

# Wayne County

## State of the County Health Report

### PRIORITY AREAS

#### BASED ON 2008

#### COMMUNITY HEALTH

#### ASSESSMENT

- ◆ Teen Pregnancy
- ◆ Infant Mortality
- ◆ Chronic Disease to include heart disease, diabetes, & cancer
- ◆ STDs
- ◆ Obesity

### *Inside This Issue:*

Chronic Disease Rates	2
Childhood Obesity	2
Economic Indicators	2
Get Real Get Tested	3
Infant Mortality	3
Teen Pregnancy	4
Agency Information	4

## State Accreditation Received 2009

The Wayne County Health Department was accredited in April 2009. This was a proud moment for Health Director, Mr. James Roosen and Nursing Director Mrs. Evelyn Coley and the entire health department staff. This is our first accreditation.

During 2008 the Health Department conducted a Community Health Assessment and many of the priority areas continue to be the same ones we have battled in the past.

In terms of progress made the Health Department has done the following:

It is well recognized in Wayne County that many of our leading priorities are higher among minorities. Therefore in 2008 a full time Minority Health Coordinator was hired to target many of these issues. Our Minority Health Coordinator is a former health educator who worked in the area of teen pregnancy prevention. Ms. Rovonda Freeman has worked faithfully with many African American churches, public schools and gate keepers in the African American community to address health disparities and health inequities. She presently chairs a Minority Health Task Force/Steering Committee. In 2008 in conjunction with Curtis Media Ms. Freeman co-hosts a weekly

live radio talk show entitled "This Week in Minority Health." Ms Freeman also continues to work with other community partners such as Cooperative Extension and the Health Department Health Promotion Coordinator in promoting Eat Smart Move More with African American churches. Through continued education targeted at reducing leading chronic diseases this program strives to reduce disease and death among minority citizens. Ms. Freeman also works with designated schools in providing programming targeted at childhood obesity and teen pregnancy prevention.

Wayne County has a significant problem with syphilis which is also true statewide. A Get Real, Get Tested Campaign took place in November 2009 to encourage local citizens to be tested for syphilis. The Wayne County Health Department has also recently received funding for HIV/AIDS case management.

Other measure that have taken place to address infant mortality include an open access system to improve access and wait times in the prenatal clinic. This has been very successful—very positive feedback has been received from clients. However we have much work to do as our infant mortality data reveals—for more data see page 3.

Grant funding is being sought to further address infant mortality.

## Chronic Disease Rates Decrease For Some Races & Genders but Not All

Wayne County did experience a decline in age-adjusted death rates for heart disease for 2004-2008 as compared to the death rates for 2002-2006. For example for white males the death rate dropped from 323.8 to 295.6 per 100,000. Minority males also saw a decline from 338.2 to 304.7. The decline was also true for both minority and white females with minority females declining from 212.6 to 205.3 and white females declining from 191.2 to 173.2

The continued decline in heart disease death rates can most likely be attributed to improved life-styles (in terms of smoking cessation, increased exercise & better food choices) as well as outstanding advances in health care for those with heart problems. This is a celebration indeed for Wayne County.

Wayne County recently received A Fit Community Grant and thus our community hopes to see even more improvement in the reduction of this leading cause of death as our community agencies strive to work together to get individuals and families more physically active through better access to parks and recreation sites. This will benefit not only the reduction of heart disease but other chronic diseases too.

Total cancer death rates dropped also for white males, minority males and minority females. However white females saw an increase in total cancer death rates with an increase from 162.5 to 170.4. Trachea/lung cancer decreased for white males and minority females but increased for minority males and white females. Breast cancer increased for minority females (36.0 to 40.4) as compared to white females who saw a reduction (30 to 26.0) Prostate cancer dropped for white & minority males—however the minority rate is over 3 times higher than white (73.6 for minority men versus 18.2 for white). As noted through these statistics for breast & prostate minority rates are significantly higher. Early screening & diagnosis are essential along with increased awareness of these diseases.

Diabetes rates declined for white but did not for minorities. The Health Department initiated a Diabetes Awareness Walk in the fall of 2009 to bring more awareness to this leading killer. Presently the Wayne County Health Department does not provide primary care. The local WATCH van provides primary care to those lacking health insurance coverage. Without this wonderful service in our community it is feasible to say our disease rates, especially diabetes might possibly be much worse. Goshen Medical Clinic has also recently started a Diabetes Care Program for this community as well so this is yet another source of care for those with diabetes. The County of Wayne has recently implemented a prescription drug card for the general public—this may assist those unable to afford insulin & supplies.

## Economic Indicators

### CHILDHOOD OBESITY

- ◆ Childhood obesity continues to be addressed through the Obesity Task Force that was formed in 2006. A Fit Community Grant has been received for the city of Goldsboro.
- ◆ A local farmer's market has been established by the Health Department within the city of Goldsboro.

Population, 2008 estimate	115,696
Uninsured ages 18-64 (2005)	14,759 (20.9)
% of Medicaid Births (2008)	60.2%
Reduced Lunch (2006)	1,940 (10.1 %)
Free Lunch (2006)	9,543 (49.7 %)
4 yr. High school completion rate, 2006	61.5 %
PerCapita Income (2005)	\$26,141.00
% of unemployment (2006)	5.2

## Get Real Get Tested Campaign Comes To Wayne County

Wayne County based on findings from the 2008 Community Health Assessment continued to see numbers increase where HIV and syphilis are concerned. Most recently during December 2009 we continued to see a dramatic increase of syphilis cases (71) here in Wayne County as compared to 17 cases for the entire year of 2007

The number of HIV cases in Wayne increased from 32 in 2006 to 34 in 2007. In reviewing trend data for 2003-2007 (most current available) Wayne County has 91 cases of AIDS reflecting a rate of 15.8 per 100,000 as compared to 12.0 for the state. Health Director James Roosen has worked diligently to secure an HIV/AIDS Case management grant which will provide needed case management to people living with HIV and AIDS in Wayne County.

In order to take aim at the other problem of syphilis Health Director James Roosen has worked with the state on the Get Real Get Tested Campaign. Numerous volunteers as well as Health Department staff went out to various areas in 2008 and 2009 to provide HIV and syphilis testing. The southern end of Wayne County appears to be an area where syphilis rates are an issue in particular therefore the Get Real Get Tested Campaign focused a great deal of its time there most recently.

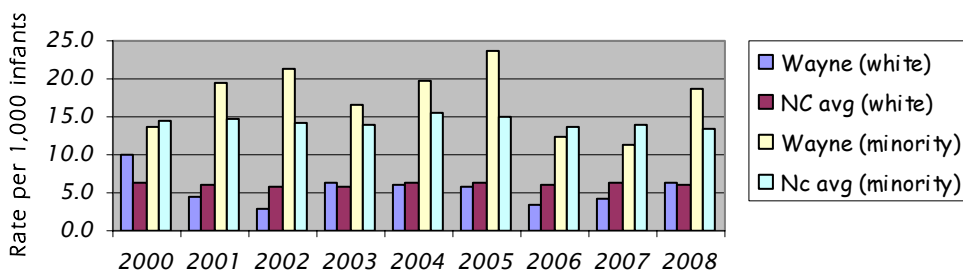
Drugs, prostitution and promiscuity (multiple sex partners) are thought to be part of the rise in syphilis. As syphilis rises we also know that the number of HIV cases will also subsequently rise. Communicable disease testing is available to the public at no cost and clinic hours are Monday–Thursday, 7 am to 6 pm. In August 2008 the Health Department's Hours of Operation went to a 10 hr–4 day work week due to tough economic times. Closing on Friday has been a way of reducing operational expenses. We are not sure how this may have influenced our ability to provide testing and treatment to the public where STDs are concerned. It is recognized that the rise in syphilis cases is a statewide problem so Wayne County is not alone in this dilemma.

## Infant Mortality in Wayne Increases in 2008

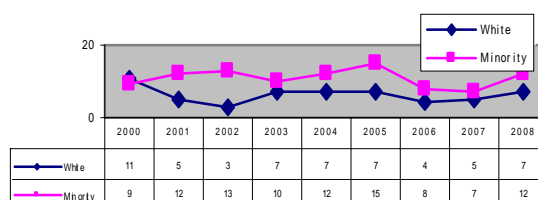
The national (U.S.) infant mortality rate, the rate at which babies less than one year of age die, has continued to steadily decline over the past several decades as has the state of N.C. See charts to the right regarding infant deaths in Wayne County—please note that rates based on less than 10 deaths are unreliable and should be interpreted with caution according to the NC State Center for Health Statistics. (7/2009)

Grants have been written in 2009 by the Health Department to provide more focus on infant mortality—especially for minorities as their rates are obviously substantially higher (18.6 deaths per 1000 births for minorities as compared to 6.2 deaths per 1000 for white. (2008). This rate reflects a huge disparity for minority infants—work is being done to address this.

Graph 4: Infant Mortality - Wayne County



Infant Mortality in Wayne County 2000-2008



# Teen Pregnancy—A Complicated Issue

The total teen pregnancy rate in Wayne County in 1997 was 93.7 per 1,000 females as compared to the state rate of 82.9. During the next 10 years the total teen pregnancy in Wayne County would begin a slow up and down decline to 79.9 in 2007 as compared to the state rate of 63.0 per 1000 females.

In 2008 the total teen pregnancy rate for Wayne County was 73.2 as compared to 58.6 for N.C.—this again reflects a drop—\*however it has to be noted that in 2008 the method of calculating teen pregnancy rates changed and thus the State Center for Health Statistics has cautioned counties that this reduction may not reflect a true decline. (see chart)

Teen pregnancy is a complex problem with no easy answers. Many agencies in Wayne County have worked for many years to address this difficult and expensive issue. It is a multi-faceted problem that requires a multi-faceted approach. Wayne County can be applauded in that this problem has been addressed through many avenues that include the Wayne County Public Schools as well as through various community programs through after school initiatives. School based health centers are also located

in a number of Wayne County middle and high schools. Health educators from the local health department provide in-kind services to these centers as well as having worked in the schools prior to school based health centers. The W.A.T.C.H. program in Wayne County also has a health educator that is stationed permanently at Goldsboro High School to work with students. There are two Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Councils with one whose focus is on promoting the annual Rose Banquet which promotes abstinence and the other WATCH council that takes a more comprehensive sex education approach. The Wayne County Health Department is in the process of writing a grant to access secondary teen pregnancy prevention funding. The Health Department will also be working with schools as the transition is made to provide comprehensive sex education to students.

	Wayne	Total Rate	White	Non-white	State total
2006	71.2		53.1	93.5	63.1
2007	79.9		63.0	110.7	63.0
2008 *	73.2		59.7	87.3	58.6

(per 1,000 females ages 15–19)



## Wayne County Health Department

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**HOURS (as of 8/2008)**

Monday–Thursdays  
7:00 am–6:00 pm

Visit us online  
[www.waynegov.com](http://www.waynegov.com)



## Mission Statement

The mission of the Wayne County Health Department, through our responsive and professional staff, is to preserve, promote and protect the health of our community by preventing disease, protecting the environment and promoting healthy living.