
CONCLUSION

The HNC 2030 objectives and health indicators will help to guide state and local efforts over the next decade to ensure everyone in North Carolina can live the healthiest life possible. The process and framework of the HNC 2030 efforts reflect the desire to gather community input and select health indicators across a wide range of topics that drive health. Decision-makers in the HNC 2030 process sought to highlight key issues of health disparities and health inequities within our state for people across race, ethnicity, geographic location, sex, and poverty level.

Overall, 21 health indicators were chosen across the topics of Social & Economic Factors, Physical Environment, Health Behaviors, Clinical Care, and Health Outcomes. Many of these indicators have not traditionally been considered in the work of public health, including reading proficiency, incarceration rates, housing problems, and employment. Yet, it is clear from growing research that these issues play a very large role in the opportunities people have to make healthy choices for their lives, and in some cases directly impact health outcomes.

Each section of this report included statewide data and “Levers for Change,” yet it is important to remember that many of these issues vary widely on the local level. County-level data provides the best picture of the issues faced within communities, and even still, it is vital to dig deeper into that data to see variances across race, ethnicity, income, and other factors.^{GGG} An overall unemployment rate or teen birth rate does not show the disparities that exist across groups. We encourage counties and communities to look at all available information for their populations to understand where efforts are needed to improve the drivers of health.

Addressing the variety of topics that affect how we live, learn, work, play, and age will require the collaboration of leadership across public health and other sectors. Community-based cross-sector partnerships will be key to addressing the range of HNC 2030 objectives. People who work at the community level understand the specific issues that an area faces and what partners are needed to affect change. Partnerships should include community members impacted by an issue and stakeholders such as public health, health care, business, education, law enforcement, transportation, and housing, to name a few.

As the new decade begins, the NC DHHS and DPH will be developing a population health improvement strategy and resources to be used at the local level. HNC 2030 is intended to be a road map not just for NC DHHS, but for the whole state, including state agencies that may not think of their role as traditionally aligned with health. The broader view of the drivers of health and well-being with attention to health disparities will help make North Carolina a place for everyone to live a healthy life.

^{GGG} The most recent county-level data for HNC 2030 indicators as of publication can be found on the NCIOM website with the electronic version of this report.