



# 2023

## *State of the County Health (SOTCH) Report Pender County, North Carolina*

The 2023 State of the County Health (SOTCH) Report serves as an update on the current health status of Pender County residents. The SOTCH provides health information that is intended to augment the 2022 Community Health Assessment (CHA). The CHA is conducted every four years and includes a more comprehensive analysis of the overall health status of the county. The main priorities identified from the 2022 Community Health Assessment were:

- 1- Heart Health**
- 2- Substance Use**
- 3- Access to Care**

This report demonstrates progress made in the last year as it relates to these health priorities, recent health statistics, new initiatives and emerging issues that may impact the health status of residents in Pender County. The 2022 CHA and previous SOTCH reports may be found at the county libraries, the health department, or online at: <http://health.pendercountync.gov>



*Building a Healthier Tomorrow...*

**Pender County Health Department**

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# PENDER COUNTY SNAPSHOT



**65,737**

POPULATION (2022 EST.)

9.2%

EST. PERCENT CHANGE OF POPULATION (2020-2022 CENSUS)

42.5

MEDIAN AGE (2021)

PERCENT UNDER 5 YEARS OLD



5.4%

PERCENT OVER 65 YEARS AND OLDER



18.6%

22.2%

PERCENT UNDER 18 YEARS OLD

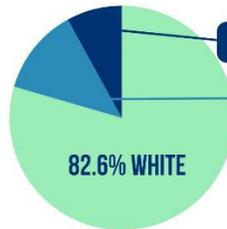
POPULATION AGE BREAKDOWN

**76,143**

POPULATION PROJECTION 2030

**87,235**

POPULATION PROJECTION 2040



13.0% AFRICAN AMERICAN

8.3% HISPANIC/LATINO

82.6% WHITE

POPULATION THAT ARE VETERANS (2018-2022)

4,960

49.5% FEMALE

50.5% MALE

\$ XX,XXX

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME



10.5% POPULATION LIVING BELOW POVERTY

13.9% UNDER AGE 18



\$36,352 PER CAPITA INCOME (2018-2022)



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2018-2022)

\$74,538

77.2

AVERAGE LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (2018-2020)

U.S Census Bureau, 2022 Quick Facts, N.C. State Center for Health Statistics, Office of State Budget and Management

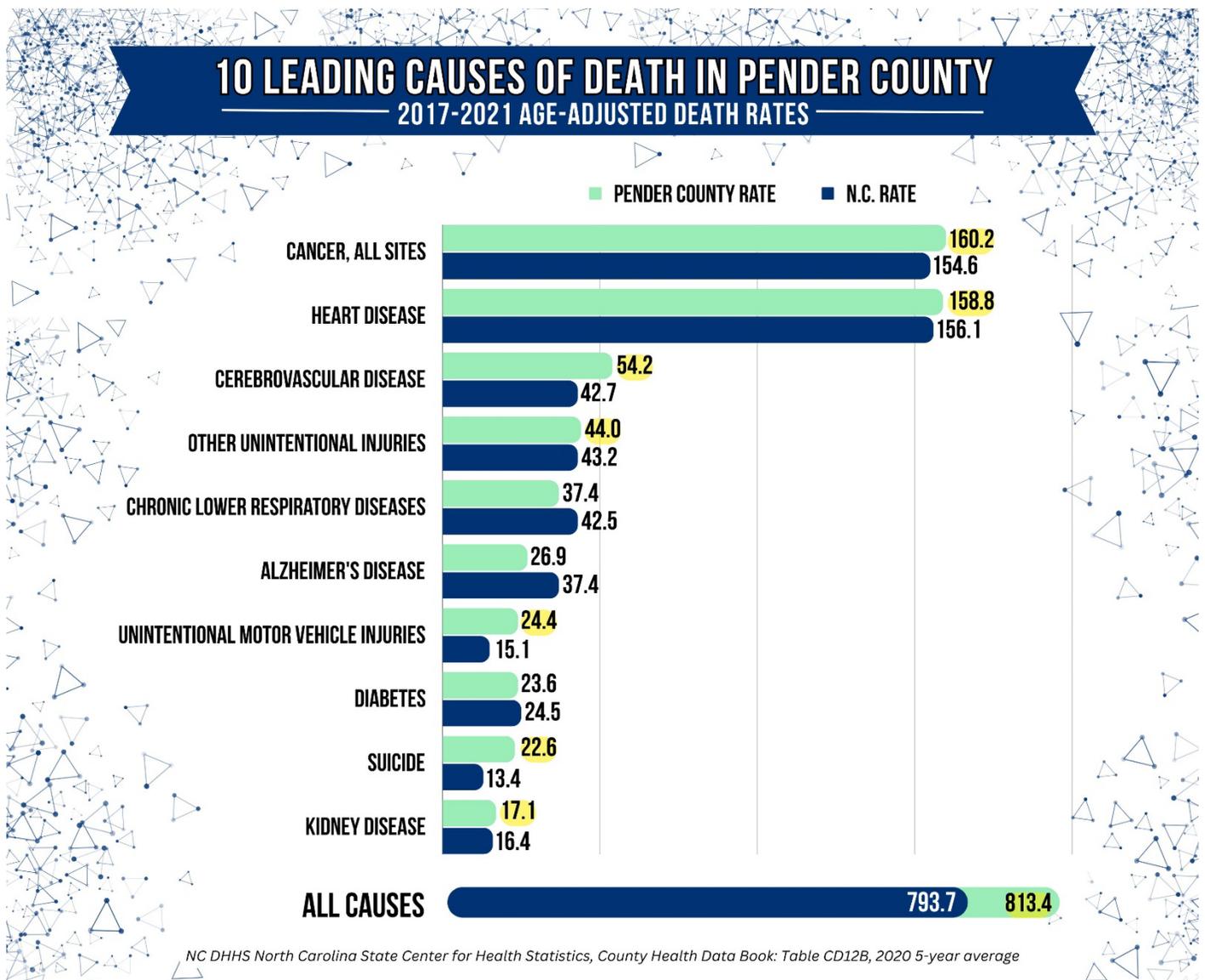
## Maternal and Child Health

The NC State Center for Health Statistics shows the Pender County birth rate for teens ages 15-19 years old was 21.1% compared to 24% for North Carolina (2021). Approximately 20.3% of pregnant women had less than a high school education while 37.4% had a college or post-graduate degree (2021). The percentage of women who smoked during their pregnancy was 5.9% compared to a state rate of 5.6% (2021). About 81% of mothers had chosen to breastfeed at the time of hospital discharge (2021). About 70% of women sought prenatal care in the first trimester (2021). Only 2.1% percent of pregnant women received no prenatal care prior to delivery compared to the state rate of 3.8% (2021). Women receiving early prenatal care have lower rates for poor pregnancy outcomes such as low birth weight and infant death.

A brief look at the health of Pender County children showed that there was a 7.5% infant mortality rate in 2021 compared to the state rate of 6.8%. The child death rate was 49.4% with 34 child deaths, ages 0-17 years, during the five-year period 2017-2021.

One of the most important long-term factors that can affect a child’s health and development is poverty. 13.9% of children less than 18 years of age are living in poverty (2022). In addition, 19.1% of children are living in households that experience food insecurity (2018-2019).

Access to care means timely use of comprehensive, quality health care services that promote and maintain health; prevent and manage diseases; and reduce unnecessary disability and premature death. Health care access is a concern in Pender County, a designated “provider shortage area.” In 2019, there were 4.1 dentists per 10,000 residents compared to the state rate of 5.0 per 10,000 population. The rate for medical providers was much lower: 2.8 primary care compared to a state rate of 7.0.



As noted on page two, the highlighted death rates for Pender County are greater than the state rates over a 5-year average (2020). In addition, the overall death rate for the county exceeds the state rate. Many of these causes of death are preventable. Our prevention efforts face many challenges when trying to promote healthy lifestyles through physical activity, healthy nutrition, injury prevention and avoidance of tobacco and other substances. Progress toward many of the community health improvement activities are found in this document. However, residents must assess their own personal choices and behaviors and how their decisions may negatively impact their health outcomes.

From 2018-2020, the average life expectancy for Pender County residents at birth was 77.2 years of age. Life expectancy for women was 80.2 years compared to 74.4 years for men. Aside from gender, disparities are also found among African Americans with an average life expectancy of 73.2 years compared to 78 years for whites.

## *Changes in Data for 2023*

The leading causes of death in Pender County for 2015-2019 compared to 2017-2021 revealed few changes. Deaths due to diabetes are unchanged and remains ranked as 8th leading cause of death. Unintentional motor vehicle injuries have remained unchanged. Concern remains for resident deaths due to other unintentional injuries and suicide.

# Tracking Progress of Pender County Health Priorities

Substance Use	Progress
<p>Identify available resources for mental health and substance use prevention and increase awareness among Pender County residents.</p> <hr/>  <div> <p><b>1-800-QUIT-NOW</b> 1 - 8 0 0 - 7 8 4 - 8 6 6 9</p> </div> <div> <p><b>Se Habla Español</b> 1-800-Déjelo-Ya</p> </div> <p><b>www.quitlinenc.com</b></p>  <div> <p><b>988 SUICIDE &amp; CRISIS LIFELINE</b></p> </div> <div> <p><b>CATCH<sup>®</sup></b> <b>MY BREATH</b> <b>YOUTH E-CIGARETTE PREVENTION PROGRAM</b></p> </div> <p>Opioid Overdose: Understanding the Epidemic Pender County Website Page: <a href="http://www.pendercountync.gov/hhs/notices-base/opioid-overdose-understanding-the-epidemic/">http://www.pendercountync.gov/hhs/notices-base/opioid-overdose-understanding-the-epidemic/</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ On-going promotion of Quitline NC via community events, brochures, and social media.</li> <li>✓ On-going multi-disciplinary <i>Substance Use Prevention Partnership</i> meetings and action planning/implementation to target mental health and substance use prevention efforts             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Regular assessment of state and local data on unintentional poisoning, drug overdose deaths, opioid prescribing rates, and current interventions</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Continued participation in state and regional activities for the promotion of smoke-free/tobacco-free policies</li> <li>✓ On-going promotion of <i>988 Suicide &amp; Crisis Lifeline</i></li> <li>✓ Current standing order for Naloxone Kit onsite and staff trained to administer</li> <li>✓ Website, Facebook, and Billboard up-to-date postings on Opioid Epidemic</li> <li>✓ Promotion of county-wide “Drug Take Back Day” events and locations</li> <li>✓ Promotion of <i>Integrated Family Services Mobile Crisis</i> team with patients and community</li> <li>✓ On-going referrals to/promotion of Coastal Horizon’s Substance Use Prevention Programs via brochures, flyers, community events, social media, and website</li> <li>✓ Continues to maintain an up-to-date Resource Guide of mental health providers in Pender County for community members</li> <li>✓ Opioid Prevention Planning Committee</li> <li>✓ Promotion of International Overdose Awareness Day</li> <li>✓ Providing all county employees with educational materials on overdose prevention as well as awareness ribbons</li> </ul>

# Tracking Progress of Pender County Health Priorities



- ✓ Monthly Reproductive Life Planning Education Classes at Pender County Department of Social Services that includes the topic of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome
- ✓ Partnered with Pender County Cooperative Extension to implement the *Empowering Youth and Families (EYFP)* Program to resident families
  - Training was completed
- ✓ Shared Naloxone Kits with Local Law Enforcement and Pender County Schools
- ✓ Began the planning process with Pender County Schools to get approval to teach CATCH My Breath Program to students



## Community Outreach/Education



## Pender County Billboard Designs-Hampstead, NC



# Tracking Progress of Pender County Health Priorities

## Heart Health

## Progress

Increase public awareness and promote opportunities for increasing physical activity and nutrition.



**Matter of Balance Program**



**National "Wear Red Day"**



**Healthy Heart Walk**

- ✓ On-going collaboration with *Pender County Parks and Recreation* to promote activities held at county parks
- ✓ On-going promotion of physical activity programs, community events, and opportunities across the county, via brochures, local newspapers, social media (Facebook, health department and county websites)
- ✓ Conduct *Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME)* classes at the health department to provide education and prevention of heart disease
- ✓ Conduct *Matter of Balance (MOB)* classes in the community. Classes focus on falls-prevention, a common injury for older adults, as well as exercises geared towards older adults to improve mobility and heart health.
- ✓ Promotion of various nutritional programs to health care providers and community partners through Lunch and Learn events
- ✓ Facebook page posts on events that promote physical activity and good nutrition
- ✓ Promotion of *National Nutrition Month* through bulletin board displays and social media with focus on a heart healthy diet
- ✓ Partnered with Parks & Rec to promote "Year of the Trail" (Healthy Heart Walk)
- ✓ Raised awareness for American Heart Month by participating in "Wear Red Day"

# Tracking Progress of Pender County Health Priorities

## Access to Care

Identify available resources for cancer screenings and provide the community with educational outreach events/programs to promote awareness.



Breast Cancer Tea Party – Mt. Calvary



Health Screenings at Burgaw Fire Department



Back to School Immunization Clinic Advertisement



“Homeless Stand Down” Event

## Progress

- ✓ Monthly promotions to increase awareness in the prevention of many types of cancers
- ✓ Educational displays created and set up at all county departments
- ✓ Facebook posts to promote awareness of many types of cancers
- ✓ Billboard designs displayed in the county to promote cancer screening awareness
- ✓ Promotion of the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program to allow uninsured, low-income women the opportunity for breast and cervical screenings
- ✓ Partnered with Mt. Calvary Center for Leadership Development to hold Breast Cancer Awareness Tea Party
- ✓ Raised awareness for Breast Cancer by wearing pink
- ✓ Implementation of the CATCH My Breath program to decrease risk of teens engaging in tobacco and e-cigarette use
- ✓ Partnered with Cape Fear Homeless Continuum of Care by providing resources to the community at the Pender “Homeless Stand Down” event
- ✓ Partnered with Pender Alliance by providing resources and education to the community at the Community Resource Fair
- ✓ Partnered with Burgaw Lions Club and offered free health screenings to the community at Burgaw Fire Department
- ✓ Hosted Back to School Immunization Clinics and Community Flu Clinics



Breast Cancer T-Shirts

# *New Initiatives*

**Health and Human Services Facility** – Efforts have begun to design and construct a new health and human services facility. The new building will include the health department and the Department of Social Services. Groundbreaking will occur in Fall 2024. Additional space is included in the facility to account for growth up to 2040.

**Public Health Workforce Initiative** – As part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), the North Carolina Division of Public Health has distributed funds to ten regions in the state. Pender County is part of the Southeast Region. A workforce grant work plan will be developed to focus on public health staff recruitment and hiring; a regional training plan and a regional coordination plan to engage a regional leadership team. A main focus of the initiative will be to identify strategies to strengthen the local public health workforce and response to community health issues.

**Opioid Prevention Planning Committee** – Partnering to promote the implementation of a new Post Overdose Response Team (PORT) led by Coastal Horizons, the team will identify those at risk of overdose or who have experienced a recent overdose. They will remain in contact with individuals, encouraging them to participate in substance use treatment services.

## *Emerging Issues*

**Aging Public Health Workforce** – In a 2021 Public Health Workforce Interest and Needs Survey, 44% of state and local health workers said they planned to retire in the next five years. With so many public health workers planning to retire, public health leaders must find new ways to identify, recruit and retain new graduates and health professionals. A strong public health workforce is key when responding to community health issues and pandemics.

**Aging Population** – Recent data from 2022 revealed that Pender County was the second fastest growing county in N.C. With this growth comes more risks for chronic diseases, higher rates of cancer, heart disease, stroke, obesity, injuries, economic disparity, isolation and Alzheimer's. Increased collaboration is needed among stakeholders to respond to the prevention of multi-morbidity factors.

**Dental Care for Children** – Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been increased challenges to providing dental care to children. Children's oral health is one of the greatest unmet health care needs. Studies have shown that poor oral health in children results in more missed school days and lower grades. Untreated cavities can cause pain and infections that can lead to problems with eating, speaking, and learning. Health promotion is necessary to increase awareness of the importance for oral health care and dental services available to the community.

## *Want to do something? Get involved.*

Community members can get involved by participating on the Advisory Board of Health, attending meetings, forums, community coalitions and outreach events. Join us in our efforts to help support your family, friends, and neighbors as we work on "Building a Healthier Tomorrow."