| HNC 2030 Scorecard: Mitchell County (2021-2023)



The 2021 Mitchell County Community Health Assessment priorities are:

- Mental Health/ Substance Abuse/ Domestic Violence
- Access to Care/ Use of Services

• Chronic Disease/ Obesity/ Healthy Lifestyles

A key to navigating this scorecard:



- WNC Healthy Impact
- WNC Healthy Impact Data Workbook
- NC DHHS County Health Data Book
- <u>NC DHHS/ DPH CHA Data Tools</u>
- <u>Clear Impact Results-Based Accountability</u>
- Healthy People 2030
- Healthy North Carolina 2030

Community Health Assessment Report

CA HNC 2030 Scorecard: Mitchell County (2021-2023)

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary can be found on pages 6-10 of the 2021 Mitchell County Community Health Assessment.

Mitchell County 2021 Community Health Assessment Executive Summary

Community Results Statement

Our mission is to partner with local agencies to not only identify health needs of our community, but to also explore and develop possible solutions to address health concerns in order to work toward improving health for all residents.

Leadership for the Community Health Assessment Process

Many local organizations assisted the local health department with the creation of this document. Among those were community leaders, public health agencies, businesses, medical community, school systems, and local faith-based organizations and churches. This team worked to identify, collect, analyze, and disseminate information on community assets, strengths, resources, and needs. This document is the result of collaboration between Toe River Health District, WNC Healthy Impact, and the Mitchell County Health Partnership.

Partnerships

A health department-led comprehensive Community Health Assessment (CHA) provides community insight into the health status of the county. Through the use of surveys, focus groups, interviews, community members, local government and business leaders, and health professionals came together to identify and prioritize health issues. Participating in the assessment process put the county in a position to take the next steps in developing policy, environment, and system changes that support their concerns. Currently in Mitchell County there is a coalition to bring together all the organizations and individuals that are committed to improving health in the county. This group consists of motivated individuals who are advocates on behalf of a broad range of community members and can represent appropriately the concerns of various populations within the county. The limited resources available in the county demonstrates a need for a coalition who will take responsibility and provide leadership for promoting and supporting policy, systems and environmental change that support healthy eating, and increase physical activity and prevent tobacco use throughout the county to combat most chronic disease conditions.

Membership Mitchell County Health Partnership

Name	Agency	Contact Informati	ion	
Ron and Libby		PO Box 176	UN	
	Mountain		828-688-	
McKinney,	Community Health	Bakersville, NC	2622	ronmck@frontier.com
Vice Chairperson	Partnership	28705		
Chuck Shelton,	Mountain	PO Box 27	828-688-	Shelton@
Administrator	Community Health	Bakersville, NC	2104	bakersville.com
	Partnership	28705		
Chad Calhoun,	Mitchell County	72 Ledger School	828-688-	
Superintendent	Schools	Rd. Bakersville, NC	4432	ccalhoun@mcsnc.org
		28705		
Amelia Gouge, School	Mitchell County	72 Ledger School	828-688-	
Nurse	Schools	Rd. Bakersville, NC	4432	agouge@mcsnc.org
		28705		
Jennifer Simpson,	Blue Ridge	PO Box 1387	828-682-	
Executive Director	Partnership for	Burnsville, NC	0047	director@mypartnershipforchildren.org
	Children	28714		
Jessica Farley, Health		130 Forest Service		
Promotion Supervisor,	Mitchell County	Dr	828-688-	Jessica.farley@
Chairperson of MCHP	Health Department	Bakersville, NC	2371	toeriverhealth.org
		28705		
		130 Forest Service		
Diane Creek, Health	Toe River Health	Dr	828-765-	diane.creek@
Director	District	Bakersville, NC	2239	toeriverhealth.org
		28705		
Ruthie Styles,	Blue Ridge	215 Pineola St	828-733-	cdm@brpartnership
Community	Partnership for	Newland, NC	2899	forchildren.org
Development Manager	Children	28657		
Kathy Garland, Director	Mitchell Country	152 Ledger School	828-688-	Scdirect061@
of MCS	Senior Center	Rd Bakersville, NC	3019	yahoo.com
		28705		
	Mitchell County	10 S Mitchell Ave		
Eve Kindley, Director	Cooperative	PO Box 366	828-688-	Eve.kindley@ncsu.edu
	Extension	Bakersville, NC	4811	
		28705		
	Mitchell County	Crimson Laurel	828-688-	Sheila.blalock@
Sheila Blalock, Director		Circle Bakersville,	4715	mitchellcounty.org
	Transportation	NC 28705		

Brock Duncan, Director Pam Snyder	Mitchell County Dept. of Parks and Recreation Intermountain Children Services Inc.	Crimson Laurel Circle Bakersville, NC 28705 4929 South 226 Hwy Bakersville, NC 28705 26 Crimson Laurel	828-688- 5901 828-688- 2199	recreation@ mitchellcounty.org Pamsnyder40@ yahoo.com
Donald Street, Sheriff	Mitchell County Sheriff's Department	Circle Bakersville, NC 28705	828-688- 2139	mcsd@ mitchellcounty.org
Amanda North, Program Coordinator	My Health-e- Schools/Center for Rural Health Innovation	11 North Mitchell Ave Bakersville, NC 28705	828-467- 8815	Amanda.north@ crhi.org
Nickey Stamey, Program Director	Mitchell-Yancey Health Families	202 Medical Campus Dr Burnsville, NC 28714	828-682- 6118	director@ myhealthyfamilies.org
Wendy Boone, Director	Department of Social Services	347 Long View Dr Bakersville, NC 28705	828-688- 2175	Wendy.boone@ mitchellcounty.org
Michael Sink, Manager	WTOE Radio Station	749 Sawmill Rd PO Box 744 Burnsville, NC 28714	828-765- 7441	mike@wkyk.com
Schell McCall, Director	Partners Aligned Toward Health	202 Medical Campus Dr #9004, Burnsville NC 28714	828-682- 7899	schell@pathwnc.org
Jessica Zucchino	MYSATF / Partners Aligned Toward Health	202 Medical Campus Dr #9004, Burnsville NC 28714	828-682- 7899	jessica@pathwnc.org
Amber Dellinger	Bakersville Community Medical Clinic	PO Box 27 Bakersville, NC 28705	828-688- 2104	adillinger@mchp.care
Marylee Yearick	Blue Ridge Partnership for Children	215 Pineola St Newland, NC 28657	828-733- 2899	ccrr@brpartnership forchildren.org
Amber Chapman	High Country Area Agency on Aging	468 New Market Blvd Boone, NC, 28607	828-265- 5434	achapman@ regiond.org

Regional/Contracted Services

Our county received support from **WNC Healthy Impact**, a partnership and coordinated process between hospitals, public health agencies, and key regional partners in western North Carolina working towards a vision of improved community health. We work together locally and regionally to assess health needs, develop collaborative plans, take action, and evaluate progress and impact. This innovative regional effort is coordinated and supported by **WNC Health Network**. WNC Health Network is the alliance of stakeholders working together to improve health and healthcare in western North Carolina. Learn more at <u>www.WNCHN.org</u>.

Theoretical Framework/Model

Collaborative Process Summary

Mitchell County's collaborative process is supported on a regional level by WNC Healthy Impact (WNCHI). The Community Health Assessment outlines the community's current health status. Based upon findings, steps have been developed to implement interventions, as well as community resources to address these health issues.

The collaborative process includes input from the community as an important element of the community health assessment process. Our county included community input and engagement in a number of ways: (1) Partnership on conducting the health assessment process; (2) Through primary data collection efforts; (3) In the identification and prioritization of health issues. Community engagement is an ongoing focus for our CHA Leadership Team as we move forward to the collaborative action planning phase of the community health improvement process. Partners and stakeholders with current efforts or interest related to priority health issues will continue to be engaged. We also plan to work together with our partners to help assure programs and strategies in our community are developed and implemented with community members and partners.

Phase 1 of the collaborative process began in January 2021 with the collection of community health data. For more details on this process see Chapter 1 – Community Health Assessment Process.

Key Findings

A community wide 76-questionnaire was conducted to give residents an opportunity to express concerns and opinions about the quality of life in Mitchell County. This included questions about the quality of life, economy, education, health, housing, physical activity, social issues, transportation, and COVID. Surveys were conducted by telephone by a trained interviewer and efforts were made to reach a representative sample of the population. Self-administered surveys were also available online. A total of 244 Mitchell County surveys were analyzed: 200 via telephone interview and 44 via the publicly available weblink.

Some of the major findings that the Mitchell Community Health Partnership discussed in the prioritization process included that 54% of respondents stated that their life has been negatively influenced by substance abuse. An increasing proportion of participants have had more than seven days or poor mental health in the past year and 15% of respondents did not get needed mental health care or counseling in the past year. Three quarters of Mitchell County survey respondents had a Body Mass Index in the overweight or obese range; 39% had been diagnosed with high blood pressure.

In additional to secondary data and survey collection, nine (9) community stakeholders participated in an online key informant survey. Individuals were asked to consider specific health issues, provide comments about social determinants of health, and evaluate the strengths and opportunities of the Mitchell County community. The graphic displays a summary of their ranking of health topics in the community.

During monthly meetings, standards for the Community Health Assessment Process and Accreditation were discussed and reviewed for publication in the 2021 Community Health Assessment. Each member reviewed and approved of the Community Health Assessment Survey and Community Resource Directory included in the assessment. After the analysis was completed, qualitative and quantitative data findings were presented to the Community Health Assessment team. The team reviewed the data and developed the top ten major health issues based upon statistical data and community survey results.

Based on findings from the community survey combined with secondary health data, in November 2021, Mitchell County Health Partnership members identified ten (10) chief health concerns for the county.

Substance Abuse	Obesity Issues
Mental & Behavioral Health	Cancer
Domestic Violence	Addressing 0-5 kids
Access to Care & Services	Addressing homebound elderly
Chronic Diseases	Lack of caregivers

Health Priorities

In November 2021, the CHA Team members participated in a prioritization activity to determine the three leading health concerns to be addressed during this cycle. The worksheet asked that each of the ten concerns be ranked, as to find a top three concerns to take action. The results from the prioritization process are reviewed and discussed at the meeting. The final health concerns

are named as the focus for the next four-year cycle. Results of these worksheets were calculated to come up with the top three priorities, which are as follows:

- 1. Mental Health/ Substance Abuse/Domestic Violence
- 2. Access to Care/ Use of Services
- 3. Chronic Disease/Obesity/Healthy Lifestyles

Next Steps

The 2021 CHA will be disseminated in a variety of ways. To begin, the document will be made available online at http://www.toeriverhealth.org. Hard copies will also be available at the Health Department, local library, and printed upon request. The CHA Facilitator will present the CHA data during a Board of Health Meeting, Health Partnership meetings, Mitchell County Health Department staff meeting, and upon request.

Further steps will be taken including the development of a community health improvement plan based on the findings from the CHA. The CHA Facilitator will convene community members and partners interested in moving forward on the selected health priorities. Action teams will emerge from the selected health priorities and the teams will begin brainstorming evidence-based strategies.

Collaborative action planning with hospitals and other community partners will result in the creation of a community-wide plan that outlines what will be aligned, supported and/or implemented to address the priority health issues identified through this assessment process. The next steps will be to formulate action plans regarding these three prioritized health concerns, starting with determining what is currently going on regarding the top health concerns, and what we would like to see going on regarding these health concerns.

The health partnership will create subcommittees for each health concern and these committees will work on creating collaborative action planning and implementation efforts. Upcoming meetings will be scheduled, and partners will be notified. We will conduct a root cause analyzes and identify possible evidence-based strategies to tackle the health concerns during the action planning process.

While much work has already been done to improve the health of our community's residents, more work is left to do to ensure that Mitchell County is the healthiest place to live, learn, work, and play.

CHA Priorities

The 2021 Mitchell County Community Health Priorities are:

1. Mental Health/ Substance Abuse/ Domestic Violence

2. Access to Care/ Use of Services

3. Chronic Disease/ Obesity/ Healthy Lifestyles

All people have the resources accessible in Mitchell County that they need to live a healthy, happy, productive life.

Experience and Importance

If we are successful in fully achieving this result, we envision Mitchell County where....

- All people are happy and healthy.
- People are thriving in a healthy environment all day long.
- People have access to services, for themselves and family members.

Why is this important?

• Although the rate has decreased over time, a higher percentage of Mitchell County residents were dispensed opioids compared to NC and WNC.

Most

Recent

Period

Current

Actual

Value

Current

Trend

Baseline %

Change

- 54% of survey respondents had been negatively affected by substance abuse.
- The Mitchell County unintentional poisoning mortality rate was higher compared to NC and WNC in 2014-2018.
- 20% of survey respondents reported 7+ days of poor mental health in the past month, a higher proportion compared to previous surveys.
- The county suicide mortality rate is 81% higher than NC and rose 8% since 2012-2016.
- The DV shelter in Mitchell County served 293 clients in FY19-20 and the shelter was full on 26 days out of the year.

Good mental health is more than just the absence of individual mental illness or distress. The social, environmental, systemic, and economic factors of the community we live in and interact with significantly contribute to mental well-being and resilience. Evidence also provides a strong cause and effect relationship between mental health and physical health, and the relationship between mental health and community factors goes beyond individuals. When a community fosters good mental health, it is rewarded with healthy youth, families, schools, workforce, and economy.

NCDPH HNC20301 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Percent of children in NC (Total) with 2 or more ACEs	ⁿ 2023	17.3%	1 ע	-27% ¥
Unemployment (Total): Percent of Population in NC Aged 16 and Older Who are Unemployed but Seeking Work	2023	4.8%	9 لا	-54% ¥
NCDPH HNC2030 Uninsured: Percent of North Carolina population under age 65 without health insurance (Total) - SAHIE	2022	11.2%	3 لا	-26% ¥
Порти ниссозо Drug Poisoning Death Rate in North Carolina (Total): Drug Poisoning Death Poisoning Death per 100,000 population (age-adjusted rates)	s 2023	42.1	→ 1	205% 7
Drug Poisoning Death Rate in Mitchell County (Total): Drug Poisoning Deaths per 100,000 population (age-adjusted rates)	⁰ 2023	33.6	7 1	25% 7

	Most	Current	Current	Baseline %
P Freedom Life	Recent	Actual	Trend	Change
_	Period	Value		

What Is It?

The **Freedom Life Program** helps individuals with criminal records, including those who have been incarcerated, as they work to rebuild their lives and transition back into the community. Many people in our neighborhoods face challenges from their past and lack the support they need to break free from harmful cycles that affect not only themselves but also their families and the community. **Freedom Life** helps provide the spiritual, mental, medical, relational, and practical support necessary to make this transition successful.

By partnering with local organizations and the community, **Freedom Life** offers the resources and guidance that can help justice-involved individuals turn the difficulties of their past into opportunities for a brighter, more hopeful future.

The partners for this program include:

Mitchell County Government
Mitchell County Health Department
Mitchell-Yancey Prevention and Recovery Task Force
Mitchell County Department of Social Services
Mitchell County Sheriff's Department
PATH (Partners Aligned Toward Health)
Mitchell County cooperative Extension
Hope House
Celebrate Recovery
Mountain Community Health Partnership

Progress in 2022-2023

At the moment, Mitchell County Commissioners have decided to discontinue this idea and move in another direction.

Other activities we have been doing to address the use of the Opioid Settlement Funds are:

• Planned and carried out the "Community Learning Process" phase inviting community members to get involved, members that have a live experience with substance use, to tell their story! This could include

family members, current or previous users, service providers on the frontlines, neighbors, those working within organizations providing direct services to the community. The individuals that tell their story, or stories, remain anonymous and the story form is available in both English and Spanish This will generate actionable insights and ideas based on the stories told for making recommendations on addressing substance use in our counties.

- Completed the Mitchell County Opioid Planning Needs Assessment, compiling existing data related to substance use (particularly opioid use) in Mitchell County. This is a support tool to help with decision making around the use of local opioid settlement funds. It should be considered alongside the learnings and recommendations from the concurrent community learning process around opioid and substance use in Mitchell County, as well as other local information-gathering work.
- Held three strategic planning workshops to steer the direction we might need to go with the funds: "Building Capacity", "Refocusing Advocacy and Education Efforts", and "Empowering

Individuals".

- Building Capacity: In these workshop, participants moved from analyzing and thinking about all the creative things that could be done to making decisions about what will be done.
 Participants determined major accomplishments for year one for each strategic direction, then they created a quarterly calendar that established when
 accomplishments will be completed. Finally, the group created 90-day implementation steps for each accomplishment scheduled to begin in the next quarter
- Refocusing Advocacy and Education Efforts: In this workshop, participants were asked to take a realistic look at why this vision is not in place today. Participants were encourages to look beyond the obvious and below the surface at the underlying obstacles to our vision.
- Empowering Individuals: In this workshop, participants were asked to reflect on their shared, practical vision and the blocks and barriers that were identified in the previous two sessions.

Participants were asked to brainstorm substantial actions - actions designed to address obstacles head-on, whether through elimination, mitigation of their impact, or by actively

implementing steps to bring the vision to life.



in numbers, and this is a great opportunity for us to show up as community partners with aligned efforts. The room was filled with highly committed individuals and professionals to support their decision making process. Considering that recent interaction AND your strategic direction event held, including Advocacy Efforts. As a result of this meeting, many of the Commissioners named prevention and work with youth as their priorities for this funding. Whether that speaks to our vision for this funding or not, this is a great chance to provide information and awareness to people with financial decision making power How Much # of presentation/meetings to secure/disperse funding

CO Restart Appalachian Youth to Youth (PATH)

What Is It?

Appalachian Youth to Youth is a leadership and empowerment program that gives young people in Mitchell County the chance to speak up and take action on the issues that matter most to them. The program is inspired by **Youth to Youth International**, a proven program that helps young people develop leadership skills and make positive changes in their communities.

Through **Appalachian Youth to Youth**, students participate in discussions, activities, and experiences that help them grow their ideas and abilities to create change in their schools and communities. By taking part in the program, students learn valuable skills that will help them become role models for their peers and leaders for positive change.

This program gives local students a chance to build leadership skills, form lasting friendships, and have fun—all while preparing for success in school and life. **Appalachian Youth to Youth** is completely free to join, and free transportation home is also provided.

Enrollment for the 2023/2024 school year is open now, and enrollment for the 2024/2025 school year will begin in August 2024. To sign up, contact Tara Wright at **info@pathwnc.org** or (828) 672-7899, fill out the online enrollment form, or ask your school guidance counselor for an enrollment packet.

Partners

The partners for this program include:

Mitchell County Health Department
Intermountain Children Services
Mitchell County Health Partnership
Mountain Community Health Partnership
Partners Aligned Toward Health
SEARCH (Sustaining Essential & Rural Community
Healthcare)
Mitchell-Yancey Prevention & Recovery Task Force
Mitchell County Schools
Mitchell County Department of Social Services
High Country Caregivers

Progress in 2022-2023

- Collaborated with Penland School of Craft for members of Youth to Youth to design an original poster with a positive message—"Enjoy the Little Things". During Penland Community Day in February, the students volunteered in the printmaking studio as hundreds of community members tried their hand at the Vandercook printing press and took home a print of the poster the students had designed.
- Took a field trip to the Mitchell County Animal Rescue to volunteer and spent the afternoon socializing lonely animals, taking dogs out of their kennels for walks in the fresh air and lavishing attention on a litter of seven puppies. It was difficult to tell who was made happier by the visit—the students, the animals or their adult chaperones.

- Identified a community need to improve literacy among young children, students in Youth to Youth built, decorated, and installed a Little Free Library at Riverside Park in Spruce Pine, stocked with children's books in English and Spanish
- Created a rotating bulletin board display in their school which they used to educate their peers on mental health topics such as stress management, anxiety, depression, and healthy coping skills
- Conducted substance use prevention campaigns during Red Ribbon Week. As a part of the campaigns, they read drug and alcohol facts, paired with healthy coping skills and strengths-based suggestions, over the morning announcements for the entire week. Additionally, they hosted a school-wide art contest which gave students the opportunity to creatively express their personal reasons for avoiding substances.
- Voted on community service field trips that match their volunteering interests, which is a part of the service-learning component of Youth to Youth programming. Students have volunteered at the Mitchell County Animal Rescue and the Yancey County Humane Society to provide companionship to lonesome animals. They have also volunteered at the Appalachian Therapeutic Riding Center, Dig In! Community Gardens, and Neighbors Feeding Neighbors Food Ministry.
- Travelled to the Youth to Youth International Conference in Delaware, Ohio. During the conference, students stayed on a college campus, participated in workshops, attended fun social events, listened to inspiring guest speakers, and made new friends from across the country.

A Media Campaign

What Is It?

Conduct a media campaign on public awareness of mental health issues and effects of substance abuse among local officials, Mitchell County residents, and local healthcare providers.

Partners

The partners for this program include:

Mitchell News Jounral
WTOE Local Radio Station
Mitchell County Public Library
Mitchell County Department of Social Services
Mitchell-Yancey Prevention and Recovery
Williams YMCA of Avery County (Mitchell County
Extension)
Partners Aligned Toward Health
Mountain Community Health Partnership
Intermountain Children's Services
Mitchell County Health Department

Progress in 2022-2023

- Dedicated community partners began the planning process for a regional substance use anti-stigma communications campaign. Nine months of listening sessions, advisory group meetings, strategic planning sessions, and product development resulted in a robust understanding of what regional stakeholders wanted from an anti-stigma focused communications campaign. The main takeaway = this work is important and needs to happen!
- Planned a second phase of the campaign thanks to generous funding from Dogwood Health Trust, 5 communities in WNC are piloting
 messages from the See Me WNC campaign. This campaign seeked to reduce stigma related to substance use by promoting stories of
 residents in WNC who have lived experience with addiction. Promoted successes, focused on messages of hope and resilience, and
 connected residents to essential resources were cornerstones for this campaign. In the long-term, we hope See Me WNC lays the
 groundwork for a regional re-understanding of substance use, decreasing and eliminating stigma so people can access the care and
 resources they need

- Conducted the View From Here WNC regional social media communications campaign focused on connecting residents with essential
 resources related to Mental Health, Substance Use, Healthy Eating/Active Living, and COVID/ Flu vaccines. This campaign reached over
 450,000 WNC residents with these important messages. Part of what makes this collaborative campaign so powerful is the local trusted
 messengers who have shared their stories of resilience with residents across the region.
- Launched a Naloxone Survey as part of the regional work in Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder, Dogwood Health Trust created a survey that focuses on the accessibility and availability of Naloxone in WNC. They looked for input from community partners who are currently distributing or using Naloxone (or Narcan or other brands), the reversal agent for opioid overdose, in their work. Efforts to encourage organizations to take this important survey are still underway. We are excited to develop a complete picture of Naloxone availability and accessibility in the region.
- Held a Drug Takeback Day, Crush the Crisis Day, on Saturday, October 28, 2023. HCA is partnering with local law enforcement agencies and Partnership for Substance Free Youth to host Crush the Crisis prescription drug take back events at locations across WNC. Residents had the opportunity to safely and anonymously drop off unused and expired medication for proper disposal any of the participating collection site, at the local hospital.

Access to Care/ Use of Services

If we are successful in fully achieving this result, we envision Mitchell County where				
Experience and Importance				
household stability and health care for all.	Period	Value		
R & has what they need to be healthy. Residents in Mitchell County have	Most Recent	Actual	Current Trend	Change
Mitchell County is a thriving, safe community, where everyone gets along,	Maat	Current	Comment	Baseline %

- Peaceful, with more time and energy to engage with community
- More relationship driven
- People listening to each other & respecting each other
- Healthcare with no stigma
- Less stress
- Families can earn a real living wage to live with benefits
- No drugs, alcohol, vandalism
- Respect, honoring each other
- Emotional and physical safety
- Less fear
- · Children can safely play outside with their friends
- More connection with nature

Why is this important?

- While the uninsured population decreased since 2009 in Mitchell cOunty, the percentage remained higher than NC.
- 21% of Mitchell County survey respondents did not have health insurance in 2021.
- The percentage of the population eligible for Medicaid has increased steadily.
- Nearly 12% of survey respondents reported a time in the past year when they were unable to get medical care. 20% of respondents reported a time in the past year when they needed mental health care or counseling and could not get it.
- As of 2019, Mitchell County had higher provider to population ratios compared to WNC and NC, meaning that there were more providers available to serve the population.8

Our CHA Team, with representation from roughly 20 community organizations, working to broadly address health, social and economic needs, were actively engaged in 3 2-hour work sessions to identify which community health conditions to prioritize. Using a tool to prioritize conditions based on relevance, impact and feasibility, Access to Care and Use of Services emerged as one of the three areas to focus on for CHIP moving forward.

L NCDPH HNC2030 health insurance (Total) - SAHIE	2022	11.2%	3 لا	-26% 🖌
Number of Primary Care Physicians per 10,000 Population Ratios, Single Years (Mitchell County)	2019	8.5	7 1	-12% 🎽
🧜 Primary Care Clinician (PCC) Rate - Mitchell County: Ratio of Population to Clinician	2022	604	2 لا	-7% 🖌
Life Expectancy (Total) in NC - 3 Year rolling: Avg. # of years of life remaining for people who have attained a given age	2023	76.0	7 1	-3% 🎽
Life Expectancy (Total) in Mitchell County (3-yr rolling): Average # of years of life remaining for people who have attained a given age	2023	73.6	ک	-3% 🖌

🗛 🔤 Comprehensive Community Media Campaign

What Is It?

- Reduce poverty among families
 - $\circ\;$ Learn, collaborate, and partner with organizations that focus on poverty reduction
 - Collect and report data on how living in lower wealth communities impacts health
 - Recommend and support legislation of a livable wage and pay equity
 - Standardize poverty reduction strategies in systems, services, and programs

Partners

The partners for this program include:

Partners Aligned Toward Health
Lazarus Design Team
Mitchell County Cooperative Extension
Mitchell County Schools
Mountain Community Health Partnership
Intermountain Children's Service
Mitchell County Health Department
Center for Rural Health Initiative
Mitchell County Public Library

Progress in 2022-2023

- Launched campaign "Toe River Health Discovery" to give real time help for those struggling in Avery and Mitchell Counties and beyond to overcome not prioritizing health, trust issues, and stigma for low-income or minority populations. All marketing channels drove traffic to newly designed pages to connect patients with helpful information and real time help.
 - Revised and rebranded website and logo to focus on quality care for all.
 - Gathered content to offer testimonial videos and printed material.
 - Promoted new media pieces by paid advertising on Google search and Facebook/Instagram Ads
 - Purchased marketing materials that included billboards, signage on grocery buggies and restaurants, pamphlets/brochure
 - Created social media platform and guidelines for posting (2 times a week per channel)
 - Planned to promote blogs weekly, using branding voice that is kid, empathic in order to become a trusted source of information and resources
 - Optimized Google business account and leveraged Google search console

Leadership Conference for Mitchell County Resources

Α

What Is It?

- Increase access to and use of quality, team-based, comprehensive, compassionate primary health care (including preventive, physical, and behavioral/mental health care services)
 - Provide affordable, comprehensive insurance coverage
 - Promote access to and use of immunizations
 - Provide evidence-based culturally responsive patient education and guidance

Partners

The partners for this program include:

Blue Ridge Partnership for Children
Intermountain Children's Place
Mountain Community Health Partnership
Williams YMCA of Avery County
Mitchell-Yancey Prevention & Recovery
Partners Aligned Toward Health
Mitchell County Department of Social Services
Mitchell County Public Library
Blue Ridge Hospice & Palliative Care
Vaya Health
RHA Mental Health Services
Mitchell County Schools
Mitchell County Senior Center

Progress in 2022-2023

- Held Mitchell County Resource Fair Expo on September 29th, 2022 to educate the community about preventive medicine, promote healthy lifestyle choices, and offer basic medical screenings, essentially serving as a platform to raise awareness and access to important health information and services within a community.
- Hosted the 2022 ChildFest, an annual celebration of young children. ChildFest featured a variety of indoor and outdoor activities, including
 inflatables, train rides, and a musical calliope. ChildFest provided lots of valuable information about services that are available locally for
 parents and caregivers of young children. ChildFest focused on a family-focused atmosphere and provides parents and caregivers access to
 information about quality child care, early literacy, health & nutrition and much, much more. One of the most important things about Child
 Fest is encouraging a healthy, active lifestyle for young children.
- Attended 2022 Healthy Kids Day to improve the health and well-being of kids and families across Avery ands Mitchell Counties. YMCAs across the country host free community events aimed to inspire kids to keep their minds and bodies active throughout the summer months. The day-long event featured activities ranging from dancing and free play to putt-putt and story time. All activities are designed to inspire kids to get active while simultaneously teaching families how to develop routines that support mental and physical health at home.

🗸 🔤 Utilization of 211 Resources

Chronic Disease/ Obesity/ Healthy Lifestyles

	All people in Mitchell County live in a community that supports access to	Most	Current	Current	Baseline %	
ĸ		Recent	Actual	Trend	Change	
	affordable, nutritious foods and physical activity opportunities.	Period	Value			

Experience and Importance

If we are successful in fully achieving this result, we envision Mitchell County where....

• All people are living as healthy as they can by having all their basic daily needs met.

- All children in Mitchell County are clean, fed, and clothed ready to learn at school.
- People in Mitchell County are obtaining a healthy diet to support normal growth, maintaining a healthy body weight, and reducing the risk of chronic disease leading to overall health and well-being.
- Everyone has access to a quality education, safe and healthy homes, recommended amounts of physical activity and nutrition, regular health care appointments and check ups

Why is this important?

- Historically, heart disease mortality rates have been higher in Mitchell County compared to WNC and NC and they have recently risen. The same pattern is seen among Mitchell County survey respondents: higher and rising rates of heart disease.
- The diabetes mortality rate is also climbing in Mitchell County and was 21% higher than NC in 2015-2019.
- Compared to NC and WNC, a higher proportion of survey respondents were overweight or obese: 75% in 2021. An increasing percentage of respondents would be categorized as obese: 41% in 2021, higher compared to WNC, NC and the US.
- 25% of survey respondents reported no leisure-time physical activity; 18% meet the physical activity recommendations.

People who eat too many unhealthy foods — like foods high in saturated fat and added sugars — are at increased risk for obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and other health problems. Obesity in turn is also linked to many serious health problems, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some types of cancer (Healthy People 2030).

Individuals with low incomes and long work hours may have less time to prepare meals at home and less time to participate in physical activities. In addition, people in rural areas and low-income communities may be far from a grocery store that sells healthy foods. Their communities may lack formal facilities for exercise, or the roads and public spaces may not be safe to move around in (Healthy NC 2030).

I,	NCDPH HNC2030 Third Grade Reading Proficiency: Percent of children in NC (Total) who ar proficient in reading at end of Third Grade	2024	48.5%	73	-18% 뇌
		proficient in reading at end of Third Grade	2024	40.370	<i>v</i> . 5

A New recreation center in Bakersville

What Is It?

The new **Mitchell Recreation Center** is a key strategy to increase access to physical activity for the residents of Mitchell County. The center will be built behind the County Administration Building in Bakersville. It will be 13,120 square feet and have many features, like a gym with a basketball court, a walking track, a concession area, an aerobics/dance studio, a workout room, and locker rooms. The center will also have offices and storage for the Mitchell County Recreation Department.

This new building will help people of all ages stay active and healthy. The goal of **Mitchell County Recreation** is to help children grow through sports, and to make sure everyone has the chance to live a healthy life. The center will be a great place for families and individuals to exercise, have fun, and meet new people. Construction is expected to start in spring 2024, and the center should open by late 2025.

The recreation center will be located right next to the Bakersville Quick Mart at 177 Crimson Laurel Way, making it easy for people to visit.

Partners

The partners for this program include:

Mitchell County Parks and Recreation Department Mitchell County Health Department Mitchell County Administration Mitchell County Schools Town of Bakersville Town of Spruce Pine

Progress in 2022-2023

• Approved initial design plans for the new Mitchell Recreation Center building being constructed behind the current County Administration Building in Bakersville

- Broke ground on the state-of-the-art facility that is set to be the recreational hub for the community, featuring a full basketball court, walking track, pickleball courts, workout equipment, event space, volleyball courts, an indoor weight area, an aerobics/yoga facility, locker rooms, concessions, and plenty of storage. The structure will be a pre-engineered metal building with details of construction being finalized as the design work continues
- Initial grading of the site has been completed, with construction beginning this spring. Current plans are for the building and associated athletic fields to open in late 2025
- Poured concrete slab where our basketball/volleyball/pickleball court will be
- Preliminary planning has began by the Parks and Rec Board of Directors that include basketball tournaments, group exercise classes, and evidence-based educational classes

A New YMCA in Spruce Pine

What Is It?

The Mitchell County YMCA is being built at the Three Peaks Enrichment Center in Spruce Pine, North Carolina and is expected to open in the summer of 2025. The 105,000 sq ft facility will include a 6-lane competition pool, splash pool, event center, and education space for Mayland Community College. The YMCA has been working with the Mitchell Wellness Initiative to bring a YMCA to Mitchell County.

Partners

The partners for this program include:

Williams YMCA of Avery County Mitchell County Administration Town of Spruce Pine Mayland Community College Samuel L. Phillips Family Foundation AMY Wellness Foundation NC Senators, Ralph Hise & Dudley Greene

Progress in 2022-2023

- Surveyed Mitchell County residents to determine their interest in a YMCA; conducted a feasibility study which included a local survey that returned more than 1,200 responses. The overwhelming need was for an indoor aquatics center, second was youth development opportunities and third was programming aimed at preventing chronic disease and community health.
- Secured funding and finalizing plans for a ground-breaking ceremony at the Three Peaks Enrichment Center. The new Y will emphasize community health, aquatics, and youth development programs. Other plans include offering healthy living programs improve their strength, fitness, diet, and social connections.
- Started providing essential programs and services designed to improve community health, nurture youth development, and encourage social responsibility off site. One program the Y currently provides after-school services in Mitchell County, Parkinson's and arthritis management and food delivery.

- Basic construction of the Mitchell County YMCA, also known as, Three Peaks Enrichment Center, space has been completed, paving the way for the establishment of the 18,000 square foot wellness facility, which will include:
 - Cutting-Edge Aquatic Center: At the heart of the facility, a state-of-the-art aquatic center will feature an Olympic short course lap pool, a recreational splash pool, and water-based activities for all ages. Swimming lessons, aquatics fitness classes, and water safety programs will be central to the offerings.
 - Community Health and Wellness Hub: The YMCA's commitment to community health will be showcased through an expanded fitness center and wellness programs. Modern exercise equipment, group fitness classes, personal training and health education programs will be available to help community members of all ages achieve their health and fitness goals.
 - Youth Development Spaces: Youth programs with enhanced with dedicated spaces designed to foster growth, learning, and leadership among our young people. A dedicated child development classroom, splash pool and other amenities will directly focus on impacting the lives of youth.
 - Community Engagement: The facility will serve as a hub for community engagement and interaction. It will feature community gathering areas, meeting spaces, and social lounges, encouraging residents to connect and collaborate, strengthening the bonds within our community.

	Most	Current	Current	Baseline %
P New MANNA Backpack Programs	Recent	Actual	Trend	Change
	Period	Value		

What Is It?

Assist with food drives/food distribution at local food pantries/backpack programs and help meet the basic needs of those in need; media campaign, volunteering at events, help manage referrals, evaluate needs/resources, etc.

The **Manna Backpack Program** is a community program that helps children who do not have enough food on the weekends. Many children get meals at school during the week, but when they are at home over the weekend, they may not have enough to eat. The program gives these children a backpack filled with healthy, easy-to-make food, like snacks, meals, and drinks, so they have enough food to eat when they aren't at school.

The **Manna Backpack Program** works with local schools, community groups, and volunteers to make sure children who need food get it. This helps children feel better, stay healthy, and do well in school. The goal is to make sure no child goes hungry and that they have the energy to learn and grow.

Along the intersection of the North Toe River and Highway 226, hope is as abundant as the trees for which the town is named. Here in Spruce Pine, off of Roan Road is Neighbors Feeding Neighbors, one of eight MANNA partner agencies in Mitchell County. Community partners have worked tirelessly for the past two years to grow a food ministry to meet the dynamic needs of the community.

Partners

The partners for this program include:

Neighbors Feeding Neighbors Mitchell County Health Partnership Mitchell County Health Department Mitchell County Schools Intermountain Children's Place Mitchell County Department of Social Services Mitchell Senior Center Mitchell County Parks & Recreation

# of families served	2023	39,285	7 2	10460% 7
PM # of individuals served	2023	79,851	7 2	9795% 🛪
PM # of community meals served	2023	106	7 2	10500% 7
PM # of pounds of food distributed	2023	1.17Mil	7 1	509% 7
PM # of MANNA backpacks donated	2023	8,541	7 2	59% 7

P. Walk with Ease Program

MostCurrentCurrentBaseline %RecentActualTrendChangePeriodValue

AM

What Is It?

Start a Walk with Ease Program, encouraging others as they put together your own walking plan and set your own goals.

Walk With Ease is an evidence-based physical activity program designed to help individuals improve their mobility, flexibility, and overall health through walking. Ideal for people with arthritis or those looking to increase their physical activity levels, this program provides structured walking routines, educational materials, and motivational support to help participants achieve their fitness goals.

The program includes three levels: a self-paced version, a group walking option, and a virtual version, making it accessible to people of all abilities. Participants learn how to safely and effectively incorporate walking into their daily routines, reduce pain, and enhance quality of life. Walk With Ease promotes the importance of physical activity for long-term health and is designed to be easy to follow, motivating, and fun.

Walk With Ease is offered through various community-based organizations, including local health departments, senior centers, and other health-focused organizations. The program empowers individuals to take charge of their health while fostering a sense of community and support.

Partners

The partners for this program include:

Mitchell Senior Center
Mitchell County Health Department
High Country Council of Government
Mitchell County Parks and Recreation
Blue Ridge Regional Hospital
Mitchell County Schools
Blue Ridge Hospice & Palliative Care
Mitchell County YMCA

Progress in 2022-2023

For the past three years, the YMCA has been working with the local Mitchell Wellness Initiative group with the goal of bringing a YMCA and healthy living programs to Mitchell County. While we continue to work towards a physical YMCA in Spruce Pine, the YMCA is delivering several Healthy Living and Community Outreach Programs throughout Mitchell and Yancey Counties. One of many of these programs is Walk with Ease for seniors.

- Mets 3 times per week for about an hour for 6 weeks
- Led by a trained program instructor

Page

- Discussion sessions consist of a "lecture topic" lasting about 5-10 minutes, warm up, stretching, walking, cool down, and stretching
- Encourage a program option on walking on one's own and/or once weekly group walking sessions, with support through on-line and email
 resources

PM # Participants	2023	28	7 1	8% 7
State of the County Health Reports (SOTCHs)				
SR 2022 State of the County Health Report				
SR 2023 State of the County Health Report Progress on CHIPs				
15/18				4/28/2025 10:59:53

Click on each program/ strategy below to find and review updates in the "Progress in 2022-2023" note tabs.

Mental Health/Substance Abuse/Domestic Violence

- <u>New Freedom Life</u>
- Restart Appalachian Youth to Youth (PATH)
- New <u>Media Campaign</u>

Access to Care/ Use of Services

- New Leadership Conference for Mitchell County Resources
- New Comprehensive Community Media Campaign
- New <u>Utilization of 211 Resources</u>

Chronic Disease, Obesity, & Healthy Lifestyles

- New New recreation center in Bakersville
- New <u>New YMCA in Spruce Pine</u>
- New <u>MANNA Backpack Programs</u>
- Walk with Ease Program

Significant/ Notable Changes in Morbidity and Mortality

Mortality rates in Mitchell County, North Carolina are generally higher than the state and regional averages.

- Drug overdoses and accidental deaths are among the leading causes of death in Mitchell County. Causes of death in Mitchell County Drug overdoses:
 - In 2012–2019, the average drug overdose death rate in Mitchell County was 21.2 per 100,000 people.
- Accidental deaths: The accidental death rate in Mitchell County is 81.5 per 100,000 people.
 - Vehicle crash fatalities: The vehicle crash fatality rate in Mitchell County is 10.7 per 100,000 people.
- Other health information The cancer incidence rate in Mitchell County is 456.7 per 100,000 people.
 - The preventable hospital admissions rate in Mitchell County is 2,762 per 100,000 people.
 - The airborne cancer risk in Mitchell County is 22.34.
 - The air quality hazard in Mitchell County is 0.27.
- See Mitchell County Opioid Planning Needs Assessment Report: chromeextension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.mitchellcountync.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Mitchell-County-Opioid-Assessment-Report_FINAL_9-1-23_with-appendices.pdf

The leading causes of death in Mitchell County, North Carolina are heart disease, cancer, and chronic lower respiratory disease.

- Heart disease: The leading cause of death in Mitchell County. The mortality rate for heart disease in Mitchell County increased between 2012–2016 and 2015–2019.
- Cancer: The cancer incidence rate for Mitchell County is 456.7 per 100,000.
- Chronic lower respiratory disease: A leading cause of death in Mitchell County.

Other health conditions in Mitchell County include:

- Preventable hospital admissions
- Airborne cancer risk
- Air quality hazard
- Drinking water violation rate
- Public safety
- Accidental death rate
- Vehicle crash fatality rate

In North Carolina, heart disease, cancer, and accidents were the leading causes of death in 2022. These three causes accounted for 45% of all deaths in the state that year.

RAN	K CAUSES	NUME	BER%
1	Heart Disease	64	26.8
2	Cancer	49	20.5
3	Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseas	es 16	6.7
4	All Other Unintentional Injuries	15	6.3
5	Cerebrovascular Diseases	12	5.0
6	Alzheimer's Disease	11	4.6
7	Diabetes Mellitus	8	3.3
8	Septicemia	7	2.9
9	Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhos	is 4	1.7
10	Motor Vehicle Injuries	4	1.7
	All other causes (Residual)	49	20.5
TOTA	ALAII Causes	239	100

Emerging Issues Impacting Health

- Wages idling in neutral, middle-class living standards increasingly out of reach, and *economic* gains bypassing everyone except those at the top. Citizens continue to suffer from social inequality and income gaps.
- Vaping and underage drinking become prevalent among adolescents with more teens needing medical attention for the health consequences both behavior addictions bring
- Severe housing issues emerge from the effects of the insufficient funds to support the housing market
- Youth behavioral health spiraling out of control from childhood trauma leading to a variety of health problems, including mental health conditions, substance abuse, and chronic diseases
- Families and children in need of daily necessities (food, clothing, eye exams/glasses, dental and health services) in order to function in everyday life

New/ Paused/ Discontinued Initiatives/ Activities

- Construction on the county's new school in Ledger is moving at a fast pace. The school, which is made possible through \$40 million in needs-based capital grant funding from the state, will have two sides— an elementary wing for grades 3-5 and a middle school wing for grades 6-8. The school will be across from the Mitchell County Schools Central Office in Ledger, down the road from Mitchell High and the Mitchell County Senior Center. The project began with preliminary conversations about eight years ago. Over the course of the past few years, the location, scope and details of the project have shifted several times.
- Broke ground on a new student athletic complex that include plans for a new softball field, a road to go behind Mitchell High School for bus pickup and drop off, and various projects to improve the track and baseball field. The entire complex is expected to be completed within a year of breaking ground with the building expected to be finished late this fall and the softball field hopefully ready for the next season in the spring of 2025. The complex has been fully funded by a \$14.5 million grant. KC Electric, a local Mitchell County business, won the bid to complete electrical work on the athletic complex. The plan to construct an athletic complex has been talked about for around 20 years but that they have been working hard to get funding for the project within the past five years. One of the main reasons for constructing the athletic complex is to increase safety for student-athletes during basketball season. These safety concerns mainly surround the fact that basketball practices often end up running late into the night due to having limited space for the boys' and girls' teams to practice in. In the past, this has caused students to have to drive home as late as 11 p.m. in variable mountain weather.

The athletic complex will include an indoor practice field of 30 yards for football, a basketball court, a golf simulator, a wrestling area, dropdown baseball nets, and a weight room. This will allow many sports teams as well as school bands to utilize the space and practice rain or shine. Any middle or high school student will also be able to use the space during open gym events or when areas have not been scheduled for use. The complex will also have restrooms and an area for concessions that can be used in the case of hosting tournaments.

• Mountain Community Health Partnership, a leading healthcare provider in Mitchell and Yancey Counties, announces the acquisition of 105 acres for its expansion project. The newly acquired land will be the future site of an integrated health clinic providing expanded primary care, behavioral health, and dental services and will serve as MCHP's headquarters. Anticipated to break ground in later 2025, the 20,000-square-foot building will mark a milestone in MCHP's commitment to providing healthcare services in the region. The expansion will enhance MCHP's capacity to serve the community's growing needs and contribute to the overall improvement of healthcare infrastructure in the region.

• Launched "View From Here" media campaign in Western North Carolina (WNC), which is a collaborative effort by various health organizations in the region to promote important health topics and share personal stories from local residents, focusing on issues like mental health, substance abuse, healthy eating, and active living, all through a social media-driven approach to encourage positive lifestyle changes within the community; essentially, it aims to highlight the unique perspective of WNC residents on their health concerns and how they are addressing them.