

# Sources of Data for Community Profiles: A Resource Guide for Community Health Assessment in North Carolina

State Center for Health Statistics

March 2014

## Purpose

For years, the State Center for Health Statistics has prepared the *County Health Data Books* associated with Community Assessment. The required public health community assessment and the resulting required Community Assessment Document are now on a three- or four-year cycle, replacing the two-year cycle that was in place for more than 20 years. Each local health department is now assigned to a specific multi-year cycle. Every year, a group of counties/local health departments engage in community assessments. The process involves community members surveying available data and determining their priority health problems, programs to improve these problems and areas for legislative action each year. The main purpose of these *County Health Data Books* in the past has been to provide local public health departments with quantitative health-related data about their county as a basis for making decisions about public health programs.

In recent years, the community diagnosis or community health assessment process has expanded beyond the activities of local public health departments to encompass hospitals, voluntary health agencies and many other community organizations. A major impetus behind this expanded community health assessment has been the development and activities of Healthy Carolinians Task Forces across the state.

As the focus of community health assessment has been broadened, there is a need for a wider range of data about communities. Through the *County Health Data Books* and other publications, the State Center for Health Statistics has provided county-level health data on topics such as mortality, live births, fetal deaths, abortions, cancer morbidity, communicable diseases, hospital discharges, birth defects, behavioral risk factors and public health programs. The purpose of this document is to provide the reader with access to other data about communities that have not traditionally been included in publications of the State Center for Health Statistics. Examples would include data on housing, economic status, the environment, education, crime, mental health, child abuse and social services. Factors such as these are often important determinants of physical health and set the context for public health problems and interventions. A broad approach to community health is also consistent with the spirit of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, which was established to integrate the provision of health and human services programs in North Carolina.

Following are some sources of data about communities in North Carolina. In most cases, the source contains information for counties or other geographic sub-areas of the state, with statewide data for comparison where available.

Sources of data that provide information only for the state as a whole are generally not included. This listing of data sources is divided into two categories: data available on the Internet and contacts to organizations with data.

## County-Level Data Available on the Internet

Most North Carolina county/district health departments now have websites. A list of health departments, as well as their contact information and website addresses are available on the North Carolina Association of Local Health Directors website: [www.ncalhd.org/county.htm](http://www.ncalhd.org/county.htm).



### [www.shepscenter.unc.edu](http://www.shepscenter.unc.edu)

The **Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research** has county-level data on its website, especially in relation to health manpower. From the main page, click on “Data” and then “North Carolina Health Professions Data System.” Then click on “Download Data” and there are county-level tables for different categories of health manpower. Especially useful are the “State and County Profiles,” which can be accessed on the left-hand side of this page.



### [www.countyhealthrankings.org/north-carolina](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/north-carolina)

The **County Health Rankings** website provides access to 50 state reports, ranking each county within the 50 states according to its health outcomes and the multiple health factors that determine a county’s health. Each county receives a summary rank for its health outcomes and health factors and also for the four different types of health factors: health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors and the physical environment. Each county can also drill down to see specific county-level data (as well as state benchmarks) for the measures upon which the rankings are based. The County Health Rankings

are a key component of the Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health (MATCH) project. MATCH is a collaboration between the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** and the **University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute**.



### [www.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr)

The **Division of Health Service Regulation** in the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services collects data for each hospital and nursing home in the state through the annual re-licensure process. Directories listing all regulated facilities by service type are available for download.



### [www.ncdhhs.gov/dma](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dma)

The **Division of Medical Assistance** in the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is the state Medicaid agency in North Carolina. It produces an annual report with some county-level data called *Medicaid in North Carolina Annual Report*. Many of its reports are now available on its website. From its main page, go to Publications to view its annual report, as well as additional Medicaid data and information.



### [www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas)

The **Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services (MHDDSAS)** in the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services collects statistics from state-operated mental health facilities across the state. Annual reports, containing facility and county-level information, are available on community mental health centers, state psychiatric hospitals, alcohol and drug treatment centers, mental retardation centers and other mental health facilities. To view their reports, from the main page, go to Statistics and Publications.



### [www.ncdhhs.gov/dss](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss)

The **Division of Social Services** in the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services collects information in a number of human services areas, including child abuse and child protective services, Food Stamps and the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. To view its statistical reports, from its main page, click on “Statistics and Reviews.” You can then choose to select data regarding Child Welfare, Child Support, Food Stamp Program or Work First.



### [www.scorecard.org](http://www.scorecard.org)

This site is maintained by the **Environmental Defense Fund**. It allows one to search by ZIP code and provides information by county on what chemicals are being released into the neighborhood environment by manufacturing plants, which of these chemicals are potentially the most harmful, and what companies are responsible. The site also provides maps of locations of pollution sources.



### [www.ncchild.org](http://www.ncchild.org)

**NC Child: the Voice for North Carolina’s Children** (formerly the North Carolina Action for Children) has a website that provides county-level information on child health and well-being. Areas covered include demographics, physical well-being, intellectual well-being, social well-being and economic well-being. Extensive county-level data are available in its *North Carolina Children’s Index* which includes more than 75 indicators of child and youth well-being. It also provide links to the KIDS COUNT Data Center at <http://datacenter.kidscount.org> which allows users to access maps and tables containing data at both state and county levels.



### [ehs.ncpublichealth.com/hhccehb/cehu/lead/ncllead.htm](http://ehs.ncpublichealth.com/hhccehb/cehu/lead/ncllead.htm)

North Carolina state law requires all laboratories doing business in North Carolina to report all positive blood lead test results for children less than six years of age. Once fully implemented, **NC Lead Surveillance System (NC LEAD)** will provide direct access to clinical and environmental data.



### [nchip.n3cn.org](http://nchip.n3cn.org)

The **North Carolina Community Health Information Portal (NC-HIP)** provides county-level data on the health and healthcare of the population. In addition to Community Characteristics and Community Health Indicators, the site provides Medicare Indicators, Medicaid Population Profiles, Medicaid Cost and Utilization data and CCNC Quality Measures.



### [www.nccfwdvc.com](http://www.nccfwdvc.com)

The **North Carolina Council for Women/Domestic Violence Commission** compiles information on domestic violence, sexual assault and rape prevention programs. Its website provides a variety of county-level data on domestic violence, including the number of calls, the number of clients served, education/training and shelter services use. Click on “Statistics” from the main page.



### [www.agr.state.nc.us/stats](http://www.agr.state.nc.us/stats)

The **North Carolina Department of Agriculture** (919-856-4394) website has county-level statistics related to agriculture, including crop and farm income and other agricultural economic data. Click on “County Estimates.”



### [www.nccommerce.com](http://www.nccommerce.com)

The **North Carolina Department of Commerce** (919-733-4151) has a website that contains a variety of useful data for each county in the state. From the main page select “ACCESSNC” and click on “Community Demographics” to access economic data from the “Custom County Reports” tab. Data can be downloaded into Excel.

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### [www.dpi.state.nc.us](http://www.dpi.state.nc.us)

The **North Carolina Department of Public Instruction** (919-807-3300) collects a variety of information related to education in North Carolina, much of which is available through its website. From the top of the main page, select “Data & Statistics” and then the *NC Statistical Profile*. This report contains detailed educational data at the county level. This page also has a link to Education Statistics Access System (ESAS) – a Web-based interactive data extraction and distribution tool designed to enable anyone with access to the Internet to extract the basic data for the North Carolina school systems, create custom reports and then download.

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### [www.ncdot.gov/nctransit](http://www.ncdot.gov/nctransit)

The **North Carolina Department of Transportation** (919-733-2520) has a website with information on public transit services for counties and cities across North Carolina. A scroll-down list is provided to choose the geographic area you are interested in. This is a sub-page of the general North Carolina DOT website ([www.ncdot.gov](http://www.ncdot.gov)).

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### [www.ic.nc.gov](http://www.ic.nc.gov)

The **North Carolina Industrial Commission** in the Department of Commerce collects data on work-related injuries closed under the Workers’ Compensation Act. Data are collected on the worker, the injury and the employer, and are available at the county level. In addition, it has

searchable databases which enable users to query its data at: [www.ic.nc.gov/database.html](http://www.ic.nc.gov/database.html).

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### [www.nccommerce.com/lead/data-tools](http://www.nccommerce.com/lead/data-tools)

The **North Carolina Labor and Economic Analysis Division** (919-705-1500) collects a variety of information related to employment, occupations, industries, wages and unemployment in North Carolina. There are links to labor force statistics, occupational information such as employment and wages, industry information, as well as information access tools and links to statistical sources.

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### [www.ncruralcenter.org](http://www.ncruralcenter.org)

The **North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center, Inc.** serves as a resource for rural people and communities. The center serves the state’s 85 rural counties, with a special focus on individuals with low to moderate incomes and communities with limited resources. Their website hosts a “Rural Data Bank” which includes County Profiles as well as the ability to perform custom data searches.

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### [www.osbm.state.nc.us/ncosbm/facts\\_and\\_figures/state\\_data\\_center.shtm](http://www.osbm.state.nc.us/ncosbm/facts_and_figures/state_data_center.shtm)

The **North Carolina State Data Center** (SDC) maintains a comprehensive website with a great deal of data available by county. Most useful is LINC (Log Into North Carolina) which provides Web access to over 1,300 data items from state and federal agencies. The site includes the ability to query Census data, including information on housing and on the demographic, social and economic characteristics of the population. These data are available for very small geographic areas. In addition, via its LINC query system, it provides data on vital statistics and health, social and human services, education, law enforcement and a variety of other topic areas.

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### [www.odum.unc.edu/odum](http://www.odum.unc.edu/odum)

The **Odum Institute for Research in Social Science** (919-962-3061) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill provides a variety of public opinion poll and other data through its website. See especially the Data Archive section where under Data Holdings you will find North Carolina data. Also accessible from the Data Archives section are North Carolina Vital Statistics data, where complete public use data files for births, deaths and other vital events can be downloaded for further analysis. Full documentation of these files is provided. Also, much of the other data through this site can be downloaded into a variety of file formats. Though the data from this site are primarily for the state and the nation as a whole, some county-level information is available.



### [www.ncdoj.gov/About-DOJ/State-Bureau-of-Investigation.aspx](http://www.ncdoj.gov/About-DOJ/State-Bureau-of-Investigation.aspx)

The **State Bureau of Investigation** collects detailed information on crimes that occur in North Carolina, and has a variety of county data available on its website. See particularly the section with links to “Crime Statistics” and the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data by county for several years. Some crime indicators are also included in the LINC data system, described in the State Data Center section above. For questions about the crime data or to make special requests, contact: SBI-crime-reporting@ncdoj.gov or (919) 662-4523.



### [www.schs.state.nc.us](http://www.schs.state.nc.us)

The **State Center for Health Statistics** (919-733-4728) has maintained a website for over a decade. This site describes the programs and services of the State Center, and offers a plethora of county-level data that can assist communities in performing their assessment. Most useful in this regard is the Interactive Health Data which can be found here: [www.schs.state.nc.us/interactive](http://www.schs.state.nc.us/interactive). Additionally, the State Center continues to generate the *County Health Data Book* annually.

The latest edition of the *Data Book* can be found at: [www.schs.state.nc.us/schs/data/databook](http://www.schs.state.nc.us/schs/data/databook).

The State Center also offers additional information by county such as the recent addition of our biannual *Trends in Key Health Indicators* report, which presents graphs depicting county and statewide trends for select health measures: [www.schs.state.nc.us/schs/data/trends/pdf](http://www.schs.state.nc.us/schs/data/trends/pdf).

Other county-level information, such as the *North Carolina Health Statistics Pocket Guide* and *Leading Causes of Death*, can also be accessed on the SCHS website from this page: [www.schs.state.nc.us/data/county.cfm](http://www.schs.state.nc.us/data/county.cfm).



### [www.ncgov.com](http://www.ncgov.com)

This is the **State of North Carolina** website. Some of the state department websites described below can be accessed through this main state home page. In addition, there are links to many other state agencies from this North Carolina home page, and many of these state agency websites have links to other websites related to their topic area. Click on “Agencies” from the main state home page.



### [www.hsrc.unc.edu](http://www.hsrc.unc.edu)

The **University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center** collects data on motor vehicle crashes, including alcohol involvement and seat belt use, as well as other information related to highway safety. Its NC Crash Data Query website: [www.hsrc.unc.edu/crash](http://www.hsrc.unc.edu/crash) enables users to create tables reflecting crash, vehicle and person/driver information for crashes occurring in North Carolina. All of the data are available by county, city, Highway Patrol area or NCDOT division. HSRC also maintains the North Carolina Alcohol Facts (NCAF) website: [www.hsrc.unc.edu/ncaf](http://www.hsrc.unc.edu/ncaf), a separate query system specific to alcohol-related crashes and injuries. In addition, special research publications prepared by the HSRC are available for download from its Research Library.

## Contacts to Other Organizations with Data

A good place to start in collecting community data is in your own community. The following local organizations often have useful information for developing a community profile.

- County Planning Department
- Chamber of Commerce
- County Department of Social Services

In addition, there are 16 **Regional Councils** across the state. According to the NC Regional Councils' website, these regions "administer state funds for community and economic development, serve as area agencies on aging and are affiliates of the NC State Data Center." Following is a list of these Regional Councils with the counties they cover, their phone numbers and Web addresses.

[www.ncregions.org/about-us](http://www.ncregions.org/about-us)

### Region A:

Southwestern North Carolina Planning and Economic Development Commission – Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon and Swain counties

(828) 586-1962

[www.regiona.org](http://www.regiona.org)

### Region B:

Land of the Sky Regional Council – Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania counties

(828) 251-6622

[www.landofsky.org](http://www.landofsky.org)

### Region C:

Isothermal Planning & Development Commission – Cleveland, McDowell, Polk and Rutherford counties

(828) 287-2281

[www.regionc.org/IPDC/web.cfm?CID=324](http://www.regionc.org/IPDC/web.cfm?CID=324)

### Region D:

High Country Council of Governments – Ashe, Alleghany, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey counties

(828) 265-5434

[www.regiond.org](http://www.regiond.org)

### Region E:

Western Piedmont Council of Governments – Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba counties

(828) 322-9191

[www.wpcog.org](http://www.wpcog.org)

### Region F:

Centralina Council of Governments – Anson, Cabarrus, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly and Union counties

(704) 372-2416

[www.centralina.org](http://www.centralina.org)

### Region G:

Piedmont Triad Regional Council – Alamance, Caswell, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Guilford, Montgomery, Randolph, Rockingham, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin counties

(336) 904-0300

[www.ptrc.org](http://www.ptrc.org)

### Region J:

Triangle J Council of Governments – Chatham, Durham, Johnston, Lee, Moore, Orange and Wake counties

(919) 549-0551

[www.tjcog.org](http://www.tjcog.org)

### Region K:

Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments – Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance and Warren counties

(252) 436-2040

[www.kerrtarcog.org](http://www.kerrtarcog.org)

**Region L:**

Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments –  
Edgecombe, Halifax, Nash, Northampton and  
Wilson counties

(252) 234-5952

[www.ucpcog.org](http://www.ucpcog.org)

**Region M:**

Mid-Carolina Council of Governments –  
Cumberland, Harnett and Sampson counties

(910) 323-4191

<http://mccog.org>

**Region N:**

Lumber River Council of Governments – Bladen,  
Hoke, Richmond, Robeson and Scotland counties

(910) 618-5533

[www.lumberrivercog.org](http://www.lumberrivercog.org)

**Region O:**

Cape Fear Council of Governments – Brunswick,  
Columbus, New Hanover and Pender counties

(910) 395-4553

[www.capefearcog.org](http://www.capefearcog.org)

**Region P:**

Eastern Carolina Council – Carteret, Craven,  
Duplin, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico  
and Wayne counties

(252) 638-3185 Ext. 3001

[www.eccog.org](http://www.eccog.org)

**Region Q:**

Mid-East Commission – Beaufort, Bertie,  
Hertford, Martin and Pitt counties

(252) 946-8043

Toll Free: 1-800-799-9194

[www.mideastcom.org](http://www.mideastcom.org)

**Region R:**

Albemarle Commission – Camden, Chowan,  
Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hyde, Pasquotank,  
Perquimans, Tyrrell and Washington counties

(252) 426-5753

[www.albemarlecommission.org](http://www.albemarlecommission.org)



**State Center for Health Statistics**  
Eleanor Howell, M.S., Interim Director

1908 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1908  
(919) 733-4728 • FAX: (919) 733-8485

[www.schs.state.nc.us](http://www.schs.state.nc.us)

**State of North Carolina**  
Pat McCrory, Governor  
[www.governor.nc.gov](http://www.governor.nc.gov)



**Department of Health and Human Services**  
Aldona Z. Wos, M.D., Secretary  
[www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov)

**Division of Public Health**  
Robin Cummings, M.D., Acting State Health Director  
[www.publichealth.nc.gov](http://www.publichealth.nc.gov)



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N.C. Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health  
State Center for Health Statistics  
1908 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1908