

Rowan County

2016 State of the County Health Report

Rowan County



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

State of Rowan County's Health

Required each year between the Community Health Assessments, the State of the County Health (SOTCH) report is part of Rowan County Health Department's accreditation process. This report is intended to:

- Heighten awareness about health issues relevant to Rowan County and North Carolina
- Bring attention to areas where policy and environmental changes, partnering initiatives and resources would help create a healthier and stronger community
- Describe local efforts that impact local health issues and quality of life of our community
- Summarize recent progress that addresses the health priorities identified in the 2015 Community Health Assessment
- Identify common ground for joining together to solve community health issues and identifying some of the local initiatives and partnerships that are working to address these issues

The 2016 SOTCH Report is designed to deliver information to you that is concise and easy to understand. The data that is included must be accurate, come from reliable sources, be measurable over time, be comparable at a county and state level, and compatible to the needs of our community. As you read this report, you are encouraged to compare Rowan County data to the state's data and then determine for yourself where the community is doing better, the same, or worse than the state. It is quite evident that one's overall health and well-being are improved when environmental and policy changes are made and financial support is offered.

Health Concerns Selected As Priority Issues

The 2015 Rowan County Health Department (RCHD) Community Health Assessment (CHA) was conducted in partnership with Novant Health. The CHA identified "major issues" in the county and described how those issues were identified. In RCHD's CHA process, it was imperative that the health-related priorities were acknowledged. The following table identifies three health-related priorities per the 2015 CHA, selected to collaborate and address in the forthcoming years. Action plans to address the following priority issues were submitted to NC Department of Public Health in December 2016 for approval.

2015 Community Health Assessment Health Priorities

- 1 Tobacco
- 2 Prescription Drug Abuse
- 3 Obesity

List of Priority Issues

- Preventing Chronic Disease via healthy behaviors – reducing tobacco use
- Promoting the reduction of prescription drug abuse
- Preventing Chronic Disease via healthy behaviors – reducing obesity

Leading Causes of Death in Rowan County – 2011-2015

Rank	Cause	# of Deaths	Rate
1	Cancer	1,687	197.1
2	Diseases of the heart	1,578	186.6
3	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	524	61.7
4	Cerebrovascular diseases	428	51.2
5	All Other Unintentional injuries	324	44.4
6	Alzheimer's disease	313	37.4
7	Pneumonia and influenza	272	32.4
8	Diabetes mellitus	237	27.6
9	Septicemia	164	19.2
10	Nephritis, nephritic syndrome and nephrosis	156	18.7
	Total Deaths – All Causes	7,787	939.3

*Leading Causes of Death by County of Residence, All Ages: Ranking, Number of Deaths, and Rates per 100,000 population.
Source: State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina*

The table above confirms the need to address the chronic diseases that contribute to our leading causes of death. Healthy Rowan's Community Health Action Plans (CHAPS) address tobacco usage, prescription drug abuse and obesity, which all contribute to chronic disease, yet are preventable.

Health Priorities - Community Health Action Plan Progress

Priority Issue: Mental health and related issues including prescription drug abuse.

Objective: Reduce the number of medication and drug poisoning deaths in Rowan County by 3% by 2019.

Interventions: **Narcan Rescue Kit Distribution Program and Medication Take-back boxes.**

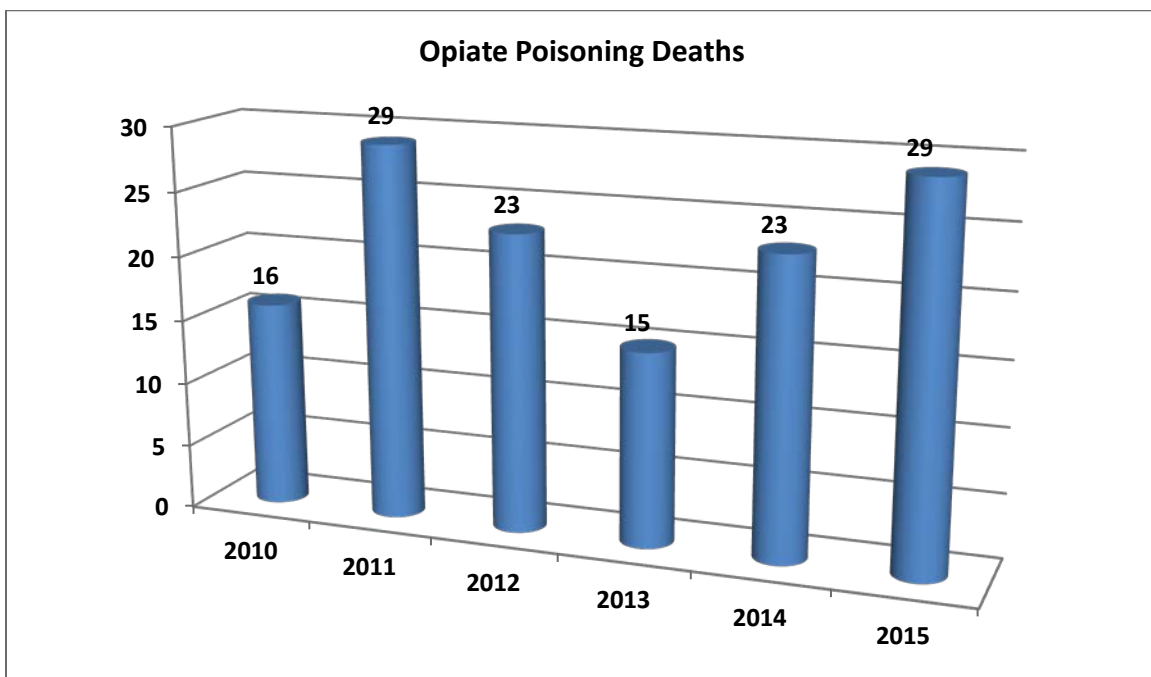
- **Narcan Rescue Kit Distribution Program** - RCHD will prepare and distribute 200 Narcan Kits to participating pharmacies in Rowan County
 - Kits will include: Educational materials, treatment options, CPR shield, latex gloves, a reference for reporting to www.naloxonesaves.org, and a tracking system for Rowan County
 - Local pharmacies will sell the Narcan which will then be distributed with the FREE Narcan Nasal Spray Rescue Kit by the pharmacists
 - RCHD has created a Standing Order so they may too distribute Narcan, along with the eight other local pharmacies.
- **Medication Take-back boxes** - In Rowan County, the Public Health Department has partnered with local law enforcement to install 9 secure collection boxes for unwanted, unused, and expired prescription and non-prescription medications at multiple municipalities throughout the county.

Progress:

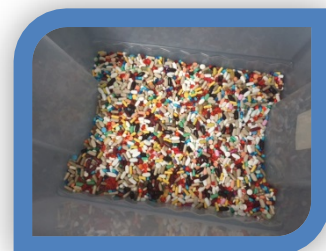
- 135 Rescue Kits have been prepared for distribution to the 9 participating pharmacies. Each Rescue Kit contains the following educational information:
 - What is Narcan and Proper Storage Information
 - CPR Barrier Shield
 - Single pair of surgical gloves
 - Copy of the North Carolina's Good Samaritan Law

- Quick Start Guide on how to use the Narcan Nasal Spray(English and Spanish)
 - Daymark Recovery Services Brochure
 - 24-Hour Access/Crisis Line Brochure from Cardinal Health
 - After an Emotional Crisis Brochure from Cardinal Health
- Rowan County's Emergency Services and Telecommunications have also been made aware that these kits will soon be within local homes.
- With this knowledge, anyone that places a call to 911 for an overdose and/or for a nonresponsive person will be asked if they have a Narcan Rescue Kit
- From July 2016 through November 2016, law enforcement has removed 192 pounds of unwanted, unused, and expired prescription and non-prescription medications from 5 of 9 secure medication take-back boxes that were installed at multiple municipalities throughout the county.

Total Opiate Deaths 1999-2015 for Rowan County was 309. This represents a 625% increase over 16 years. There has been an 81% increase in Opiate Poisoning Deaths since 2010.



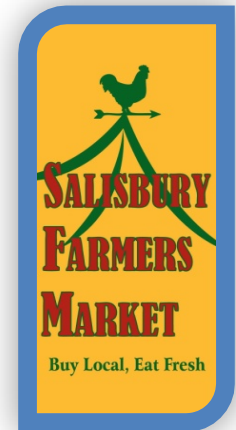
<http://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/DataSurveillance/poisoning/AllOpiatePoisoningDeathsbyCounty-1999-2015.pdf>



Priority Issue: Obesity and related diseases/conditions including diabetes, kidney disease, hypertension, high cholesterol, heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, and joint replacement.

Objective: Increase the number of individuals that report consuming fruits and vegetables five or more times per day by 3% by 2019

Interventions: **Cooking Matters at the Store, Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), and Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More (FFESMM).**



- **Cooking Matters at the Store** – Cooking Matters at the Store (CMATS) grocery tours are one time, hands-on nutrition tours designed to help low-income adults make healthy, affordable choices at the supermarket. Two curriculums are available: Cooking Matters at the Store for Adults and Cooking Matters at the Store for WIC Parents. Tours cover key shopping skills such as reading food labels, comparing unit prices, and shopping for fruits and vegetables on a budget to ensure families get healthy meals at home. To implement the program, the Rowan County Health Department will partner with the Inter-Faith Food Shuttle in Raleigh, N.C. and become a Satellite Partner for the program, and conduct six Cooking Matters at the Store tours for low-income adults by 2019.
- **Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)** - The WIC FMNP is associated with the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, popularly known as WIC. The WIC Program provides supplemental foods, health care referrals and nutrition education at no cost to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding post-partum women, and to infants and children up to 5 years of age, who are found to be at nutritional risk. The WIC FMNP was established by Congress in 1992, to provide fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC participants, and to expand the awareness, use of, and sales at farmers’ markets. RCHD WIC will increase the number of redeemed farmers’ market nutrition vouchers from 40% (2014) to 45% in Rowan County by 2019.
- **Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More** – “Faithful Families” promotes healthy eating and physical activity in communities of faith. Resources for the program include a 9-session Faithful Families curriculum and the Planning Guide for Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More (Planning Guide). The Faithful Families curriculum is co-taught by nutrition and physical activity educators and trained lay leaders from faith communities in small group sessions. Lay Leaders bring the spiritual elements into each session, through discussion questions and "Thinking it Through" prompts in each lesson. Two local churches will implement environmental and policy changes into their place of worship that supports a healthier lifestyle by 2019.

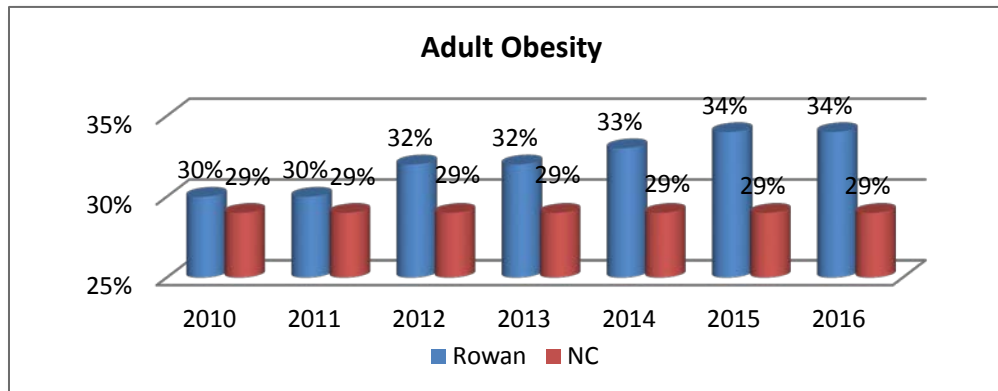
Progress:

- **Cooking Matters at the Store** – Contact has been made with the Inter-Faith Food Shuttle to:
 - Receive an introduction to the program; Determine that a Satellite Partnership was the right fit for our organization; Determine that Cooking Matters at the Store was the best course option for RCHD, and, Request a Partnership Satellite Agreement which, upon receipt, will be reviewed, signed and initiated.
- **Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)** – Per the state WIC Vendor manager, there have been some difficulties getting current data reports due to the implementation of Crossroads Software for the WIC programs. The most recent data available (2014) reports a redemption rate of 40.1%.
 - The RCHD WIC Director received a call from the state wanting to verify the contact person and address of the agency so they have the correct demographics to send the FMNP check stock.

Received registration information for the NC FMNP required webinar, and has registered for the April 12, 2017 webinar. Vouchers have not yet been received.

- **Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More** - In collaboration with North Carolina Cooperative Extension (Rowan County), planning was initiated to attend online training in March 2017 to meet NC State requirements for FFESMM course instruction.

Adult obesity in Rowan County from 2010 until 2016 has increased 13%, while the state has remained the same.



Source: County Health Rankings www.countyhealthrankings.org

Per the American Cancer Society, “Each year, about 589,430 Americans die of cancer; around one-third of these deaths are linked to poor diet, physical inactivity, and carrying too much weight.” Many of these deaths related to diet and activity factors could be prevented by making efforts to make healthier food choices, increase physical activity, and losing unwanted pounds. (*American Cancer Society, Last Medical review: 06/30/2014;* <http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/dietandphysicalactivity/diet-and-physical-activity>).

Priority Issue: Preventing chronic disease via healthy behaviors – reducing tobacco use.

Objective: By 2019, reduce the percentage of Rowan County adults who report smoking by 3%.

Interventions:

- **Tobacco Free Rowan (TFR)** - (www.tobaccofreerowan.com) This website is maintained to provide information to encourage local businesses and organizations to voluntarily adopt tobacco-free policies. Tobacco use remains the number 1 preventable cause of death.
- **Young Lungs at Play (YLAP)** – An initiative of RCHD which works with partnering agencies in eliminating children’s exposure to secondhand smoke in public parks and playgrounds. “Young Lungs at Play” began as collaboration with the City of Salisbury to adopt a tobacco-free ordinance for all city parks and recreational facilities and grounds.
- **Project Alert** – Project Alert is a free classroom-based substance abuse prevention program for 7th and 8th graders that is proven to reduce the experimental and continued use of drugs. Through a series of comprehensive lessons, Project Alert motivates students against drug use, cultivates new non-use attitudes and beliefs and equips teens with the skills and strategies they’ll use to resist drugs. Part of the curriculum addresses tobacco use.

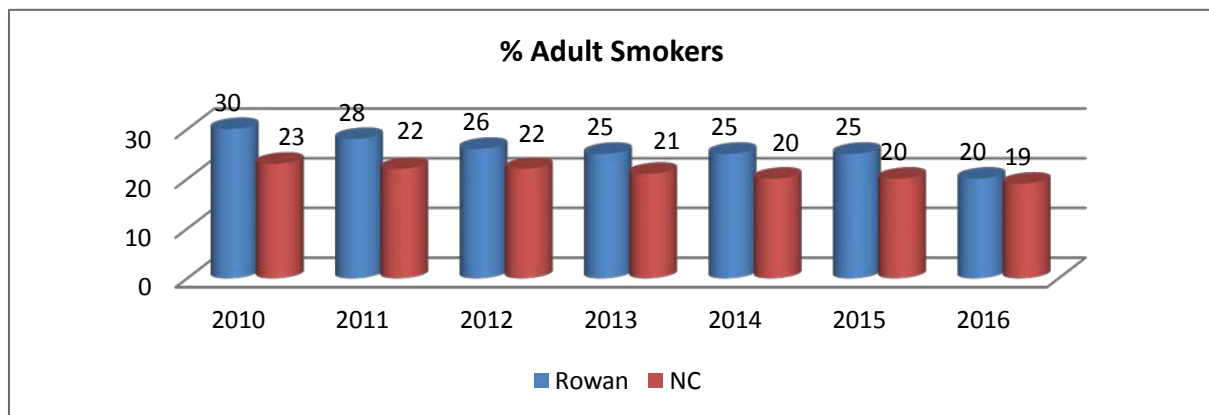
- **Catch My Breath-** Catch My Breath is a best-practices youth E-cigarette prevention program developed by the Michael & Susan Dell Center for healthy living at UHealth School of Public Health. The program provides up-to-date information to teachers, parents and health professionals to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to make informed decisions about the use of E-cigarettes.

Progress:

- **Tobacco Free Rowan (TFR)** – TFR was developed and launched in late spring of 2016. Tobacco Free Rowan had its first application for membership in May 2016 from Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency.
- **Young Lungs at Play (YLAP)** – YLAP has assisted area municipalities in developing tobacco-free policies, and provided signage to promote tobacco-free policies in Spencer, East Spencer, Rockwell, Landis, China Grove in addition to the Brenner Crossing Apartments.
- **Project Alert** – Project Alert was initiated in fall 2016 at a Middle School within the Rowan-Salisbury School System as part of the 7th and 8th grade students Health Education class. 85 students received 11 lessons in two classes per week. The same Middle School has been offered the classes in the fall of 2017. One of the 8th grade classes saw a positive increase from pre to post testing of 14.3%.
- **Catch My Breath** – A local middle school principal, within the Rowan-Salisbury School System, has been contacted and provided with written information regarding the Catch My Breath program. This program may be offered to that school's students in the fall of 2017.

Data trend analysis shows a 33% decrease in adult smokers in Rowan County from 2010 to 2016. This trend may be attributed in part to the passage of legislation prohibiting smoking in bars and restaurants that became law January 2, 2010. This was a major step in improving the public health as tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in North Carolina (*Healthy North Carolina 2020; American Cancer Society*). Across the U.S., smoking bans have contributed to a percentage drop in hospitalizations in 2012 for various chronic diseases: -15% for heart attack; -16% for stroke and -24% for respiratory disease (*Circulation Journal, Cathy Payne, USA TODAY*). A meta-analysis study in the Lancet (March, 2014) found that smoke-free legislation was associated with reductions in pre-term birth and hospital attendances for asthma ([http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(14\)60082-9/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(14)60082-9/abstract)).

There has been a 33% decrease in adult smokers in Rowan County from 2010 to 2016.



Source: County Health Rankings www.countyhealthrankings.org



Left: Mike Jones, a business owner in Granite Quarry, donated use of a billboard space and Healthy Communities funding paid for the billboard directing citizens to the local drop box.

On the previous pages, readers are able to examine the priorities established from the 2015 Community Health Assessment and the progress made addressing those issues. Through the years, one of the many challenges faced by the Rowan County Health Department Community Health Education staff has been extracting practical information from existing data. The following tables contain data relative to Rowan County citizen’s health, economy, social well-being, and education. Reader’s may then compare county to state data and determine the significant issues that affect overall health and well-being. The Rowan County Health Department is committed to obtaining a better understanding of local health needs, building collaborative relationships in the community and improving conditions for a healthier Rowan County.

–Stephen A. Joslin, RCHD, Community Health Education

Review of Major Morbidity and Mortality Data & Data Trend Analysis

Death Rates for Leading Causes	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2015 NC	Trend Rowan 11-15	% Change Rowan
Cancer – All Sites	229	230.9	246.5	259	253	192.3	Same	10.48
Heart Disease	242	219.3	229.2	221.5	227.8	183.9	Same	-5.86
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	70.3	68.0	84.6	68.5	87	52	Worse	23.75
Cerebrovascular Disease	56.5	60.8	62.9	65.6	63.2	50.1	Same	11.85
Alzheimer’s Disease	51.4	63.7	39.8	35.3	35.9	37.9	Better	-30.15
Pneumonia and Influenza	29.0	39.1	53.5	33.9	41	21	Worse	41.37
Diabetes Mellitus	30.4	33.3	26.7	39	41.7	27.3	Worse	37.17

Nephritis, Nephritic Syndrome and Nephrosis	21.7	21.7	23.1	18.9	27.3	18.1	Worse	25.8
Septicemia	22.5	18.8	22.4	25.2	29.5	15.5	Worse	31.11

Source: State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina (Mortality Statistics Summaries) <http://www.schs.state.nc.us>

Cancer Death Rates	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2015 NC	Trend Rowan 11-15	% Change Rowan
Trachea, Bronchus & Lung	70.3	79.6	68.0	88.7	71.9	54.4	Same	2.27
Female Breast	34.3	27.1	32.8	21.3	25.5	27.1	Better	-25.65
Colon, Rectum & Anus	23.9	17.4	24.6	23.1	22.3	16.7	Same	-6.69
Prostate	22.0	10.3	22.0	16.1	18.9	18.5	Same	-14.09

Source: State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina (NC Vital Statistics Vol. II) <http://www.schs.state.nc.us>

Trends in Key Health Indicators	2004	2009	2014	2014 NC	Trend Rowan 04-14	% Change Rowan
Number of Primary Care Physicians per 10,000 population	5.5	5.8	5.7	8.6	Same	3.63
Number of Dentists per 10,000 population	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.7	Same	-2.77
Number of Registered Nurses per 10,000 population	72.2	79.3	93.6	105.5	Better	29.63
Number of Physician Assistants per 10,000 population	2.0	3.3	4.3	4.8	Better	115

Source: North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services; Division of Public Health/State Center for Health Statistics; North Carolina County Trend Reports, February 2017. <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/data/keyindicators/reports/Rowan.pdf>

Socio-Economic Factors	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016 NC	Trend Rowan 10-14	% Change Rowan
Unemployment*	12.8%	11.6%	9.9%	8.3%	6.7	6.1%	Better	-47.6
Children in Poverty*	29%	29%	27%	28%	29%	24%	Same	0
Children in single-parent households*	33%	34%	37%	39%	39%	36%	Worse	18.1%
Uninsured adults*	19%	21%	19%	21%	19%	18%	Same	0
High school graduation**	81.1%	82.9%	80.9%	85.1%	83.3%	85.9%	Same	2.71
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2015 NC	Trend Rowan 11-15	% Change Rowan
Free and Reduced Price meals (PreK-Early College)***	61.8%	63.4%	63.5%	63.1%	63.5%	57.9%	Same	2.75

*Source: County Health Rankings www.countyhealthrankings.org

**Source: High School Graduation, NC Department of Public Instruction, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/cohortgradrate>

***NC DPI Free and reduced Meals Application Data, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/resources/data/>

Emerging Issues & New Initiatives



- Healthy Rowan** - Went through reorganization in 2015. The committee is comprised of an executive committee and a full committee. The executive committee members include the Rowan County Public Health Director, CEO of Novant Rowan, Director of the Community Care Clinic, a Rowan County Commissioner, the Mayor of the City of Salisbury, and the Director of Elderly Services at St. John's Lutheran Church. The full committee has 25 additional community leaders that have decision-making capabilities. Community leaders are essential to building a secure and healthy community. The committee has selected the following items to focus on: chronic disease, specifically related to obesity and physical activity; and mental health, specifically related to substance issues and use. Each committee member brings something unique to Healthy Rowan; and those who serve, provide valuable input and expertise at our monthly meetings.
- Salisbury Greenway** – Stretching for 3.3 miles, the greenway is a recreational area and linear park located in the City of Salisbury for walking, biking and jogging. The City of Salisbury Engineering Department has obtained \$700,000.00 from the Transportation Alternative program for the section of the Greenway from Catawba College/Grant's Creek to Kelsey Scott Park. The local match will be \$175,000.00. This project is slated for completion in 2018. An additional grant was awarded for the FEMA No Rise Certificate and bridge design criteria with footings at Catawba College for \$40,500.00 with a Carolina Thread Trail match of \$4,500.00. An additional grant was received by The City of Salisbury Engineering from Carolina Thread Trail for \$91,062.00 with a match of \$10,118.00 for the .63 miles from Kelsey Scott Park to Jake Alexander Boulevard.
- Carolina Thread Trail** - The Salisbury Greenway Committee has been promoting and partnering with local municipalities to adopt the Carolina Thread Trail. By adopting this plan, it would allow Rowan County to be connected to fourteen other counties throughout North and South Carolina. If Rowan County proceeds with this, a total of 1500 miles (100 miles/county) would be laid out as a network of greenways and conserved corridors between the two Carolinas. In Rowan County alone, there are 107.8 miles of proposed trails, which includes 70 miles of "blueways" or waterways. By adopting the plan, financial support and grants for the creation of trails and/or greenways becomes more readily available.
- Affordable Care Act (ACA)** – Per our data trend analysis, the percentage of uninsured adults in Rowan County remains higher than the state average, and the number of physicians in Rowan County is lower than the state average. The lack of health insurance continues as a barrier preventing/limiting access to health care. As the future of the ACA in question, so is continued coverage for adults who might otherwise be uninsured.

- **Cabarrus Rowan Community Health Centers, Inc.** – As Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), each of their 4 clinics currently has a minimum nominal fee of \$35.00 (subject to change without advanced or written notice) for an office visit. They continue to offer a sliding fee scale for uninsured, underinsured, and insured patients in accordance with applicable federal guidelines/regulations. 2 FQHCs are in Rowan County: China Grove Family Medicine and North Rowan Family Medicine (Spencer).
- **Prescription Drug Abuse** – Continues to be an issue of concern in our county. Rowan County Sheriff’s Department, NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and Rowan County Department of Environmental Management host annual “Operation Medicine Drop-Off” events. Ruffy-Holmes Senior Center, along with Home Instead Senior Care, partnered to host “Operation Medicine Cabinet” which provided residents with a “drive-through and drop-off” event for unused prescriptions and over-the-counter medications.
- **Food Deserts** – Access to healthy foods continues to be an issue in Rowan County (<http://www.communitycommons.org/>). Per the 2016 County Health Rankings (<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>), 9% of our population has limited access to healthy foods, that is, they are of low-income and do not live close to a grocery store. Additionally, 17% have Food Insecurity. Utilizing healthy Communities funding, RCHD continues to promote local farmer’s markets and fruit and vegetable stands.
- **Persons in Poverty** - Per County Health Rankings, 29% of Rowan County children are living in poverty while the statewide percentage is 24%. Our unemployment rate is 6.7%, which is higher than the state average of 6.1%. (<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>)
- **Rowan Helping Ministries (RHM)** – In 2015-2016, RHM sheltered 516 different men, women and children, clothed 10,942 individuals, served 87,827 prepared meals and distributed 695,939 pounds of groceries to 20,048 individuals. (<http://www.rowanhelpingministries.org/>). Additionally, RHM is operating a satellite location in Mt. Ulla, serving clients in western Rowan County, is thriving and self-supporting.
- **Air Pollution** – Per the 2016 report from County Health Rankings (www.countyhealthrankings.org), Rowan County averaged 12.7 daily density of fine particulate matter while the state average was 12.3. (<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/north-carolina/2016/measure/factors/125/data>) Fine particulate matter is defined as particles of air pollutants with an aerodynamic diameter less than 2.5 micrometers. These particles can be directly emitted from sources such as forest fires, or they can form when gases emitted from power plants, industries and automobiles react in the air. The relationship between elevated air pollution, particularly fine particulate matter and ozone, and compromised health has been well documented. Negative consequences of ambient air pollution include decreased lung function, chronic bronchitis, asthma, and other adverse pulmonary effects. RCHD continues an Air Quality Awareness Flag Program (AQAFP). Each day The AFAQP uses multi-colored flags to indicate the outdoor air quality. The flags come in four colors based on the Air Quality Index (AQI) from the North Carolina Division of Air Quality. Each day a flag is raised at the health department that corresponds to the color of the AQI for Rowan County. The color of the flag indicates the level of outdoor activity recommended for that day. Day care centers and schools are notified weekdays when outdoor activities should be limited or avoided for sensitive children and adults. This would include people with respiratory diseases such as asthma or heart disease. (<http://www.rowancountync.gov/GOVERNMENT/Departments/HealthDepartment/HealthInformation.aspx>)

Rowan County Health Department looks forward to continuing to serve our community and to improve the health and lifestyles of our citizens. If you’d like more information on any of these issues in this report, please feel free to contact us at Rowan County Health Department, Attention: Community Health Education, 1811 East Innes Street, Salisbury, NC 28146, Phone: 704-216-8777; Fax: 704-216-7968.