

# Iredell County

## State of the County Health Report

# 2018

Each year, the Iredell County Health Department releases a State of the County Health Report. This report details Iredell County's current health status, emerging issues, and various projects that have been accomplished over the last year to address the top selected health priorities.

The State of the County Health Report is an intermittent document released during the three years between each Community Health Assessment. The Community Health Assessment is a 8-step process that takes approximately one year to complete and entails collecting primary and secondary data, then comparing and analyzing the data and presenting it to the Healthy Carolinians Taskforce in order to provide them with a picture of the overall health and wellness of the community and allowing them to select the top health priorities and concerns that will be focused on for the next four years. During the last assessment process, healthy eating and active living, chronic diseases, and risky behaviors were determined to be the leading health priorities for our community.

The Community Health Assessment and State of the County Health Report are both vital in keeping our community partners, stakeholders, leaders, and general community informed and up to date on various health issues our county is facing. These reports also give updates on how we are working within the community and with our local, regional, and state-wide partners to address certain health priorities. The Iredell County Health Department focuses primarily on environmental, policy, system, and process changes in order to promote sustainability and long-term impact.

### Report Contents

**Demographics (2)**

**Mortality & Morbidity (3)**

**Infant and Child Health (4)**

**Selected Health Priorities (5)**

**Chronic Disease (6)**

**Healthy Eating &  
Active Living (7)**

**Risky Behaviors &  
Substance Use (8)**

**Emerging Issues & New  
Initiatives (9)**

**Iredell County Healthy  
Carolinians Taskforce (10)**



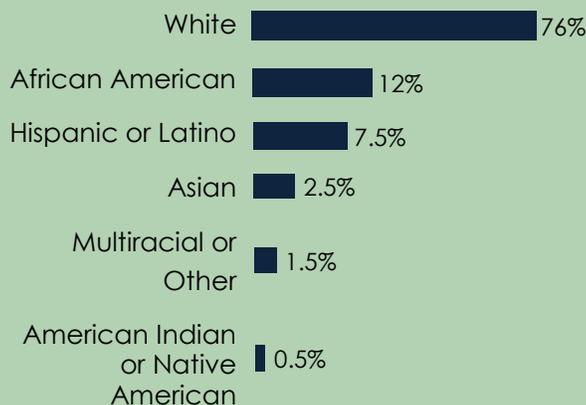
**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Iredell County Health Department

January 2019

## Iredell County Demographics at a Glance

### Racial Demographics



### 2017 Population

Total number of people living in Iredell County. The Iredell County population has increased nearly 6% since 2010

175,711

### Median Household Income

The Iredell County median household income is higher than State by nearly \$6,000

Iredell: \$55,957

NC: \$50,320

### Unemployment Rate

The Iredell County and NC unemployment rates have both improved over the last year

Iredell: 3%

NC: 3%

### Percent Uninsured

Percent of people under the age of 65 that do not have health insurance

Iredell: 12%

NC: 13%

### Educational Attainment

The percentage of persons, 25 years and older, who have graduated high school or received a GED

Iredell: 89%

NC: 87%

### Poverty

The poverty level is defined as an annual income of \$23,283 or less for a family of four and \$11,945 for an individual. The Iredell County poverty percentage is nearly 5% less than NC.

Iredell: 11%

NC: 15%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, State and County QuickFacts 2017

## Social Determinants of Health

Social Determinants of Health are the complex circumstances in which individuals are born and live that impact their health. They include intangible factors such as political, socioeconomic, and cultural constructs, as well as place-based conditions including accessible healthcare and educational systems, safe environmental conditions, well-designed neighborhoods, and available healthy foods. **Social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age and are shaped by the distribution of finances, power, and resources on a global national, and local level.** The five key social determinants of health include economical stability, education, social and community context, health and healthcare, and neighborhood and built environment. These social circumstances create societal stratification and are responsible for health inequities among different groups of people based on social and economical class, gender, and ethnicity. Social determinants are the underlying cause of today's major societal health dilemmas including obesity, heart disease, diabetes along with many other chronic conditions. By working to establish policies that positively influence social and economic conditions and those that support changes in individual behavior, we can improve health for our community that can be sustained over time. Improving the conditions in which we live, learn, work, and play and the quality of our relationships will create a healthier population, society, and workforce

## Mortality and Morbidity Data Leading Causes of Death

### Leading Causes of Death

Five Year Trend Data

	Iredell 2017	Iredell 2013	NC 2017	NC 2013
Cancer—All Sites	19%	23%	21%	22%
Diseases of the Heart	18%	21%	20%	21%
Cerebrovascular Disease	6%	5%	6%	5%
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	5%	6%	6%	6%
Alzheimer's Disease	5%	3%	5%	3%
Unintentional Injuries	4%	3%	5%	4%
Diabetes Mellitus	3%	3%	3%	3%
Pneumonia & Influenza	3%	2%	2%	2%
Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, and nephrosis	2%	*	2%	2%
Parkinson's Disease	2%	*	*	*
All Other Causes	32%	29%	29%	29%

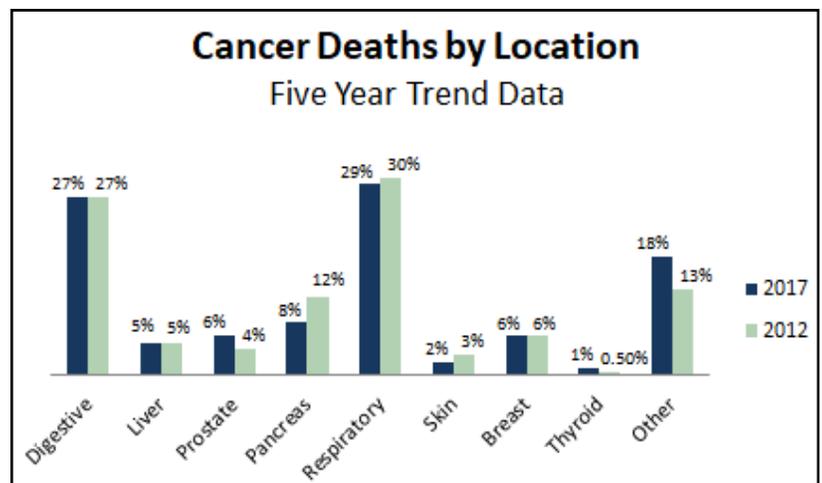
Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, 2013 and 2017 Leading Causes of Death

The top three leading causes of death in both North Carolina and Iredell County have remained the same over the last five years. The top three leading causes of death, cancer, diseases of the heart, and cerebrovascular disease, make up nearly half of all deaths in Iredell County. **Of the overall top leading causes of death, half of them are preventable, chronic conditions.** It's common for an aging population to experience higher rates of chronic conditions, and often aging individuals will develop more than just one chronic condition at a time. Chronic conditions are often preventable through maintaining a healthy diet,

getting the recommended amount of physical activity, and refraining from risky behaviors like using tobacco products and consuming alcohol. Chronic conditions are among the most prevalent condition facing our community today and make up a majority of healthcare related cost.

## Cancer

In 2017 there were 320 cancer related deaths, compared to 291 in 2012. **Cancer deaths associated with the pancreas, respiratory organs, and skin have decreased since 2012, while cancer deaths related to the prostate, thyroid, and other organs have increased.** Cancer deaths related to the liver, breast, and digestive tract have remained constant over the last five years. Early detection protocols and maintaining a healthy lifestyle by eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, getting an adequate amount of physical activity, and refraining from tobacco and alcohol products can be linked to reducing the prevalence of cancer and preventing cancer-related deaths.

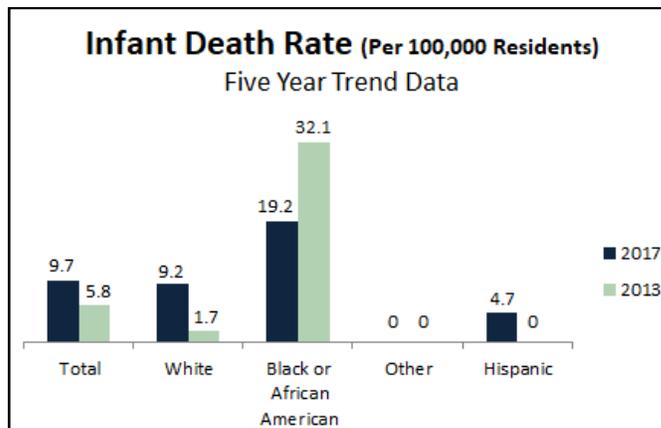


Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, Detailed Mortality Statistics Report, 2012 and 2017 Iredell County Deaths

## Infant and Child Health

### Birth Outcomes

In 2017, there were 1,857 infant births and 18 infant deaths, compared to 1,727 births and 15 infant deaths in 2013. **The overall infant mortality rate, per 100,000 residents, has increase from 5.8 in 2012 to 9.7 in 2017.** For the past five years, the infant mortality rate among all races has been staggering from year to year. The only constant notable in the trend data is the racial disparity between African American infants and White and Hispanic. African American infants continue to be at a disproportionate disadvantage in terms of infant mortality. This statistical difference is prevalence in both Iredell County and the state of North Carolina.



Source: NC Center for Health Statistics, 2013 & 2017 NC Infant Mortality Report

\*Infant Mortality data is statistically insignificant because of low number in regards to total population.

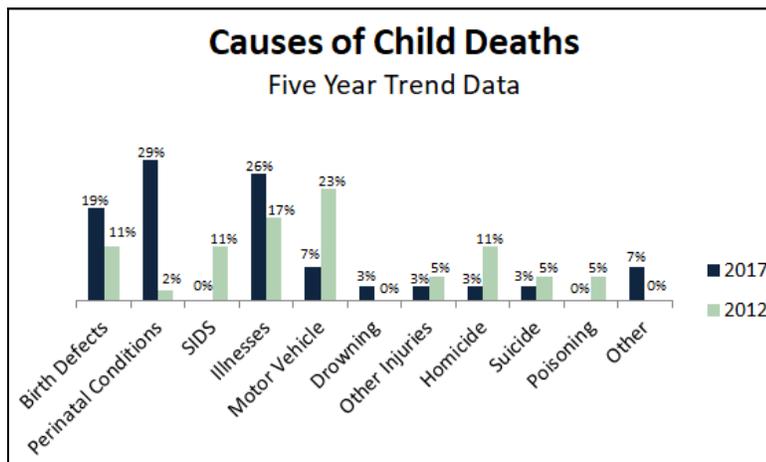
Risk Factor or Characteristic	Iredell 2017	Iredell 2012	NC 2017	NC 2012
Teenage Pregnancy	1%	3%	2%	3%
Mother Less than High School Education	10%	15%	14%	18%
Late or No Prenatal Care	7%	5%	8%	6%
<i>Care beginnings in the third trimester</i>				
Mother Overweight (BMI 25-29.9) or Obese (BMI 30+)	54%	50%	53%	49%
Mother Smoked	10%	13%	9%	11%
Not Breastfed Upon Discharge	20%	26%	19%	24%

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, 2012 & 2017 Birth Risks & Characteristics

Risk factors such as maternal age, access to prenatal care, and mothers weight play a crucial role in overall birth outcomes. **Since 2012, there has been improvement in regards to teen pregnancies, educational attainment of mothers, breastfeeding rates, and the percentage of mothers who smoke while pregnant. On the contrary, more mothers are receiving late or no prenatal care and more mothers are either overweight or obese.** Prenatal risk factors are associated with many poor birth outcomes, such as preterm birth, low birth-weight infants, birth defects, and even sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

## Child Health

The health of a children in a population is a great indicator for the overall health of the general population of a community. **Over the last five years, there has been a decrease in child deaths related to motor vehicle injuries, SIDS, homicide, and poisoning. Within the same time frame, there was an increase in child deaths associated with birth defects, perinatal conditions, illnesses, and drownings.** A majority of child deaths occur in children under the age of one. Of all the child deaths in Iredell County, a majority could be prevented by following recommended safety protocols, such as car seat safety, water safety, and risky behavior prevention education.



Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, 2012 and 2017 0-19 Years Leading Causes of Death

## Health Priorities and Action Plans

The top three selected health priorities were identified to be chronic condition prevention, healthy eating and active living, and risky behavior prevention.

**First Health Priority: chronic condition prevention** was selected as our first health priority. Chronic conditions were selected as the top health concern due to the fact that half of all the leading causes of premature death in Iredell County are a result of chronic conditions. Four of the top ten health concerns of the community health survey respondents were cancer, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes, which are nearly all chronic conditions.

**Second Health Priority: healthy eating and active living.** Healthy eating and active living directly correlate with six of the top ten health concerns of the community and four of the leading causes of preventable death in Iredell County. Healthy eating and active living play a crucial role in mitigating risk factors such as obesity, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol that impact overall health.

**Third Health Priority: risky behavior prevention.** Risky behaviors include substance use, prescription drug misuse, tobacco use, and unsafe driving practices. Three of the top ten health concerns selected by the community survey respondents are directly related to risky behaviors, and two of the leading preventable causes of death are linked to risky behaviors. These behaviors were paired together as "risky behaviors" because while substance use is the primary focus, addressing them collectively in targeted populations and the general community is efficient and effective.

### Chronic Disease

Reach 10% of the target population within the next three years with educational material about colorectal cancer and offer free colorectal cancer screenings to those qualified.

Offer free diabetes awareness classes over next three years.

Iredell County Health Department will increase its social media presence by 20% annually through March of 2019 and share chronic disease related education and information at a rapid pace.

### Healthy Eating & Active Living

Assist three local businesses and industries in adopting worksite wellness practices by March 2019.

By March 2019, expand the Share the Harvest Program by 10% annually and market both the Share the Harvest Program and Iredell County Farmer's Markets in order to increase participation.

Increase access to places or facilities for physical activity by updating the Get Fit Iredell community calendar and holding one physical activity event annually sponsored by the Iredell County Health Department, as other partners will do the same.

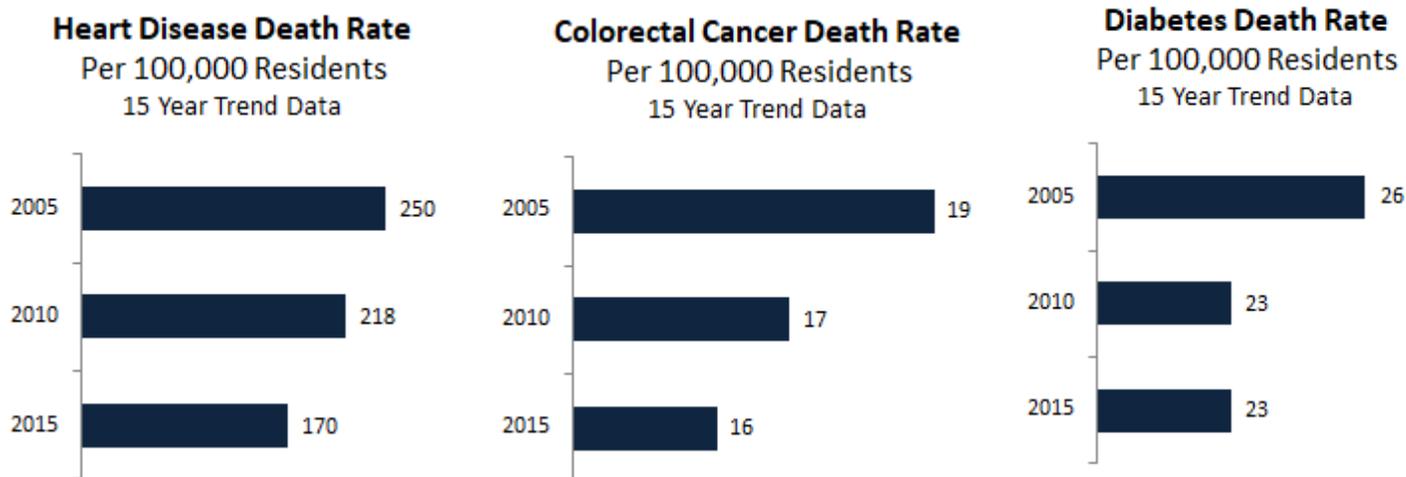
### Risky Behaviors

Expand the current youth substance-use prevention and leadership program into five partnering organizations and host at least one train-the-trainer program by March 2019.

Implement a technology-based substance use prevention program in two of the most at-risk schools in Iredell county (one school from each district) by March 2019.

Iredell County Health Department will increase its social media presence by 15% annually through March of 2019 and share substance abuse and risky behavior related education and information instantaneously.

## Chronic Disease



Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, County Trends & Key Health Indicators, 2017

## Colorectal Cancer Initiatives

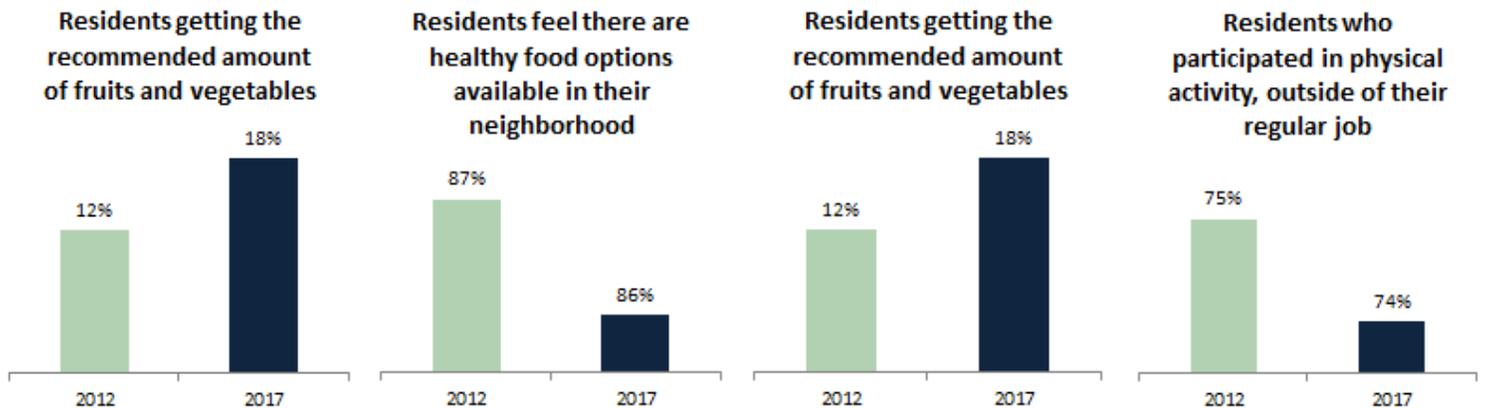
In 2018, the Iredell County Health Department partnered heavily with Iredell Health System and the American Cancer Society to bring colorectal cancer awareness to the citizens of Iredell County. **In March 2018, a community lunch-and-learn was held at the Iredell County Health Department.** The educational lunch-and-learn was attended by 38 individuals, and presenters at the event included a gastroenterologist from Iredell Health System, a cancer-resource licensed counselor from Iredell Health System, and the Livestrong Program Coordinator who facilitates support groups and educational classes at the local YMCA specifically for cancer patients. **In October 2018, the Iredell County Health Department, Iredell Health System, and the American Cancer Society partnered again to bring colorectal cancer at-home screenings to Iredell County Government employees.** Iredell County Government was able to fund FIT test, an at-home colorectal cancer screening tool, for 165 employees. During the 2018 wellness fair, educational information and resources were provided to over 215 individuals related to colorectal cancer prevention and early detection, and 35 employees qualified for the at-home screening. During the next year, the Iredell County Government and Iredell County Health Department will continue to educate employees during their annual health screenings and provide them with an at-home colorectal screening tool.

## Diabetes Initiatives

**Over the last year, the Iredell County Health Department was able to reach over 1,250 Iredell County residents with awareness and educational information related to diabetes.** Through various resources, the Iredell County Health Department was able to secure educational information related to early detection of diabetes, diabetes management, and diabetes friendly eating habits. This information was shared with local businesses and industries, at the Iredell County agricultural fair, at various other outreach events, and displayed on informational kiosk throughout the community.

# Iredell County 2018 State of the County Health Report

## Healthy Eating & Active Living



Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, 2012 & 2017 BRFSS Survey

## Healthy Food Access Initiatives

During the last year, the Iredell County Health Department continued to work in partnership with the Iredell County Cooperative Extension to sponsor the Share the Harvest Program. This program links local farmers to the local food banks and encourages them to plant and extra row for donation purposes, or to donate any excess produce that they have throughout the growing season. Partnering food banks include Iredell Christian Ministry, Mooresville Christian Mission, and Matthew 25. **The Share the Harvest program was able to bring over 18,500 additional pounds of produce to these local ministries in order to provide residents in need with fresh, local, nutritious produce.** Also this year, the Iredell County Health Department participated in the state-wide fruits and vegetable outlet inventory. This project took place in March of 2018 and entailed Iredell County Health Department staff reaching out to all local fresh food retail sites, such as Farmers Markets and Roadside Stands and surveying them about the fresh foods they offer and their hours of operation. **This information was compiled into a state-wide resource, and used by the Iredell County Health Department to create the Farmers Market informational flyer.** This flyer details to local Farmers Markets in Iredell County and includes their location, acceptable payment methods, and hours of operation. This informational was shared throughout the community, placed on the Iredell County Health Department Facebook page and website, and shared through the Iredell County Cooperative Extension newsletter.

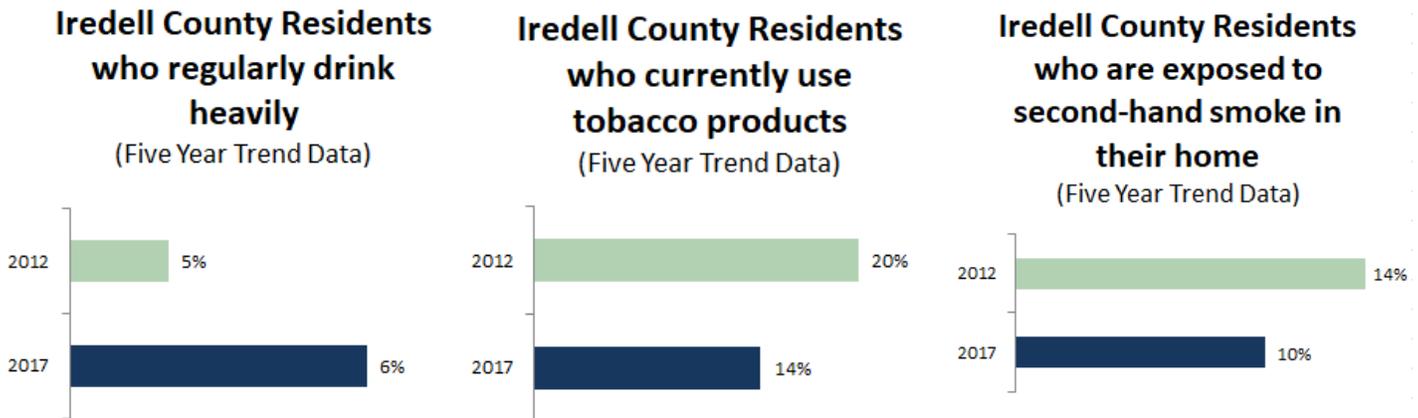


## Active Living Initiatives

For the fourth year, the Iredell County Health Department remains an active participant on the Get Fit Iredell Committee. This committee is made up of representatives from over 30 businesses and industries in Iredell County and has the shared vision of increasing physical activity through offering free-of-charge, family-friendly, physical activity related events throughout the year in all parts of the County. **In September 2018, the Iredell County Health Department, in Partnership with the United Way of Iredell County and Statesville Free News was able to host a "pick your fun day" event at the Lake Norman State Park. This events attended by 48 individuals and was geared to accommodate all age groups and included yoga, taekwondo, hiking, and canoeing.** The Iredell County Health Department also took an active role in marketing the Get Fit Iredell Committee and events through the Get Fit Facebook Page and website.

# Iredell County 2018 State of the County Health Report

## Risky Behavior Prevention



Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, 2012 & 2017 BRFSS Survey

## Tobacco Free Living Initiatives

The Iredell County Health Department is an active member of the Region 4 Tobacco Alliance. Through this partnership, the Iredell County Health Department is committed to providing tobacco-use prevention education and tobacco-related resources to the citizens on Iredell County. Over the last year, the Iredell County Health Department has continued to work heavily with the Statesville and Mooresville Housing Authorities to educate residents about the importance of remain tobacco-free and the importance of adhering to their newly adopted smoke-free policy. **The Iredell County Health Department has provided educational posters and resource materials to both housing authorities and hosted residential informational sessions related to the newly adopted smoke-free rule. The Iredell County Health Department also assisted the management of an additional Multi-Unit Housing Complex, Kings Grant Court, in providing residents with an informational education session on the importance of living in smoke free housing and the effects not adhering to smoke-free policies can have on residents.** Kings Grant Court was also provided with tobacco prevention signage and posters and educational information for the residents. In order to impact the youth of Iredell County and remind them of the importance of living tobacco-free, the Iredell County Health Department worked with the Region 4 tobacco Free Alliance to provide each school in Iredell County with informational posters that are geared toward the youth.

## Youth Initiatives

**In 2018, the Iredell County Health department was able to directly reach 245 youth-aged individuals with risky-behavior prevention education.** Through a partnership with the local afterschool-program, PRIMETIME, the Iredell County Health Department was able to reach more than 150 students with prevention education. **In order to expand the scope of reach, the Iredell County Health Department, in Partnership with Iredell-Statesville Schools, was able to provide all middle school Health and Physical Education teachers with the tools and resources to teach Project ALERT, an evidence-based substance-use prevention program to their 7th and 8th grade Health and Physical Activity Classes.** This will enable the program that instills leadership skills to combat peer pressure to reach over 300 students during the 2018-2019 school year. **The Iredell County Health department was also able to work collaboratively with the Iredell County Cooperative Extension to bring a hybrid Health Rocks and Project ALERT, both evidence based programs, to at-risk students that participate in the Mooresville Police Department PALS Program.** This dual program enabled students to learn the necessary skills to combat peer pressure, develop leadership skills, and learn the importance of remaining substance-free.

## Emerging Issues

### Vaping and “Juuling”

The use of electronic vapor products, specifically “Juul” is increasing throughout the nation, with Iredell County being no exception. Electronic vapor products heat a liquid and produce an aerosol, or mix of particles in the air and can look like a cigarette, cigar, tank device, and even a USB flash drive. Electronic vapor products are known to contain harmful substances including heavy metals, cancer-causing chemicals, flavoring linked to serious lung disease, and nicotine which can harm the developing brain. Young people who use electronic vapor products may be more likely to smoke cigarettes or use other tobacco products in the future. While there is work being done on the regional and state level to educate youth and change policy related to electronic vapor products, parents are advised to talk to their children about the risks of using such products.

### Changing Communication

Effective communication is vital to public health. With the ever-changing and growing merge of communication and technology, public health is at a crossroad in terms of effective health communication processes. By adapting to the technological advantages and fast-paced social media messaging, public health is able to improve information infrastructure, build health skills and knowledge, and increase community-based reach. A disadvantage to transitioning to technology based communication is the emerging disparities related to access to health information, services, and technology can result in lower usage rates of preventative services, less knowledge of chronic disease management, and poorer reported health status..

## New Initiatives

### Safe Kids Initiative

Child and infant safety is becoming a new focus-area of the Public Health Develop and Promotion Division. In an effort to work collaboratively with many other community organizations and agencies, the Iredell County Health Department is in the early stages of developing a Safe Kids of Iredell Coalition. The objective of this coalition will be to work collectively with other organizations to strategically plan strategies and best practices for improving child health and safety in Iredell County. The Iredell county Health Department Youth-Based Education Strategist will serve as the coalition facilitator and will work closely with a representative from the Iredell County Partnership for Young Children to ensure the coalition remains focused on impacting areas that are selected as a priority during the coalitions first strategic planning process.

### Community Outreach Initiative

With the current culture of information sharing transitioning to web-based interactions and social media relationships, it is vital that the Iredell County Health Department also make efforts to share information on various platforms and through multiple venues to ensure accuracy and vast reach of important information. In order to meet citizens where they are, the Iredell County Health Department is transitioning from health-fair and outreach based communication, to business and place-based communication and outreach. During the next year, the Iredell county Health Department will reach out to local businesses and industries and community-based agencies and bring to them important health-risk reduction educational information in order to get it easily in the hands of community members. The Iredell County Health department will also focus more outreach and educational efforts on Facebook and website marketing in order to increase communication reach. Reaching citizens where they are is a key focus of public health and the Iredell County Health department is committed to strengthening community-based education and communication.

# Iredell County 2018 State of the County Health Report

The Iredell County Healthy Carolinians Task Force is a group of Iredell County professionals and community members working together to emphasize public health and preventive health practices to improve the quality of life and health status of all Iredell County residents. Iredell County Healthy Carolinians was established in 2004 and is made up of community members, leaders, and organizations who are committed to improving the health of Iredell County residents.

## Iredell County Health Department Healthy Carolinians Facilitation Team

Megan Redford, Healthy Carolinians Coordinator

Norma Rife, Director of Public Health Development & Promotion

Jane Hinson, Health Director

## Iredell County Healthy Carolinians Taskforce

Liz Burns, United Way of Iredell County

Richard Griggs, Statesville Recreation and Parks Department

Melissa Jablonski, Iredell County Partnership for Young Children

Karen Kerley, Iredell-Statesville Schools

Sara Lewis, United Way of Iredell County

Brett Eckerman, United Way of Iredell County

Regina Propst, Insight Human Services

Lisa Warren, Iredell Health System

Caroline Hager, Iredell County Health Department

Brady Johnson, Iredell-Statesville School System

Stephen Mauney, Mooresville Graded School District

Mitzie McCurdy, Lake Norman Regional Medical Center

Grady Mills, Community Member, Past Board of Health Member

Ann Rice, Iredell Council on Aging

Amanda Peters, Iredell-Statesville School System

Nancy Keith, Iredell County Cooperative Extension

Blake Blakley, YMCA

Sylvester Reed, Mt. Nebo Baptist Church, Community Member

Bryan Duncan, I-Care

Nelson Granada, First Baptist Church of Statesville

## How To Get Involved

Iredell County Health Department continuously partners with local agencies, organizations, and individuals to assess the community to improve overall health.

Help us work toward a healthier Iredell County.

Please join the Iredell County Healthy Carolinians Task Force! 704-924-4089

This SOTCH has been disseminated to Iredell County Health Department's stakeholders, community partners, internal staff, and the general population through hard-copy dissemination at the Iredell County Health Department and Iredell County Public Library.

Electronic copies of this report and other Iredell County health data can be found on our website:  
<https://www.co.iredell.nc.us/164/Community-Health-Data>

