



What Is It?

The North Carolina Division of Public Health requires local health departments to conduct a comprehensive Community Health Assessment (CHA) every three to four years. During the interim years, local health departments are responsible for creating an annual report, known as the State of the County Health Report (SOTCH). The report provides an update on the progress made toward our priority health concerns identified in the 2020 CHA.

The SOTCH Report is developed through Clear Impact Scorecard. Clear Impact Scorecard is a web-based tool that collects, tracks, and analyzes data to measure the impact of a specified goal while improving the performance of programs. In addition, it provides an update on the most recent mortality and morbidity data.

Partnering with numerous stakeholders in the community, our 2 top priorities chosen are:

Tobacco

Hypertension

The Anson County Health Department (ACHD) and the local hospital, Atrium Health Anson (AHA), partnered to conduct the 2020 CHA. The local hospital, Atrium Health Anson, is serving as the Lead Agency for hypertension. The Health Department is taking the lead on Tobacco. Both priorities are in alignment with the Healthy North Carolina 2030 Objectives. Data collected for the CHA, and included in SOTCH report, were gathered from surveys, interviews, focus groups, the core committee, community stakeholders, and key informants. The Anson County SOTCH report is presented to the state and local government, community stakeholders, and the public. The report is also provided and discussed at numerous community meetings and forums.

Anson County Overview

Anson County was established in 1750, located in North Carolina’s Piedmont region. The county takes its name from George Lord Anson (1697-1762), a Royal Navy officer. For an extended time, Anson County was one of the largest territories in the colony, with borders that ideally extended westward as far as the Mississippi River. Later, portions of Anson County became Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Richmond, and Union Counties. From the 2018 US Census, Anson County’s current population is 24,877. With Several new trends and health concerns emerging such as, access to care, mental health, substance abuse, and tobacco; Anson County is currently ranked one of the 10 least healthy counties in North Carolina.

Progress on CHIPs

Hypertension

Hypertension and resulting health problems is a major issue in Anson County. The primary factors that cause this issue relate to access to exercise opportunities, limited access to healthy food, tobacco use, and sugar-sweetened beverage consumption. These are included in the Healthy North Carolina 2030 Health Indicators. Atrium Health Anson has implemented a program to positively impact this issue.

Atrium Health Anson continues to assist the county on reducing blood pressure levels by utilizing Monitoring Quality Metrics at Carolinas Primary Care and providing community screenings/education to the public.

The overall blood pressure goal for Ansonians with blood pressure (HG) levels less than 140/90 is 77.3%. Anson County's current blood pressure percentage is 67% overall, 10.3% away from the primary goal, which means the higher the percentage the better.

The "poorly controlled" measure of hemoglobin (HBA1C) levels within the county is at 27.4% with a goal of 21.8%, which means the lower the measurement the better.

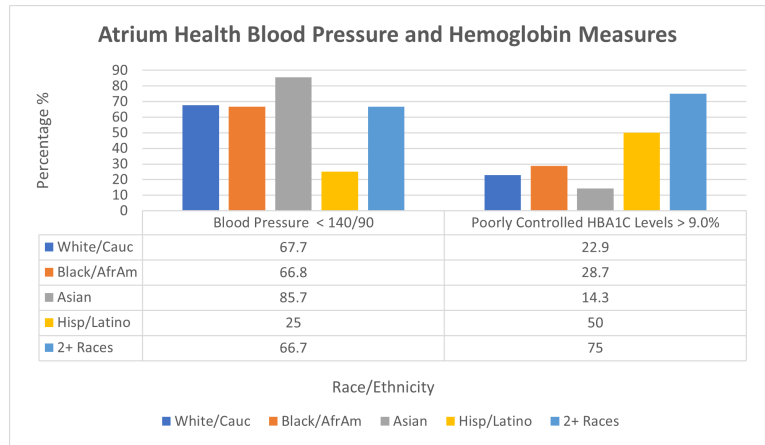
Table A provides the measures of blood pressure and poorly controlled hemoglobin levels by race/ethnicity. The table provides the numbers and percentage of the eligible population that worked towards the goal of 77.3% for blood pressure, and 21.8% for hemoglobin levels.

Graph A highlights the blood pressure and poorly controlled HBA1C levels by race/ethnicity in Anson County. Graph A also demonstrates the percentage of blood pressure levels less than 140/90 and poorly controlled levels higher than 9.0%.

Table A

Measure	Blood Pressure < 140/90 MM HG			HBA1C Poorly Controlled- HBA1C > 9.0%		
	Met	Eligible Population	% Met	Met	Eligible Population	% Met
White/Cauc	88	130	67.7%	101	131	22.9%
Black/AfrAm	187	280	66.8%	219	307	28.7%
Asian	6	7	85.7%	6	7	14.3%
Hisp/Latino	1	4	25.0%	2	4	50.0%
2+ Races	2	3	66.7%	1	4	75.0%
Total	284	424	67.0%	329	453	27.4%

Graph A



Tobacco

Rising Tobacco and e-cigarettes usage is a huge public health concern amongst Anson County residents. Continued efforts are being made in the fight against Tobacco and e-cigarettes amongst society. Efforts are being implemented to aid in both the prevention and management of this issue by the Anson County Health Department.

Ansonians are being offered three programs by the Anson County Health Department for the year 2021-2022, these programs include CATCH my Breath, You Quit Two Quit, and QuitSmart.

CATCH is currently being offered at Anson High School through the schools Axis Program. The Axis program is an alternative setting for students with minor behavioral infractions that focus on mentoring and counseling to help students learn and help make better choices moving forward.

Monthly presentations are presented to students who have been caught with vaping products on campus. The presentations allow students to learn more about the dangers of vapes and to make better choices moving forward. The maximum number of students per session is 10 which allows more focus on the needs of each individual participating. The sessions are offered in person and via Zoom on an as needed basis.

The initial process has started to offer **You Quit, Two Quit** throughout the Health Department. Currently, the program is being scheduled to train most staff in each department before it is offered to our patients and the public.

QuitSmart is currently still being advertised in the Anson County local newspaper to gain more clients to begin their smoke-free journey.

The Atrium Health and the Anson County Health Department meets once every 3 months to update the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

Hypertension

Hypertension is a contributor to serious diseases that greatly impact the quality of life and can result in death. In Anson County, Hypertension is a contributor to 4 of the 10 leading causes of death. Atrium Health Anson continues to implement strategies to support one of the targets of the Healthy North Carolina 2030 Desired Results: Increase Life Expectancy from 77.6 to 82.0 years.

In 2021, 35.1% of adults in North Carolina reported they were diagnosed with hypertension by a health professional; with high percentages meaning healthy and low percentages meaning less healthy. In 2019, there were a total of 1,009 deaths due to hypertension at the state level. Heart disease alone caused 65 deaths in Anson County, and 19,661 deaths at the state level in 2019. The rate of heart disease deaths per 100,000 population in Anson County between 2014-2018 was 226.1. In North Carolina the rate was 158.0.

Tobacco

Tobacco not only negatively impacts the health of individuals, but it also endangers the health of the environment. When e-cigarette and cigarette waste is not disposed of properly, it makes its way into the environment where it pollutes water, air, and land with toxic chemicals, heavy metals, and residual nicotine. This is a problem in the Anson County Community as it is also coming more common amongst youth.

Since the 2020 Community Health Assessment (CHA), the adult smoking rate for the county raised from 20% to 25% according to the 2020-2021 County Health Rankings. The state of North Carolina had a 1% increase during this time, increasing from 17% to 18%.

Covid-19

The covid-19 pandemic has affected the overall health in Anson County. Covid cases are increasing daily. Today, the amount of covid-19 cases in Anson County are up to 6,504, Anson County only has an estimated population of 25,000 people. The death toll is currently at 98.

americanshealthrankings.org

ncdhhs.gov

Emerging Issues Since Last CHA

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, Anson County has suffered significantly resulting in new emerging issues throughout the county. These issues included lack of retail, resources, transportation, employment, inflation, (Sexually Transmitted Infections) STI's, and teen pregnancy.

The Wadesboro Walmart announced closure the first week Covid-19 made its way to North Carolina, resulting in tough times for Anson County. Walmart officially closed April 3, 2020. The #1 ranking retail store in the United States was a major employer and primary source of food and other supplies for Anson County. The loss affected both customers and former workers at a difficult time leaving 205 workers unemployed. Walmart was also a major resource to families enrolled in the food and Nutrition Services Program which severely limited their produce options.

Resources are more limited since the pandemic; several stores providing resources have closed due to financial stability and labor shortages. The county is also facing teacher shortages due to retirements and resignations during the pandemic due to schools closing. The shortage has left teachers covering multiple classes through virtual learning leaving room for break-downs and burn-outs.

Prior to Covid-19, Anson County residents struggled to find reliable transportation, now that several stores have closed throughout the county, the only option is to travel to the nearest grocery, retail, or pharmacy store which may be further in distance. This limits Ansonians to a variety of resources and jobs. According to the US Census, the mean travel time to work in minutes between 2015-2019 was 26.7 minutes.

STI rates and teen pregnancy has increased since the last CHA. STI and teen pregnancy rates likely rose during the pandemic. During the early months of the pandemic reports of STI's decreased due to disruptions to health care and STI testing services, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Reduced access to testing sites may have led some people to unwittingly spread infection. As clinics reopened, infections rates increased.

Mask and vaccine mandates also left the county in a frenzy. In 2021, masks were required in indoor public places for people over the age of three, regardless of vaccination status. Along with mask mandates, vaccination requirements were set. Most health facilities required covid-19 vaccinations to stay employed. Today, specific health facilities set policies and procedures in place to ensure employees are fully vaccinated while also providing exemptions.

Opportunities and resources are limited in Anson County and the cost of living has continued to rise. STI rates and teen pregnancy has continued to increase as well. Mandates continue to stay active while covid-19 continues to affect the population. Anson is still currently ranked among the least healthy counties in North Carolina (Lowest 0%-25%).

Table 1.0 demonstrates the health behaviors that contribute to the overall health factor ranking in Anson County and North Carolina in 2021. Table 2.0 demonstrates additional health behaviors that are not included in the overall health ranking.

Table 1.0

Health Factors		
Health Behaviors	Anson County	North Carolina
Adult smoking	25%	18%
Adult obesity	41%	32%
Food environment index	7.2	6.8
Physical inactivity	37%	23%
Access to exercise opportunities	6%	74%
Excessive drinking	16%	18%
Alcohol-impaired driving deaths	28%	28%
Sexually transmitted infections	720.3	647.8
Teen births	36	22

Table 2.0

Additional Health Behaviors (Not included in overall ranking)		
Health Behaviors	Anson County	North Carolina
Food insecurity	17%	14%
Limited access to healthy foods	4%	7%
Drug overdose death	17	22
Motor vehicle crash deaths	23	14
Insufficient sleep	42%	36%

countyhealthrankings.org

census.gov

New/Paused/Discontinued Initiatives Since Last CHA

New

Like all Local Health Departments, the Anson County Health Department spent a considerable amount of time and effort steering covid-19. The department now administers covid-19 vaccines to the public free of cost. These include boosters and vaccinations for children 5 and up.

CATCH training is now incorporated through the Anson County Health Department. The program allows certified trainers, such as Health Educators, to present the curriculum to other educators. This will enable educators to become certified to teach the program at their own convenience to youth throughout the county.

Nutritional cooking classes are being offered free of charge in person and virtually through the Anson County Health Department for members of the community. Safety measures are used in each class and limited seats are offered to allow social distancing. Along with nutritional cooking classes, the department offers Farmers Market Friday's. Farmers Market Friday's allows members of the community to sell their goods and produce directly at the Anson County Health Department.

Paused

Atrium Health Anson's 5-2-1-0 program, which promotes daily nutritional guidance and physical activity, is paused due to covid-19 and virtual learning for school aged children. The hospitals mobile unit, in which provided blood pressure checks to the community, is also paused due to covid-19 and relocation of the unit.

Discontinued

Anson count continues to adapt to the new norm by implementing new ways to continue new and paused initiatives. No programs have been abandoned nor discontinued.

Actions				
Name	Assigned To	Status	Due Date	Progress