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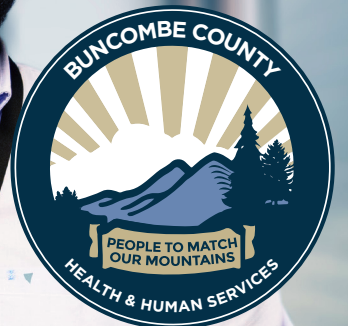
BUNCOMBE COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

# ANNUAL REPORT

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The purpose of Buncombe County Health and Human Services is to strengthen our communities by advancing health, safety and opportunity. As I reflect on this purpose, several simple truths come to mind:

- As we seek to build a stronger Buncombe County, it must begin with those who serve. We are committed to hiring, supporting and engaging a strong, resilient workforce at Buncombe County Health & Human Services (BCHHS). I am so grateful for the dedication, creativity and compassion of the 550+ team members of our agency. We also have a committed and engaged HHS board that supports and encourages our purpose.
- Buncombe County is full of unique communities that are constantly changing. BCHHS is committed to partnering with these communities to advance opportunities for a fulfilled life regardless of their age, zip code or skin color.
- Public health and family safety are at the core of our services. We believe these are foundational aspects of how people and communities can better achieve their full potential.

We seek to be a leader in our professions, striving to advance our purpose with excellence, determination, and creativity. As you read the pages of this report, it is my hope that you will see our commitment to our purpose through our actions and achievements.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stoney Blevins". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Stoney Blevins  
Agency Director,  
Buncombe County Health & Human Services

## ADVANCING HEALTH



### WIC Earns National Award & Continues Tradition of Excellence

BCHHS takes pride in producing outstanding results across all program areas and the Women Infants and Children (WIC) program is no exception. Buncombe County WIC passed their State audit in December 2018 with flying colors. The audit praised the WIC team for their outreach efforts, strong breastfeeding program (support, documentation, and coordination), comprehensive nutrition counseling, assessment, and care plans, and their array of culturally diverse educational materials.

WIC was awarded the USDA's Loving Support Award of Excellence for the second year in a row. In FY 2019, the USDA awarded 78 Gold Awards and 12 Gold Premiere Awards nationwide. Buncombe County was 1 of the 12 Gold Premier award winners, putting them a step above their Gold Award achievement last fiscal year. Innovative outreach efforts and a strong emphasis on breastfeeding peer counselors continue to propel the Buncombe County WIC program to the highest ranks of their program on the national level.

### Partnering with Students to Prevent Substance Use Disorder

The Partnership for Substance Free Youth and community partners produced the NC Student Summit on Opioid and Substance Abuse at the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in Black Mountain in Spring 2019. The Student Summit focused on bringing future community leaders together to learn about the current state of addiction and how to build capacity for a healthier and safer future. The students were involved at a higher level than the year before in creating and co-facilitating workshops that followed the head, heart, and hand model. At the conclusion of the summit, over 80% of respondents reported increased skill around creating peer messages about substance abuse prevention.

The 2019 Student Summit won two NC Excellence in Communications Award from the North Carolina City and County Communications Conference; 1st place in the category of Community Visioning and 1st place in the Citizen Participation category.

A notable achievement and win for our community is the student's sustained momentum throughout the year in efforts to

educate and inspire their fellow students on the topic of substance use disorder (SUD). Examples include the creation of the Asheville Buncombe Futures Movement (ABFM) youth coalition at Asheville High and the AC Reynolds Opioid Youth Leadership Council, which held impressive assemblies for every grade to increase knowledge of SUD. The Student Summit is financially supported by a variety of partners in Buncombe County and is a great example of collaboration and creativity, especially with our prevention and school partners.



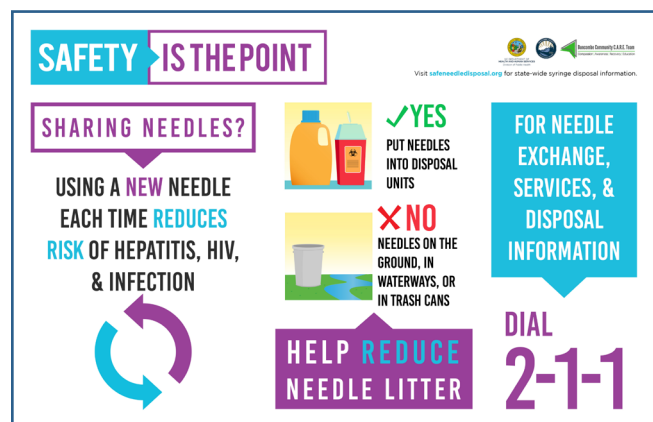
## Major Progress on Opioid Overdose Grant Deliverables

Buncombe County Health and Human Services made significant progress on grant deliverables related to opioid misuse and overdose deaths in FY19. A time-limited state grant of \$100,000 from the Centers for Disease Control and NC DHHS helped to address 4 unmet needs in Buncombe County: Health Education, Naloxone Availability, Syringe Disposal, and Syringe Services. A Harm Reduction Training was created in collaboration with the Buncombe Community, Awareness, Respect, Education (C.A.R.E.) Coalition. Over 200 community members and staff received the training in harm reduction principles, Narcan administration, and syringe disposal safety. Pre- and Post-

test surveys for this training showed an increase in health belief knowledge and harm reduction acceptability.

To address syringe safety, 5-quart syringe disposal units were installed in bathrooms of central County buildings (35 Woodfin St., Pack Library, 40 Coxe Ave.). As a result, staff in these locations reported a decrease in the number of syringes found in and around these properties. BCHHS continues to engage community partners and stakeholders in efforts to install more syringe disposal units throughout the community.

A media campaign was created to educate the public on harm reduction, syringe safety, stigma reduction, and overdose prevention. The “Safer” campaign includes a web page, posters, flyers, and bus ads created in collaboration with the Buncombe C.A.R.E. Coalition. The intended outcome of this campaign is to prevent life-threatening infections through safer injecting practices. “The opioid epidemic is a public health crisis that is wreaking havoc on our whole community. Harm reduction strategies are working to ameliorate the effects of this crisis and we are seeing improvements,” says Jan Shepard, Public Health Director.



Syringe Safety Bus Sign

## Hepatitis A Outreach Team Provides Hundreds of Vaccines to Prevent Outbreak in Buncombe

Since 2017, there have been large outbreaks of Hepatitis A across the US, including one in NC. Hepatitis A (Hep A) is a vaccine preventable, highly contagious viral liver infection.

In response to this outbreak, BCHHS created a Hep A Outreach Team to educate and provide vaccine to high risk individuals who often experience barriers when seeking preventative healthcare. Since the Hep A Outreach Team first met in September 2018, they have provided over 300 vaccines to high risk populations in Buncombe County. “We realized that we had an opportunity to collaborate with our community partners to help prevent an outbreak in our community. We know that just one dose of the Hep A vaccine is 95 percent effective in preventing infection so we focused our efforts on getting this important resource to as many people in these communities as possible,” says Amparo Acosta, Public Health Nurse Supervisor for BCHHS.

## Immunization Coalition

The Shield of Protection Immunization Coalition began in the summer of 2018. Coalition members use the social-ecological model as a framework to select strategies used to improve immunization rates in WNC. Coalition members include health care providers, school and child care administrators, school nurses, representatives from local community organizations like Western Carolina Medical Society and Blue Ridge Public Radio, parents and grandparents. To date, the group has created a speakers bureau, trained members on social media use, created a Facebook page, and rolled out immunization promotion ads in local movie theaters.

## Chickenpox Outbreak

In the fall of 2018, a varicella (chickenpox) outbreak occurred in a school in Buncombe County that had a large number of students who were not up-to-date on recommended immunizations. A total of 41 students and community members became ill, making it the largest outbreak of chickenpox in NC since the varicella vaccine was introduced in 1995. Public Health officials issued 104 quarantine orders to control the spread of the illness. The outbreak officially concluded in January 2019. An outbreak of this magnitude and the challenges presented by this situation proved to be difficult, however the Buncombe County team maintained excellent lines of communication with the school, parents, and the community to ensure that the response followed protocols and that the community had the information that they needed to be safe.

Based on her work during the outbreak, Mary Backlund, RN, received the Spirit Award for the NC Western Region. As a Communicable Disease Nurse, Mary was instrumental in maintaining a positive working relationship with the private school throughout the varicella outbreak. Her kindness, professionalism and integrity were key to navigating this challenging situation.

Dr. Jennifer Mullendore, BCHHS Medical Director, received the 2019 Medical Director Anchor Award for her commitment to professionalism and to guarding the

Communicable Disease  
Investigations

3,040

Confirmed Reportable  
Diseases

2,392

public's health. She showed sincere concern for the health of the students during the outbreak and made their wellbeing the main focus of her efforts during the response. "The dedication and expertise of our staff in this outbreak was nothing less than exemplary, from Communicable Disease nurses and Public Health Leadership to our county Legal Department," noted HHS Director Stoney Blevins. "Even though the pace was very demanding due to the nationwide media attention and the legal proceedings, our staff maintained a diligent, kind approach to the outbreak from beginning to end that was always aimed at keeping both children and our community safe."

## Addressing Health Inequities Critical for Continued Improvements in Health

Buncombe County continues to hold its position as one of the healthiest communities in the State of North Carolina, according to national County Health Rankings (CHR) released by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. In the 2019 County Health Rankings, Buncombe County ranked 14th in the state for overall health outcomes. The average life expectancy for Buncombe County Residents improved in rank from #23 in 2018 to #19 in 2019. Buncombe also ranked 3rd in the health factors category for access to medical care, health behaviors, education, employment, and built and physical

environment. These health factors lay the groundwork for the eventual health outcomes of our population.

It is important to note, however, that the health outcomes for our entire population are not the same for everyone. In fact, when we take a closer look at the County Health Rankings and review data from the NC Center for Health Statistics, we see that stark health inequities exist for people of color in Buncombe County. According to this data, black babies are 3.8 times more likely to die before the age of one than white babies, 2.1 times more likely to be born at a lower birth weight than white babies, and are dying before the age of 18 at 2.5 times the rate of white children. Black adults over the age of 65 experience preventable hospital stays at 1.8 times the rate of white adults and black adults with diabetes die at 3.4 times the rate of white adults with diabetes.

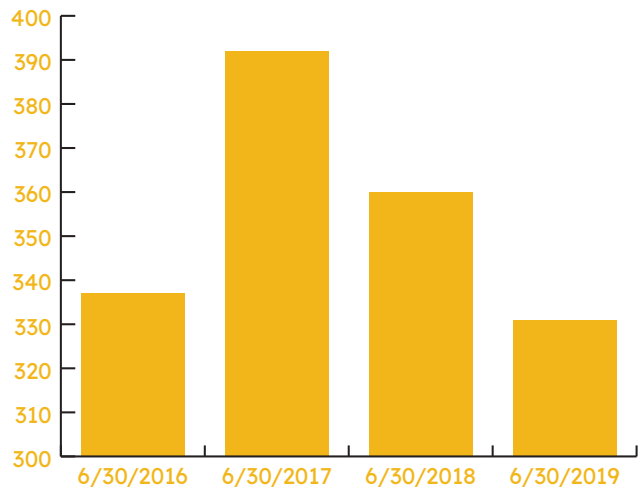
In response to this persistent and increasing inequity, Buncombe County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) partners have committed to advancing equity in birth outcomes and infant mortality over the next 10 years. We believe that multi-sector partnerships are crucial to addressing this serious and complex issue and feel confident that, along with our partners in Buncombe County, our community can implement honest, thoughtful, and effective actions to improve health for everyone in our community.

# STRENGTHENING SAFETY



## Decreasing the Number of Children in Foster Care

BCHHS is pleased to report that the number of children in Foster Care in Buncombe County has declined, even with an expansion of our ability to serve young adults aged 18-21 in the foster care program. In FY19, six more children exited custody and family reunification increased by 7% compared to FY18. This resulted in a record low number of children in foster care since FY2015. Efforts to shore up active Permanency Planning cases and a multifaceted approach to improve family preservation have resulted in positive outcomes. These outcomes include a reduced number of children entering custody and a reduction in the total number of petitions filed. In FY19, 100 Non-Secure petitions were filed compared to 172 petitions in FY18. Non-custodial petitions decreased as well in FY19; 76 non-custodial petitions filed in FY19 compared to 121 petitions in FY18. Family preservation rates of families served by Family In Home services have improved from 93.6% to 96.8%. Of the 611 children served in FY19, only 19 of those children transferred to foster care. The remaining children were with family at the time of case closure.



**Total Children in Custody  
Including 18-21 YO**

Other aspects of our response to keep families and children safe include initiatives that help to address the trauma experiences of the children and parents that we serve.

These efforts include:

- Partnering with Youth Villages and Mountain Child Advocacy Center to develop a two generational clinical assessment and treatment pathway for all maltreated children and their parents.
- Improving our workforce’s understanding of trauma and its impact on child safety, wellbeing

and permanence through structured training and skill building while also incorporating trauma-responsive practices, especially in our Child and Family Team Meetings.

- Developing a Legal Consultation protocol that requires multiple layers of staffing and problem-solving prior to petitions being filed. This allows for improved communication and collaboration to consider trauma-informed options for preserving families.
- Implementing Abba's House and Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Team (START) model to address substance use disorder which is the main reason children entered foster care in the last several years.

## Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Team (START) Model Shows Promising Outcomes

BCHHS and Family Preservation Services of NC (FPS) joined forces to implement a Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Team (START). The Buncombe County START program is based on the START Kentucky Model. START is a child welfare program for families with co-occurring substance use and child maltreatment delivered in an integrated manner with local addiction treatment services.

START pairs child protective services (CPS) workers trained in family engagement with FPS Family Mentors (Peer Support Specialists, who are in long term recovery and have had their own child protective services case as part of their life experience) and a FPS Coordinator using a system-of-care and team decision-making approach with families, treatment providers, and the courts. Essential elements of the model include quick entry into START services to safely maintain child place-

ment in the home when possible, and rapid access to intensive addiction/mental health assessment and treatment.

This program has been well received by the families that we partner with. In FY19, 49 families were active in the START Program and there were 25 START Family Graduations.

i2i The Center for Integrative Health awarded the Quality Commitment Award to the START Program, Buncombe DSS, and Family Preservation Services of NC. The Quality Commitment Award is a well-deserved recognition of Buncombe County's Social Work Staff, Peer Support Specialists, and leadership who are using new approaches to address some of the most challenging and complex issues facing our families and community.

## Abba's House

Abba's House is a 12-month residential recovery program for mothers struggling with substance use disorder and their infant children. In FY19, 35 mothers were impacted by Abba's House services and 22 mothers were either reunified or maintained unification with their baby. There were 8 graduates from the year-long program run by Western North Carolina Rescue Ministries with support from BCHHS.

## Advocacy for Adult and Aging Population

For over 20 years, Adult Protective Services (APS) has coordinated the Senior Wish Tree in our community. APS has worked with many community partners to support aging and vulnerable residents who are isolated and without a support network over the holidays. In FY19, APS Senior Wish Tree was able to sponsor 140 older and disabled adults in Buncombe County.



APS also helped to spearhead a family-friendly event that included kids activities, free document shredding, live music, and a community walk to increase awareness of elder abuse and exploitation. Over 300 community members came out to show support for older adults during this event.



## Building Staff Resiliency

Working in HHS requires a broad range of knowledge about populations in our community, resources, and how to help others get their basic needs met. Investments in our staff's ability to be informed, safe, resilient, and prepared during times of stress are key to this work.

To combat Secondary Traumatic Stress and Compassion Fatigue, Social Work began to develop an organizational care model guided by four key concepts:

- Collective Purpose and Effectiveness
- Trusting Relationships
- Mental/ Emotional Wellness and Psychological Safety
- Physical Wellness and Safety

Examples of this work include our process of engaging in Critical Incident Stress Management debriefings after significant shared trauma experiences and drop-ins that help to build a culture of trust through open dialogue around equity and racial justice within our agency and in our service to our community.

## Staff Safety and Preparedness

In FY19, BCHHS rolled out measures to improve staff safety. They include increased systems coordination and a new de-escalation training, Non-Abusive Psychological and Physical Intervention (NAPPI). NAPPI training focuses on developing a common language for behavior assessment so that identification and responses to escalating incidents are standardized and specific strategies and tactics are employed during conflict.

During the winter of FY19, Emergency Services reported 20,000 citizens without power in Buncombe County. The American Red Cross and BCHHS partnered to open and staff a shelter throughout the weather event. At one point, 17 people sheltered overnight, including 15 teenagers from South Carolina who were stranded on I-40 when their van broke down. With power outages and collapsed buildings due to the snow, the shelter was open for three days. This weather event presented an opportunity for the first deployment of the BCHHS Sheltering Operations Unit which is stocked with enough supplies to shelter up to 30 people. In FY19, BCHHS assisted in sheltering 76 people during weather events.

To help staff understand their role in emergency response, 600 Buncombe Ready educational kits were disseminated to HHS staff with focused messaging about the importance of staff's designation as "Emergency Essential" personnel.

### NAPPI 2019 FIGURES

23 Classes

456 Total Students

148 Non-HHS Students

# ADVANCING OPPORTUNITY



## Economic Services Partnership Showing Great Results in Education and Employment Outcomes for Clients

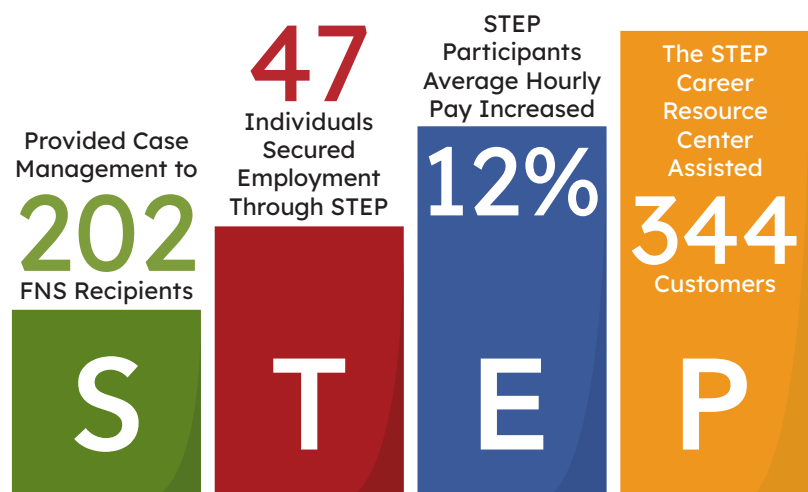
Skills, Training, and Education Program (STEP) allows all Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) recipients (ages 18-59) the opportunity to take continuing education courses at A-B Tech at no cost. STEP is a collaborative effort between A-B Tech and BCHHS. Tuition and fees, books, supplies, and testing are all covered by STEP.

STEP provided case management to 202 FNS recipients in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2019. There was a 188% increase in the number of trainings completed this SFY compared to last year with 182 participants completing trainings through STEP. In SFY19, 47 individuals secured employment and the average hourly pay increased to \$12.79 per hour, a 12% increase from the previous year.

The STEP Career Resource Center is critical to these successful outcomes. It is a place where local job seekers can gain one-on-one assistance with their job

search, creating résumés/cover letters, practicing interviewing skills and completing online job applications. These services are offered to the public as well as STEP and Work First participants. The center assisted 344 customers in SFY 2019. There were also 10 workshops held for community agencies and the public.

The STEP Team utilized their skills and connections to engage and connect 28 local area employers to the talented and dynamic local area workforce, while highlighting the history and culture of the Edington Center and the thriving historically significant Southside neighborhood at the Edington Center Career Fair in May 2019.



STEP also responded to specific needs of employers in our community by recruiting community members interested in careers in early childhood development and construction. Participants were offered free early childhood development training and enrollment at AB Tech for EDU 119. STEP covered the cost of tuition and books for the course and participants were able to earn substitute teacher work during taking the EDU 119 course at a pay rate of \$13 per hour. Upon successful completion of the course, Buncombe Partnership for Children assisted in placing participants into permanent teacher assistant positions.

STEP partnered with the Nation Center for Construction and Research (NCCER) to recruit, train, and further develop a construction workforce in Buncombe County to support the Lee Walker Heights Renovation Project. Students experienced classroom learning sessions, hands-on training in construction math, hand and power tools, construction drawings, material handling, and forklift operation. Temp work was available for eligible participants during the duration of the class and the cost of the course and books were covered by STEP.

STEP is a valuable resource for everyone in our community. In FY19, a college graduate with a master's degree in bio-ethics reached out to STEP for assistance. She was in the middle of a divorce, reliant on public assistance, and a single mother who hadn't worked in over 5 years. She met with the STEP Education Navigator who connected her to the STEP Career Resource Center. With their assistance, her resume and cover letter were updated, she received assistance with applying for jobs, and was ultimately able to find

full-time employment earning \$23.00 per hour with a Managed Care company that allows her to use her master's degree in a career that she loves.

## Buncombe Child Support Services Brings Financial Support to Children and Families

In FY19, Buncombe Child Support Services (BCSS) collected \$13,073,502 in much needed child support for the families of Buncombe County. Buncombe Child Support Services (BCSS) contracts with Veritas-HHS to provide full service child support operations that include establishing fatherhood, setting realistic orders that meet the needs of parents, diligent collection practices and creating plans to reduce child support debt. This team works with fatherhood programs, employers, incarcerated parents, and community employment co-operatives to encourage parental responsibility so that children receive financial support from both parents, even when they live in separate households. With a revolving caseload size of around 6,600 cases, this team of 20 employees ranked 2nd out of 100 counties in job performance. Job performance is graded on paternities established, cases under order, current support paid, and cases paying back payments. Of the total 6,660 caseloads, 93.78% of these are under order. BCSS collected 70.72% of current support due and 72.74% of all back payments due.

This team of dedicated individuals values integrity, innovation and creativity, quality and teamwork as their daily motivations to deliver top quality service to the families of Buncombe County.

## New Addition to HHS Campus at 40 Coxe Avenue

In March, 2019, Public Health services moved back into the renovated HHS Campus at 40 Coxe Avenue in downtown Asheville. This relocation brings Public Health, Economic Services and Veterans Services together in the same building, creating improved access to the full array of services that BCHHS provides. Veterans Services is now located on the 7th floor of the North Wing. Heath Smith, Veterans Services Supervisor reports a positive gain, saying, “One thing that has been great about the move is our ability to easily refer Veterans to other services in the building.”

The new location and renovation provides more space for immunizations, reproductive health services, breastfeeding assistance facilities, and much needed space for conference rooms and meeting spaces. Staff and clients visiting the building now park in the 8-story Sears Alley parking garage that is connected to the building.

“This move allows BCHHS to focus on offering a more patient-centered clinic space and is more comfortable and efficient for patients and staff,” says HHS Medical Director, Dr. Jennifer Mullendore.



Aerial photo of Health & Human Services Building at 40 Coxe Ave.

The following services are in now in this location:

- Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program: cancer screenings and preventive health services
- Care Coordination
- Childcare subsidy: assistance with payments for childcare
- Family Planning: pregnancy testing, birth control, preconception counseling, cervical cancer screening, referrals for vasectomies and tubal ligations
- Food assistance (formerly SNAP / Food Stamps)
- Immunizations and Foreign Travel vaccines
- Long Term Care (Assisted Living and Nursing Home Care)
- Medicaid for individuals, children and families
- Nurse Family Partnership
- Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) testing and treatment
- STEP: Skills Training & Employment Program
- Syringe Services Program
- Tuberculosis (TB) testing and treatment
- Veterans Services: benefits assistance, healthcare navigation, and other resources for veterans
- WIC Nutrition Services: breastfeeding assistance, health screenings and nutrition education
- Work First Services to assist with higher educational attainment and job training

## HHS Employee Leadership

Meredith Benjamin, Program Consultant on our Employee Relations Team, was appointed to the State Human Resources Commission in FY19. This high honor means that BCHHS is represented at the highest levels of Human Resources in the State of North Carolina.

Amparo Acosta, Public Health Nurse Supervisor, was chosen to participate in North Carolina Public Health Leadership Institute 2018-2019 Cohort. Amparo has been serving in Public Health for over 20 years now, most recently in the role of Public Health Nurse Supervisor.

Felissa Vazquez, Environmental Health Food & Lodging Supervisor, was selected to participate in the International Food

Protection Training Institute's Fellowship Program. This fellowship provides the opportunity for leadership development, a guided research project, and collaboration with other agencies across the country. Research findings were published in the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) Journal and presented at the national AFDO Conference. Felissa has been on the Environmental Health Team since 2004 and has been an Environmental Health Food and Lodging Supervisor for 5 years.

Wake Forest Physician Assistant Program Community Partnership Awards were given to Wendy Young, FNP and Cindy Runion, NP-C, in recognition of their outstanding service to the Physician Assistant Program and to the communities they serve.

# FY 2019 ECONOMIC SERVICES DATA

## CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

The Child Care Subsidy program helps families overcome the barrier of affordable, quality childcare, so they can get back to work. BCHHS partners with Southwestern Child Development to maximize our use of capped annual funding from the State.

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Total child care subsidy dollars                  | \$10,164,000 |
| Avg. number of children served per month          | 1,638        |
| Number of children on waiting list for child care | 424          |
| Avg. number of months on waiting list             | 1.6          |
| Percentage of need met                            | 80%          |
| Percent of total child care dollars expended      | 99.93%       |

## CHILD SUPPORT

Buncombe County's Child Support unit partners with Veritas to secure child support payments from non-custodial parents to provide much needed resources for children and families.

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Children in open cases at end of report pd | 6,443        |
| Collection rate on past due support        | 70.72%       |
| Total dollars collected for Buncombe       | \$13,073,502 |

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

HHS designed Community Outreach to connect people with our Economic Services while a community partner is serving them. That partner site is often closer to a person’s home or work - or the outreach “location” may be an agency a resident calls on the phone during evening hours. It’s where clients have come for help - where they’re comfortable.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Number of clients receiving services through out-post staff  | 3,929 |
| Community CarePartners; Charles George VA Medical Center; MAHEC; Mission Hospital; Minnie Jones Health Center (WNCCHS); WIC West |       |

## EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Emergency Assistance is a County partnership with Eblen Charities for one-time help to families in a temporary financial crisis. Payments go directly to the utility or housing company owed money. This charitable partnership works to keep a family whole and from losing their home.

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Number of families served   | 1,399       |
| Average benefit per household   | \$355.69    |
| Dollar value of Emergency Assistance (all FY 2018)  | \$400,500   |
| Additional funding & programs: Crisis Intervention Program, Energy Neighbors, Helping Each Member Cope, Family Preservation, & General Assistance | \$1,036,160 |

## FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES (FNS)

Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) provides a safety net, keeping food on the table in tough times of hardship and recovery. Of the 13,711 households receiving FNS at the end of FY2019, 62% had children or an elder adult (60+). FNS also supports the local economy by bringing significant dollars into the community.

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Number of households receiving FNS                                | 13,711       |
| Average days to process FNS application (State Standard: 30 days) | 10 days      |
| Dollar value of FA benefits (all FY19)                            | \$33,849,500 |
| Average dollars monthly Household FA benefit                      | \$199        |

## MEDICAID

Medicaid plays a vital role in insuring low-income children, pregnant mothers, and disabled or aged adults. Medical costs can be crippling, so uninsured people often put off care. If they become sick, their only option may be the Emergency Room, which drives up health costs for everyone.

As a part of Medicaid, Health Choice is an option for families just over the income limits for Medicaid coverage. Together, these two programs reduce the high personal, social, and economic costs of neglecting timely, preventive health care.

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Percent of county population enrolled in Medicaid   | 18.6%   |
| Number of families and children covered (children and caretakers)                               | 35,230  |
| Number of elderly/blind/disabled adults   | 15,113  |
| Average number of days to process Adult Disability applications (Target: 90 days)               | 73 days |
| Average number of days to process Family and Children's Medicaid applications (Target: 45 days) | 24 days |

## WORK FIRST

Work First helps families get back on their feet when parents have little or no income to support their children. It provides temporary cash support for the children, job training, and employment services for parents.

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Number of Work First cash recipients              | 266     |
| Number of adults entering employment              | 32      |
| Average entry dollars hourly wage, newly employed | \$11.12 |

# FY 2019 PUBLIC HEALTH DATA

## DISEASE CONTROL

Disease control services prevent epidemics and the spread of communicable diseases through ongoing prevention activities, testing and treatment services and a rapid, effective response to urgent and emerging community outbreaks.

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Communicable disease investigations                               | 3,040 |
| Confirmed reportable diseases                                     | 2,392 |
| Communicable disease clinic visits monthly average (HIV, STD, TB) | 392   |

## FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES

The Family Planning Program provides confidential reproductive life planning, contraception and preconception health services for anyone of reproductive age.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Number of Family Planning clients served | 1639* |
| Number of Family Planning clinic visits  | 2564  |

\*Due to transition to a new electronic health record mid-fiscal year, this value is inflated, as some clients may have been counted twice.

## FOOD AND LODGING

Food and lodging provides inspections of regulated food, lodging, nursing home, day care, and summer camp facilities to protect residents and tourist populations.

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Facility inspections                                | 4,727 |
| Restaurants in compliance with inspection standards | 91.9% |
| Restaurants receiving Grade "A"                     | 99.0% |

## IMMUNIZATION

Getting immunized throughout your lifetime protects you, the people you love and our community against harmful diseases. The Immunization Clinic provides a wide range of vaccines (including travel vaccines) for adults and children.

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Number of immunizations given (including flu)             | 11,289 (5442 clients) |
| Percent BC HHS children fully immunized at 2 years of age | 90%*                  |

\* While we offer all recommended immunizations, some parents decline certain immunizations for their children.

## NURSE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) is an evidence-based nurse home-visiting program that targets low-income parents. NFP partners with them from pregnancy through their child's second year. NFP's goal is to improve pregnancy outcomes, improve child health and development, and increase economic self-sufficiency.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Number of babies born FY 2018  | 85    |
| Number of mothers served FY 2018                                     | 291   |
| % of NFP babies born low birth weight (program to date)              | 9.6%  |
| % of NFP children with substantiated abuse/neglect (program to date) | 9.24% |

## ONSITE GROUNDWATER

Onsite groundwater services assure protection of groundwater through properly installed septic systems and permitting of new wells.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Number of septic permits issued  | 2,709 |
| Average days from the date clients are ready begin work to the date of initial visit by onsite staff | 6.5   |
| Number of well permits issued  | 480   |

## PREVENTIVE HEALTH SCREENING

The Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) and the WISEWOMAN program (heart health screening) provide preventive health screening and education for low income, uninsured women and transgender persons.



|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Number of clients screened for heart disease risk                           | 312*  |
| Number of clients screened for cancer                                       | 1,074 |
| Number of clients diagnosed with breast cancer                              | 3     |
| Number of clients diagnosed with precancerous or cancerous cervical changes | 5     |

\*Funding for the WISEWOMAN program was not available from August 2018 through February 2019 as the state program reapplied for funds from federal government.

## VETERANS SERVICES

In Buncombe County, we are answering the needs of our returning service members by connecting them to support services and providing guidance regarding employment, housing, retirement issues, and counseling.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Number of office and home visits                           | 3,165 |
| Number of phone calls received by Veterans Services office | 9,720 |

## WIC NUTRITION

The Women Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program provides education, nutritious foods, and breastfeeding support to improve the health and nutritional status of low-income women and children.

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Average number of participants enrolled in WIC per month in FY 2019 | 3,805 |
|---|-------|

# FY 2019 SOCIAL WORK DATA

## ADOPTION ASSISTANCE

Adoption Assistance helps children achieve permanency and may provide families with help when they adopt a child from foster care.

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Children receiving adoption assistance | 578 |
| Number of adoptions finalized          | 48  |

## ADULT CARE HOME LICENSURE AND MONITORING

Adult Care Home Licensure and Monitoring is responsible for responding to complaints related to compliance with regulations and issues of resident safety. Buncombe County Health and Human Services refers areas of concern to the Department of Health and Human Services Regulation, the entity that has authority for enforcement.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Adult care homes monitored                               | 77    |
| Complaints investigated                                  | 425   |
| Percent of investigations with confirmed mistreatment    | 22.3% |
| Average number of adults using Adult Day Care, per month | 21    |

## ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS)

Adult Protective Services provides a timely, comprehensive, and respectful response to the needs of elders and adults with disabilities who are victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Responses to reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation of elderly and disabled | 983 |
| Percent of Evaluations with Mistreatment Confirmed                             | 33% |

## CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS)

Child Protective Services investigates and assesses all allegations of child abuse, neglect, or dependency.

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Responses to reports of abuse, neglect, or dependency of children | 2,485 |
| Children involved   | 3,427 |
| Children who did not enter foster care                            | 97.8% |

## FAMILY IN-HOME SERVICES

Family In-Home Services allows Social Workers to partner with families to strengthen their ability to safely parent their child in their own home.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Total number of families served  | 518   |
| Total number of children served  | 948   |
| Children who remain at home or with kin while receiving In-Home services (thus avoiding foster care) | 97.5% |

## FOSTER PARENT TRAINING AND LICENSING

Social Work Services trains, licenses, and supports families who open their home to children.

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Average number of licensed foster homes, per month | 86 |
| New foster families                                | 19 |

## PERMANENCY PLANNING

Permanency planning allows Social Work Services to partner with families and other community agencies to achieve timely permanence for children, whether that is safe reunification with their family, guardianship with a relative or kinship provider, or adoption.

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Children up to age 21 in Foster Care   | 336    |
| Average number of children in custody with Social Work Services, per month   | 365    |
| Children who exited foster care to be reunified with their families remained safely in their home and did not re-enter Foster Care | 91.67% |

# HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES LEADERSHIP

## Administration

Stoney Blevins, HHS  
Director

Our overall mission at Buncombe County Health and Human Services is to keep our community strong by working to align our community resources in ways that are efficient and lead to better outcomes for our citizens. Our purpose is to strengthen our communities by advancing health, safety, and opportunity.



## Employee Relations

Amy Davis, Director

Through workforce and organizational development strategies, we support a robust workforce across Health and Human Services. Employee Relations partners with all HHS Divisions to implement best practices in hiring and training, support employee resilience, and maintain a safe and healthy workplace.



## Public Health

Jan Shepard, Director

Our mission is to promote and protect the public's health and to assure through community partnerships that all people in Buncombe County have the opportunity to make healthy choices within a healthy environment.



Dr. Jennifer Mullendore,  
Medical Director / Clinical Services Director

We aim to help people attain high quality, longer lives, free of preventable disease, disability, injury, and premature death. We work to achieve health equity by eliminating disparities, which improves health for all people. We foster social and physical environments that promote good health, development, and behaviors throughout all stages of life.



## Social Work Services

Rebecca Smith, Director

Our mission in Adult and Child Protective Services is to partner with individuals, families, and communities to strengthen their efforts toward independence, permanence, and safety.

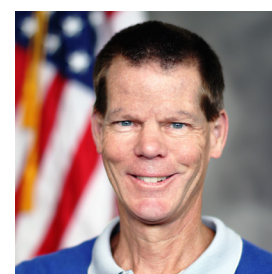


We aim to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable children and adults in our community.

## Economic Services

Phillip Hardin, Director

Buncombe County's Economic Services provides services that help low-income families get and maintain work, support employment, promote quality health care coverage, food assistance, energy assistance, and other economic supports. We aim to promote self-reliance and self-sufficiency for individuals and families.



# 3 EASY WAYS TO CONNECT TO SERVICES

## Visit Our Offices:

40 Coxe Avenue  
(Economic Services, Public Health  
Services, Veterans Services, WIC  
Services)

339 New Leicester Highway  
(WIC Services)

35 Woodfin Street  
(Social Work Services)

## Call Us:

Economic Services:  
(828) 250-5500

Social Work Services:  
(828) 250-5500

Public Health Services:  
(828) 250-5000

## Visit Our Webpage:

[www.buncombecounty.org/hhs](http://www.buncombecounty.org/hhs)

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We appreciate the guidance and support of the County Commissioners, County Manager, and Governing Boards.

## County Commissioners

Brownie Newman (Chairman)

Joe Belcher

Amanda Edwards

Jasmine Beach-Ferrara

Mike Fryar

Robert Pressley

Al Whitesides

## Buncombe County Manager

Avril Pinder

## Health and Human Services Board

Frank Castelblanco, Chair

Stephanie Kiser RPh, Vice-Chair

Amanda Edwards

Lucy Lawrence

Steve Valeika

Ken Putnam, PE

Greg Narron

Carol Coulson

Johnnie Grant

Jacquelyn Hallum

Yvette Jives

Rachel Keener

Jim Pitts, PhD

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Sonya Greck

Rick Elingburg

Terry VanDuyn

Dan Frayne