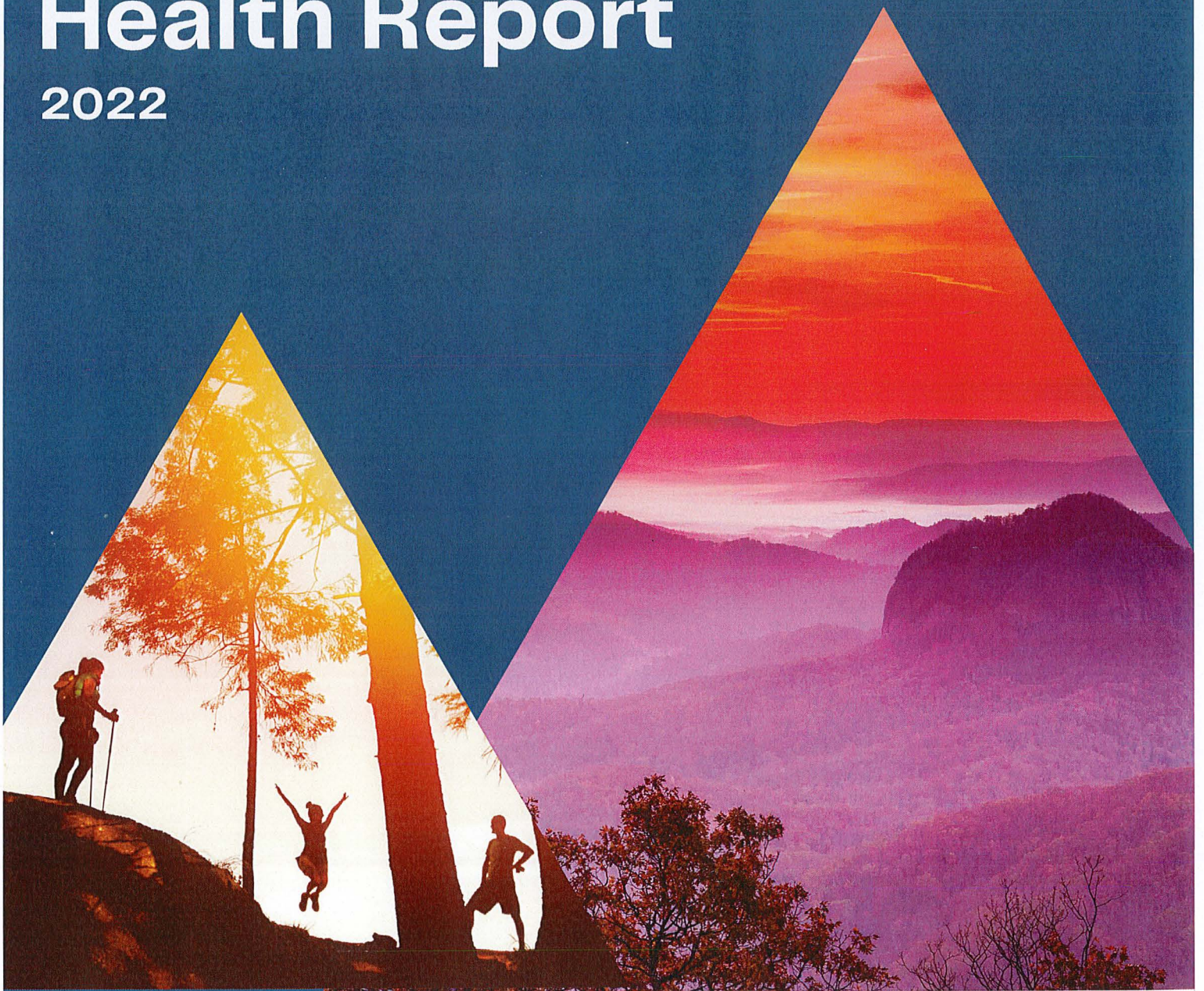


Macon State of the County Health Report 2022



Macon County
Public Health

S 2022 SOTCH Report

Progress on CHIPS

Please see the progress on CHIP for 2022 note tabs listed under each program by clicking the links below.

Access to Care

- [Promote recruitment and retention of additional medical personnel](#)

Obesity

- [Chronic Disease Management and other health education classes within Macon County](#)

Substance Abuse

- [Supporting Aligned Activities of Community Partners and Systems](#)

Affordable Housing

- [Committee to Address Affordable Housing Issues](#)

Significant/Notable Changes In Morbidity and Mortality

There have been no significant morbidity and mortality changes in our community.

- RWJF County Health Rankings

Emerging Changes Impacting Health

These are the new or emerging issues in our community in 2022 that were not identified as priorities in our CHA.

- Cost of healthy food has increased with inflation.
- Increase in property tax assessments at the beginning of 2023, which will make it even more difficult for new buyers to purchase homes and current owners to keep their homes.
- Change in county leadership, transferring the lead on substance abuse and mental health related issues from government to the private sector.

New/Paused/Discontinued Initiatives or Activities

The following are new initiatives or changes in our community in 2022:

- Mental Health Task Force rebranded as Behavioral Health Task Force to help reduce potential stigma. Leadership of Task Force transitioned from government to the private sector.
- Grant received from the Duke Endowment to help with better access to healthy foods within the county.
- Amazon announced the opening of a distribution center within the county, which will help with unemployment.

P Promote recruitment and retention of additional medical personnel.

What Is It?



Promote the recruitment and retention of additional primary care physicians and dental practitioners serving Macon County was identified by Macon County Public Health as an action, that when combined with other actions in our community, has a reasonable chance of making a difference in access to health care in our community. This is an ongoing program in our community.

Current standards/rates of pay have not been effective in attracting medical professionals to rural areas within Macon County. A new hospital is close to completion. Hopefully this, plus increased rates of pay, additional benefits, and better advertising will help in attracting talent to our area.

The customers for this program are local medical practices, and the patients they serve. This recruitment program aims to make a difference at the organizational change level. Implementation will take place in local medical offices.

In turn, once medical staff in the area increases, the community care clinics within Macon County will be better able to serve the uninsured and underinsured. Non-Profit clinics in rural areas tend to use local doctors who are willing to provide services at reduced cost. More doctors equals more availability to more patients.

Partners



The partners for this program include:

Agency	Person	Role
Mission Health/Angel Medical Center/Highlands-Cashier Hospital		Lead
Macon County Public Health		Collaborate
Community Care Clinic of Franklin		Support
Community Care Clinic of Highlands		Support

Progress in 2022



- Established data sharing with Community Care Clinic of Franklin, Community Care Clinic of Highlands, and Vecinos Health Hub to share monthly visit data to gauge patient access to care for low income patients.
- Established monthly data measure to track Primary Care utilization at Macon County Public Health to gauge clinic utilization for low income patients.

Measures

	Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Target Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
PM Percent of persons with health insurance	2019	18Percent Uninsured	—	→ 1	-18% ↘



2018	18Percent Uninsured	—	↗1	-18%↓
2017	16Percent Uninsured	—	↘5	-27%↓
2016	17Percent Uninsured	—	↘4	-23%↓
2015	18Percent Uninsured	—	↘3	-18%↓
2014	21Percent Uninsured	—	↘2	-5%↓
2013	25Percent Uninsured	—	↘1	14%↑
2012	26Percent Uninsured	—	↗1	18%↑
2011	24Percent Uninsured	—	↘1	9%↑

Story Behind the Measure

Uninsured is the percentage of the population under age 65 without health insurance coverage. A person is uninsured if they are currently not covered by insurance through a current/former employer or union, purchased from an insurance company, Medicare, Medicaid, Medical Assistance, any kind of government-assistance plan for those with low incomes or disability, TRICARE or other military health care, Indian Health Services, VA, or any other health insurance or health coverage plan. Uninsured measure is based on one year of survey data and is created using complex statistical modeling by The Small Area Health Insurance Estimates. Modeling generates more stable estimates for places with small numbers of residents or populations.

What Works to Do Better (Performance)?

What's Helping What We Do?

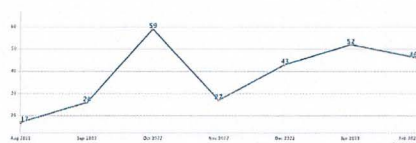
- Affordable Care Act
- Labor shortage and more positions offering health benefits
- Possible MEDICAID expansion in North Carolina. On February 16, 2023, North Carolina's House passed legislation that would direct the state to expand Medicaid by January 2024.

What's Hurting What We Do?

- Coverage not affordable
- Rising health care costs
- Lost employment
- Not eligible for coverage
- Signing up difficult and confusing
- Low wage service sector employments without health benefits



Number of Primary Care Visits at MCPH



Feb 2023	46	—	↘1	77%↗
Jan 2023	52	—	↗2	100%↑
Dec 2022	43	—	↗1	65%↑
Nov 2022	27	—	↘1	4%↑
Oct 2022	59	—	↗3	127%↑
Sep 2022	26	—	↗2	0%→
Aug 2022	17	—	↗1	-35%↓
Jul 2022	13	—	↘1	-50%↓
Jun 2022	40	—	↗1	54%↑

Story Behind the Measure

Macon County Public Health began offering primary care services two years ago due to lack of primary care physicians in the area. These services were need to fill a gap due to physicians not accepting new patients, regardless of insurance status, and to help fill a need in the community.

What Works to Do Better (Performance)?

What's Helping What We Do?

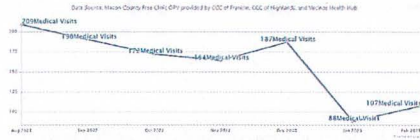
- Increase availability of appointments following easing of COVID restrictions
- Planned new Vecinos clinic location in Macon County projected 2024 to expand available primary care visits in the community
- New Angel Medical Center hospital and active recruitment on new providers.

What's Hurting What We Do?

- Rising health care costs
- Transportation issues for clients
- Affordable housing for new providers moving to the area
- Employment opportunities for new providers family medicine
- Lack of local Labor and Delivery services for young providers



Number of Medical Visits at Free Clinics



Feb 2023	107Medical Visits	—	↗ 1	-9% ↘
Jan 2023	88Medical Visits	—	↘ 1	-25% ↘
Dec 2022	187Medical Visits	—	↗ 1	60% ↗
Nov 2022	164Medical Visits	—	↘ 3	40% ↗
Oct 2022	172Medical Visits	—	↘ 2	47% ↗
Sep 2022	190Medical Visits	—	↘ 1	62% ↗
Aug 2022	209Medical Visits	—	↗ 1	79% ↗
Jul 2022	167Medical Visits	—	↘ 1	43% ↗
Jun 2022	198Medical Visits	—	↗ 2	69% ↗

Story Behind the Measure

Number of Medical Visits provided at the three Community Care Free Clinics serving Macon County. Data is voluntarily provided on a monthly bases. Free clinic services is limited to income qualified,, uninsured residents of Macon County and helps increase access to care for uninsured people.

What Works to Do Better (Performance)?

What's Helping What We Do?

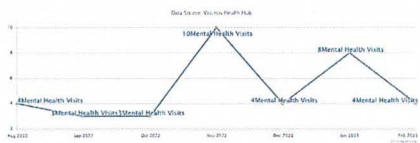
- Highlands Community Care Clinic
- Franklin Community Care Clinic
- Vecinos Health Clinic
- Increase availability of appointments following easing of COVID restrictions
- Planned new Vecinos clinic location in Macon County projected 2024

What's Hurting What We Do?

- Limited availability of volunteer providers and staff
- Competition for limited financial resources
- Rising health care costs
- Transportation issues for clients
- Rising housing costs
- Inflation



Number of Mental Health Visits at Free Clinics



Feb 2023	4Mental Health Visits	—	↘ 1	100% ↗
Jan 2023	8Mental Health Visits	—	↗ 1	300% ↗
Dec 2022	4Mental Health Visits	—	↘ 1	100% ↗
Nov 2022	10Mental Health Visits	—	↗ 1	400% ↗
Oct 2022	3Mental Health Visits	—	→ 1	50% ↗

Sep 2022	3 Mental Health Visits	—	↓ 1	50% ↑
Aug 2022	4 Mental Health Visits	—	↗ 2	100% ↑
Jul 2022	3 Mental Health Visits	—	↗ 1	50% ↑
Jun 2022	2 Mental Health Visits	—	↓ 2	0% →

Story Behind the Measure

Number of Mental Health visits provided by Vecinos Health Clinic to Macon County residence. Vecinos services are limited to income qualified, uninsured patients.

What Works to Do Better (Performance)?

What's Helping What We Do?

- Available Mental Health service to uninsured patients
- Proposed opening of a new Vecinos Health Clinic in Macon County in 2024

What's Hurting What We Do?

- General lack of Mental Health Services in WNC
- Transportation issues for patients
- Services are currently located in Jackson County

P

Chronic Disease Management and other health education classes within Macon County

Chronic Disease Adult Health

What Is It?

Chronic Disease Management and other educational classes were identified by MCPH as an action, that when combined with other actions in our community, has a reasonable chance of making a difference in decreasing the high level of Obesity in our community, and subsequently, other health issues that result from being overweight. This is a new program in our community.

These classes can be held all over the community to accommodate those with disabilities. Currently, our plan is to being by holding these classes in the local library for ease of access and scheduling.

Partners

The partners for this program include:

Agency	Person	Role
Macon County Public Health	Health Education Department	Lead
MountainWise	Tobin Lee and Paige Robinson	Collaborate
Fontana Regional Library	Abby Hardinger	Support

Progress in 2022

- MountainWise Diabetes Prevention Program
- Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions classes will begin in June 2023. The first class will be an 6 week workshop (meeting once per week for 2 hours) and will be limited to 10 students.
- This class was chosen due to the high rate of people in Macon county living with a chronic condition, which can limit one's activity and increase chances of obesity. Our goal is to educate people on how to manage their chronic conditions and increase their health and wellness.

Measures

Most Recent Current Actual Current Target Current Trend Baseline %
Period Value Value Change



Number of students enrolled in class — — — — —

Story Behind the Measure

No data yet for this particular performance measure.

Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions classes will begin in June 2023. The first class will be an 6 week workshop (meeting once per week for 2 hours) and will be limited to 10 students.

This class was chosen due to the high rate of people in Macon county living with a chronic condition, which can limit one's activity and increase chances of obesity. Our goal is to educate people on how to manage their chronic conditions and increase their health and wellness.

What Works to Do Better (Performance)?

What's Helping What We Do?

- Mountainwise currently conducts Diabetes Prevention Classes within Macon County
- MCPH will begin conducting health classes at the local library in June 2023, which will be free to the public.
- MCPH received a Duke Endowment grant to assist with developing equitable access to healthy food opportunities.
- Availability of low cost and free fitness and educational classes around th county continues to increase.
- Use of the Greenway trail and outdoor activities remains popular.

What's Hurting What We Do?

- Inflation has caused healthy food prices to increase dramatically, while junk food prices remain relatively stable.
- People do not exercise as much in the winter months.
- Cost of local gyms and personal training
- Lack of insurance that covers the cost of items mentioned above.
- Continued rise in the cost of food prices.



Percentage of students who stick with a healthy living plan after finishing the class — — — — —

Story Behind the Measure

There is currently no data for this performance measure. Data will be collected monthly to check on students' progress after they have taken the 8 week workshop.

What Works to Do Better (Performance)?

What's Helping What We Do? These are the positive forces at work in our strategy/ program that influence how much we do or how well we do it.

- Staying in contact with students after they have completed the 8 week workshop
- Offering tips and motivation for them to keep improving

What's Hurting What We Do? These are the negative forces at work in our strategy/program that influence how much we do or how well we do it.

- Friends and family members who are not supportive of lifestyle changes
- Cultural issues pertaining to food, health and physical activity

P Supporting aligned activities of community partners and systems.

What Is It?

Supporting aligned activities of community partners and systems was identified by a team of community stakeholders as an action, that when combined with other actions in our community, has a reasonable chance of making a difference in substance use and mental health in our community. This is an ongoing program in our community, building on work that is already happening around substance use and mental health.

The priority population/customers for this strategy are community partners and those most affected. This aims to make a difference at individual and organizational levels. Implementation will take place within community systems whose efforts are concentrated around substance use and mental health.

This strategy will address health disparities by addressing issues of access to available services within the community by connecting community partners to identify aligned activities and to avoid duplication of work, while expanding the network of organizations working together to solve this public health issue.

Partners

The partners for this program include:

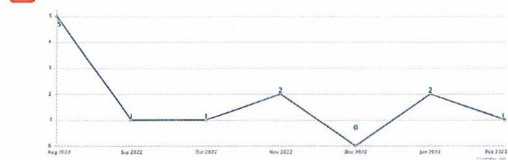
Agency	Person	Role
Appalachian Community Services	Counselor(s)/ Administration	Collaborate, Support, Represent Target Population
Community Representative	Bob Kiley	Represent Target Population
County Commissioner	Gary Shields	Lead
County Housing	John Fay	Collaborate, Support
Angel Medical Center	Clint Kendall, CEO	Collaborate, Support
Macon County Public Health	Community Health Promotion Coordinator and Health Educator	Collaborate, Support
Macon County School System	Marci Holland and Robert Holland	Collaborate, Support, Represent Target Population
Macon County Sheriff Office	Brent Holbrooks, Sheriff	Collaborate, Support, Represent Target Population
Meridian Behavioral Health	Counselor/ Administration	Collaborate, Support, Represent Target Population
No Wrong Door	Sheila Jenkins	Collaborate, Support
Vaya Health	Ronnie Beale, Chairman of Governing Board (Head of Mental Health Task Force for Macon County)	Lead
Macon County Detention Center	Brent Ledford, CPT	Collaborate, Support, Population Most Affected
Vecinos	Counselor(s)/Administration	Collaborate, Support, Represent Target Population
Macon County EMS	Warren Cabe	Collaborate, Support

Progress in 2022

- NARCAN is regular being administered throughout the county and helping to save lives.
- Coordination between organizations dealing with behavioral health and substance abuse issues continued to improve.
- Established NARCAN and Overdose EMS Response data measures with Macon County Emergency Management Services to help gauge the substance abuse rates in Macon County.

Measures

PM NARCAN Administered by EMS



Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Target Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
Feb 2023	1	—	↓1	-50% ↓
Jan 2023	2	—	↑1	0% →
Dec 2022	0	—	↓1	-50% ↓
Nov 2022	2	—	↑1	0% →
Oct 2022	1	—	→1	-50% ↓
Sep 2022	1	—	↓1	-50% ↓
Aug 2022	5	—	↑2	150% ↑
Jul 2022	3	—	↑1	50% ↑
Jun 2022	2	—	↓1	0% →

Story Behind the Measure

Monthly data provided by Macon County Emergency Management Services on NARCAN administered by EMS personnel when responding to calls in the field.

What Works to Do Better (Performance)?

What's Helping What We Do?

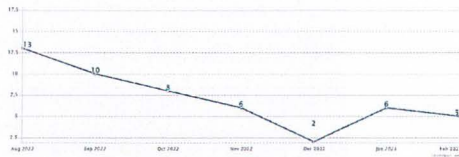
- Increased public awareness of possible overdose symptoms
- Increased availability of NARCAN kits for EMS and First Responders
- Increased training opportunities on proper use on NARCAN kits

What's Hurting What We Do?

- Continued public stigma of substance abuse
- Geographic challenges in EMS response times
- Vaping products being laced with illegal drugs
- Illegal drugs being laced with fentanyl contributing to accidental drug overdoses

PM Number of Overdoses EMS Responded

Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Target Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
Feb 2023	5	—	↓1	-17% ↓



Jan 2023	6	—	↗1	0% →
Dec 2022	2	—	↘4	-67% ↓
Nov 2022	6	—	↘3	0% →
Oct 2022	8	—	↘2	33% ↑
Sep 2022	10	—	↘1	67% ↑
Aug 2022	13	—	↗1	117% ↑
Jul 2022	6	—	↘2	0% →
Jun 2022	10	—	↘1	67% ↑

Story Behind the Measure

Monthly data provided by Macon County Emergency Management Services on number of overdose responses by EMS personnel.

What Works to Do Better (Performance)?

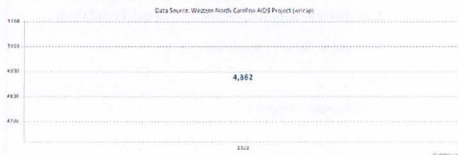
What's Helping What We Do?

- Increased public awareness of possible overdose symptoms
- Increased availability of NARCAN Kits

What's Hurting What We Do?

- Continued public stigma of substance abuse
- Geographic challenges in EMS response times
- Vaping products being laced with illegal drugs
- Illegal drugs being laced with fentanyl contributing to accidental drug overdoses

PM Number of adults with substance abuse who receive treatment	2022	4,862	—	→ 0	0% →
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Story Behind the Measure

This is the first year we received data from the Western North Carolina AIDS Project (wncap) concerning the number of program visits. The purpose of their program is harm reduction. WNCAP offers case management, runs a needle exchange program and provides overdose reversal kits throughout the community.

WNCAP is one of several entities within Macon County that is working to resolve the substance abuse issue.

What Works to Do Better (Performance)?

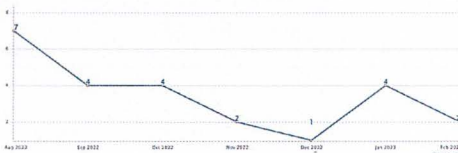
What's Helping What We Do?

- Meeting regularly with behavioral health organizations to coordinate efforts to bring better services to Macon County
- Providing NARCAN to residents to use in emergency overdose situations

What's Hurting What We Do?

- Newly elected officials do not believe this a problem that needs to be addressed and (briefly) canceled the Behavioral Health Task Force, which was the regular meeting with local partners for coordination purposes.
- Lack of communication from county commissioners.
- Lack of information on use of Opioid Settlement Funds

PM NARCAN Administered by Non-EMS	Feb 2023	2	—	↘1	0% →
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Jan 2023	4	—	↗1	100% ↑
Dec 2022	1	—	↘2	-50% ↓
Nov 2022	2	—	↘1	0% →
Oct 2022	4	—	→ 1	100% ↑
Sep 2022	4	—	↘1	100% ↑
Aug 2022	7	—	↗1	250% ↑
Jul 2022	4	—	↘2	100% ↑
Jun 2022	6	—	↘1	200% ↑

Story Behind the Measure

Monthly data provided by Macon County Emergency Management Services on NARCAN administered by Non-EMS personnel reported to EMS personnel when responding to calls in the field.

What Works to Do Better (Performance)?

What's Helping What We Do?

- Increased public awareness of possible overdose symptoms
- Coordination between organizations to help reach rural areas

What's Hurting What We Do?

- Continued public stigma of substance abuse
- Vaping products being laced with illegal drugs
- Illegal drugs being laced with fentanyl and xylazine

PM Distribution of Overdose Reversal Kits	2022	8,610	—	→ 0	0% →
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Story Behind the Measure

This is the first year we received data from the Western North Carolina AIDS Project (wncap) concerning the number of overdose reversal kits distributed. The purpose of their program is harm reduction. WNCAP offers case management, runs a needle exchange program and provides overdose reversal kits throughout the community.

WNCAP is one of several entities within Macon County that is working to resolve the substance abuse issue.

What Works to Do Better (Performance)?

What's Helping What We Do?

- Meeting regularly with behavioral health organizations to coordinate efforts to bring better services to Macon County
- Providing overdose reversal kits to residents to use in emergency overdose situations

What's Hurting What We Do?

- Newly elected officials do not believe this a problem that needs to be addressed and (briefly) canceled the Behavioral Health Task Force, which was the regular meeting with local partners for coordination purposes.
- Lack of communication from county commissioners.
- Lack of information on use of Opioid Settlement Funds

P Committee to Address Affordable Housing Issues

What Is It?

Creating and participating in a committee was identified by the International Friendship Center of Highlands, NC as an action, that when combined with other actions in our community, has a reasonable chance of making a difference in obtaining affordable housing in our community. This is a new program in our community.

The customers for this program are local non-profit organizations that deal with housing issues on a regular basis, and the committee aims to make a difference at the local level. Meetings began in December 2022. MCPH joined for the first time on February 3, 2023.

By increasing affordable housing in Macon County, more people will choose to live and work in the area. Plus, stable affordable housing allows individuals with health issues to address those issues without worrying whether or not they will have a place to live.

Partners

The partners for this committee include:

Agency	Person	Role
International Friendship Center of Highlands, NC	T.J. Smith, PhD	Lead
Macon County Public Health	Community Health Promotions Coordinator	Collaborate and Support
Other local area non-profits	John Fay	Collaborate and Support
Macon County Housing		Collaborate and Support

Progress in 2022

- Macon County Public Health is currently actively addressing this issue because it is beyond our area of influence but are closely monitoring the progress in addressing this issues by our community partners.



COUNTY

Macon, NC

2022



Rank #25 of 100 counties in North Carolina

Health Outcomes

Health outcomes represent how healthy a county is right now, in terms of length of life but quality of life as well.

Macon (MA) is ranked among the healthiest counties in North Carolina (Highest 75%-100%).

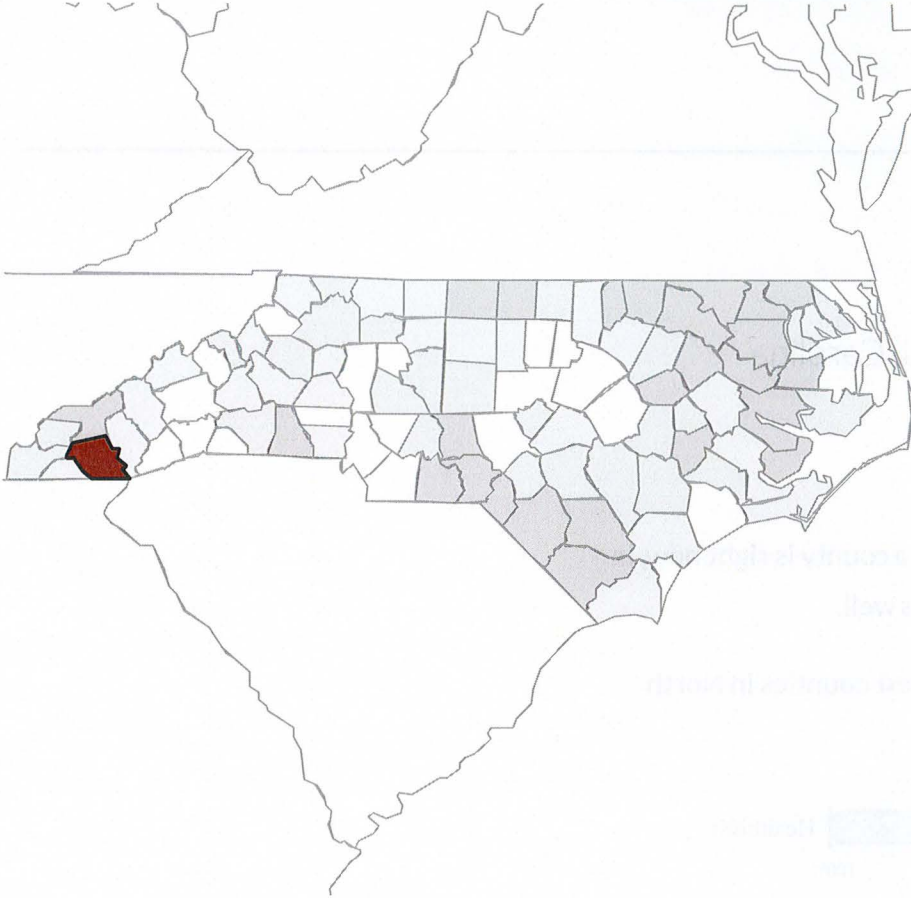


Health Factors

Health Factors represent those things we can modify to improve the length and quality of life for residents.

Macon (MA) is ranked in the higher middle range of counties in North Carolina (Higher 50%-75%).













County Demographics





Show More

County Snapshot

- Show areas to explore
- Show areas of strength
- Trends Available

Health Outcomes			
Length of Life	Macon (MA) County	North Carolina	United States
Premature Death	7,700	8,000	7,300

Quality of Life		Macon (MA) County	North Carolina	United States
Poor or Fair Health		19%	18%	17%
Poor Physical Health Days		4.1	3.7	3.9
Poor Mental Health Days		4.7	4.4	4.5
Low Birthweight		9%	9%	8%
Additional Health Outcomes (not included in overall ranking)				+
Health Factors		Macon (MA) County	North Carolina	United States
Adult Smoking		20%	19%	16%
Adult Obesity		33%	34%	32%
Food Environment Index		7.4	6.6	7.8
Physical Inactivity		28%	26%	26%
Access to Exercise Opportunities		100%	68%	80%
Excessive Drinking		19%	17%	20%
Alcohol-Impaired Driving Deaths		 29%	26%	27%
Sexually Transmitted Infections		 206.4	669.9	551.0
Teen Births		28	21	19
Additional Health Behaviors (not included in overall ranking)				+
Clinical Care		Macon (MA) County	North Carolina	United States
Uninsured		 18%	13%	11%
Primary Care Physicians		 1,630:1	1,400:1	1,310:1
Dentists		 1,800:1	1,710:1	1,400:1
Mental Health Providers		410:1	360:1	350:1
Preventable Hospital Stays		 1,745	4,096	3,767
Mammography Screening		 44%	48%	43%
Flu Vaccinations		 48%	53%	48%

Additional Clinical Care (not included in overall ranking) +				
Social & Economic Factors		Macon (MA) County	North Carolina	United States -
High School Completion		89%	89%	89%
Some College		58%	68%	67%
Unemployment		6.7%	7.3%	8.1%
Children in Poverty		19%	18%	16%
Income Inequality		5.1	4.7	4.9
Children in Single-Parent Households		25%	27%	25%
Social Associations		15.3	11.3	9.2
Violent Crime		110	351	386
Injury Deaths		116	82	76
Additional Social & Economic Factors (not included in overall ranking) +				
Physical Environment		Macon (MA) County	North Carolina	United States -
Air Pollution - Particulate Matter		6.9	7.5	7.5
Drinking Water Violations		No		
Severe Housing Problems		13%	15%	17%
Driving Alone to Work		84%	79%	75%
Long Commute - Driving Alone		28%	34%	37%
Additional Physical Environment (not included in overall ranking) +				

Note: Blank values reflect unreliable or missing data.