

## HEALTH PRIORITIES BY TASK FORCE TOPICS

The Community Health Assessments (CHAs) of twelve North Carolina counties were examined and the priorities were categorized under the three main topics that our Task Force on Rural Health will cover in the coming months. The three topics are: 1. Community and environmental determinants, 2. Health behaviors, and 3. Health services.

The twelve counties surveyed include the eight rural counties in which the Task Force will conduct community meetings, in addition to four other rural counties across the state. The twelve rural counties are: Beaufort, Bladen, Clay, Columbus, Granville-Vance, Halifax, Jackson, McDowell, Montgomery, Rockingham, Transylvania and Wilkes.

### Topic 1: Community and Environmental Determinants

Priority	County/Counties
Success in school	Clay, Granville-Vance
Recreational opportunities/after school activities for youth	Clay, Montgomery
Job opportunities (Note: this was not listed as a final priority, but Montgomery's CHA noted this as a leading concern in the process)	Montgomery

### Topic 2: Health Behaviors

Health Priority	County/Counties
Physical activity and nutrition	Beaufort, Bladen, Columbus, Granville-Vance, Halifax, Jackson, McDowell, Montgomery, Rockingham, Transylvania, Wilkes
Obesity	Beaufort, Columbus, Halifax, McDowell, Montgomery, Rockingham, Transylvania, Wilkes
Diabetes	Bladen, Halifax
Chronic disease (including respiratory)	Bladen, Beaufort, Columbus, Granville-Vance
Heart disease	Bladen
High blood pressure	Halifax
Mental health	Rockingham, Transylvania, Wilkes
Substance abuse	Columbus, Halifax, Jackson, McDowell, Rockingham, Transylvania, Wilkes
Reproductive health/teen pregnancy	Bladen, Granville-Vance, McDowell, Montgomery

### Topic 3: Health Services

Health Priority	County/Counties
Access to healthcare	Columbus, McDowell, Rockingham, Wilkes
Dental health	Transylvania

### Miscellaneous

Health Priority	County/Counties
Cancer	Beaufort, Bladen, Halifax, Rockingham

**STRATEGIES FOR PRIORITIES THAT ADDRESS HEALTH BEHAVIORS**

Health Priority	Strategies
Physical activity and nutrition	<p><b>Strategies that promote both physical activity and nutrition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide education to the community at large related to healthy eating, physical activity, and their benefits. (Beaufort, Halifax, Rockingham, Wilkes)</li> <li>• Promote <b>Eat Smart Move More</b> programming, and is offered throughout the county. (Bladen, Granville-Vance, Halifax, Jackson)</li> <li>• Work with faith organizations to promote physical activity (e.g. establish walking trails) and/or nutrition policies. (Bladen, Columbus, Granville-Vance, Rockingham)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hold a faith and health summit. (Columbus)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Collaborate with community partners to sponsor activities to promote healthy eating and/or physical activity for children. (Beaufort, Rockingham)</li> <li>• Create a Wellness Task Force that focuses on identifying future initiatives and sustaining current ones. (Transylvania, Wilkes)</li> <li>• Form a community Physical Activity and Nutrition Coalition like the one that is part of the Columbus County Farmer’s Market. (Columbus)</li> <li>• Use a Community Healthy Living Index (CHLI) survey tool to measure community support for physical activity and healthy eating. Following the assessment, the local sites develop an action plan that will enable them to plan for policy and environmental change strategies, identify and remove barriers and expand opportunities for healthy living. (McDowell)</li> </ul> <p><b>Strategies that promote physical activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner health departments with schools to offer additional programs:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Promote walk campaigns or walking clubs (Bladen, Montgomery, Rockingham)</li> <li>○ Encourage schools gather data from students using Fitnessgram on BMI and physical fitness. (Wilkes)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Adopt an exercise policy for employees to increase physical activity by allowing them 15 extra minutes, 3 days a week. (Columbus)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Signage to promote physical activity awareness has been distributed to all Columbus County Departments to post. (Columbus)</li> <li>○ Exercise classes are currently being offered to county employees and faith based organizations. (Columbus, Jackson)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Start a countywide fitness challenge like Jackson County’s “Get Fit Jackson” competition. (Jackson)</li> <li>• Improve conditions of current walking trails or build additional ones. (McDowell)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Host events at walking trail sites to increase awareness and benefits of physical activity. (Beaufort)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Provide evidence-based programs to promote physical activity among the elderly like Fit and Strong or Walk with Ease. (Montgomery)</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Strategies that promote nutrition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote healthy eating, all health department sponsored functions where food is served will offer healthy options. (Beaufort)</li> <li>• Host healthy foods tasting event. (Jackson)</li> <li>• Build a community garden. (Jackson, McDowell, Montgomery)</li> <li>• Provide additional nutrition education to students in school. (Transylvania) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide healthy cooking classes to students like Camp Bon Appetite, a week of nutrition education in Bladen. (Bladen, Montgomery)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Apply for grants like the USDA health and nutrition grant to increase fruit and vegetable consumption among students. (Columbus)</li> <li>• Host forums in areas in the county where there are food deserts so community members can assess the situation and develop solutions. (Montgomery)</li> <li>• Create and support local farmers' markets. (Montgomery, Rockingham) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide vouchers for community members to purchase fresh produce at local farmer's market. (Jackson, Rockingham)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Obesity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish and promote health data and/or statistics on obesity rates and health issues at least twice a year. (Beaufort)</li> <li>• Implement energizers program for elementary teachers and provide energizer and recess kits for all teachers on an annual basis to combat obesity. (Halifax)</li> </ul>
Diabetes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create diabetes education and support group (Bladen, Columbus, Halifax, Rockingham)</li> <li>• Increase public awareness about diabetes in the county and provide information about resources to link high-risk populations with appropriate services through attendance at local festivals, health fairs and events. (Halifax) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Offer free blood sugar and cholesterol screening by the county health department and referrals will be made to the individual's health care provider. (Columbus)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Create and mail monthly newsletters to all diabetes patients and the community. (Halifax)</li> <li>• Run diabetes foot care clinic. (Columbus)</li> <li>• Run diabetes eye clinic. (Halifax)</li> <li>• Start summer camps for children at risk for diabetes like Mission Possible Day. (Bladen)</li> </ul>
Chronic disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host community events targeting chronic disease. (Beaufort)</li> <li>• Promote nationally recognized health events (Red Dress Day- February, GASO- November) by sharing information with staff, clients, and at least one community partner. (Beaufort)</li> <li>• Provide at least one staff development activity educating staff</li> </ul>

	<p>regarding chronic disease prevention and/or management. (Beaufort)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send quarterly updates on chronic disease prevention and management through media outlets. (Beaufort)</li> <li>• Sponsor programs that promote healthy lifestyles like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Healthy Bladen Lifestyles Program offers healthy nutrition, physical activity, and overall wellness to participants. (Bladen)</li> <li>○ Girls on the Run (GOTR), a positive youth development program that combines interactive curricula with running to inspire self-respect and health lifestyles in pre-teen girls. (Granville-Vance)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Provide health department clients with counseling/written information regarding dangers of smoking and second hand smoke. (Beaufort)</li> </ul>
Heart disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Columbus County Board of Commissioners passed a smoking policy that prohibits smoking in county buildings and cars. (Columbus)</li> </ul>
High blood pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct public awareness campaigns to educate residents about blood pressure guidelines and stroke warning signs. (Halifax)</li> <li>• Provide monthly free blood pressure and blood sugar screenings to rural communities in Halifax County. (Halifax)</li> <li>• Promote and educate using Power to End Stroke presentation. (Halifax)</li> <li>• Conduct Heart Health Events during heart health month. (Halifax)</li> <li>• Publicize updated hypertension guidelines in area newspapers, local pharmacies, rest homes and Health Link Resource Center. (Halifax)</li> </ul>
Mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate the collaboration of resources by holding regular community mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse stakeholder group meetings which include advocacy groups, consumers, providers and agencies associated with those services. (Transylvania, Wilkes)</li> <li>• Offer community education on mental health. (Wilkes)</li> <li>• Coordinate efforts between physical and mental health providers during the diagnosis process. (Wilkes)</li> </ul>
Substance abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure funding to provide non-insured residents with access to drug and substance abuse counseling at little or no cost. (Columbus)</li> <li>• Provides referrals from community health centers to patients who need drug or substance counseling (Columbus)</li> <li>• Community health center provides education about the dangers of substance abuse to residents. (Columbus)</li> <li>• Participate in annual National Night Out events in Roanoke Rapids to raise awareness about substance abuse. (Halifax)</li> <li>• Promote substance abuse prevention efforts in schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use Not on Tobacco Program and Alternative to Suspension Program through Halifax County Schools. (Halifax)</li> <li>○ Support the Operation Don't Drink and Drive at Halifax County Schools. (Halifax)</li> <li>○ Offer Project Alert – a substance abuse prevention curriculum</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>that covers tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, cocaine and inhalants. (Jackson)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fund Media Detective – a media literacy education program for 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders to prevent or delay the onset of underage alcohol and tobacco use. (Jackson)</li> <li>○ Support local youth to teach others about the effects of alcohol and problems related to drinking. Produce and show a video with youth modeling safe practices for prom and graduation. The PSAs were produced by the students and aired locally and regionally to reduce underage drinking and promote the use of designated drivers by people of legal drinking age. (McDowell)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Host prescription drug abuse lunch and learn series. (Jackson)</li> <li>● Install permanent prescription drug drop off box at local police department. (Jackson, McDowell)</li> <li>● Provide prescription opioid overdose prevention program. (Wilkes)</li> <li>● Install drug court; the Adult Treatment Court in Judicial District 29A is in the third year of accepting participants. Drug Court is a place where instead of prison, addicts receive the right mix of treatment and accountability needed to change their lives. (McDowell)</li> </ul>
<p>Reproductive health and pregnancy outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adopt in-school programs or curricula for sex education and/or pregnancy prevention including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Making Proud Choices (MPC) curriculum for comprehensive sex education and develop partnership between APPCNC and schools for training and implementation. (Granville-Vance)</li> <li>○ Teen PEP (Prevention Education Program) where an advisor trains high school juniors and seniors through a credited course to be effective sexual health advocates for peers. They conduct outreach workshops on a host of topics including unintended pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and other teen health concerns. (Granville-Vance)</li> <li>○ Girls on the Run (GOTR), a positive youth development program that combines interactive curricula with running to inspire self-respect and health lifestyles in pre-teen girls. (Granville-Vance)</li> <li>○ Adolescent Parenting Programs (APP) and other parenting classes at a county high school. (Bladen, Granville-Vance)</li> <li>○ Teen PREP – an evidence-based teen outreach program for middle school students (grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) that can be taken for elective credit and offers intense daily curriculum in addition to a community service component at the end of each semester. (Granville-Vance)</li> <li>○ Working with Working to Institutionalize Sex Education (WISE) program with APPCNC. (Wilkes)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Host Parents Matter sessions with parents to help them better communicate with their children (ages 9-12) about risk behaviors and sex. (Granville-Vance)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Form teenage pregnancy prevention task force/advisory council to develop county-specific recommendations. (McDowell, Montgomery)</li><li>• Utilize Nurse Family Partnership (NFP), an evidence-based nurse home visitation program that improves the health, well-being and self-sufficiency of first-time, low-income parents and their children. (McDowell)</li><li>• Host Teen Outreach Program (TOP) in partnership with the faith community. (Montgomery)</li><li>• Implement Young Moms Connect (YMC), a community support program for young mothers or mothers-to-be to increase self-sufficiency, health maintenance, and parenting skills. (Rockingham)</li></ul>
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