



# 2018 TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Community Results Statement

The Community Health Assessment process will lead to partnerships and strategies that help Transylvania County become a vibrant, engaged community that supports the physical, emotional, and social well-being of all its residents.

## Leadership

Transylvania County uses a traditional leadership model, in which Transylvania Public Health staff coordinate the effort with collaboration from representatives of Transylvania Regional Hospital and other stakeholders in the community.

## Partnerships

Representatives from 32 community partners, including healthcare systems, businesses, education, emergency services, elected officials, law enforcement, government agencies, and other civic and non-profit organizations, as well as healthcare and behavioral health providers and the general public participated in efforts to gather data and determine priorities to create this community health assessment.

Partnerships	Number of Partners
Public Health Agency	1
Hospital/Healthcare Systems	2
Healthcare Providers	7
Behavioral Health Providers	3
EMS Providers	2
Pharmacist	1
Community Organizations	13
Businesses	1
Educational Institutions	2
Public School System	1
General Public	1
Other:	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brevard Police Department</li> <li>• Transylvania County Sheriff</li> <li>• Brevard City Council</li> <li>• Transylvania County Commissioners</li> <li>• Transylvania County Parks and Recreation</li> <li>• Transylvania County Department of Social Services</li> </ul>	

## Regional/Contracted Services

Transylvania County received support from **WNC Healthy Impact**, a partnership between hospitals, public health agencies, and key regional partners in western North Carolina that works locally and regionally to assess health needs, develop collaborative plans, take action, and evaluate progress and impact. This effort is coordinated and supported by **WNC Health Network**, which is the alliance of hospitals working together to improve health and healthcare in western North Carolina.

## Theoretical Framework/Model

This process was guided by tools and support developed by WNC Health Network based on Results-Based Accountability™ (RBA). RBA is a disciplined, common-sense approach to thinking and acting with a focus on how people, agencies, and communities are better off.

## Collaborative Process Summary

In January 2018, regional telephone surveys supported by WNC Healthy Impact began to collect health data from randomly-selected individuals in each county. In April and May 2018, 41 key informants within the community were identified and administered an online survey also supported by WNC Healthy Impact. Additional local data was collected based on specific community questions in the fall and winter of 2018.

In October 2018 and January 2019, Transylvania Public Health hosted two Priority-Setting Workshops attended by 34 community members who discussed and identified top health-related concerns based on size, severity, community concerns, feasibility, and related socioeconomic data.

## Key Findings

Based on the number of residents affected and the severity of the conditions, the biggest health concerns in Transylvania County include overweight/obesity, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, mental health hospital visits, cardiovascular disease, stroke, digestive disease, asthma, COPD, cancer mortality, diabetes, pre-term births, alcohol-related car crashes, and falls among those ages 65 and older.

Key informants were most concerned about the need to address obesity/nutrition/physical activity, substance use, infant and child health, diabetes, general mental health, depression/anxiety/stress, heart disease/stroke, and injury/violence. In addition, they identified housing and early childhood education as socioeconomic factors that were critical to address.

Other Transylvania County data that may be of concern compared to the state or region or due to trends over time include employment, road maintenance, housing, access to care and health insurance, physical activity, nutrition, mental health, substance use, and radon. Violence and crime were much lower in Transylvania County compared to the state and region.

## Health Priorities

Community members prioritized the following health issues as being most important to address:

### **Mental Health & Substance Use**

Mental health and substance use are interconnected to each other and to issues that include suicide deaths, overdose deaths, adverse childhood experiences, depression, anxiety, liver disease, alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes, lung cancer, COPD, and employment. However, residents have limited options for treatment and counseling options, especially for those who have lower incomes, no insurance, or transportation issues. Despite promising community efforts to address substance use and suicide, there is still much work to be done in this area.

### **Healthy Lifestyle**

Transylvania County's top two causes of death and many of our morbidity statistics of concern including obesity, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, certain cancers, and stroke are directly affected by nutrition and physical activity. Residents report having trouble accessing healthy food and getting the recommended amount of physical activity.

### **Other Notes**

Community members also identified overarching themes around the ways that health in Transylvania County is affected by financial stability, including links to housing, education, employment, food security, and access to care. There is an important role that elected officials, policy-makers, businesses, funders, and other community organizations can play in addressing this issue to improve health.

## Next Steps

Next steps include continued collaboration with interested stakeholders to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan that will address the identified priorities and improve health for Transylvania County residents. This CHA document will be shared with stakeholders via email and presentations to selected groups and agencies. It will also be made available for public access at the Transylvania Public Health office and website ([transylvaniahealth.org](http://transylvaniahealth.org)), on the WNC Health Network website ([wnchn.org](http://wnchn.org)), and in the reference section of Transylvania County Library.