



2016 SOTCH

State of the County Health Report

New Hanover County

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The New Hanover County Community Health Assessment Team is pleased to present the 2016 State of the County Health Report (SOTCH), with a focus on our county's priority health issues.

An annual report, the SOTCH educates New Hanover County residents about the health issues in our community, as well as gives updates on how we are working to address these health issues. Recent morbidity and mortality data is highlighted, along with recent subcommittee projects and accomplishments.

Health priorities help in guiding the plans for public health programs and prevention strategies in New Hanover County. The Community Health Assessment Team analyzed data from the 2015 Community Health Assessment (CHA) and identified the following three priority health concerns for New Hanover County:

- Injury Prevention related to unintentional poisoning
- Obesity Prevention in adults and children
- Excessive Drinking Prevention and reducing alcohol related motor vehicle deaths

Health disparities was not listed individually, but considered a part of every priority area. A copy of the full CHA may be found on the Health Department website at www.health.nhcgov.com under the 'about us' link then under 'reports'.

This SOTCH report will be available to community partners and the general population electronically on the New Hanover County website, physically at the New Hanover County Health Department, at all New Hanover County Libraries, and distributed as a press release.

The New Hanover County Board of Health will be presented with this information and the County Commissioners will receive this report through a direct mailing. If you would like a copy of this report mailed to you, please call 910-798-6500.

New Hanover County Vision

A vibrant, prosperous, diverse coastal community, committed to building a sustainable future for generations to come.

www.health.nhcgov.com

Top 3 Health Priorities

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How Priorities
Were Chosen

Increase the percentage of adults who are neither overweight nor obese.

- **Primary Data:** Considering the self-reported height and weight of the participants, 60% would be classified as either overweight or obese in the Body Mass Index (BMI) chart. Cross tabulation of BMI and race results reveal that white respondents had 58% (688 people) in the overweight/obese category, African Americans had 76% (98 people) in the overweight/obese category, Asians had 80% (4 people) in the overweight/obese category, Native Americans had 88% (8 people) in the overweight/obese category and biracial responders had 64% (29 people) in the overweight/obese category. When considering their communities, survey respondents listed sidewalks/bike paths improvements (25%) as a need for improvement. Only 29% of respondents get the CDC recommended 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week. When asking the 71% why they don't get the recommended amount of physical activity, almost all of the respondents said they either don't like to exercise, it costs too much or they are too tired to exercise (91%).
- **Secondary Data:** 2010 and 2013, 87% of New Hanover County residents say they do have access to exercise opportunities. Limited Access to Healthy Foods is the percentage of the population who are low income and do not live close to a grocery store. In 2010, eight percent (8%) of New Hanover County residents were considered low income and did not live close to a grocery store.
- **Healthy NC 2020 Objective:** Increase the percentage of adults who are neither overweight nor obese from 34.6% to 38.1% by 2020

Current Resources/ Programs Available: Parks and Recreation options, Healthy Communities Program, Wilmington Health Magazine's Healthy Family Program, Fireman's Fit Family Challenge, Farmers MarKID events, Obesity Prevention Coalition, Seasonal Farmer's Markets.

Reduce excessive drinking rates/alcohol-related traffic crashes

- **Primary Data:** With 29% of respondents in agreement, drinking and alcohol abuse came in as the third most popular issue listed as affecting the quality of life in new Hanover County. When asked what improvements their communities need most, 10% of survey respondents said drug and alcohol treatment. The leading health education resource residents (27%) need provided for their community is substance abuse prevention (alcohol/drugs/prescriptions). A majority of parents (68%) who took the survey said that they talk to their kids about alcohol abuse and drinking.
- **Secondary Data:** Excessive drinking was noted among 18% of the survey respondents which is above the state percentage (16%) and all of its peer counties (range: 14%-16%) during 2006-2012. During 2009-2013 New Hanover County had 29% of crashes that were contributed to alcohol impairment, this percentage is similar to its peer counties (range: 22%-38%).
- **Healthy NC 2020 Objective:** Reduce the percentage of traffic crashes that are alcohol-related from 5.7% to 4.7% by 2020

Current Resources/Programs Available: School based instructional programs, Sobriety checkpoints, Drunk driving laws, Healthy Communities Program, Coastal Horizons Intervention Program, Cape Fear Coalition for a Drug Free Tomorrow, Sheriff's Department, Wilmington PD.

Reduce unintentional poisoning death rate for prescription drugs and opioid use

- **Primary Data:** When asked what topics people in their communities need more information about, the top response was substance use/abuse (27%). Some 38% of survey respondents chose to throw their medications in the trash as the most popular form of disposal, followed by taking the medications to a community take back event (22%) as the next most popular. Another behavioral health finding was that 1,077 people (68%) said they have used a prescription drug that was prescribed to them within the last 30 days. In contrast, 37 people, (2%), of survey takers say they have used a medication that was not prescribed for them within the last 30 days. And 57 people, (3%) say they have used a drug classified as illegal in the past 30 days.
- **Secondary Data:** During 2006-2012, the drug poisoning mortality rate in New Hanover County (17.0) exceeded two of its three peer counties and the state rate (12.0). The rate is measured by the number of drug poisoning deaths per 100,000 population
- **Healthy NC 2020 Objective:** Reduce the unintentional poisoning mortality rate from 11.0 to 9.0 by 2020.

Current Resources/ Programs Available: Project Lazarus, Medication Take Back Events, Cape Fear Coalition for a Drug Free Tomorrow, Safe Kids Cape Fear.

Following the presentation of the CHA findings, community members were given a problem importance sheet with primary and secondary data information for the top six most important health topics that were identified. Participants were asked to review the written information and to rank each topic based on three criteria; magnitude, seriousness and feasibility .

After each participant scored their health topic from 1-10 the scores were totaled and divided by the number of participants that submitted a problem importance sheet.

Increase the percentage of adults who are neither overweight nor obese.

- **New Website**—Cape Fear Obesity Prevention Coalition received a new website for members to share information. The Cape Fear Obesity Prevention Coalition is a collaborative community based network dedicated to supporting children and families of Brunswick & New Hanover Counties in becoming neither overweight nor obese. This new website will help to offer additional communication tool for cross sector community partners that are interested in obesity prevention initiatives. www.capefearopc.wordpress.com



- **Community Gardens**—Access to fresh fruits and vegetables is a strategy used to offer healthier choices to those living in areas where healthy stores are not available. Through the Healthy Communities program at the local Health Department, more than seven community gardens have either been enhanced or established during 2016. The goal is to equip the community with resources and training they will need to keep the gardens growing for years to come.
- **Wilmington Parent's Family Fitness Challenge**—Wilmington Parent Magazine challenged Wilmington families to get fit together. The challenge offered a mobile-friendly activity tracker, free community exercise classes, expert fitness advice and nutrition tips for families. Three wellness experts in areas of fitness, nutrition, and wellness worked with the families for the 8 weeks to meet their goals. Two families were chosen as spotlight families and the general public was invited to join in on the fun.
- **Ogden Park's Fitness Equipment**—New fitness equipment was installed at the Ogden Park in 2016. The equipment features stations for pull-ups, bench presses, dips, sit ups and leg presses -- all of which use body-weight resistance to build muscles.
- **Fired Up Challenge**—Firefighters in New Hanover County went above and beyond their fire prevention duties by encouraging families to get Fired Up for a safer and healthier community with the Fired Up Challenge! The fire fighters encouraged community members to check their smoke detector batteries, establish a family escape plan and engage in physical activities to participate in the Fired Up Challenge!
- **School Health Advisory Council**—In an effort to adhere to the wellness policy that was adopted by the school board, School Health Advisory Council members have a plan to train wellness champions at every school to carryout evidenced-based programs. The comprehensive plan will address health education, health services, physical education, nutrition services, mental health services, safe school environment, staff wellness and parental/community involvement.
- **Active Based Learning**— DC Virgo is blazing trails with it's pilot program, designed to provide active based learning in the classroom. Active-based learning is a technique adopted by a teacher to teach traditional subjects through activity. Studies show this child-centered approach brings about enhanced learning experiences and improved behavioral outcomes.



Ogden Park's new fitness equipment

Reduce excessive drinking rates/alcohol-related traffic crashes

- Plans to address the excessive drinking and alcohol-related traffic crashes are underway in the county.

Reduce unintentional poisoning death rate for prescription drugs and opioid use

- **AMA Teens Speak Campaign**- AMA Foundation for prescription drug safety provided funding to the Cape Fear Coalition for a Drug Free Tomorrow- a media campaign. The coalition solicited input from UNCW students to engage middle school students in the design. Students were asked to create safety messages centered around prescription drug safety. The winning design was turned into a billboard with a prevention message.
- **Fall & Spring Medication Disposal Events**-Every fall and spring, the New Hanover Regional Medical Center partners with the local Health Department, law enforcement and a variety of community partners to hold a medication take back event at the medical mall. This event typically receives more than 700 pounds of medications twice a year.
- **Opioid Summit**-The Wilmington Police Department hosted an opioid summit to begin discussions surrounding the opioid epidemic in our area. Task groups and workgroups have since formed from those summits and continue to meet to work toward a multi-sector, community intervention.
- **Walgreens and Carolina Beach Permanent Drop Box**-A new permanent drop box has been placed at the Carolina beach police department and the Walgreens on Oleander and College drive. Permanent drop boxes are best practice tools that allow individuals to bring unwanted or unused medications for proper disposal anytime of the year.
- **Naloxone Standing Orders Adopted**-The New Hanover County Health Department adopted a naloxone dispensing standing order to provide naloxone to patients and their family members that present to the clinic.

Significant Events of 2016

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Current national and local legislation and events impacting Public Health

- **Public Health and the Policing of Black Lives:** Violence is a public health issue. In 2016 stories about improper policing practices leading to the deaths of various persons of color made headlines. When minorities in communities are disproportionately killed at the hands of police compared to their Caucasian counterparts, it harms the public's health and deepens racial health inequities. Since our existing public health infrastructure continuously collects data on injuries and deaths, public health agencies can play a critical role in preventing police violence by monitoring and systematically investigating its impact on communities.⁴
- **Castlight Report on Health:** Castlight Health is a California-based health care information company that produced a report titled "The Opioid Crisis in America's Workforce." Wilmington lead the nation with an 11.6 percent abuse rate. Castlight reviewed and analyzed health data from almost 1 million workers covered under their employer-based insurance. This report brought national attention to North Carolina and extended a call to action for multiple community partners to work with public health to address the growing epidemic.⁵
- **Rabies Law Updated:** In March 2016, North Carolina's rabies laws conformed to recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Association of Public Health Veterinarians' Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control. North Carolina rabies law requires that all owned dogs, cats and ferrets must be vaccinated against rabies by four months of age (NCGS 130A-185). One shot is not enough; rabies vaccinations must be kept current. Modifications of note in this updated version of the compendium, compared with the previous version, include clarification of language, explicit encouragement of an interdisciplinary approach to rabies control, a recommendation to collect and report at the national level additional data elements on rabid domestic animals, changes to the recommended management of dogs and cats exposed to rabies that are either unvaccinated or overdue for booster vaccination, education of the recommended 6-month quarantine period for certain species, and updates to the list of marketed animal rabies vaccines.¹
- **Zika Cases:** Zika virus is primarily spread through mosquito bites. Most people infected with Zika do not show any symptoms, though about 1 in 5 experience fever, red eyes, rashes, body aches and headaches. The virus can cause microcephaly, which severely limits brain development among fetuses and newborns, and other serious birth defects. Concern grew in 2015 when the first confirmed infection was reported in Brazil. Cases have since spread to many other countries, including the U.S. and its territories. Puerto Rico has reported the most cases, while local transmission of the virus also has been reported in Florida. The public health response the outbreak focuses on preventing transmission, supporting affected families and containing the virus to areas where it is present. Other efforts include disease surveillance, laboratory diagnosis and mosquito control. Travel-associated Zika virus disease cases reported in North Carolina is 81, and there have been zero locally acquired vector borne cases reported in North Carolina.²
- **Needle Exchange Approved:** Syringe exchange programs became legal in North Carolina on July 11 2016, the day Governor McCrory signed House Bill 972 into law (G.S. 90-113.27) . Any governmental or nongovernmental organization "that promotes scientifically proven ways of mitigating health risks associated with drug use and other high risk behaviors" can start a syringe exchange program. Needle exchange programs decrease the transmission of blood borne disease by decreasing the likelihood that people who inject drugs will share syringes and by collecting used syringes from the community and properly disposing of them.³

1Control & Prevention in North Carolina, NCDPHHS, 2016 <http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/rabies/control.html>

2Disease and Topics: Zika Virus, NCDPHHS, 2016 <http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/zika/>

3FAQ on Syringe Exchange Programs, NCHRC, 2016 <http://www.nchrc.org/syringe-exchange/syringe-exchange-2/>

4Public Health and the Policing of Black Lives, Harvard Review, 2016 <http://harvardpublichealthreview.org/public-health-and-the-policing-of-black-lives/>

5The opioid crisis in America's Workforce, Castlight Health, 2016 <http://www.castlighthealth.com/typ/the-opioid-crisis/>

County Demographics

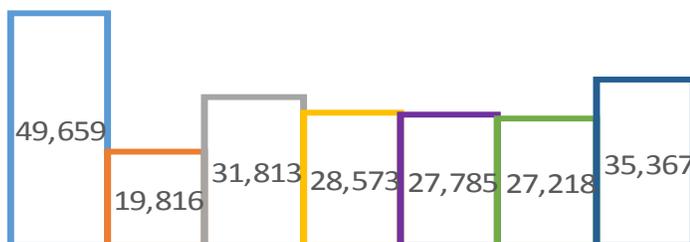
	2015 NHC	2015 NC
Estimated Population	220,358	10,042,802
Gender		
Male	106,347 (48%)	4,889,865 (49%)
Female	113,884 (52%)	5,166,818 (51%)
Race		
White	81%	71%
Black	14%	22%
Am. Indian or Alaskan Native	1%	2%
Asian	2%	3%
Multi-Racial/Other Race	2%	2%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic	6%	9%

Source: *US Census Bureau Quick Facts* & *Office of State Budget and Management*

	(2010-2014) NHC	(2010-2014) NC
Veterans	17,075	709,471
Foreign born persons	5.3%	7.6%
Language other than English spoken at home	7.5%	11.1%
With a disability, under age 65 years	8.8%	9.5%
Ages		
	2015 NHC	2015 NC
< 19 Years	49,659	2,585,899
20-24 Years	19,816	715,623
25-34 Years	31,813	1,299,797
35-44 Years	28,573	1,312,477
45-54 Years	27,785	1,375,837
55-64 Years	27,218	1,258,609
65+ Years	35,367	1,508,441

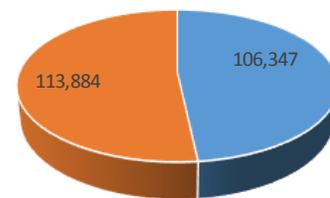
Source: US Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/37129,37>

NHC Ages, 2015



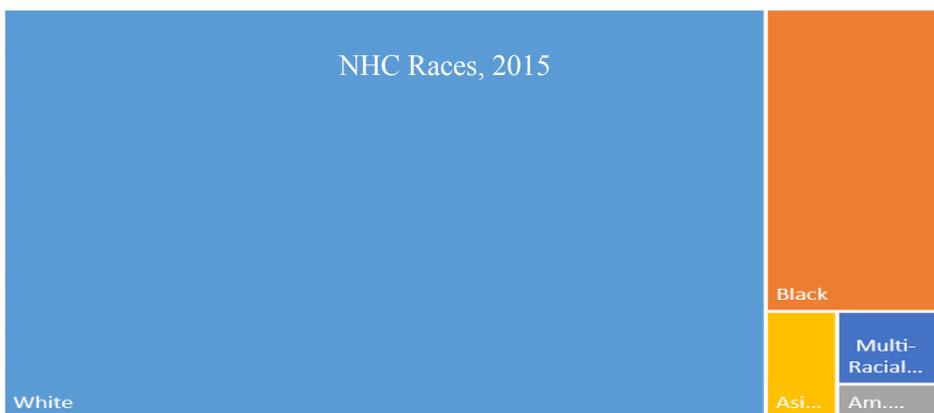
■ < 19 Years
 ■ 20-24 Years
 ■ 25-34 Years
 ■ 35-44 Years
 ■ 45-54 Years
 ■ 55-64 Years
 ■ 65+ Years

NHC Gender, 2015



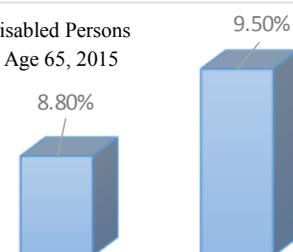
■ Male ■ Female

NHC Races, 2015



■ White
 ■ Black
 ■ Am. Indian or Alaskan Native
 ■ Asian
 ■ Multi-Racial/Other Race

NHC Disabled Persons Under Age 65, 2015



NHC

NC



Economic Snapshot

County Mortality

Rank	Cause	#	%
1	Cancer	438	22.7
2	Diseases of heart	389	20.2
3	Cerebrovascular diseases	179	9.3
4	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	95	4.9
5	All other unintentional injuries	80	4.2
6	Alzheimer's disease	56	2.9
7	Diabetes mellitus	45	2.3
8	Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis	34	1.8
9	Influenza and pneumonia	33	1.7
10	Septicemia	31	1.6
	All other causes (Residual)	547	28.4
Total Deaths -- All Causes		1927	100.0

Source: <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/data/vital/volume1/2015/newhanover.html> & <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/interactive/query/lcd/lcd.cfm>

According to the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics, there were a total of 1,927 deaths for all ages (excluding fetal) recorded in New Hanover County in 2015. The leading causes of death for specific age groups during that same year are reflected in links above.

NHC Cancer-related Deaths and Rates, 2014

Colon/Rectum	Deaths 150	Rate 12.3	Lung/Bronchus	Deaths 611	Rate 49.9	Female Breasts	Deaths 131	Rate 19	Prostate	Deaths 100	Rate 20.9
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Source: <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/schs/CCR/mort1014cnty.pdf>

County Morbidity

Health factors represent values that influence the health of a county. Four types of health factors: health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic, and physical environment factors were measured. A fifth set of factors that influence health (genetics and biology) is not included in the Rankings.

Health outcomes in the County Health Rankings represent the health of the county population. There are two types of health outcomes measured. How long people live (mortality) and how healthy people feel while alive (morbidity) are measured on a 1-100 scale rating.

2016 Health Factors	10
Health Behaviors	12
Clinical Care	7
Social & Economic Factors	25
Physical Environment	9

Source: [County Health Rankings](#)

2016 Health Outcomes	14
Length of Life	13
Quality of Life	24

Source: [County Health Rankings](#)

- **Unemployment:** 6,343 individuals or 5.8% of the labor force was unemployed in 2014.
- **Household Income:** Median household income was \$49,835 in 2013.
- **Poverty:** During 2010-2014 about 18% of adults lived below the poverty line and 24% of children. 2015 Poverty guidelines define poverty as making less than \$24,250 annually for a family of four.
- **SNAP Benefits:** 16,384 families received SNAP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits during the 2014-2015 fiscal year.
- **High School Diploma:** At least 90.6 percent of New Hanover County citizens had a high school diploma during 2009-2013.

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts](#), 2010-2014 Accessed February 1, 2016.

Source: [New Hanover County Health Department of Social Services Annual Report 2014-2015](#) Accessed December 19, 2015.

Emerging Issues

- **Mobile Food Market:** Several government and community partners have begun discussions regarding a mobile market in the area. This need has developed in response to increasing access to healthy food options in areas where there are limited healthy options.
- **Minority Diabetes Prevalence:** A regional grant has been presented to address the growing rate of prediabetes in minority communities. An estimated 2.5 million North Carolinians are living with prediabetes and without intervention, 11% of those would go on to develop diabetes. The Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities is providing the grant to communities that plan to reach African American, Native American, Asian and Hispanic communities.

New Initiatives

- **Parks Prescription:** Parks Prescriptions: Park prescriptions is a movement to strengthen the connection between health care and parks and public lands to improve the physical and mental health among individuals and communities. The New Hanover County Health Department will work with the New Hanover County Parks Department and the SEAHEC Agency to implement park prescriptions programs throughout the county.
- **Violence Prevention as a Public Health Issue:** The Blue Ribbon Commission for the Prevention of Youth Violence is researching ways to partner with Public Health to address community violence. BRC representatives are exploring community health worker models that have been successful in other states.
- **School Health Advisory Council:** The New Hanover County SHAC is proposing wellness coordinators be enlisted at every school to support the schools newly amended wellness policy. The SHAC executive committee is hoping to have a group of interested professionals trained to deliver programming to students, staff and parents in every school.
- **Faithful Families Eating Smart Moving More:** The NHCHD is working with regional partners to deliver the FFESMM program to area churches. This evidenced based program is designed to engage faith-based communities in fitness and nutrition programs that lead to positive health outcomes.
- **Be Active Kids Curriculum:** Smart Start of New Hanover County staff are working to train the trainer to deliver action-based content in child care settings.
- **Farm to School Initiative:** Smart Start has the opportunity to participate in a farm to school team building activity. NHC was chosen to convene a team to work together to develop a farm to school network in the county.
- **New Hanover County Food Policy Council:** Several community groups have convened to lay plans to form a food policy council in NHC. The primary purpose of is to synthesize information and coordinate efforts to advise elected officials and public administrators about how they can further support our local food system.
- **Booze it or Looze It Media Campaign:** The NHCHD is working to increase public awareness of DWI checking stations by partnering with the Forensic Tests for Alcohol Branch using the Booze it or Loose it Campaign. "Booze It & Lose It" was launched in 1994 to increase awareness of the dangers of drinking and driving, as well as the penalties associated with driving drunk.
- **American Ninja Warrior"-style challenge courses at area parks:** The parks and gardens department is in talks with various community partners to support an interactive obstacle course at one or more of their parks. The goal would be to get the community engaged in a competitive-style activity outdoors.
- **ENGAGE SENC:** The Engage Southeast North Carolina Community platform (EngageSENC.org) is a new web-based tool to help scholars, educators, organizations, community members, decision makers, and philanthropic funders in Columbus, Brunswick, New Hanover, Pender and Onslow County cross boundaries and collaborate on projects to improve the quality of life in Southeastern North Carolina.

- ◆ CDC Quality Improvement Project-Vector Control
- ◆ NC Division of Public Health - Women's Health
- ◆ NC DHHS Zika Virus Mosquito Control Grant-Vector Control
- ◆ Cape Fear Memorial Foundation-Family Counseling
- ◆ Ministering Circle-Good Shepherd and Mobile Dental Unit
- ◆ Halloween Safety Grant - Safe Kids
- ◆ HIV/STD Outreach-Health Promotion
- ◆ Family Planning Grant-Women's Health
- ◆ PREPare for Success-Health Promotion

New Hanover County Public Health received a total of **\$395,619** in grants during the 2016 calendar year.

Volunteer Opportunities

Contact Us

New Hanover County Health Department

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health.nhcgov.com

[www.facebook.com/
NHCHealth](http://www.facebook.com/NHCHealth)

[www.twitter.com/
NHCHealth](http://www.twitter.com/NHCHealth)



Electronic copies of this report and other New Hanover County health reports are available at:

[http://health.nhcgov.com/
about-us/reports/](http://health.nhcgov.com/about-us/reports/)

- ◆ [Blue Ribbon Commission for the Prevention of Youth Violence](#)
- ◆ [Cape Fear Coalition for a Drug-Free Tomorrow](#)
- ◆ [Coastal Horizons Center, Inc.](#)
- ◆ [Cape Fear Community College](#)
- ◆ [Cape Fear Obesity Prevention Coalition](#)
- ◆ [Cape Fear Volunteer Center](#)
- ◆ [Engage SENC](#)
- ◆ [Feast Down East](#)
- ◆ [New Hanover County School Health Advisory Council](#)
- ◆ [New Hanover County Health Department](#)
- ◆ [New Hanover County Library](#)
- ◆ [New Hanover County Parks Department](#)
- ◆ [New Hanover Regional Medical Center](#)
- ◆ [North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition](#)
- ◆ [Safe Kids Cape Fear Coalition](#)
- ◆ [School Health Advisory Council \(SHAC\)](#)
- ◆ [Smart Start of New Hanover County](#)
- ◆ [South Eastern North Carolina Regional Health Collaborative](#)
- ◆ [Wilmington Health](#)

