

Pitt County

*State of the County's
Health Report*

2004

*Prepared by Pitt County Health Department in collaboration with Pitt Partners for Health
April 2005*

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Background

Every four years local health departments throughout North Carolina are charged with conducting a community health needs assessment to identify the major public health concerns within a county. Pitt County Health Department in collaboration with Pitt Partners for Health, Pitt County's Healthy Carolinians Task Force, conducted an assessment in 2003 and as a result identified the following health priorities:

- *Access to Care*
- *Diabetes*
- *Heart Disease and Stroke*
- *Nutrition and Physical Activity*
- *Older Adult Health*
- *Infant Mortality*
- *STDs/HIV/AIDS*

The first five areas listed above were identified by Pitt Partners for Health as priorities for the next four years. The Health Department, working closely with Pitt Partners for Health, adopted these four priorities and added infant mortality and STDs/HIV/AIDS as well.

Annually, counties are asked to look at the priorities selected during the community health assessment process and provide the citizens with a report on the progress made within the priority areas. This report summarizes activity within Pitt County over the past 12 – 18 months related to each of these priority areas. It includes activities/initiatives sponsored by various organizations within Pitt County. Included also in this report are new activities or expansion of existing activities funded by various grants. In addition to the availability of grant resources outside of Pitt County such as Kate B. Reynolds, The Duke Endowment, and the Health and Wellness Trust Fund to mention only a few, Pitt County has two granting organizations focused specifically on addressing the health needs of Pitt County citizens. The Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation makes every effort to address the priorities selected by our community and in so doing allocates nearly one million dollars each year for health improvement initiatives. The Pitt County Health Education Foundation, supported by the fundraising efforts of the Pitt County Medical Society, grants an average of \$80,000 annually to health improvement initiatives within our county.

Access To Care

Pitt County is only one of 13 counties in NC reporting that 20% or more of the population is below poverty level. A strong correlation exists between income and insurance status – the lower the income, the less likely to be insured. At last report, almost 1 in 5 (18%) Pitt County adults reported that they did not have health insurance. Several initiatives have been undertaken to improve access to health care.

HealthAssist, a medical assistance program, provides access to medical care for uninsured residents of Pitt County and continues to operate four community resource centers in cooperation with local community groups. These centers, located in West Greenville, Grifton, Grimesland, and Pactolus, offer health education to community members, health screenings, and linkages to health care in the community. Health Assist has teamed up with Greene County Health Care Inc. to provide basic health care services to enrollees. Presently, HealthAssist has over 600 active enrollees. Approximately 1,482 people have received services in the past year. Education, including medical nutrition therapy, has been provided to enrollees as well. HealthAssist received approximately 1.4 million dollars from various grant resources last year, as well as administrative support from Pitt County Memorial Hospital to administer the medical assistance program and operate the community resource centers. Funding sources have included Pitt County Memorial Hospital, Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation, Pitt County Health Education Foundation, HRSA-Healthy Communities Access Program, The Duke Endowment and the Department of Justice.

Additionally, through the generous support of volunteer health care providers, an **indigent care clinic** is provided on Sunday afternoons. In 2003-04, the Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation provided \$3,000 to support the Pitt County Care Clinic. In 2004-05, the Foundation increased its support to \$15,000.

The **School Health Program** administered by Pitt County Memorial Hospital provided 1,010 referrals to care providers as a result of case management efforts by the school nurses. A total of 4,789 students with health issues were referred to the school health program during the 2003-04 school year. Three percent of the referrals (143) involved coordination of appointments and transportation by the school nurses to facilitate care. In 2003-04, the Pitt County Health Education Foundation provided financial support to provide eye glasses for 60 needy children referred by school nurses and teachers. In 2004, the NC Division of Public Health awarded two (2) school health nursing positions to Pitt County. These positions are being incorporated into Pitt County Memorial Hospital's School Health Program. These new positions will provide school nurse services to the County's two largest high schools.

The ***Pediatric Asthma Program***, also operated by Pitt County Memorial Hospital, received 162 client referrals during the 2003-04 school year. Clients were linked to care providers 71 times as a result of case management efforts.

Several organizations teamed up to sponsor two ***Kidney Early Evaluation Program*** (KEEP) screenings in 2004. The National Kidney Foundation provided the necessary supplies and forms. Locally, the Tar River Chapter of the American Nephrology Nurses Association co-sponsored the events with assistance from HealthAssist, Greene County Health Care, Inc., and Pitt Partners for Health members. A total of 98 individuals participated. Seventy (70) individuals learned that they may have chronic kidney disease based on the screening results and were referred for further evaluation. Chronic kidney disease is defined as pathological abnormalities or markers of damage noted in blood, urine, or imaging studies.

Under the leadership of Access East, Inc, a local 501c3, various health and community partners have joined together to develop a ***lay health advisors program***. Following training, individuals visit their neighbors, churches, and other networks to provide health education and linkages to health care resources.

Access to dental care has long been recognized as a need in Pitt County. Beginning in 2001, the Health Department in collaboration with Pitt Partners for Health received funding from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation, The Duke Endowment, Pitt County Health Education Foundation and Pitt County Memorial Hospital for a mobile dental unit. ***The Smile Safari Mobile Dental Clinic*** travels from school to school within Pitt County providing dental health services to eligible children. This clinic has increased the number of children who receive preventive dental health care. Approximately 1300 children received sealants through the Smile Safari Mobile Dental Clinic during the 2003-04 school year compared to just over 900 children in 2001-02.

Access to dental health care has increased due to other initiatives as well. The number of Pitt County ***dental practices that accept Medicaid has doubled*** since 2000. Presently, 10 practices accept Medicaid. For the second year in a row, area dentists donated their time and practice resources to provide dental health services to area children. Twenty-five (25) area dentists participated in the ***“2004 Give Kids A Smile Day”*** providing 77 children an array of dental health services including fluoride treatment, restorations, extractions, and sealants. Services estimated at \$40,000 were donated during this day.

Diabetes

In Pitt County diabetes mortality rates consistently exceed the State's rate of diabetes mortality. Even more alarming is the mortality rate among African Americans. As a result of the collaborative efforts by many in our community, diabetes has moved from the fourth leading cause of death in Pitt County to its current rank of fifth leading cause of death.

The second annual *Winning With Diabetes* Conference was held in July 2004 with a financial contribution of \$10,000 from the Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation. This conference is designed to support the person with diabetes as it relates to improved diabetes management and utilization of health care resources. Pitt Partners for Health provided scholarships for individuals who needed assistance with registration fees. Approximately 242 persons attended the conference in 2004. Funds have also been allocated by the Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation and the Pitt County Health Education Foundation to support this conference in the summer of 2005.

The Diabetes CARE Project administered by Cornerstone Ministries, Inc continued its successful operation in 2004. The CARE Project is a collaborative church-based project targeting African-Americans with diabetes or those at risk for developing diabetes. Health Advisors from various congregations are trained to educate individuals within their communities about diabetes detection, care, and management. Presently, there are 20 active Health Advisors serving 13 church communities throughout Pitt County and a Diabetes Support Group in the Ayden Township. The Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation has generously supported this initiative for several years with the Project receiving \$126,000 from the Foundation in the past two years. The Diabetes CARE Project was the 2004 recipient of the Charles C. Blackmon Award for Eliminating Health Disparities, a statewide award given by the North Carolina Healthy Carolinians organization.

The Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation has supported diabetes initiatives in other ways as well. The Foundation provided \$3,550 to support *community diabetes screenings*. Diabetes screening was provided at 76 locations with 1,563 individuals being screened. Five percent (5%) of those screened had an elevated blood sugar. Of this 5%, more than half knew they had diabetes, but did not have their diabetes controlled. Programs that assist individuals with diabetes management are critical to improving this health problem. In 2003-04 and 2004-05, the First Born Community Development Center received a total of \$42,440 from the Foundation to provide *nutritional food supplies for people with diabetes*, as well as nutrition education to assist people with diabetes in making healthier food choices.

Members of Pitt Partners for Health participated in *media* opportunities including a 30 minute television special on Cable 7 and a three part radio series on JOY 1340/ WOOW. Diabetes risk factors, signs and symptoms, and control measures were discussed, as well as complications of uncontrolled diabetes.

Heart Disease and Stroke

More than 1 in 3 deaths in Pitt County are attributed to cardiovascular disease – heart disease and stroke. For this reason, Heart Disease and Stroke are priority health concerns for Pitt County.

In 2004, *Project HeartBeat*, a collaboration between Pitt County Medical Society, Pitt County EMS, Greenville Fire and Rescue, Northeastern Region Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program, and American Heart Association, placed 19 publicly accessible automated external defibrillators (AEDs) throughout Pitt County including the Townships of Ayden, Grifton, Farmville, and Bethel, as well as within the City of Greenville and three County Government buildings. Funding for this competitive grant opportunity was made possible by the Northeastern Region Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program - a program administered by Pitt County Health Department.

In 2003-04 and 2004-05, the Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation provided financial support to local emergency services for the *purchase of defibrillators* for rescue vehicles. The goal is to have the same level of service throughout Pitt County. Additionally, the Pitt County Health Education Foundation provided funding to the Winterville Police Department to assist with purchasing AEDs.

Early identification of risks and increasing awareness for the signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke are priority objectives. Pitt County Memorial Hospital in collaboration with the NC Stroke Association received a three-year grant award from Kate B. Reynolds for the implementation of a *Stroke Risk Identification Program*. While PCMH will work with several counties in Year 2 and 3, Pitt County was the focus of Year 1 activity. Six hundred, fifteen (615) individuals were screened and counseled for stroke risk factors from September 2003 – August 2004. Those with elevated risk factors were referred for further evaluation. (Funding amount for Pitt County was \$105,041.) As a follow-up to the KBR funded activities for Pitt County, the Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation has awarded Pitt County Memorial Hospital Regional Rehabilitation \$5000 in 2004-05 to provide educational outreach related to stroke prevention and warning signs.

Pitt Partners for Health and Greenville Fire and Rescue sponsored several *cholesterol and blood pressure screenings* during September 2004, Cholesterol Education Month. Over 150 persons participated in the screenings.

Eastern Area Health Education Center and University Health Systems co-sponsored a day long conference to discuss *best practices in stroke care* from onset of stroke through recovery. The conference featured 17 regional and statewide faculty and provided information to an audience that included physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and allied health professionals.

Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion

Over one-half (55.8%) of Pitt County adults report that they are overweight or obese. The statistic for children is sobering as well. Nearly 40% of Pitt County children are at risk for overweight or are overweight. Poor nutrition and physical inactivity are major contributors to Pitt County's leading cause of death – cardiovascular disease. Pitt County's health care providers, education system, business and government communities have responded to these staggering statistics with several initiatives to support improved nutrition and increased physical activity opportunities.

Many organizations including the Health Department, Pitt County Schools, Pitt County Memorial Hospital, Brody School of Medicine, East Carolina University, Pitt County Local Physical Activity and Nutrition Coalition, ViQuest, Start With Your Heart, and Pitt Partners for Health have partnered to address nutrition and physical activity. Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation has recently added this health concern as a priority for funding. In 2003-04, the Foundation provided over \$228,000 to support nutrition and physical activity interventions for numerous projects such as KIDPOWER and Food Literacy Partners. In 2004-05, the Foundation increased this amount to just over \$300,000 by continuing funding for these initiatives and adding others. ***KIDPOWER*** supports a dietitian to provide Medical Nutrition Therapy to children/adolescents in Pitt County who are overweight or at-risk for overweight. ***The Food Literacy Partners Program*** trains community volunteers to provide nutrition education within communities throughout Pitt County. Four training programs were completed between August 2003 and December 2004. Eighty-five (85) trainees graduated as Food Literacy Partners Program volunteers. Several ***other pilot projects*** sponsored by ECU faculty are underway in Pitt County and receiving Foundation support including staff wellness programs and programs designed specifically for overweight teens.

Pitt Partners for Health supported the ***Farmer's Market Nutrition Education Program***. During the 2003 market season, local chefs provided cooking demonstrations. Over 1,000 food samples of healthy recipes using ingredients from the Farmer's Market were provided, as well as recipes and nutrition education materials. During the 2004 market season, chefs again volunteered to provide cooking demonstrations. Food samples of healthy recipes using ingredients from the Farmer's Market were provided along with the provision of over 800 recipes and nutrition education materials. Twenty-two (22) Food Literacy Partners volunteered a total of 70 hours of community service at the Pitt County Farmer's Market.

Pitt County is one of several counties in North Carolina that participates in the **Winner's Circle Healthy Dining Program**. The Health Department coordinates the Pitt County efforts by working with local restaurants and cafeterias to identify healthy dining options for customers. Several eating establishments participate in the Winner's Circle program including the cafeterias of Pitt County Schools, Pitt County Memorial Hospital, and ECU Campus Dining. Chefs from local Winner's Circle eating establishments participated in the "*Battle of the Chefs*" competition on May 1, 2004. The competition was held as part of the "*Go Red for Women*" campaign coordinated by ViQuest, Pitt County Memorial Hospital, American Heart Association, and Winner's Circle Healthy Dining Program – Pitt County. Pitt County School cafeterias began offering at least one Winner's Circle meal each day for the 2004-05 school year. All of the ala carte items offered in the K-5 cafeterias now meet the Winner's Circle criteria, and 50% of the ala carte items offered in the middle and high school cafeterias meet Winner's Circle criteria. Milk machines with low-fat milk options were placed in all 6 middle schools for the 2004-05 school year.

Winner's Circle in the school cafeteria program is one of several initiatives being undertaken to address improvements in the area of child nutrition and physical activity. Since 2000, **Growing Up FIT!** has provided physical activity, food and nutrition education, active recess, and after school programming with healthy snacks to children at risk of overweight, as well as medical referral services. Currently in the fourth year of funding from the Kate B. Reynolds (KBR) Charitable Trust S.E.L.F. Improvement Program, FIT! has developed a sustainable community level partnership program that can be tailored to individual school environments and curriculum to improve physical activity levels and eating habits of elementary school children. During the past four years, over 4000 elementary school children in seven elementary schools have increased physical activity levels, improved fruit and vegetable intake during the school day and at home, and decreased overweight among cohorts in grades 3-5. After school programming has served over 400 students at risk of overweight at five schools in the past four years. Community outreach through family education groups and newsletters, media programming, and PTA programs has increased awareness of the problem of overweight throughout the generations. FIT! has recommended and supported statewide and local policy and environmental changes to improve opportunities for successful behavioral change to more active, healthy lifestyles. Interdisciplinary health science student training, assessment and evaluation research services have also been developed as a part of FIT! efforts to reduce the prevalence of overweight in families. In addition to KBR, other funding for the program has come from Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation, Centers for Disease Control, NC Institute of Nutrition, NC Agromedicine Institute, Brody School of Medicine, and Children's Miracle Network. Currently a business plan is being developed for the sustainability of key programming and to provide technical assistance and programming materials and evaluation services to other school districts, health agencies, and communities.

In February 2003, Pitt County created a **Healthy Schools Task Force** to support the work of Pitt County Schools in changing the school environment to create healthier opportunities for students and staff.

The Task Force is chaired by a member of the Pitt County Health Department and the team members represent various agencies in Pitt County. The Pitt County Health Education Foundation provided funding to the Task Force to create informational brochures targeted to parents and other adults explaining the impact of poor nutrition and physical inactivity. The brochure details initiatives undertaken by our school system to address these problems.

In August 2003, Pitt County Health Department received an *Eat Smart, Move More* grant in the amount of \$19,506 to support the Pitt County Schools efforts to promote physical activity. This grant provided 51 K-5 classrooms with *physical activity equipment*. Additionally, 49 classrooms received *physical activity lessons* that supplemented the core education curriculum.

The Eat Smart, Move More funding also supported the development of *two new walking trails on school campuses* – GR Whitfield and Falkland Elementary. Seven elementary schools now have walking trails for school and after-school community use. Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation has provided funding for two additional trails in 2004-05. The Pitt County Local Physical Activity and Nutrition (LPAN) Coalition received funds from the Pitt County Medical Society to develop a *“Walking Trails & Routes in Pitt County” CD*. The CD was released in October 2004 and contains electronic maps of local walking trails, as well as walking tips provided by members of Pitt Partners for Health’s Nutrition and Physical Activity committee. The Pitt County Planning Department collaborated with the LPAN to create the maps and CD. Information contained on the CD is also available on the web at www.pittcountync.gov/depts/planning/cdwalk .

In January 2004, Pitt County Schools received a three-year *Health and Wellness Trust Fund grant* in the amount of \$449,000. The grant provides the financial resources to expand several initiatives to support healthy eating and physical activity interventions for students and staff within Pitt County Schools.

As a result of this funding and other financial support from grants, Pitt County Schools has implemented several policy and environmental changes including support for daily physical activity in elementary schools and healthier options system-wide in the school nutrition program. Pitt County Schools has developed a reputation statewide for its efforts to improve the nutrition environment. The system was selected as one of eight school systems in the state to pilot implementation of *“North Carolina’s Recommended Standards for All Foods Available in Schools.”* Thirteen (13) elementary schools in Pitt County will participate in the pilot program which is scheduled to begin in January 2005. Northwest Elementary School was selected as one of 25 schools in the state to participate in the *USDA Fruit & Vegetable Pilot Program*. The program will provide fruits and vegetables daily to all children in addition to what is served as part of the school breakfast and lunch programs.

Numerous outreach and educational activities have been undertaken by Pitt Partners for Health's Nutrition and Physical Activity Partners. This group coordinated a ***Nutrition & Physical Activity Fair*** in March 2004 at the Colonial Mall. Thirty-two (32) exhibitors provided information to community members. The fair also included fruit and vegetable samples, yoga demonstrations, and door prizes. A similar fair is being planned for March 2005.

Nutrition & Physical Activity Partners promoted healthy eating and physical activity at the ***Ayden Collard Festival*** in September 2004. Over 125 community members visited the booth to participate in nutrition and physical activity related games, and to receive information about healthy eating and physical activity.

Nutrition & Physical Activity Partners also coordinated ***media promotions*** throughout the year. WNCT Channel 9, CBS affiliate, conducted monthly nutrition interviews with a dietitian from the Health Department, as well as sponsored a four-part Nutrition Makeover series in March 2004. WITN Channel 7, NBC affiliate, conducted monthly interviews with Growing Up FIT! staff promoting nutrition and physical activity. *The Daily Reflector*, a local and regional newspaper, continued to print a weekly nutrition column by Kathryn Kolasa, PhD, RD, LDN. In September 2004, additional media coverage, including two television interviews, one radio interview, and four newspaper articles, were provided to promote 5-A-Day and Eat Smart, Move More messages.

In FY 2003-04, Pitt County Government allocated 1.05 million dollars for the development of ***Phase I of the Pitt County Recreation Complex***. Groundbreaking for the first facility was held in August 2004 with a completion date set for July 2005. This is the first county recreation facility for Pitt County citizens. It will create new opportunities for physical activity for all citizens, especially youth and senior citizens.

The Pitt County Health Education Foundation has provided financial support (\$14,000) to a grassroots community organization, First Born Community Development Center, to purchase ***playground equipment and fencing*** to provide outdoor activities for children.

In May 2004, the ***“Successful Solutions for Moving Our Children Toward a Healthy Weight ... Schools, Communities, Families” conference*** was held in Pitt County. Staff from ECU Agromedicine (Growing Up FIT!) and Eastern AHEC collaborated with several Pitt County agencies to sponsor the conference for Eastern NC that highlighted successful initiatives within the region to address healthy weight. The 75 attendees were encouraged to replicate successful initiatives within their respective communities.

In September 2004, the Greenville/Pitt County Chamber of Commerce hosted the third Education Summit and devoted the program to ***“The Health of Education”***. Business, health care and education leaders received the latest information regarding strategies for improving the health of children and parents. There were 260 attendees.

In response to the national and regional epidemic of childhood overweight, the ***ECU-UHS Pediatric Healthy Weight Research and Treatment Center (PHWRTC)*** was formed in August 2003 to address weight issues for eastern North Carolina children and youth. The PHWRTC is involved in three main activities: 1) collaborating with local health care providers and community agencies to combat childhood overweight; 2) providing clinical care for at risk and overweight children and youth in the region through two Pediatric Healthy Weight clinics; and 3) conducting childhood obesity prevention and treatment research. To learn more about the center, visit <http://www.ecu.edu/pedsweightcenter/>.

Led by the staff of the PHWRTC, a team of registered dietitians and nutrition educators in Pitt County developed a ***standardized Medical Nutrition Therapy protocol***. This tool, completed and printed in November 2004, is the first of its type in the country and will facilitate the provision of standardized nutrition counseling for overweight children. In addition, this document provides valuable nutrition patient education materials. The protocol and educational materials are available on the PHWRTC website listed above. The Pitt County Medical Society provided financial support for the development and distribution of this tool.

In August 2004, Pitt County Memorial Hospital was awarded over 1.5 million dollars for a period of three years from The Duke Endowment to support the development of a ***Pediatric Healthy Weight Case Management Program***. It is anticipated that an additional two years of funding will be made available to support this initiative beyond the initial three year period. The three main objectives of the grant are: 1) to establish a comprehensive case management program that provides a well-integrated system of services and education specifically designed to minimize future morbidity and mortality and improve quality of life among the highest risk subset of overweight children in Pitt County, 2) to provide training and promote collaboration among local clinicians/providers in order to facilitate early identification of and anticipatory guidance for children at risk of overweight, as well as facilitate standardized care plans, and 3) to raise community awareness of the epidemic of childhood overweight as a health problem, not an appearance issue, by instituting a social marketing campaign to increase community awareness of the childhood overweight epidemic and supporting policies that result in improved physical activity and nutrition services during the school day, in after school programs, and at school events.

In 2004, University Health Systems of Eastern North Carolina launched its Nutrition Initiative which seeks to improve the ability of patients, employees, and the community *to eat smart and move more*.

Older Adult Health

Older Adult Health was the newest health priority selected for 2004 by Pitt Partners for Health. Approximately 23% of Pitt County's population is adults age 50 and older. Many of the activities discussed below target the population age 65 and over.

Since 1996 Pitt County Health Department has collaborated with Pitt County Memorial Hospital, Pitt County Medical Society, AARP, Council on Aging, and other community volunteers to sponsor *flu shot clinics* targeting those at highest risk for developing serious complications from the flu. Individuals 65 years and older is one of the priority populations. This year the group sponsored a clinic in October 2004. Over 1300 individuals were vaccinated against the flu in this single day. As a result of the vaccine shortage in the fall, Pitt County Health Department, working closely with the NC Division of Public Health, was able to secure 11,150 doses of influenza vaccine for use in Pitt County. Of this amount, Pitt County Health Department distributed over 7,400 doses of influenza vaccine to 47 different health care and nursing home providers. Pitt County Health Department staff administered approximately 3500 doses to individuals.

Pitt County Council on Aging sponsors several programs to support senior citizens. The Council operates *five congregate meal sites* throughout the county serving approximately 100 meals daily. In addition, the Council on Aging utilizes volunteers to deliver about 265 meals daily to home bound seniors in the county to help meet their nutritional needs.

About 300 seniors in Pitt County participate in the *prescription assistance program* to access low cost and free prescriptions. In addition to this program administered by the Council on Aging, an additional 200 seniors in Pitt, Beaufort, and Bertie Counties participate in the *Medication Management and Prescription Drug Assistance Program for North Carolina Seniors*. This latter program is supported by a grant from the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund. During calendar year 2004, 1,475 prescriptions were provided to 200 patients. The Health and Wellness Trust Fund grant also has provided support for a full-time position at HealthAssist, assistance at Pitt County Council on Aging, and pharmacy consultant services for medication management.

About 100 recipients receive benefits through the *nutritional supplement program* – Boost and Ensure are provided at one-half the retail cost. The Council on Aging recycles *durable medical equipment* and distributes to needy seniors. The *Senior Info Line* responds to more than 6000 calls yearly. Callers are provided information and assistance with linkages to local providers and resources.

The Pitt County Council on Aging received financial support (approximately \$45,000) from Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation for several initiatives in 2003-04 including a **safety and falls prevention program**, as well as continued support for the **Fountain Wellness Center**. Additionally in 2004-05, the Council on Aging received a \$200,000 grant to support the construction of a **new Senior Center** for Pitt County.

The Pitt Aging Coalition successfully launched a **family caregiver series** to address various topics related to caring for an older adult. Supported by the regional Family Caregiver Support Program and local aging service providers, the Alzheimer's Association hosted two successful Alzheimer's educational workshops in Pitt County. Two support groups were also formed by local aging service providers.

The **End of Life Coalition** received financial support from the Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation, the Pitt County Health Education Foundation, Pitt Partners for Health and private donations to provide educational programs, facilitator training, and Advanced Care Planning Clinics to assist people with end of life planning and preparation. Approximately 20 individuals received "Advanced Care Planning Facilitator" training. An additional 19 individuals received "Grief Group Facilitator" training.

The **Eastern Area Health Education Center Carolina Geriatric Education Center Advisory Committee** was created with a four year grant award of \$85,000 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The advisory committee is comprised of members from East Carolina University Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Allied Health, College of Health and Human Performance, Center on Aging, and community partners from the Britthaven Corporation, Mid-East Commission, Pitt County Memorial Hospital, and private consultants. The group has developed a two-day curriculum designed to provide health professionals with the expertise to increase mobility in seniors and improve independence.

GoldPath Senior Membership Program, coordinated by Senior Services at Pitt County Memorial Hospital, currently has enrolled over 525 seniors. Members receive a monthly newsletter, opportunity to participate in weekly education programs, as well as many other benefits.

Throughout the year, several **health fairs** were held to address the needs of older adults. Many organizations collaborated to host such events. Free screenings, resource information on products, programs, and services that are available in the community were offered at each event. Locations during the year included ViQuest, Aquatics and Fitness Center, malls, churches, Proffitt's, etc. One such event was the **Pitt County Elder Fair** hosted annually by the Pitt Aging Coalition. Last year's event offered educational seminars and a resource fair for approximately 250 older adults. Another event was the **Senior Health and Fitness Day** held at the ViQuest Center to recognize the health and wellness of the older adult population. A cooking demonstration, free exercise classes, and lunch were provided as part of the festivities.

Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation has expanded recreation services to older adults through the reorganization of staff and use of grant funds. *Exercise classes* that promote physical activity are held throughout the county. This Department in collaboration with other community agencies sponsors the *Greenville-Pitt County Senior Games*. In 2004, Pitt County hosted the NC Senior Games State Finals 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament with over 450 participants.

The Sixth Annual Alzheimer's Memory Walk was held in October 2004 at the Greenville Town Commons. This was a record year with over 300 walkers and more than \$21,000 raised. All money was donated to the Alzheimer's Association, Eastern NC Chapter.

Safe Communities Coalition of Pitt County partnered with the local AARP to sponsor an *AARP Driver Safety Program*. Three (3) Driver Safety Courses for older adults were held in 2004. This eight-hour course is taught by a volunteer certified AARP instructor and is provided at no cost to the participant. Fifty-four (54) adults attended the classes this year.

Infant Mortality

Infant mortality, the death of a child before the age of one, has long been a priority for Pitt County. Pitt County's infant death rates consistently exceed the State's rate. Even more alarming is the disparity between the white and other races. In Pitt County other races have an infant mortality rate three times higher than the white rate. For this reason, Pitt County established the Pitt Infant Mortality Prevention Advisory Council (PIMPAC) and has actively sought out new funding to developing interventions to address this health concern. The Pitt County Health Department has been the recipient of numerous grant awards to support infant mortality prevention and reduction efforts in Pitt County. The Health Department develops and implements these grant activities under advisement of PIMPAC. In 2004, Pitt County Health Department received a \$19,000 March of Dimes grant award to conduct a *prematurity awareness campaign* targeting health professionals in Pitt County and eastern NC, as well as local business leaders and their employees. Participants were advised of the signs and symptoms of prematurity, prevention tips, and policy and environmental enhancements at the worksite to promote pregnancy wellness.

With financial contributions from March of Dimes and Pitt County Memorial Hospital, Pitt County Health Department along with numerous community partners hosted the *annual maternity fair* in April 2004. Approximately 900 individuals attended this one day event designed to promote resources within the community for families of childbearing age and young children.

Pitt County Health Department received continuation funding in July 2004 from the *Healthy Beginnings initiative* with NC DHHS. The Health Department will receive \$50,000 per year for three years to support a program that provides supplemental support to women at increased risk for poor pregnancy outcomes and to develop a lay health advisor program for smoking cessation and breastfeeding promotion.

Pitt County Health Department also received funding from the *Targeted Infant Mortality Reduction (TIMR) Program* in July 2004 (approximately \$39,000 per year for 3 years) to support in-home breastfeeding peer counseling and folic acid education and supplementation. This funding will support a full-time *in-home breastfeeding peer counselor* who will serve WIC and Medicaid-eligible mothers in Pitt County. PCMH also has employed two *breastfeeding peer counselors* who support mothers who deliver their babies at the hospital.

March of Dimes (MOD) has continued its support of *folic acid education and promotion* as a strategy for reducing neural tube defects in babies. In 2004, MOD supported a new position in Eastern North Carolina to promote use of folic acid.

In January 2004, the Health Department received a community award from the March of Dimes (\$1,923) to support the implementation of a **Centering Program** (group prenatal visits). This alternative way of providing prenatal care has been well received among clients and a second “centering group” has begun.

Pitt County is also one of six counties in Eastern NC that receives funds from a federal *Healthy Start Initiative*. These funds provide for outreach activities to identify women at risk for poor pregnancy outcomes and link them to the needed resources within the community, as well as enhanced care coordination services for the most at-risk women. An additional allocation of \$6,510 was awarded for postpartum depression treatment. Federally funded Healthy Start projects are required to screen for postpartum depression and refer clients for assessment and treatment. These resources will be available through May 2005.

Child Care Health Consultants, funded by the Martin/Pitt Partnership for Children, became certified to present "It's SIDS" (*Infant Toddler Safe Sleep and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Risk Reduction in Child Care program*) in October of 2003 and began implementation in November 2003 to coincide with implementation of the new law effective December 1, 2003. This new law mandates back to sleep positions for children under 12 months of age in childcare centers. Staff conducted 17 presentations with approximately 375 childcare workers participating.

While most of the women in Pitt County who experience an infant death are between the ages of 20-29, many of these women began their childbearing as adolescents. Pitt County Health Department has worked for several years to lower the adolescent pregnancy rate by implementing programs that focus on self-esteem, responsible decision making, and community service learning.

In 2004, the *Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program* received funding from the Health Education Foundation Grant (\$6,000) and Pitt County Memorial Hospital to support the peer education program in the North Pitt/Bethel school attendance area.

STDs/HIV/AIDS

While there has been a steady decline in the number of gonorrhea and chlamydia cases over the last three years in Pitt County, a large number of the cases continue to be among African Americans age 13-29 year olds in NC.

New HIV infection reports appear to have stabilized in the last three years. As of September 30, 2004, there had been only 23 new cases reported for Pitt County. As always, caution should be used in interpreting the surveillance data because those at highest risk for infection are still not getting tested. While the infection rate appears to be declining in Pitt County, it is increasing in surrounding counties. Pitt County Health Department is preparing to utilize Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to identify and track high HIV/STD prevalence areas thereby targeting these areas for more intense education and outreach efforts.

Beginning in July 2004, Pitt County Health Department was awarded \$55,000 each year for three years from the NC DHHS to continue STD/HIV prevention, education, and outreach targeting adolescents, young adults, and substance abusers. This initiative, *Project Outreach*, has received funding from NC DHHS since 1993. In addition to providing education to substance abusers in treatment programs, as well as conducting street outreach in targeted neighborhoods, staff has collaborated with ECU Student Health Services and Pitt County AIDS Service Organization (PiCASO) to provide HIV peer leader training for student leaders.

As part of Project Outreach, staff has visited Pitt County Detention Center to provide *HIV education and testing for male inmates* for the past three years. Presently, Pitt County Health Department is developing a Memorandum of Understanding with Pitt County Detention Center and PiCASO to provide HIV education and testing to female inmates once a month. This is a high risk population that has not been served in the past three years.

In 2003-04 and again in 2004-05, *PiCASO* has received funding from Pitt County Health Education Foundation to expand one-on-one education efforts focused on at-risk youth. In addition, PiCASO has received financial support from the Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation for the past two years to continue prevention and disease management education programs in West Greenville.

The American Red Cross, Pitt County Chapter is very active in HIV/AIDS education. Most recently this Chapter has focused on developing a HIV educational program, ***HIV/AIDS Knowledge is Golden Program***, targeted to senior citizens. If this program is successful, it will be shared with the National American Red Cross for inclusion in national literature. The Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation has provided support for this program in 2003-04 and 2004-05.

Summary

Much of the success in Pitt County as it relates to health improvement is a result of the collaborative relationships within Pitt County. Pitt Partners for Health, Pitt County's Healthy Carolinians Task Force, charges itself with identifying opportunities for partnerships within Pitt County.

While every attempt has been made to summarize the major activities occurring within Pitt County to address each of the priority areas, it is acknowledged that some programs may not be represented in this report. Please contact Jo Morgan, Pitt County Health Department, at 252-902-2426 or email djmorgan@pittcountync.gov to ensure that information about your program as it relates to one of the priority areas for Pitt County is included in future reports.

For more information about how you can become involved in Pitt Partners for Health, please contact Pitt Partners' chair or coordinator listed below. Also listed below is contact information for the subcommittees for each of the priority areas identified by Pitt Partners.

Pitt Partners for Health

Doyle Cummings, Chair, 252-744-2586, cummingsd@mail.ecu.edu
Kristen Brooks, Coordinator, 252-847-8265

Access to Care Subcommittee

Tina Dixon, Co-Chair, 252-847-8080, tdixon@pcmh.com
Nancy Ball, Co-Chair 252-758-8833, nballpcms@earthlink.net

Diabetes, Heart Disease, and Stroke Subcommittee

Shantell Cheek, Chair, 252-902-2451, slcheek@pittcountync.gov
Cathy Mclean, Vice Chair, 252-847-5136 cbmclean@pcmh.com

Nutrition and Physical Activity Partners Subcommittee

Joanne Moylan, Chair, 252-902-2388, jjmoylan@pittcountync.gov

Older Adult Health Subcommittee

Mary Hall, Chair, 252-847-0550, mphall@pcmh.com

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Ginger Dail, American Red Cross – Pitt County Chapter
Cynthia Davis, Mid-East Commission
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Kahla Hall, Pitt County Memorial Hospital Foundation
Mary Hall, Community Health Programs, Pitt County Memorial Hospital
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