From the Public Health Director, Ann Absher…

I can’t believe another year has passed at the Wilkes County Health Department. This was an eventful year and I want to highlight a few of the many accomplishments we were proud to achieve this year.

The health department is honored to be recipient of a Community Health Center designation or Federally Qualified Health Center that began on January 1, 2017. Our center, named the Wilkes Community Health Center, is the accomplishment of several years of preparation in the making. I want to recognize the Health Foundation for the assistance in the grant preparation, the Board of Health, the Wilkes Community Health Center Board, and the Wilkes County Commissioners for their support of this endeavor. Finally, I want to thank the health department management team, our medical director, Dr. Albert, and health department clinic and management support teams for the hard work to make this dream a reality for Wilkes County residents.

This year several projects are in implementation to improve health outcomes for Wilkes County residents. We received an Infant Mortality Reduction grant designed to decrease infant mortality by increasing access to tobacco cessation, increasing access to long term birth control methods and positive parenting education. The Market Bucks program allows us to provide access to fresh fruits and vegetables for school aged children at the farmers’ markets.

Environmental Health received grants to provide improved food safety services to our community. Our clinics, Diabetes and MESH programs received several grants through the Office of Rural Health and Duke Endowment to increase access to care and improve patient outcomes. Through partnerships with Wake Forest Baptist and a grant with the Health Foundation, we are providing tele-health in our Diabetes and Nutrition Center by offering the Brenner FIT program and the Brenner FIT Academy for children and families in Wilkes County. This program has been very successful graduating additional classes that were full in capacity.

The staff of the Wilkes County Health Department appreciates the opportunity to serve our community in efforts to promote health and prevent disease. This annual report is our opportunity to remind you of the types of services that we provide, but also to make you aware of the fact that public health impacts everybody, every day and everywhere.
Community Health Center has been active since 2015 in addressing substance abuse issues among adolescents. Additionally, Wilkes County Schools are reliable partners in addressing mental health & substance abuse among youth in Wilkes County. The Youth Behavior Risk Survey and PRIDE Survey have been implemented in grades 6-12 of WCS. Project Lazarus leads a Community Coalition, which aims to address substance abuse and accidental overdose in Wilkes County, and a sub-committee of this ground, the Youth Coalition, has been active since 2015 in addressing substance abuse issues among adolescents. Additionally, Wilkes Community Health Center has applied for federal funds to help address mental health and substance abuse in our community. The health center should get notified of funding in September 2017.

### Environmental Health

**Water Protection**: Residents and businesses receive permits and evaluations for proposed, existing or repaired wastewater systems.

- **Septic Permits**: 548
- **Well Permits**: 99
- **Complaints**: 73
- **Water Samples**: 176
- **Methamphetamine Lab Notification**: 1

**Food & Lodging**: Unannounced inspection are conducted on facilities at a risk base frequency. Complaints are investigated to ensure compliance and promote public health. Foodservice employees are educated in safe food handling practices.

- **Restaurants**: 214
- **Temporary Food Establishments**: 37
- **Meat Markets**: 10
- **School Lunchrooms**: 22
- ** Lodging Facilities**: 10
- **Public Pool Facilities**: 23
- **Child & Adult Care Centers**: 40
- **Nursing/Rest/Group Home**: 20
- **Tattoo Permits**: 6

Want to View Restaurant Grades On-Line? Go to wilkeshealth.com and click the Restaurant Inspections box.

### Chronic Disease and Prevention

With the help of a grant through the Health Foundation, the health department was able to provide Market Vouchers to 80 families from North Wilkesboro Elementary, 45 families at Wilkesboro Elementary, 73 families at Mulberry Elementary, 20 families in Brenner FIT, 40 families through the Summer Feeding Program at the Wilkes County Library, and 10 families through St. Paul’s Episcopal Church. Each family received at least $3.00/week throughout the market season to be spent on fresh fruits, vegetables, and plants.

The health department in partnership with the Northwest Regional Tobacco Manager assisted Woodfield Apartments, Walden Ridge Apartments Grandview Apartments in implementing smoke free policies.

Through partnerships with Wake Forest Baptist and a grant with the Health Foundation, we are providing tele-health in our Diabetes and Nutrition Center by offering the Brenner FIT program and the Brenner FIT Academy for children and families in Wilkes County. The Health Department has just successfully completed our third class of Brenner FIT Families. During the last cohort, we offered two classes due to demand in the community. The health department has received a grant to expand services in our community. This fall we hope to reach families in the Mt. View community, by offering a class at Mt. View Elementary.
Care Coordination for Children

CC4C is a population management program that maximizes children’s health ages birth up to 5 years old. The program is offered at no charge to children who have long term medical conditions, dealing with social issues, referred by the physician or has had a recent hospital visit. The goal is to improve the healthcare of children.

Wilkes County has approximately 2,528 Medicaid children ages 0-5.

Pregnancy Care Management

OB Care Management is a population management program for prenatal patients in Wilkes County. Nurses and Social workers work with prenatal women and the OB physician to ensure the best possible care during the pregnancy and after delivery. The goal is to help have a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby.

Wilkes County has approximately 2,711 Medicaid women age 14-44.

Health Check

Wilkes County families are contacted to ensure their children receiving Medicaid benefits get a complete physical each year. (FY 2012)

Number of children eligible for Health Check: 8,751

Number of children eligible receiving an annual physical: 4,933

Participation Rate: 67.4%

Newborn/Postpartum Services

A registered nurse with experience in postpartum and newborn care makes a one-time visit to new mothers and their babies in their homes following discharge from the hospital. Visits have been proven to play an integral part in providing continuity of care from the hospital to the home. Our goal is to ensure that our families in Wilkes County receive the best start possible to begin a healthy life for their newborns and a smooth transition for the family.

Newborn Visits: 88
Postpartum Services: 86

How We Served the Community

Adult Health- Adults age 21 and older receive well and sick care.
Patients: 1,819
Patient Visits: 5,600

Child Health- Children age 20 years and below receive well and sick care.
Patients: 1,300
Patient Visits: 2,348
Physicals: 519
Lead Screening: 55
Dental Screenings: 92

Diabetes and Nutrition Center- Registered Dietitians offer individual and group classes for Diabetes education. Medical Nutrition Therapy assists patients with Weight Management, Eating Disorders, Hypertension, Hyperlipidemia, Renal Disease, Celiac Disease, Food Allergies, Sports Nutrition and Other Diagnoses.
Diabetes Education/Medical Nutrition Patients: 401
Diabetes Education Visits/Medical Nutrition Visits: 1,052
After the three month follow-up:
35.4% of our patients are checking their feet daily
54.39% of our patients have a hemoglobin A1c of less than 7%
Average decrease of Hemoglobin A1c of 1.01 points

Laboratory- Health Department patients receive lab work to assist with prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.
Lab Tests Performed: 7,557

Family Planning- Teens and adults receive complete medical care and are provided with information and options about birth control choices including abstinence.
Patients Served: 599
Patient Visits: 1,138
Vasectomies: 0

Pharmacy- Health department patients may receive medications at reduced cost; or arrangements may be made through an agreement with the WRMC Care Connection Pharmacy.
Total Medications Filled: 936
Prescription Medications Filled: 798
Over the Counter Medications Filled: 138

Vital Records- Birth and death records are registered and analyzed to discover local health issues, and possible prevention activities.
Live Births Recorded: 390
Deaths Recorded: 571

Women, Infants & Children (WIC)- Eligible women and children are provided nutrition education and coupons for supplemental foods. (Numbers reflect average totals from July 2015-April 2016)
Clients: 1,684
Mobile Expanded School Health (MESH)

High school students receive immunizations, sports physicals, sick and injury care, counseling and support. Teen parents also receive pre- and post-natal health information, support and referrals for other services.

Total Student Visits: 2,267
Behavioral Health Visits: 1,114 (includes middle school and high school students)
Medical Visits: 822
Sports Physicals: 331

Communicable & Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Screening, monitoring and treatment for certain communicable diseases is available. Coordination with health care providers and public education is provided.

HIV Tests: 748
TB Patients: 2
Rabies Investigations: 69
Reportable Diseases: 311

Immunizations (Shots/Vaccines)

Children receive vaccine management, monitoring and administration. Boosters for employment, vaccines for international travelers, and flu and pneumococcal vaccines are also available.

Total vaccines administered: 2,253
Total Hepatitis A vaccines: 137
Total T-Dap vaccines: 795
Flu vaccines administered: 851

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www.wilkeshealth.com
or
www.facebook.com/WilkesCountyHealth/

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