

2013 MECKLENBURG COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Why do we do it?

CHA is a best practice and a requirement for state funding and accreditation. **ESSENTIAL SERVICE 1** of the Ten Essential Services of Public Health is to monitor health status to identify community health problems. This is accomplished through routine surveillance, tracking, monthly and annual reports and every four years, a Community Health Assessment.

What is it used for?

Monitoring indicators, identifying populations at risk, planning, designing and funding interventions.

How is it done?

Review data → Prioritize findings → Communicate findings → Action planning → Implement plan

What was the priority setting methodology?

1) Community Survey – Summer 2013

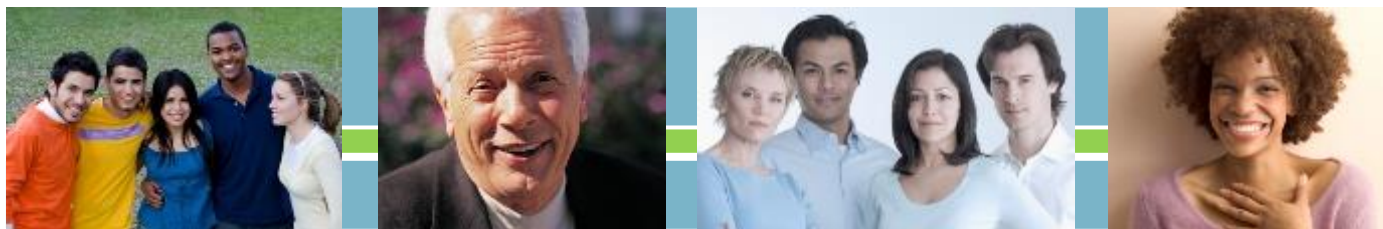
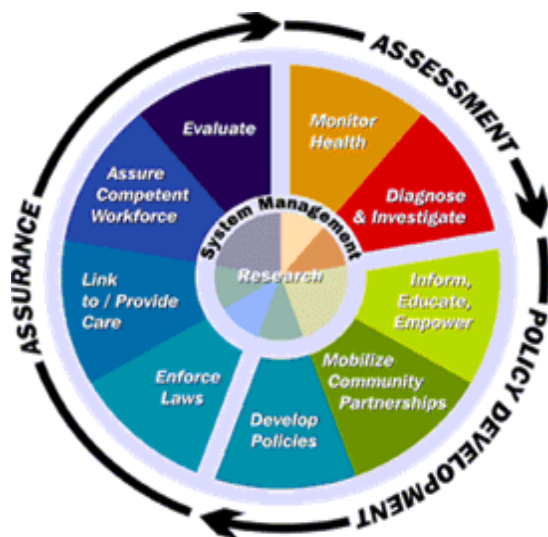
1,888 residents participated in paper and online surveys. They were polled on health behaviors and asked to rank 9 health focus areas.

2) Community Meeting – October 25, 2013

117 community members attended the priority setting meeting. They reviewed presentations on each of 9 focus areas followed by table discussions and were then asked to rank each area by 5 criteria: magnitude, severity, intervention effectiveness, public concern and urgency. Scores from both activities were combined with heavier weight given to community meeting because of education and discussion opportunities.

What's next?

Community action planning for 4 top priority health areas will begin soon.



ABOUT THE TOP 4 PRIORITY HEALTH AREAS

Issue #1: Chronic Disease

- Nationally and locally, **cancer, heart disease and stroke** are the leading cause of mortality, accounting for almost half of all deaths; they are the **leading causes of death for people ages 45 years and above** as well as leading causes of disability along with chronic lower respiratory disease and diabetes.
- 23% of Mecklenburg residents have one chronic disease and another 20% have **two or more** (2012 BRFSS).
- While Americans are living longer with chronic conditions, the associated disability, medical cost and dependence on medication may decrease **quality of life**.
- The choice of healthy behaviors such as **physical activity**, eating nutritious foods including a diet rich in **fruits & vegetables** and **avoiding tobacco** use can prevent or reduce the impact of many chronic conditions.

Issue #2: Mental Health

- Mind and body are inseparable. Mental health is **fundamental** to total health.
- Mental disorders are the **leading cause of disability** in the U.S. for ages 15-44 (NIMH).
- A range of treatments exists for most mental disorders but nearly **half of all Americans** who have a severe mental illness **do not seek treatment**. Stigma and cost are two major barriers to care (NIMH).
- In 2011, 30% of Mecklenburg **teens** surveyed reported feeling sad or hopeless (YRBS).
- In 2012, when asked about mental health—stress, depression, and problems with emotions—almost **14% of adults said their mental health had not been good** for 8-29 days in the past month (BRFSS).

Issue #3: Access to Care

- Being uninsured can have a profound negative impact on health and financial well-being.
- Per the 2012 US Census, over **150,000 people were uninsured** in Mecklenburg County.
- 37% of the uninsured people ages 16-64 **worked full-time jobs**.
- The **Affordable Care Act (ACA)** will offer options to some of this population.
- NC chose not to expand Medicaid coverage; people in this group will not be eligible to participate in the ACA insurance market place and will **continue to be dependent on free and low cost clinics or the Emergency Department**.

Issue #4: Violence

- Violence affects all **ages, races and ethnicities** causing death, injury & disability.
- Deaths resulting from firearms, other assault and child abuse represent the physical aspect of homicide. However, exposure to violent behaviors such as **bullying and domestic violence** can cause emotional harm leading to injury or death.
- There were 60 homicides in 2011; homicide was the **2nd leading cause of death for children** and young people ages 1-24; 5 of the homicides were under age 5, including 1 infant; 12% of homicides were the result of domestic violence.
- In 2011, 13.6% of high school students reported **dating violence**; this number had **increased 37%** since 2005 (YRBS).
- In 2011, 19% of high school students reported ever being **bullied** on school property and 16% reported being **cyber-bullied** (YRBS).