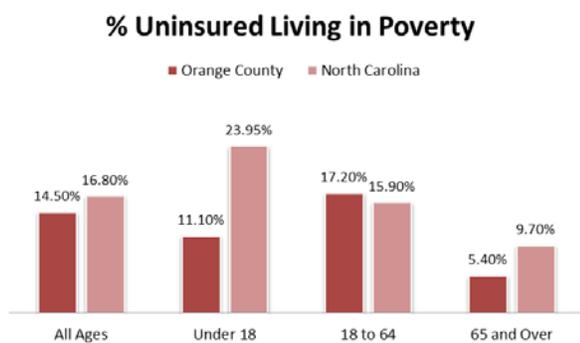
The ability to access quality and affordable health care services is a key component in a person's overall health. Orange County has a strong health care community that includes a nationally-ranked hospital system, an accredited School of Public Health, a federally qualified health center, a local public health department, a medical and dental school, and various private medical practices. In spite of these resources, residents continue to report problems accessing health care services, and 7.5% of OC population is uninsured, compared to North Carolina's uninsured rate of 10.4%².

In July 2017, OCHD contracted with Solutionreach to provide a texting service for clients. With initiation,

- 2,000 texts were sent to confirm appointments with patients,
- Patient no-show rate decreased from 15% to 12%
- 2,394 patients consented to their email addresses being used by Solutionreach.
- 7,800 patients consented to having texts sent to their phones through Solutionreach.

Poverty

Although OC is rich in resources, 12.8% of our overall population lives in poverty, with 6.2% of all families living below the poverty level. Below shows the percent of OC individuals living in poverty, compared to North Carolina.



7.6% of children in Orange County live in poverty, despite a county-wide median income of \$66,423². 18.2% of kids in Orange County live in food insecure households, compared to the NC rate of 22.6%³.

In response to poverty, HCOC hosted its first ever poverty simulation exercise in February of 2018. There were 92 total individuals who gathered at

Southern Human Services and assumed the roles of service providers and family participants. Participants went through a month, consisting of four 18 minute weeks, as families living in poverty experiencing various day-to-day barriers. Participants expressed and shared their feelings and experiences with the simulation that resulted in:

- Frustration
- Desperation
- Little to no means
- Loss of jobs
- Robbery
- Lack of community resources
- Neglecting and/or not being able to afford necessary services

[The Family Success Alliance](#) (FSA) is a collective impact initiative to close the achievement gap and end generational poverty in OC. A diverse group of parents, elected officials, community organizations, and government partners have come together to improve children's chances for educational and economic opportunities with a seamless "pipeline" of evidence-based programs, services, and supports from cradle to college and career.



FSA was created because this is the reality in Orange County:

1. **Income Inequality.** OC ranks seventh in income inequality of all counties in NC.
2. **Poverty.** One-fourth of all OC families do not earn a living wage
3. **Lack of Mobility.** 75% of our children born into poverty will remain in poverty or in low-income households.

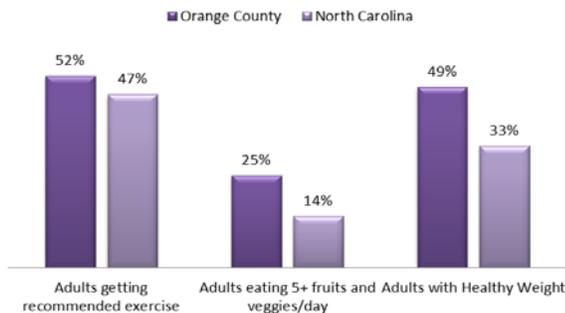
FSA Zone Navigators (7) are community members who work with families to enhance their support systems and resilience, and to identify strategies and resources to mitigate the effects of chronic stress. The Zone Navigators currently serve 120 families, located in two neighborhood "zones" in Orange County, by helping them connect with schools, community services and programs.

Priority #2: Physical Activity & Nutrition

Physical Activity & Nutrition

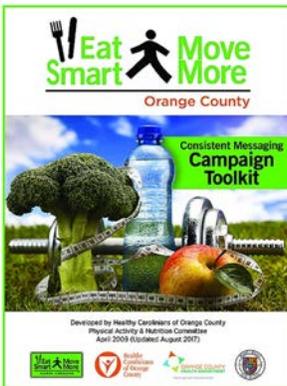
OC has shown improvements in the healthy weight of residents, but obesity remains a top health concern for OC adults and children.

Prevention is the most effective way to address obesity and the related chronic diseases. Effective prevention means ensuring safe places for physical activity and access to healthy foods. The following chart shows the percent of adults experiencing physical activity and healthy nutrition in OC, compared to NC.



14% of OC preschoolers are obese and 19% of surveyed High Schoolers (from Chapel Hill Carrboro City Schools) are getting 60 minutes of physical activity a day.

To help educate and increase the number of OC residents who are physically active and eating healthy, HCOE implemented a 6-month Eat Smart Move More (ESMM) Consistent Messaging Campaign. On September 13, 2017, fifteen community partners were trained on the ESMM Consistent Messaging Campaign.



From October 2017 to March 2018, the fifteen trained community partners pledged to promote the campaign's key messages by using the recommended strategies and policies provided in the ESMM Orange County toolkit. Their key messages of this campaign were:

- **October** – Move More
- **November** - Fruits & Veggies
- **December** – Prepare More Meals at Home
- **January** – Limit Screen Time

- **February** – Re-Think Your Drink
- **March** – Right Size Your Portions

The BOH was successful in providing funding to both OC school systems to support physical activity and nutrition projects in schools. The BOH also provided funding for 3 Partnership Academy teachers to attend the Action Based Learning and Kidsfit Kinesthetic Classroom Training in July 2017. The staff who attended peer trained fellow teachers and began incorporating physical activity in the classrooms during the 2017-18 school year.

Orange County Food Council

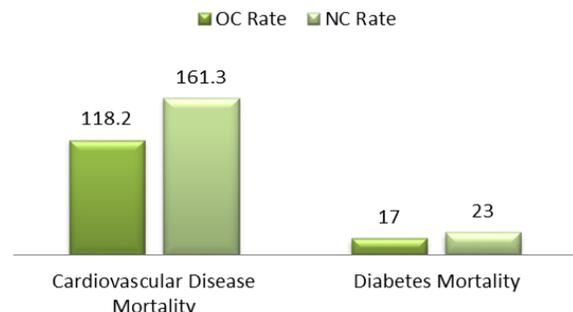
In 2016, the Orange County Food Council (OCFC) was formed with the goal of growing a local food system that ensures health, sustainable agriculture, and access for all. The Council's work is in building partnerships, identifying issues, and coordinating action.

The Council is made up of small food producers and farmers, non-profit leaders, elected officials, local chefs and business owners, public health educators and nutritionists, community gardeners and community members. The OCFC currently has two work groups that were determined from the baseline food assessment. Those workgroups are **Food Access** and **Local Food Economy**.

The BOH has plans to collaborate with the OCFC to create a food database and work together to determine effective ways to get the information out within OC, and couple the information with a physical activity database.

Chronic Disease

Physical inactivity, tobacco use and unhealthy eating are becoming part of today's lifestyles that support the rise of chronic diseases. Below represents the 2012-2016 mortality rates for cardiovascular disease and diabetes in OC compared to NC.



Priority #3: Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Suicide

Suicide is a serious public health problem that affects many people. The OC rate of suicide has increased from 8.8 to 8.9, and remains a concern to residents.

During the month of September, HCOC's Mental Health & Substance Abuse committee hosted a few community events to educate and bring awareness to suicide prevention. The events that occurred were:

1. **Suicide Prevention Kickoff.** This event was held on September 7, 2017 at the Whitted Human Services Building. Approximately 40 guests enjoyed a hot catered breakfast while they listened to remarks and support by Linnea Smith. Jaki Shelton Green read her poem "Prayer for Understanding", Kiana Redd presented the overview of the campaign, its components and OC suicide statistics. Janaki Nicastro shared her personal and heart-felt suicide related testimony, and Hillsborough Mayor, Tom Stevens, provided support and the call to action.
2. **Day of Prayer.** On September 10, 2017, local churches observed a moment of silence to recognize the lives lost to suicide during their Sunday morning services. Some churches even took the time to speak about suicide prevention and/or read the poem "Prayer for Understanding".
3. **Be the Light" Suicide Prevention Awareness Walk.** On September 22, 2017, on the campus of UNC Chapel Hill, at "The Pit", over 100 students, residents, faculty and county professionals attended this event. The guest speaker was Rwenshaun Miller, an alumnus of UNC Chapel Hill, a former athlete, and a three-time survivor of suicide. He shared his story and journey of battling suicide and mental illness. Counseling services were available for those who needed it and the night ended with a ½ mile walk in remembrance of the lives lost to suicide in Orange County. The walking path was lit with lanterns and guests received glow bracelets, necklaces, and sticks so they could literally "be the light".
4. **QPR (Question, Persuade, & Refer) training.** On September 26, 2017, a QPR

training was offered to community members and professionals at Cardinal Innovations. QPR is designed to teach 3 simple steps that anyone can use to help save a life from suicide. Participants were taught to *Question* the individual's desire or intent regarding suicide, *Persuade* the person to seek and accept help, and *Refer* the person to appropriate resources.



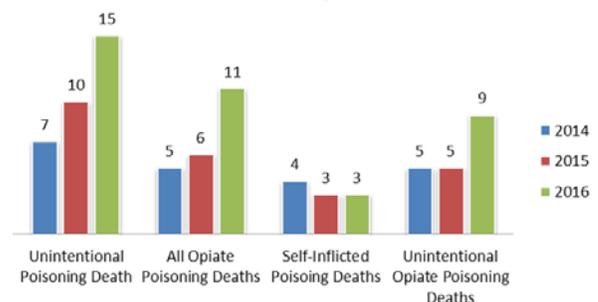
Prescription Drug Misuse/Abuse

A poison is any substance that is harmful to the body when ingested (eaten), inhaled (breathed) injected, or absorbed through the skin. In 2016 in OC, the drug overdose rate was 12.7 per 100,000 persons, compared to 7.1 in 2015; and the opioid rate was 7.8 per 100,000 persons, compared to 4.2 in 2015.

OC has seen a slight decrease in access to opioids over the past year. There are 42.1 opioid prescriptions per 100 residents, compared to 43.9 prescriptions in 2015. Furthermore, 4.9 million opioid pills were dispensed in 2016, compared to 5.1 million opioid pills dispensed in 2015.

In 2016, 18 people died of medication and drug poisoning, compared to 10 deaths in 2015. We witnessed 11 deaths related to opiate poisoning, compared to 6 deaths in 2015. 19 people died of poisoning, compared to 13 deaths in 2015, and 15 of those 19 died of unintentional poisoning⁶.

OC Poisoning Deaths



To help prevent prescription drug abuse and overdose, the health department and community coalitions have worked to educate residents on the importance of locking up prescription medications within the home.

In response to being a recipient of a \$15,000 National Association of City and County Health Officials (NAACHO) grant, the OCHD worked to prevent illegal access to opioids through the distribution of medicine lock boxes. 64 medicine lock boxes and 25 naloxone kits were distributed at community outreach events, throughout OC, in 2017.

OCHD ran radio commercials through Radio One's K97.5, with messaging about safe syringe exchange as well as naloxone, both available through OCHD, as well as locking up and not sharing medications. Commercials ran for four weeks between November 20, 2017 and December 16, 2017. As part of a marketing campaign with K97.5, we:

- Produced 116 total radio commercials; 29 commercials ran per week for four weeks.
- Reached approximately 182,000 listeners between the ages of 18-54.
- Had 116 commercials streamed on the K97.5 app; which has had 98,521 downloads.
- Had emails shared with 12,321 K97.5 subscribers.
- Had a Facebook live video done with mid-day radio personality, Autumn Joi.
- Are a part of over 105,000 page likes through K97.5 Facebook page.

Safe Syringe

OCHD is now recognized and operating as a safe syringe program. The OCHD has been exchanging needles for drug users and patients of diabetes since April 2016. The syringe packages include an immunity card, which is accepted by local law enforcement, 20 syringes, condoms, and information on drug abuse and overdose prevention, HIV, AIDS, and HCV (Hepatitis C Virus) transmission prevention, and referral information for services offered at the OCHD. In 2017, the OCHD installed drop boxes, one within each lobby of the health department locations. In 2017, the Health Department distributed approximately 40 kits but

collected 12,000 needles total, from both drop boxes.

Tobacco Prevention & Control

Tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure remain the leading causes of preventable illness and death in both OC and NC.

Youth access to tobacco products continues to be a Public Health concern as the popularity of emerging products like electronic cigarettes and hookah, rises. This year, the State Legislature allocated \$500,000 to tobacco use prevention--this is the first time youth prevention has been funded in the state budget in five years. Orange County accepted \$37,500 of these funds to support its educational and prevention programming efforts. The funds are being used to:

- Replace and update the Tobacco-Free School Signs to ensure that students, staff and visitors to the campus are aware that all tobacco use is prohibited at all times by everyone, to include e-cigarettes,
- Provide educational opportunities to youth, young adults, and youth influencers about the harms of tobacco products with a focus on emerging products;
- Train youth peer educators and their support staff on youth-led advocacy.

To decrease the number tobacco users in the County, OCHD has increased the number of partnerships to provide cessation intervention services.

More than 50 pharmacy students participated in an interactive, simulation of the American Cancer Society's Freshstart curriculum as part of a new partnership with UNC's Carolina Association of Pharmacy Students to increase the number of community supports who understand tobacco use as an addiction. Additionally, OCHD provided on-site tobacco cessation using the Freshstart curriculum at two substance abuse recovery centers and reached more than 30 tobacco users.

Data Sources

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- ³ Map the Meal Gap 2017 (2015). Child Food Insecurity in North Carolina by County. Retrieved from http://www.feedingamerica.org/research/map-the-meal-gap/2015/MMG_AllCounties_CDs_CFI_2015_2/NC_AllCounties_CDs_CFI_2015.pdf.
- ⁴ Orange County Health Department (2016). Physical Activity and Nutrition Data Dashboard. Retrieved from http://www.orangecountync.gov/departments/health/publications_and_statistics.php#revize_document_center_rz2523
- ⁵ NC State Center for Health Statistics (2016). Mortality Statistics Summary for 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/data/vital/lcd/2016/heartdisease.html> and <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/data/vital/lcd/2016/diabetes.html>
- ⁶ NC Health and Human Services (2016). Injury and Violence Prevention Branch. Poisoning Data. Retrieved from <http://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/DataSurveillance/Poisoning.htm>.



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