



## Progress on CHIP

## Community Health improvement Plan Update for 2021 – Teen Births

Proposed Strategy/Intervention/Action	Accomplishments
Maintain/enhance medically-accurate, culturally appropriate comprehensive reproductive health and safety educational programming delivered through health and physical education classes in Cleveland County Schools (Strong Teens Life Skills based on <i>Making Proud Choices</i> )	<p>January-June, 2021, 303 youth served through programming at Crest Middle and Shelby Middle Schools; 83% of students attended at least 75% of classes; no classes delivered</p> <p>August-December 2021, 205 students served through programming at Burns High School and Kings Mountain High School; 85.8% of students attended at least 75% of classes</p> <p>December 2021 “booster” classes covering STDs, pregnancy prevention and healthy relationships provided to students at Crest High School</p> <p>July-December 2020 due to COVID; students completed pre- and post-tests with the following results:</p> <p>75% knew where to access contraceptives</p> <p>96% would abstain to avoid getting an STI</p> <p>92% would abstain to avoid pregnancy</p> <p>90% would abstain because pregnancy would make future plans harder to reach</p> <p>87% indicated condoms were good to prevent pregnancy</p> <p>78% indicated condoms were good to prevent STIs</p>
Identify/engage in opportunities to deliver reproductive health and safety education to youth and young adults in traditional and non-traditional settings in Cleveland County	Limited opportunities for education in optional settings due to COVID-19 guidance;
Maintain/enhance the work of the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition to address multiple issues associated with teen pregnancy and teen births	Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition held two virtual and two in-person meetings during fiscal year to review progress in meeting state benchmarks; members participated in developing messages for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Month May 2021
Maintain/enhance the work of the Strong Teens Youth Council to engage youth and parents in messaging about reproductive health issues	Youth Council unable to meet during fiscal year due to school limits on extracurricular activities due to COVID-19 guidance;
Maintain/enhance services delivered through the Cleveland County Public Health Center Prenatal Clinic including increasing early access to prenatal care and classes on pregnancy-related topics	348 patients served in 3,088 visits to Prenatal Clinic averaging 11 visits per day; 8 patients participated in childbirth classes; 71 telehealth visits with patients primary March-May 2020; 57 patients attended post-partum visits within recommended time frame after birth; supported increased use of CCHD Dental Clinic by prenatal patients; created new video highlighting clinic services
Maintain/enhance services delivered through the Cleveland County Public Health Center Family Planning Clinic including preconception and reproductive life planning	1095 unduplicated patients served by Family Planning Clinic; COVID did not appear to be a barrier for patients to come to clinic for in-person visits; no in-person outreach due to COVID; participated in drive-through HealthCare Olympics summer 2021; distributed other educational materials to prenatal patients and NFP clients
Engage and collaborate with other women’s healthcare providers to encourage preconception and reproductive life planning as well as early access to prenatal care	Outreach to Shelby Women’s Clinic for family planning, case management for high- risk pregnancies (CMHRP) and Dental Clinic services;

Engage faith communities, especially through the Faith/Community Nurse Program, to deliver messages about preconception and reproductive life planning and to encourage early prenatal care	Limited activities – provided educational materials – due to sponsor (Atrium HealthCare) restrictions on community activities
Maintain/enhance Nurse-Family Partnership and other home visiting programs to serve low-income, high risk mothers during pregnancy and after delivery	Served 52 families total during fiscal year with 26 new enrollments; 15 babies born to participants; two drive-by graduation events to guarantee no-contacts during COVID; organized drive-through HealthCare Olympics serving 120+ cars and providing information from ten community organizations serving families and children
Design and deliver community messaging campaign regarding issues around teen pregnancy, teen births, access to care and healthy mothers/babies using multiple media formats	<p>Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition produced a series of Frequently Asked Questions about reproductive health posted on Facebook and web site as FAQ Fridays;</p> <p>Coalition provided a series of Facebook posts during October featuring local residents to promote Let's Talk Month with positive messages about parent/child communication about reproductive health;</p> <p>Coalition also sponsored print and electronic updates of <a href="#">Private Matters – A Student Resource Guide</a> and <a href="#">Parent Survival Guide</a> distributed to students and parents in Cleveland County Schools;</p> <p>Billboard supporting family planning services along with ads on Facebook and campus electronic sign;</p> <p>New video produced to highlight services of Prenatal Clinic; collaborated with Dental Clinic to provide materials to patients and Shelby Women's Clinic</p>
Explore the potential for innovative programming such as Centering Pregnancy cohorts and/or using community health workers to support pregnancy prevention and prenatal care services in targeted communities	<p>Case management for high-risk pregnancies (CMHRP) opened 352 episodes for individuals identified as high priority with all insurers under Medicaid transformation process; served additional patients identified by providers as having issues with substance abuse, depression, chronic health issues and previous pre-term births</p> <p>Engaged with Shelby Women's Clinic and Boys and Girls Club with information;</p>
Explore opportunities for telehealth services delivered to female residents for pregnancy prevention, prenatal care and supportive services after delivery including physical, social and behavioral needs	Telehealth visits provided by Prenatal Clinic, Nurse Family Partnership, CMHRP; limited telehealth engagement from Family Planning Clinic

Community Health Improvement Plan Update for FY 2021 - Tobacco

Proposed Strategy/Intervention/Action	Accomplishments
<p>Deliver tobacco prevention interventions, in-person or virtually to students enrolled in Cleveland County Schools</p> <p><a href="#">Too Good for Drugs</a> to 7<sup>th</sup> grade students in health and physical education classes;</p> <p>Teachers trained to deliver <a href="#">Catch My Breath</a> program on e-cigarettes and vaping to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students</p>	<p>Too Good for Drugs: delivered five classes (10 sessions each class) to 7<sup>th</sup> grade students</p> <p>Trained 31 individuals to deliver Catch My Breath: Boys &amp; Girls Club staff, CCHD staff, physical education teachers at Burns High School, Shelby Middle School and King Mountain Intermediate School</p>
Ensure that smoke-free/tobacco-free policies in the county include e-cigarettes and other electronic products in their definition of tobacco products	Current policies include information on electronic tobacco products; planning revisions in 2022 to include synthetic nicotine products
Develop, implement and maintain a comprehensive tobacco messaging program directed to both adults and youth using a variety of media, including evidence-based options specifically developed for target populations	Implemented segments of specific media campaigns using billboards, social media and school media to parents and students (middle and high school); used Truth Initiative, CDC Vital Signs, Escape the Vape and When the Smoke Clears; also distributed information in print and social media on Quitline accessibility

Facilitate delivery of multiple options for tobacco cessation programming to county residents including but not limited to pharmacotherapy, counseling, group cessation classes and telephone and text-based messaging formats	Initiated follow-up with Atrium HealthCare staff to institute tobacco cessation delivered through Atrium providers and practices – focus on adult patients; opened discussions with school health and school administrative staff members for delivery of tobacco cessation assessments/curriculum on-site through one-on-one contact and virtual opportunities
Actively participate in the Tobacco 21 campaign to increase the minimum legal tobacco age to purchase and/or publicly consume tobacco products to age 21 years	Produced and contracted for billboards supporting Tobacco 21 initiative; four billboards in county for 12-month period; reached approximately 18,000 individuals
Develop, implement and maintain episodic programming to target populations including educational materials and classes, health fairs and special events (ex: Great American SmokeOut, Kick Butts Day, Menthol Free Sunday, National Night Out, Tobacco Awareness Month)	<p>Provided specific education to retail tobacco merchants through SYNAR program – made 112 visits for education/materials to merchants, conducted environmental scans for 13 Vape Shops in the county;</p> <p>Participated in HealthCare Olympics drive-through event to distribute education materials with over 120 cars participating in the event – focus on information to families;</p> <p>Provided special programs on COVID/tobacco use to participants at Senior Centers</p> <p>Delivered Student Diversion interventions to nine students for vaping violations in Cleveland County Schools</p> <p>Provided information on Menthol Free Sunday to churches participating in the Minority Health Council</p> <p>Participated in National Night Out activities in Shelby and Kings Mountain with educational materials</p>

Health Department staff members were affected by the appearance first of the Delta variant and then by the Omicron variant as they continued to deliver clinical services to patients. Staff also participated in multiple mass vaccine clinics as well as led testing efforts in the county. Both surgical and N95 masks were delivered to targeted populations at intervals throughout 2021 and comprehensive messaging consisting of social media updates, press releases and billboards were used to keep residents of the county informed about COVID-19 transmission, mitigation efforts and availability of testing resources and vaccines/boosters.

## Morbidity and Mortality Changes Since Last CHA

Current mortality data for Cleveland County is drawn from the [North Carolina County Health Data Book](#) for 2021.

### Leading Causes of Death – Unadjusted Death Rates per 100,000 Population – 2015-2019

Cleveland County				North Carolina			
Rank	Cause of Death	# of Deaths	Rate per 100,000	Rank	Cause of Death	# of Deaths	Rate per 100,000
1	Diseases of the heart	1,231	253.1	1	Cancer – all sites	97,965	190.9
2	Cancer – all sites	1,213	249.4	2	Diseases of the heart	94,498	184.1
3	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	440	90.5	3	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	26,861	52.3
4	Cerebrovascular disease	300	61.7	4	Cerebrovascular disease	25,344	49.4
5	Alzheimer’s disease	249	51.2	5	Alzheimer’s disease	21,256	41.4
6	Other unintentional injuries	247	50.8	6	Other unintentional injuries	21,107	41.1
7	Diabetes mellitus	235	48.3	7	Diabetes mellitus	14,612	28.5
8	Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, & nephrosis	156	32.1	8	Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, & nephrosis	9,922	19.3

9	Pneumonia and influenza	146	30.0	9	Pneumonia and influenza	9,888	19.3
10	Septicemia	139	28.6	10	Motor vehicle injuries	7,775	15.1
	<b>Total All Deaths</b>	<b>6,186</b>	<b>1271.8</b>		<b>Total all Deaths</b>	<b>462,786</b>	<b>901.7</b>

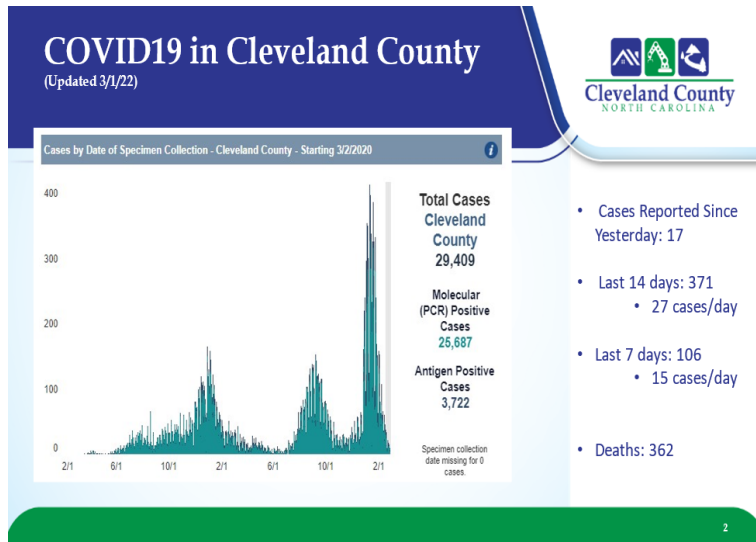
Source: State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina County Health Data Book 2021

Motor vehicle injuries ranked #2 for ages 00-19 years, #2 for ages 20-39 years and #8 for 40-64 years in Cleveland County. The local troop of the NC Highway Patrol has launched an initiative for more comprehensive patrolling of two-lane roads throughout the county where many of the motor vehicle injuries have occurred. Disparities continue to exist in death rates for African-American, non-Hispanic residents in the county in six areas: 222.3/100,000 for diseases of the heart, 67.4/100,000 for cerebrovascular disease, 190.3/100,000 for cancer-all sites, 62.5/100,000 for diabetes mellitus, 51.2/100,000 for nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis and 52.4/100,000 for Alzheimer's disease. Death rates for male residents outpace those for female residents in diseases of the heart, cerebrovascular disease, cancer – all sites with the exception of breast cancer, diabetes mellitus, chronic lower respiratory disease (more males use tobacco), chronic liver disease, nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis, and all other unintentional injuries (mainly unintentional poisoning). Females in the county exhibit a higher death rate (52.1/100,000) for Alzheimer's disease. There were 70 unintentional poisonings in the county from 2015-2019 for a rate of 16.6/100,000 compared to a state rate of 20.8/100,000. There were a total of 82 suicides (16.4/100,000) and 40 homicides (9.4/100,000) in the county from 2015-2019 compared to the state rates of 13.4/100,000 for suicides and 6.8/100,000 during the same time period. Risk factors affecting morbidity in Cleveland County include an aging population, overweight/obesity/physical inactivity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and tobacco use. All or some combination of these factors are present in many residents of the county.

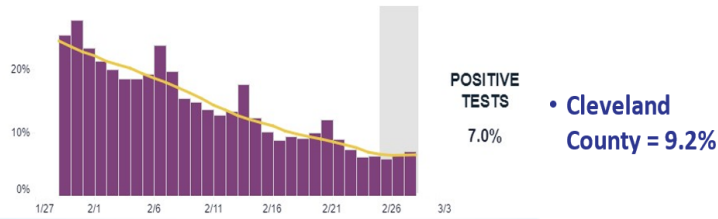
Teen pregnancy rates continue to fall in the county from 41.4/1000 in 2019 for teens 15-19 to 30.6/1000 for the same age group in 2020. The rate dropped significantly for white, non-Hispanic teens from 36.8/1000 in 2019 to 22.8/1000 in 2020. However, the rate for repeat pregnancies among all teens rose from 19.7/1000 in 2019 to 23.2/1000 in 2020. Both the number of cases and the rates increased for Chlamydia from 2019 (644 cases, 657.5/100,000 rate) to 2020 (657 cases, 670.8/100,000). An increase also occurred in the cases/rates for Gonorrhea from 2019 (312 cases, 318.5/100,000 rate) to 2020 (333 cases, 340.0/100,000 rate). Both cases and rates dropped for diagnoses of early syphilis and HIV.

The Cleveland County Health Department has played a major role in the county's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. CCHD has served as a major testing site for county residents throughout 2021 and worked with partner Kintegra Health to provide drive-through mass testing events on weekends during periods of high demand. CCHD has also provided mass vaccination clinics, first on-site at the Health Department facility and later on a drive-through basis using the Cleveland County Fairgrounds to accommodate even larger numbers of residents. Atrium HealthCare also conducted a major drive-through event in February. When booster shots became readily available, CCHD staff again conducted drive-through events. Currently the Health Department schedules testing five days a week at its facility and schedules vaccines and boosters through regular clinic service hours. The Health Department also maintains a resource list for alternate testing and vaccine/booster sites throughout the county.

A review of data around COVID-19 in the county reveals the following as of 3/1/2022:

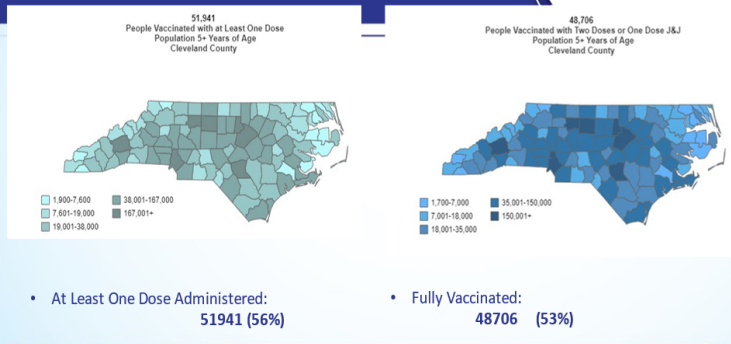


## Percent Positive Lab Results



3

## Vaccinations in Cleveland County (5+ eligible)



7

## Emerging Issues Since Last CHA

COVID-19 continued to drive service delivery by the Cleveland County Health Department in calendar year 2021. During the first half of the year, CCHD staff members concentrated on mass vaccination clinics as well as ramping up testing for county residents. School health staff nurses continue to complete testing and contact tracing for students enrolled in Cleveland County Schools and worked on the vaccine clinics as well. During the second half of the year, CCHD staff coped with the increase in COVID-19 cases with renewed efforts to get county residents vaccinated and boosted and increased testing capacity as well. CCHD staff also worked with county officials to mitigate the potential for even high case numbers with the cancellation of the Cleveland County Fair in September and the postponement of additional county-wide events such as the fall Livermush Festival. CCHD staff provided guidance to municipalities, faith communities and other organizations to reduce the potential for additional COVID-19 outbreaks.

Access to food resources continued to be an issue due to COVID-19 cases and the reluctance of many individuals to return to the workplace. CCHD staff updated and expanded the listing of food pantries in the county as well as the congregate meal settings that continued to offer carry-out meals to participants. Food insecurity rates rose to 20% of county residents with 8% of residents having limited access to healthy foods. 57% of students in Cleveland County Schools qualified for free or reduced lunches during the 2021 calendar year. Obesity rates for adults over 25 years of age continued to rise in 2021 from a self-reported rate of 31% in 2019 to 37% in 2021. Excessive drinking rates also rose slightly from 16% self-reported in 2019 to 17% in 2021. However, community benefit revenues from the ABC stores in Shelby and Kings Mountain increased contributions to the budget of the Community Organization for Drug Abuse Prevention during 2021. Adult tobacco use also increased from 18% self-reported by adults over age 25 in 2020 to a rate of 24% in 2021.

Mental health issues also increased since the last CHA was published in 2019. During 2021, the Ollie Harris Center for Behavioral Health, operated by Partners Behavioral Health MCO to serve residents of Cleveland County, was closed due to planned construction on the Health and Human Services Campus. The Ollie Harris Center previously served as a hub for mental health services operated by private providers and provided improved access for mental health clients to the col-located services offered by the Health Department and the Department of Social Services. The hub also served as a contact point for additional services provided by Partners through their ten-county service region. By August 2021 all of the private providers had secured alternative office space in the county which complicated the transportation needs of this population. Closure of this hub also meant that no Partners employees were available in the county for immediate mental health services. The location of two Kintegra Health Services facilities in Kings Mountain and Boiling Springs offered limited access to behavioral health services through that system.

Access to primary care services and to specialty care has also emerged as an issue since the last CHA in 2019. Individuals postponed primary care services for a variety of reasons – limited access by providers, on-going transportation issues and loss of employee health insurance plans as well as fear of even going to a healthcare provider office during the pandemic. Hospitals in the county were overwhelmed by COVID-19 cases and were forced to postpone elective procedures for patients. The opening of the two Kintegra locations eased this issue to a degree but all providers in the county found themselves dealing with staff shortages and patient compliance due to ongoing fears about COVID-19.

The Cleveland County Health Department is pleased to report that no initiatives or services were discontinued during the 2021 calendar year. Some services were slowed and staff were repositioned in other areas needing support and some services were reduced due to guidelines established by outside entities such as school administration but no services were eliminated due to the pressure of working through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Clinical services and selected health education activities continued on a limited basis through the majority of 2021 but started to become more robust during the last quarter of the year. Clinical units such as communicable disease (including STD clinic) and environmental health never slowed in their provision of services while prenatal services, family planning services, child health clinic and dental clinic experienced a decrease in patient encounters. To combat this decrease, staff members in child health and prenatal areas used a combination of increase telehealth as well as face-to-face encounters to encourage compliance with scheduled appointments. The Nurse Family Partnership program also relied heavily on telehealth encounters rather than home visits to remain engaged with the patients in this highly intensive program to ensure healthy outcomes for mothers and babies. Health educators were able to engage in limited classroom encounters in spring 2021 and more robust program delivery in the second semester of 2021 to provide reproductive health and safety instruction in middle and high schools in the county. Educators trained in substance abuse prevention programming also began to work with students in a variety of classroom settings during the second half on 2021 as well. While CCHD-sponsored coalitions suspended in-person meetings for much of the year, participants were able to access continuing information/education activities through Zoom or TEAMS meetings. CCHD also increased messaging through social media outlets and began the development of a series of videos developed for distribution through YouTube and Facebook. Finally, CCHD staff worked with telecommunication students and faculty at Cleveland Community College to produce a weekly program segment featuring the latest information and guidance on COVID-19 for residents in the county. This particular program has now transitioned to a monthly format entitled "For Your Health" to keep residents informed about emerging health issues in the county.

New initiatives were underway at the Cleveland County Health Department during calendar year 2021.

- New partnerships were developed with StarMed and Kintegra Health Services to meet the demand for increased testing and vaccination services in the county throughout the year.
- A partnership with Kintegra Health culminated in co-locating a behavioral health specialist from their staff to deliver behavioral health and substance abuse treatment first to patients in prenatal clinic and second to patients in other clinical areas based upon availability. This co-location of services is critical in increasing CCHD's ability to meet patients where they are and to eliminate the issue of transportation in providing comprehensive service.
- Development of Access Meds, a community pharmacy program created by the Pharmacy staff of the health Department to provide services for eligible underserved, uninsured or underinsured and low-income Cleveland County residents. The program will be open to Cleveland County residents who meet eligibility guidelines and whose prescriptions may be filled for a \$5 fee per 30-day supply if their medication is on the formulary. The program is set to begin with a soft-opening in January 2022.
- Co-location of the Department of Social Services into the existing Health Department/Ollie Harris Center facility to offer a more complete "one-stop-shopping" experience for county residents who need assistance. This has required major relocation of Health Department offices initially to begin construction on the second floor of the facility with the entire project forecasted to be complete sometime in 2023.
- Development of a new strategic plan for the Cleveland County Health Department with the plan framework developed through an intensive process involving both managers and staff from all units of the Health Department. This plan has been designed to prioritize both internal and external needs of the Health Department through 2023.
- Development of a new tobacco treatment initiative in collaboration with Cleveland County Schools to offer assessment, counseling and nicotine replacement therapy with parental permission to students enrolled in the school-based health centers located in the four high schools across the county. Initiation of this collaborative program is set for early 2022.

Finally, the Cleveland County Health Department was able during 2021 to reinstate the Diabetes Clinic to serve identified uninsured, underinsured and indigent patients in the county through the addition of new staff members.

Staff members of the Cleveland County Health Department look forward in 2022 to continuing to serve residents of the county with cost-efficient and high-quality services to positively impact health choices of all residents of the county.

## Actions

Name	Assigned To	Status	Due Date	Progress
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