### Leading Causes of Death

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause of Death, 2008-2012</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Deaths</td>
<td>Death Rates*</td>
<td>Death Rates*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases of the heart</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>149.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer (all sites)</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>131.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic lower respiratory diseases</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerebrovascular disease</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzheimer’s disease</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other unintentional injuries</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nephritis/nephrotic syndrome/nephrosis</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes mellitus</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumonia and influenza</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintentional motor vehicle injuries</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Age-adjusted death rates

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, 2015

### Top Causes of Hospitalization

- Cardiovascular and circulatory diseases
- Digestive system diseases
- Injuries and poisonings

### Leading Mortality Trends

#### Heart Disease Mortality Trends

#### Cancer (all sites) Mortality Trends

### Living with Chronic Disease

**Overweight and Obesity**

- County: 24%
- Region: 29%
- State: 30%
- Nation: 26%

**High Blood Pressure**

- County: 41%
- Region: 41%
- State: 36%
- Nation: 31%

**High Blood Cholesterol**

- County: 56%
- Region: 34%
- State: 41%
- Nation: 38%

**Diabetes**

- County: 10.9%
- Region: 7.6%
- State: 10.4%
- Nation: 7.7%


*Excludes motor vehicle injuries; includes unintentional poisonings, falls, burns, choking, animal bites, drowning, occupational and recreational injuries*
Our top two causes of death and many of our morbidity statistics of concern are directly affected by physical activity and nutrition.

We aren’t moving enough...
Only 61% of our residents get the recommended amount of physical activity and 37% of county residents say their physical activity is limited in some way (most commonly due to back or neck problems; fracture, bone, or joint injury; arthritis or rheumatism).

...or eating enough healthful foods.
Only 13% reported eating the recommended average of 5 fruits and vegetables per day in the past week.

Supporting Good Nutrition

Cooperative Extension’s Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) – provided education about basic nutrition, making healthy choices, food safety, and importance of physical activity

- 917 limited-resource youth participants:
  - 100% showed improvement in core areas

- 12 families (17% also WIC participants; 92% enrolled in food assistance programs):
  - 90% improved nutrition practices
  - 70% improved food resource management practices
  - 100% increased consumption of fruits, vegetables, or calcium-rich foods

Encouraging Active Living

Bike Rodeos – teaching bike/helmet and pedestrian safety and encouraging physical activity: 4 schools, 1500 students

Walking School Bus – weekly at BES; working on route for BMS

Physical Activity Class – for preschoolers at county library

Waterfalls to Waves – walking initiative coordinated by county parks and rec dept.

KidsGO Festival – promoting fun ways to be active: 250 attendees of all ages

BHS Health Fair – physical activity vendors and nutrition information: 400 juniors and seniors

NEW FACILITY: Transylvania County’s Recreational Facility in Rosman – sports fields and walking trail with restrooms

NEW FACILITY: City of Brevard’s Bracken Mountain Recreation Area – 7.1 miles of mountain biking and hiking trails

“I am really enjoying the classes and I’m so glad that we are taking them as a family. Now, I remind my kids what we learned in class about healthy eating and they don’t argue with me as much about eating their vegetables. And my kids remind me to exercise. Now we go for a walk as a family almost every night!”

--Single mom with two children, taking EFNEP classes at Boys and Girls Club
Most unintentional poisoning deaths occur because of the misuse of prescription narcotics; the age-adjusted death rate for unintentional poisonings in Transylvania County is 25.6 per 100,000 residents. When county residents were surveyed in 2012, nearly 1/3 expressed concern that a family member or friend was taking prescription medications without their knowledge, but almost 2/3 said they did not lock up their controlled substances.

Reducing Rx Drug Abuse

**Drug Take-Back** – efforts in April and September gathered more than 120 pounds of prescription medications for safe disposal; new large drop box in public safety building,

**Lockboxes** – partnered with local pharmacies to distribute 200 lockboxes to promote safe storage of medications

**Naloxone Kits** – available for local law enforcement, family members, pharmacies

**Education** – Red Ribbon Week activities at local schools and Fall Festival in downtown Brevard, at local schools

**Awareness** – held candlelight vigil for International Overdose Awareness Day and screened two films about drug addiction

C.A.R.E. (Community Awareness Recovery Effort) Coalition received $125,000 from Drug Free Communities to reduce youth substance use, with a focus on underage drinking, prescription drug abuse, and emerging “designer” drugs.

Dental caries are the most common chronic infectious disease among children. The decay rate for kindergarteners in Transylvania County is higher than both the state average and the Healthy NC 2020 Target.

Dental pain is also among most common complaints in the local emergency room. However, only 51% of Medicaid children ages 1-5 use any dental services.

Providing Information, Tools, and Access to Dental Care

**Healthy Smiles Dental Health Program** – provides age-appropriate education, oral hygiene kits, screening for dental problems, referrals to a local provider, and help establishing a dental home

- **Preschoolers (infant to 5 years):**
  - 575 received 1 to 3 lessons
  - 289 received dental screening
  - 10 referred for dental treatment

- **Elementary students (2nd and 3rd grades):**
  - 521 received lesson & oral hygiene kits
  - 525 students received dental screening
  - 85 noted to have possible tooth decay
  - 17 referred for dental treatment

**Average number of decayed, missing, or filled teeth among kindergarteners**

- **County:** 1.76
- **State:** 1.5

**Healthy NC 2020 Target: 1.1% or Lower**

Source: WNC Healthy Impact Survey, 2012; NC DPH Oral Health Section, 2009
New and Emerging Issues

- Leadership changes in county agencies
- Closure of hospital’s birthing center
- Lack of mental health services for children
- Responses to outbreaks of communicable diseases (including ebola, pertussis, measles)
- New immunization laws in 2015
- Access to transportation to/from services
- Poverty as barrier to good health
- Legalization of marijuana

New Initiatives

- C.A.R.E. to hire drug prevention specialist to work in county high schools
- Schenck Job Corps considering tobacco-free campus policy
- Community Transformation Project’s Health Impact Assessment is complete and ready to be used
- Transylvania Hunger Coalition is working to bring more fresh foods to residents, especially in the upper end of the county
- Training for law enforcement on use of Naloxone kits

OUR PARTNERS

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP)
ARP Addiction Recovery and Prevention
Brevard College
Blue Ridge Community Health Services / Brevard Health Clinic
Boys and Girls Club of Transylvania County
C.A.R.E. Coalition
Childcare centers
City of Brevard Fire Department
City of Brevard Planning Department
City of Brevard Police Department
Churches
Community Care of WNC
Community Transformation Project (MountainWise)
Dentists
The Family Place
National Alliance on Mental Illness
NC Cooperative Extension Service
NC Department of Transportation
NC Division of Public Health, Oral Health Section
Jarrett Brothers Inc.
Pharmacies
Physician practices
Mental health providers
Mission Health
Project Lazarus
Smart Start of Transylvania County
Smoky Mountain Center
Substance abuse treatment providers
Sycamore Cycles
Transylvania County Parks and Recreation
Transylvania County Planning Department
Transylvania County Schools
Transylvania County Law Enforcement
Transylvania Farmer’s Market
Transylvania Regional Hospital
Western Highlands Network
WNC Healthy Kids
Youth groups