



# AppHealthCare

Caring for our Community

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017



**PROMOTE. PREVENT. EMPOWER.**

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# Message from the Director

Thank you for your support of the Appalachian District Health Department. Did you know the Public Health System in NC is the only health care system that includes a strong network of accredited services in all 100 counties? And your Health Department is one of three health departments in NC to receive designation as a Federally Qualified Health Center in our Alleghany and Ashe locations – bringing federal resources to help improve access to comprehensive primary health care.

Our Local Public Health Departments in Alleghany, Ashe and Watauga Counties serve residents in 3 different ways which are consistent with state and federal mandates.

**Clinical Personal Health Care Services:** Call us for information about Immunizations, Breast and Cervical Cancer Control, pre-natal care (Ashe and Watauga Counties), primary care for adults and children (Alleghany and Ashe Counties), Nutrition/Diabetes Education, WIC, Lab services, Communicable Disease exams and more. We accept all insurance plans and also offer a special sliding fee program for those without health insurance.

**Prevention Activities:** Environmental Health water protection (septic and well permitting) and Food and Lodging inspections and permitting, Emergency Preparedness and Response, Health promotion activities including working to improve access to healthy foods and physical activity, tobacco control and prevention and convening community members for the improvement of the health of our entire population through healthier families and youth. And more!

Epidemiology (the study of disease in populations) is carried out through the Community Health Needs Assessment, tracking and trending of communicable diseases across the District, other analysis of population health data and more. In this capacity we also respond to local public health emergencies – anything from an illness resulting from food to an outbreak of a reportable contagious illness to an emergency response, such as the evolving Zika crisis.

I have enjoyed working with a terrific leadership team in accomplishing the goals and directives of AppHealthCare including continuous quality improvement and a commitment to excellence in all we do. The Leadership Team consists of: Jen Greene, Deputy Health Director/COO; Angie S. Poole, Finance Officer/CFO; Dr. Jessica Ange, Medical Director/CMO; Kelly Welsh, Director of Clinical Services; Andy Blethen, Environmental Health Supervisor; Tommy Havelos, Information Systems Director/CIO; Melissa Bracey, Director of Marketing and Regional Services and myself.

AppHealthCare employs approximately 90 individuals across the District who are critical to our success. I appreciate each of these valued team members!

Call or come by or check in at [www.apphealthcare.com](http://www.apphealthcare.com) anytime!

Yours in good health,  
Beth Lovette,  
Local Public Health Director/CEO

# Message from the Board of Health Chairman

It is my pleasure to serve Alleghany, Ashe and Watauga Counties as Chair of the Appalachian District Board of Health. Our District Health Department is one of six multi-county health departments in North Carolina that take advantage of the cost savings that can be achieved through sharing staff and resources across county lines. Federal, state and county tax dollars help fund the Health Department. Grants and fees for service generate additional funds.

The Appalachian District Health Department provides an array of essential public health services to the citizens of Alleghany, Ashe and Watauga Counties through direct service delivery and community partnerships. These services promote healthy and safe living, prevention of disease, and protection of the environment with a vision of health for all.

The Appalachian District Health Department is co-governed by the District Board of Health and the

Appalachian Partners in Public Health. The Board of Health is composed of 18 members. These members are appointed by caucus of the three County Commissioner members who are appointed from Alleghany, Ashe and Watauga Counties respective Boards of Commissioners. Many thanks to Commissioner Bobbie Irwin, Alleghany; Commissioner Jeff Rose, Ashe; and Commissioner Perry Yates, Watauga for their dedication to the health of the counties they serve. The Board of Health assures that AppHealthCare provides high-quality service in a professional, efficient and fiscally responsible manner while improving the health of the communities we serve.

Sincerely,  
Ken Richardson, Chairman  
Appalachian District Board of Health

## Board of Health Members

Ken Richardson, *Chairman*, David J. Triplett, *Vice Chairman*, Bobby Irwin, Annette N. Wagoner, Bob Edwards, Katrina Miller, Jeff Rose, Beth Kurtz, Dr. Brett Summey, Sr. , Ashley Furman, Randy Revis, Jeffrey Tiller, PE, Dr. Joseph E. Allen, Lee Jackson, Dr. Howard Johnson, Dr. Bill Herring, Phyllis Butler, Perry Yates

## Partners in Public Health Board Members

Ann Davis, Bob Edwards, Edna Sawyer, Erin Torres, Greg Bolac, Ken Richardson, Randy Revis  
Sue Hampton, Talmage Lawrence, Tomasa Sanchez, Brandi Williams

# Federally Qualified Health Center Update

In August, 2015 AppHealthCare became one of two public entity federally qualified health centers in North Carolina. Since that time, we have been learning, growing, and seeking more opportunities for additional resources to serve the medical, dental, nutrition, and behavioral health needs of Alleghany and Ashe Counties. Oversight of this work continues to be provided by health department administration, but is supported with the co-applicant board, Appalachian Partners in Public Health. This is a patient-majority board with representation from Alleghany and Ashe Counties and the Appalachian District Board of Health.

Over the past year, we have made significant progress in reaching any citizen interested in receiving high quality, patient centered care. Notably, Sarah Vences, a full time Family Nurse Practitioner with a strong background in caring for chronic disease, joined our team in Alleghany. Due to the increased demand for patient care, we have two additional advanced clinical practitioners we plan to add by August, 2017. One major change ahead for our medical clinic is an upcoming change in our clinical leadership. Dr. Danielle Darter has been with AppHealthCare for four years and has decided to move closer to her grandkids and take a new exciting career path. While we are sad to see her go, we are grateful for her contributions as our Medical Director the past several years. Recruitment efforts are underway to have a smooth transition with a new Medical Director in place as soon as possible after her departure planned for September, 2017. In addition, Kelly Welsh, BS, RN, assumed the Director of Clinical Services role in early June, 2017. Kelly joins us with a strong background in public health, human resources, and hospital experience.

The clinical services team has been working hard to continue to grow in offering high quality patient centered care. A few accomplishments from the past year include:

- ▶ Completing our first Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) site visit with minor opportunities for improvement
- ▶ Implementing centralized scheduling system for medical and dental appointments
- ▶ Launching a new dental program under the direction of Dentist/Dental Director, Dr. Keaton Mash, an Ashe County native, serving Alleghany and Ashe counties with both a fixed clinic site located at 225 Court Street in Jefferson, NC and a portable clinic reaching schools for children without a dental home
- ▶ Increasing medical clinic productivity by over 30% in the Alleghany center and nearly 50% in the Ashe center
- ▶ Initiating efforts to become a recognized Patient Centered Medical Home
- ▶ Implementing and noticing improvement in new clinical quality goals, including:
  - ▶ Increasing the number of patients who have diabetes that have a hemoglobin A1c < 7
  - ▶ Increasing the number of patients who have high blood pressure that have a blood pressure at or below 140/90 mmHg
  - ▶ Increasing the number of patients age 12 and older who have had a depression screening and follow up plan implemented if indicated

# Accreditation

Local and District Health Departments in North Carolina go through an accreditation process to address their ability to meet core functions (assessment, assurance and policy development) and the ten essential services outlined in the National Public Health Performance Standards Program. AppHealthCare (Appalachian District Health Department) was one of the first health departments in NC to be accredited and on May 19, 2017, we received re-accreditation status thanks to a wonderful leadership team and staff.



## Dental Health Services



AppHealthCare's Dental program has been likened to a hub and spokes model by Dental Director, Dr. Keaton Mash. The central hub of the dental clinic is the 4-chair office based out of Jefferson, NC. This space was previously the Ashe County Free Medical Clinic and transitioned over to Appalachian District Health Department at the beginning of 2017. Renovations were completed in June 2017, creating an up to date dental office where adult patients and more complex procedures are performed.

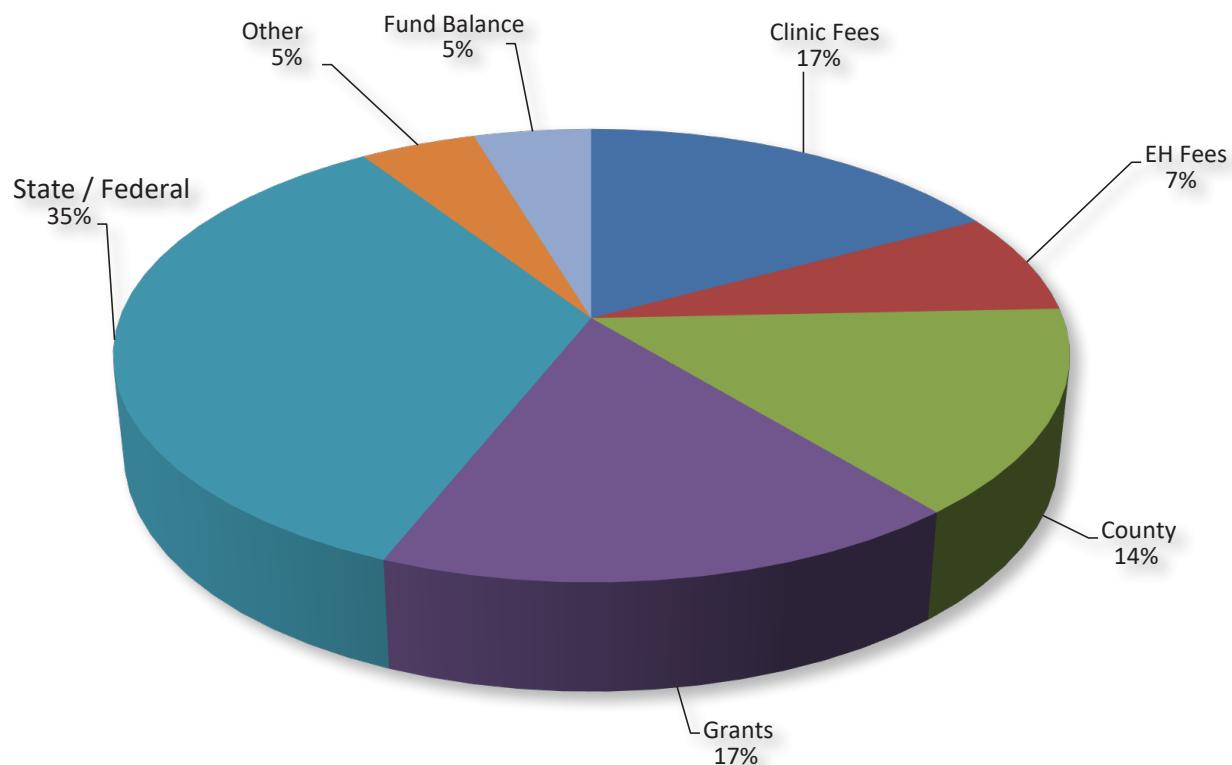


The spokes of the dental program model involve a truck, portable dental equipment, and local schools in Ashe and Alleghany County. In the spring of 2017, 96 students were treated in Ashe County Schools utilizing the portable dental equipment. From mid-December through the end of FY, 384 patients were seen by the dental team, accounting for 718 patient visits.

Currently the dental staff include a dental hygienist and 2 dental assistants. The team continues to grow and enjoys the opportunity to serve patients in our communities.

# District at a Glance

Public health services have been provided in the counties of Alleghany, Ashe and Watauga counties as a District since 1980. Prior to this year the District ranged in size from 2 - 6 counties from 1933. Each of the three counties in the District has its own health department providing local clinic and environmental services. Community health, financial and administrative services are provided on a district basis. The financial office is located in Sparta, NC in the local health department and administrative office and Community Health offices are located in the Boone, NC health department. Ashe County consists of 4 locations with the Clinic Services in a separate building from the Environmental Services office and the Dental Health office. There is also the School Based Health Center which is located at Ashe Middle School.



# Technology Updates

The overall state of the Technology systems at the Appalachian District Health Department is very good. Our current computer equipment is up to date and some units are entering their 5th year of life but still capable of handling our needs. The hardware inventory includes approximately 145 active and temporary computer systems. As the District's budget allows we will continue to move forward with upgrading our Technology as needed. This past year an IT Grant was secured in the amount of approximately 44k which allowed us to improve our network, purchase several new clinic tablets, add RAM and Solid State Hard Drives to old tablet computers and supplement the technology funding for our new Dental office.

A new Dental computer server was purchased and the old one was reissued as a backup. Two other older computer servers were reissued as a Remote Desktop licensing server and a Microsoft Update software server. Separating these tasks allowed us to better service and control those specific jobs. Printer /copiers have continued to perform well and we are looking at rolling out more of their capabilities as we integrate them into our Microsoft user Active Directory for monitoring and tracking. VoIP telecommunications system has shown how important communications are not only between coworkers but to our constituents. Its capabilities make management of telecommunications much easier for our department.

Windows 10 Operating System has been an overall improvement for all workstations especially older computers. It has given many computers a boost in performance. Our EMR, Patagonia, continues to be adjusted and customized as needed with input from our Clinical and Administrative staff. We chose Open

Dental and ProfSuni to take care of our Dental office. . LanSweeper Asset Management software has been an effective tool for inventory and warranty needs.

As mentioned before with the addition of the IT Grant we made improvements to our network across the District to expand our Switches and Wireless Access Points. Our Meraki Network equipment and Administrative Dashboard is essential in the IT Department's management of the District.

We have implemented an auto filter to secure all BYOD devices to an Access Point Guest account and keep them outside of our organization network. Only with administrative approval can an outside device be added. Work issued mobile devices can connect to our network as needed.

Development of the District website is ongoing and an initiative to boost our marketing through the website and social media outlets has continued to increase. Website Security software has continued to assist with malware and hacking blockage for our organization and to safeguard the public.



# District Health Department Services

Services	Alleghany	Ashe	Watauga
1. WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program	✓	✓	✓
2. Prenatal Care	✓	✓	✓
3. Family Planning / Women's Health	✓	✓	✓
4. Communicable Disease Control	✓	✓	✓
5. Primary Care / Child Health	✓	✓	
6. Primary Care / Adult Health	✓	✓	
7. Diabetes Self Management	✓	✓	✓
8. Nutrition Consultation	✓	✓	✓
9. Immunizations	✓	✓	✓
10. Pregnancy Care Management	✓	✓	✓
11. Care Coordination for Children	✓	✓	✓
12. Innovative Approaches for Children w/ Special Healthcare Needs	✓	✓	✓
13. Community Health Needs Assessment	✓	✓	✓
14. Youth Tobacco Prevention	✓	✓	✓
15. Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)	✓	✓	✓
16. Community Health Promotion and Wellness	✓	✓	✓
17. Northwest Tobacco Prevention	✓	✓	✓
18. Leading Coalitions for Community Health Improvement	✓	✓	✓
19. Water Protection (Septic and Well Permitting)	✓	✓	✓
20. Food and Lodging (Permitting and Inspections)	✓	✓	✓
21. District Business Office	✓		
22. Emergency Preparedness	✓	✓	✓
23. Alleghany / Ashe Health Alliance	✓	✓	
24. Top Dog Clinic (School Based Health Center), Ashe Middle School		✓	
25. Behavioral Health Services	✓	✓	
26. Dental Health Services	✓	✓	

# Community Health Services



The Community Health Team at AppHealthCare works with local stakeholders to identify, assess and address public health. We focus on community health outcomes by cultivating partnerships to strengthen public health through evidence-based prevention, intervention, systems level change and resiliency building.



This year, the Community Health team expanded to a total of 17 staff members to address public health priorities at the policy, community, and individual levels. The Community Health Team addresses population health needs through the following programs:

- ▶ Active Routes to School
- ▶ Care Coordination for Children
- ▶ Child Health School Collaboration
- ▶ Data Collection, including Community Health Assessment and Youth Risk Behavior Surveying
- ▶ Employee Wellness
- ▶ Healthy Communities Program
- ▶ Innovative Approaches
- ▶ Marketing and Communications
- ▶ Maternal and Child Health Initiatives
- ▶ Improving Community Outcomes for Maternal and Child Health
- ▶ Triple P: Positive Parenting Program
- ▶ NC Local Health Department Accreditation
- ▶ Northwest NC Partnership for Public Health
- ▶ Northwest Regional Tobacco Prevention
- ▶ Pregnancy Care Management
- ▶ Public Health Preparedness and Response
- ▶ Quality Improvement
- ▶ Substance Use Prevention and Education

The Community Health team conducted its first strategic planning process, launching a roadmap for aligning the team's work across programs. The Community Health strategies for 2017-2020 include:

- ▶ We will build resiliency and equity into our work and make them a true priority.
- ▶ We will strengthen internal structure through leadership, support and communication.
- ▶ We will be intentional about stakeholder engagement.
- ▶ We will share knowledge and resources, which will ultimately lead to utilizing Quality Improvement processes and tools.

## Active Routes to School

Active Routes to School is a NC Safe Routes to School Project supported by a partnership between the NC Department of Transportation and the NC Division of Public Health. Alleghany, Ashe, and Watauga Counties participate in this program along with the other 7 Counties within Local Health Department region 3. The 2016-2017 activities for AppHealthCare (Alleghany, Ashe and Watauga Counties) included:

- Afterschool staff training in the Let's Go NC: Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Curriculum
- Let's Go NC! Summer programming
- Let's Go NC! Let's Go Biking curriculum implemented in After School
- Over 500 bicycle helmets properly fitted and given to children in need of one.
- Materials, supplies and technical support provided for walking and biking to and at school activities



## Care Coordination for Children

Care Coordination for Children (CC4C) is a public health targeted case management program, into an at-risk population management level model. The CC4C Program is administered as a partnership between Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC), the NC Division of Public Health (DPH) and the NC Division of Medical Assistance (DMA). The main goals of the program are to improve health outcomes and reduce costs for enrolled children.

County	% of Medicaid Children Age 0-5 Contacted by CC4C	
	June 2016-March 2017	
Alleghany		10.1%
Ashe		9.5%
Watauga		10.0%
Target Range	8-12%	

- ➲ Our CC4C Care Managers are: Tiffany Minton, Watauga County, and Sheila Walter, Ashe and Alleghany Counties.

## Innovative Approaches

Parents with Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) experience a complex system of services that are challenging to coordinate and navigate. The Innovative Approaches Initiative is a family driven, community led systems change initiative that focuses on bridging gaps in systems of care that affect families of CYSHCN.



Innovative Approaches focuses on bringing together key community stakeholders to work on systems of care that impact families of children or youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) from birth to 21 years of age. Currently Innovative Approaches has active Steering Committees in Alleghany, Ashe and Watauga Counties with over 60 individuals participating, of which 26 are parents of CYSHCN. There are also Parent Advisory Councils within each county that have been trained in the Parents as Collaborative Leaders modules to become leaders in advocacy within their own communities for CYSHCN.

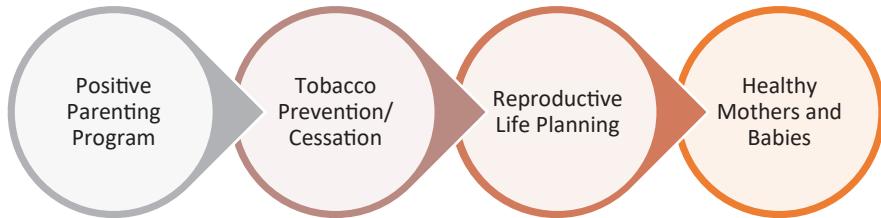
Innovative Approaches has 6 goals based on the national Maternal and Child Health Bureau performance measures:

- ▶ Increase the percent of CYSHCN whose families are partners in shared decision-making for their child's optimal health.
- ▶ Increase the percent of CYSHCN who receive coordinated, ongoing, comprehensive care within a medical home.
- ▶ Increase the percent of CYSHCN who receive adequate health insurance and financing to pay for needed services.
- ▶ Increase the percent of CYSHCN who are screened early and continuously for special health care needs
- ▶ Increase the percent of CYSHCN who can easily access community based services
- ▶ Increase the percent of youth with special health care needs who receive the services necessary to make the appropriate transitions to adult health care, work and independence.

Innovative Approaches completed the first year of a three year funding cycle award from the NC Division of Public Health, Children & Youth Branch in May 2017. With the funding expansion into Ashe and Alleghany counties Innovative Approaches saw an increase in collaboration between service providers, community stakeholders and families of CYSHCN.

In the 2016-2017 fiscal year Innovative Approaches completed six projects that impacted: 6 youth with special health care needs, 1369 families of CYSHCN, 12 early childhood professionals, 5 health care professionals, 3 school-based staff, 8 community leaders, and 21 institutional leaders. Six additional projects took shape in the final quarter of fiscal year 16-17 with the hope that even more community stakeholders will be impacted by the positive work of the initiative. For more information about Innovative Approaches view <http://www.apphealthcare.com/community-health/innovative-approaches/> or contact Elizabeth Kerley at [Elizabeth.Kerley@apphealth.com](mailto:Elizabeth.Kerley@apphealth.com).

# Maternal and Child Health Initiatives

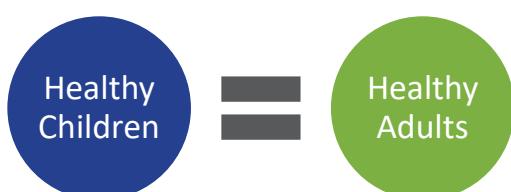


The North Carolina Institute of Medicine outlines that, “All children have the potential for positive, healthy development. However, adverse experiences, such as exposure to abuse and neglect during childhood, increase the likelihood of poor physical and mental health throughout one’s life (NCIOM, 2016).” They report that “North Carolina is taking steps to help communities across the state prevent abuse and neglect by promoting and supporting the positive development of families through the implementation of evidence-based programs... Local and state efforts, such as local efforts to ban e-cigarettes in public places, also play a critical role in curbing risky health behaviors among children (NCIOM, 2016).”

Together, the goals of the Title V Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) and the Improving Community Outcomes for Maternal and Child Health (ICO4MCH) initiatives are: to promote informed decision-making among individuals of reproductive age; to advocate for the independence and health of families through the enhancement of parents’ knowledge, skills, confidence, and self-sufficiency; and to support the development of non-violent, protective, and nurturing environments for children.

This project utilizes three evidence-based strategies: implementing and expanding the Triple P Positive Parenting Program within our communities, enhancing tobacco cessation and prevention, and increasing access and awareness of long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs).

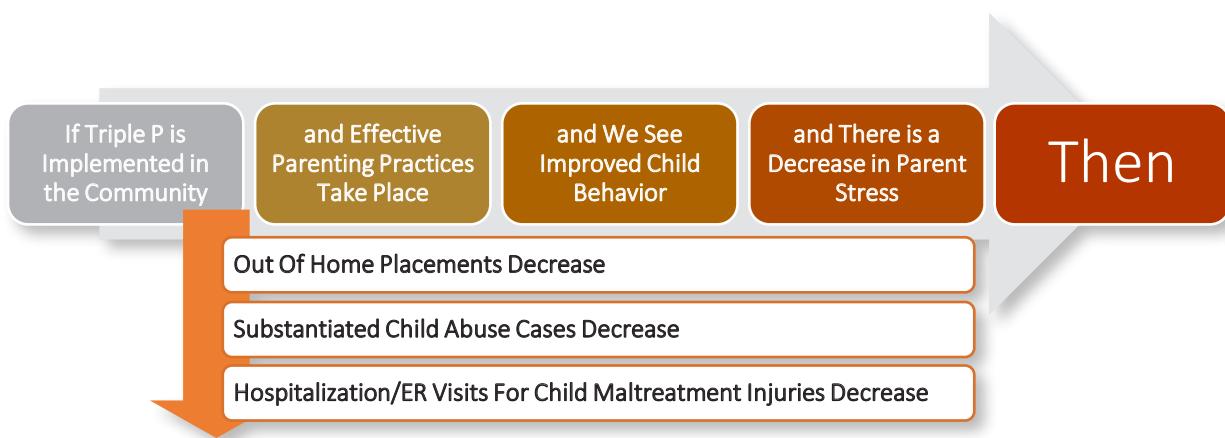
Together, these strategies work together to support the vision that all children have the comprehensive foundation of safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments specifically within Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Wilkes and Watauga counties for our MCH initiative.



## Long-Acting Reversible Contraceptives and Reproductive Life Planning

In December 2016, a survey was distributed to providers across the five Improving Community Outcomes for Maternal and Child Health (ICO4MCH) sites to assess their practices and comfort with LARCs. Statewide, 124 providers responded to this survey! Twenty-two providers in Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Watauga, and Wilkes responded to a survey. Half of participants practiced in private health care settings, and nearly 20% practiced in FQHCs. FQHC and hospital providers were also represented in this survey. The diversity of participants reflect the array of excellent partners in our community!

## Positive Parenting Program



How do we know it is working locally?

### Triple P Implementation:

- # of families reached by Triple P services to date **2337**
- # of children reached by Triple P services to date **4391**



### Effective Parenting Services

- The Triple P program is garnering high client satisfaction scores

### Improved Child Behavior

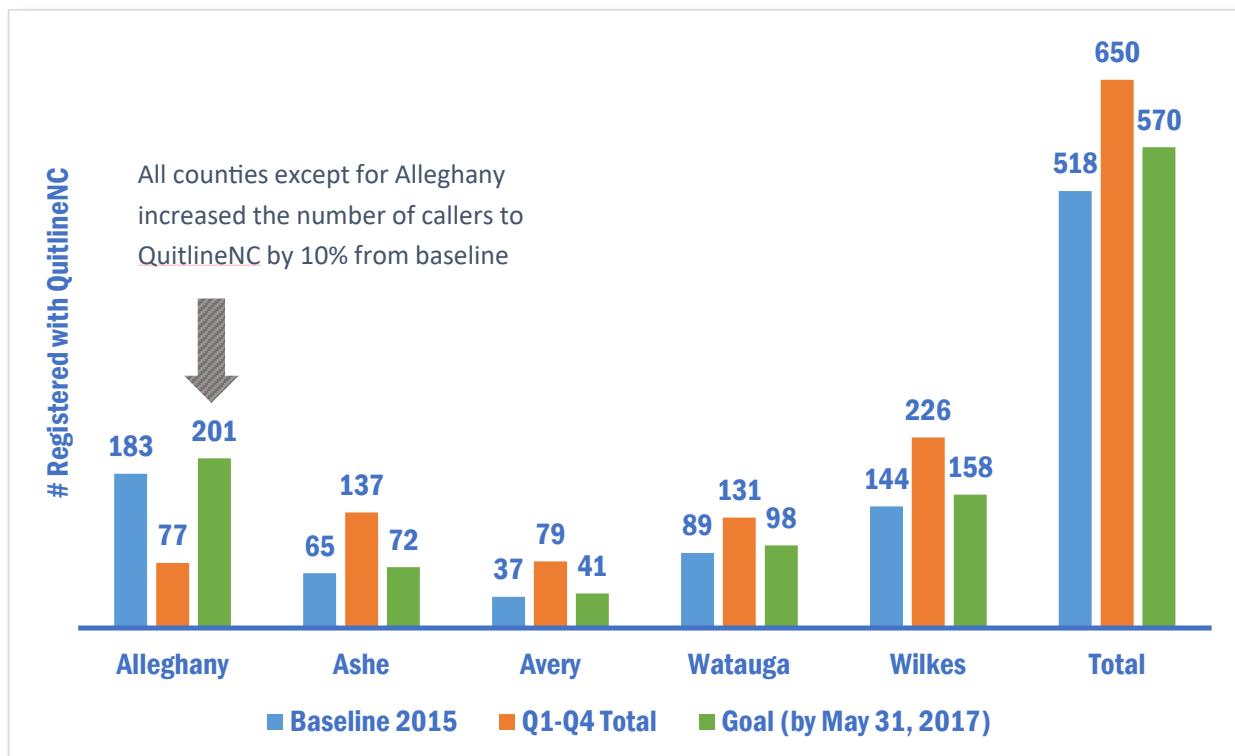
- During the Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ), post intervention parents were asked: "Has the Triple P parenting program helped you to deal more effectively with your child's behavior?" The average answer, with 7 being most satisfied, was **6.3**

### Decreased Parent Stress

- During the Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ), post intervention parents were asked: "Has the Triple P parenting program helped you to deal more effectively with problems that arise in your family?" The average answer, with 7 being most satisfied, was **5.9**

## Tobacco Prevention and Control

The MCH initiative surpassed the goal of a 10% increase in the number of callers to the QuitlineNC in Year 1 (June 2016-May 2017). The QuitlineNC is a tobacco cessation service provided to North Carolina residents.



## Northwest Regional Tobacco Prevention and Control

Northwest Tobacco Prevention has worked with Housing and Urban Development (HUD) properties throughout the 10 county region to prepare for the July 2018 deadline of all HUD housing becoming smoke-free. Several properties have already implemented smoke-free rules ensuring that the residents are breathing clean air.

The North Carolina General Assembly has allocated funds for youth tobacco prevention initiatives for the first time in several years. The funds will be for fiscal years 2017-2018 and 2018 – 2019. The goal will be to work with the School Health Advisory Councils in each of the counties in Region 3 to help educate youth about harms of conventional tobacco use and electronic cigarette use.

## Pregnancy Care Management

Better care, better birth outcomes-Pregnancy Care Management services are available to pregnant women enrolled in North Carolina Medicaid statewide, and to a limited number of low income, uninsured pregnant women in some counties. Pregnancy Care Managers are registered nurses or social workers who will work with pregnant women and prenatal care providers to ensure they receive the best possible care while pregnant and after delivery. The goal is to help mothers have a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby.

January 1, 2016 - December 31, 2016		
County	Non-Emergent Medicaid Deliveries	Clients Engaged in Pregnancy Care Services
Alleghany	57	177*
Ashe	113	
Watauga	153	71

\*includes some crossover cases from Watauga

➲ Our Pregnancy Care Managers are: Jessi Snead, Watauga County and Melissa Bedford, Ashe and Alleghany Counties.

## Substance Use Prevention and Education

AppHealthCare utilizes the Strategic Prevention Framework to guide our work to address substance use and misuse, specifically with opioids. We work with coalitions within Alleghany, Ashe, and Watauga Counties to reduce overdoses and mortality rates related to prescription drugs. AppHealthCare continues to collaborate with community partners to distribute lock boxes, publicize drop box locations, educate community members about the dangers of misuse of prescription drugs, and promote proper disposal of unused or expired prescriptions in each district county.

This year, AppHealthCare was awarded three new grant opportunities that will allow us to expand our capacity to address opioid overdose through increased awareness, knowledge, and behaviors surrounding prescription medications and appropriate disposal methods. AppHealthCare was also accepted into the 2017 InjuryFreeNC Academy and will work with community leaders to implement syringe exchange and naloxone distribution programs in Alleghany, Ashe and Watauga counties. This year also marked critical milestones in legislation for overdose prevention. On July 11, North Carolina began to allow for the legal establishment of hypodermic syringe and needle exchange programs.

# Public Health Preparedness and Response

## Preparedness: All Hazards and All Inclusive Planning

Public Health Services Include:

- ▶ Preparedness Activities
- ▶ Mitigation Planning
- ▶ Response to Communicable Disease Events
- ▶ Information Dissemination
- ▶ Immunization Activities
- ▶ Public Health Alerts
- ▶ Recovery from Natural and Man-made Disasters
- ▶ Resiliency Building
- ▶ Epidemiologic Surveillance
- ▶ Data Collection and Analysis
- ▶ Food Borne Illness Investigation
- ▶ Communicable Disease Investigation
- ▶ Crisis Communication

Main Goals

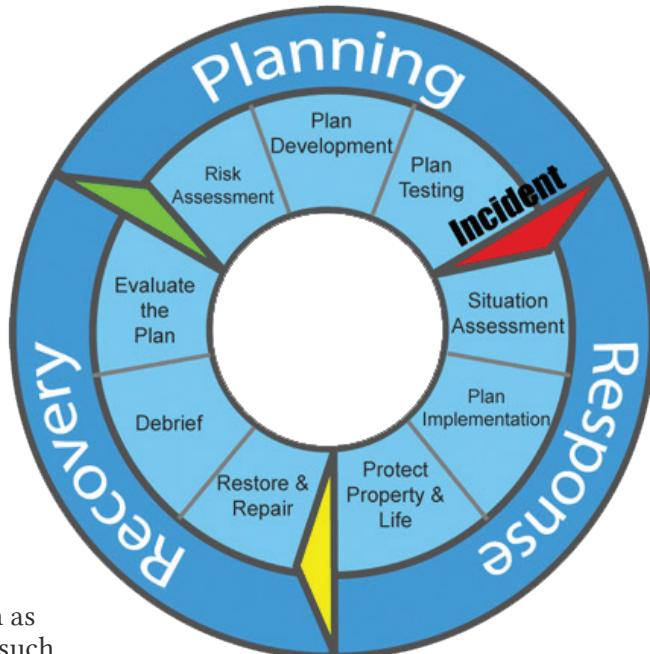
- ▶ Communicate and collaborate with stakeholders in the community on all elements of public health preparedness.
- ▶ Using relevant and current data to create the most effective plans for all hazards.
- ▶ Practicing routine and non-routine epidemiological surveillance.
- ▶ Distributing pertinent information to the public in a timely and effective fashion.

Background Information

Incidents can range from a man-made incident such as a chemical spill or explosion to natural disaster events such as severe winter storms and hurricanes. A recent example is the Ebola Virus Disease, which created concern across the United States and globally. AppHealthCare released information pertaining to high risk populations, developed and provided training, disseminated crisis and risk communication, community stakeholder engagement around the events, as well as providing culturally appropriate information to the virus's implications. For more information, check out this.

Another Example: Medical Countermeasures Readiness

- ▶ At a local level, AppHealthCare has points of distribution kits, epidemiology kits, respirator masks, and many other clinical and environmental supplies for public health responders.
- ▶ At the State and National level, medical countermeasures such as vaccines, antibodies, antiviral or antibacterial drugs, and PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) such as gloves or respirator masks are stored. The CDC has a National Stockpile of all the above equipment, and can be sent wherever in the Nation they can save the most lives if local supplies run out. AppHealthCare is responsible for maintaining all of these plans for distribution.



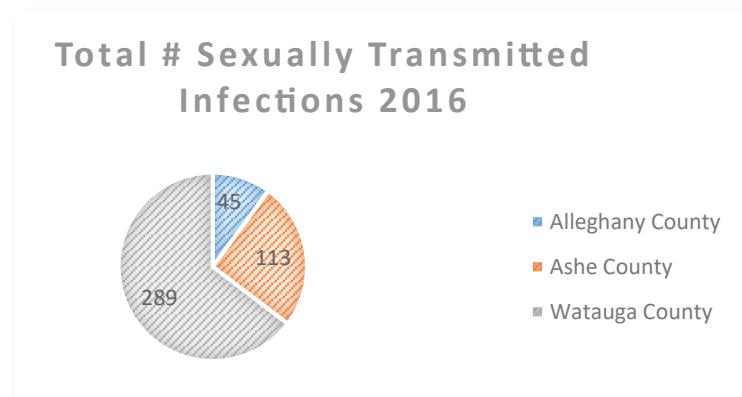
AppHealthCare continues to make all hazards and all inclusive planning a cornerstone of the public health preparedness program. We are accomplishing this by training our employees and engaging with key community stakeholders. We are using best practices and data to inform the process. We have been focused on disseminating public information regarding communicable diseases and environmental health. Much of this planning is guided by AppHealthCare Epidemiology Team (Epi Team). The Epi Team's purpose is to be a well-established and trained team that strengthens the capacity of the local public health agency to respond to events and incidents. The responsibilities of this team include:

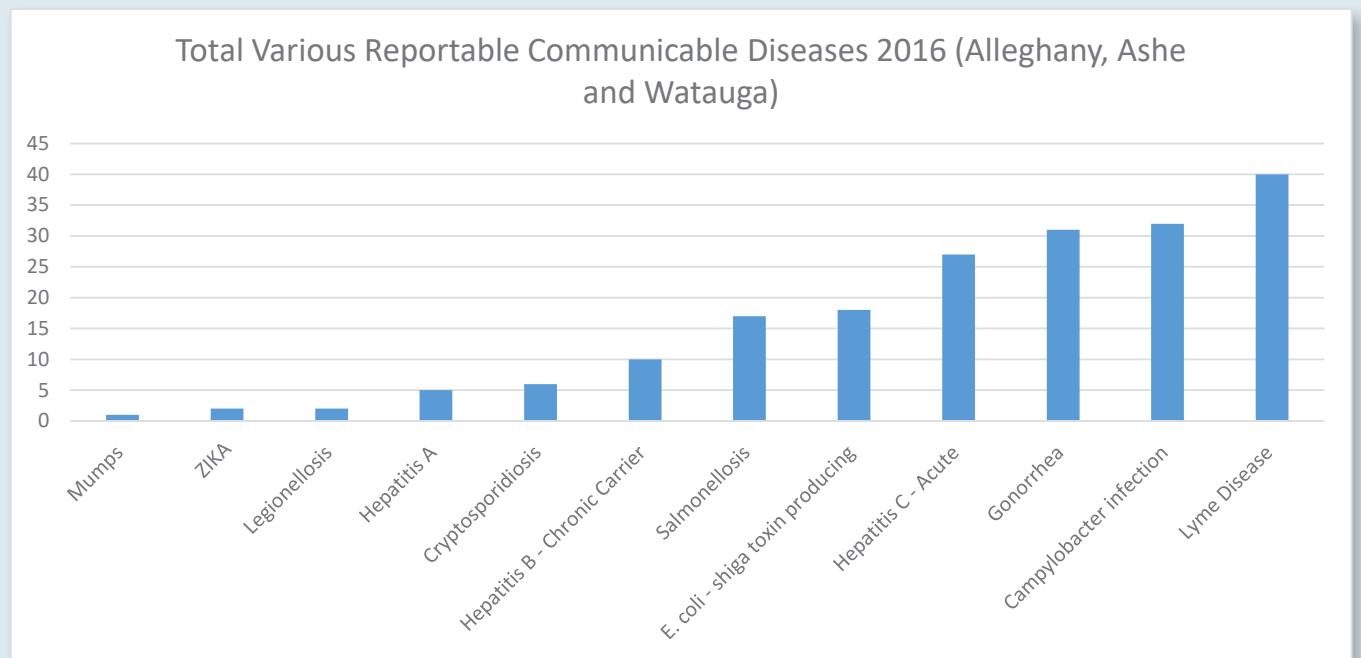
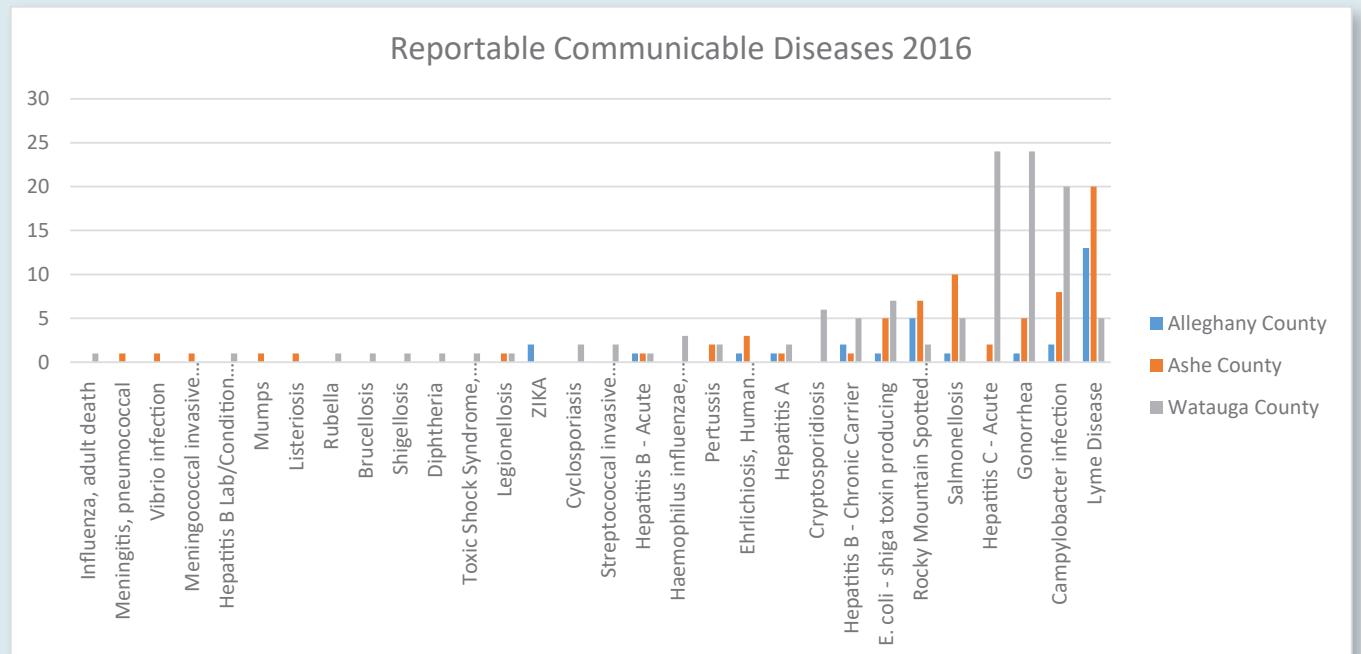
- ▶ Coordinating routine and non-routine disease surveillance activities;
- ▶ Conducting epidemiological investigations;
- ▶ Gathering and analyzing information from investigations;
- ▶ Recommending appropriate public health interventions for disease control to the health director; and
- ▶ Educating the public about disease prevention and control measures.

We engage partners throughout Alleghany, Ashe and Watauga Counties to better build a robust preparedness and response system. If you would like to learn more about Public Health Preparedness, please contact Jennifer Schroeder, Public Health Preparedness Program Manager, at [jennifer.schroeder@apphealth.com](mailto:jennifer.schroeder@apphealth.com).

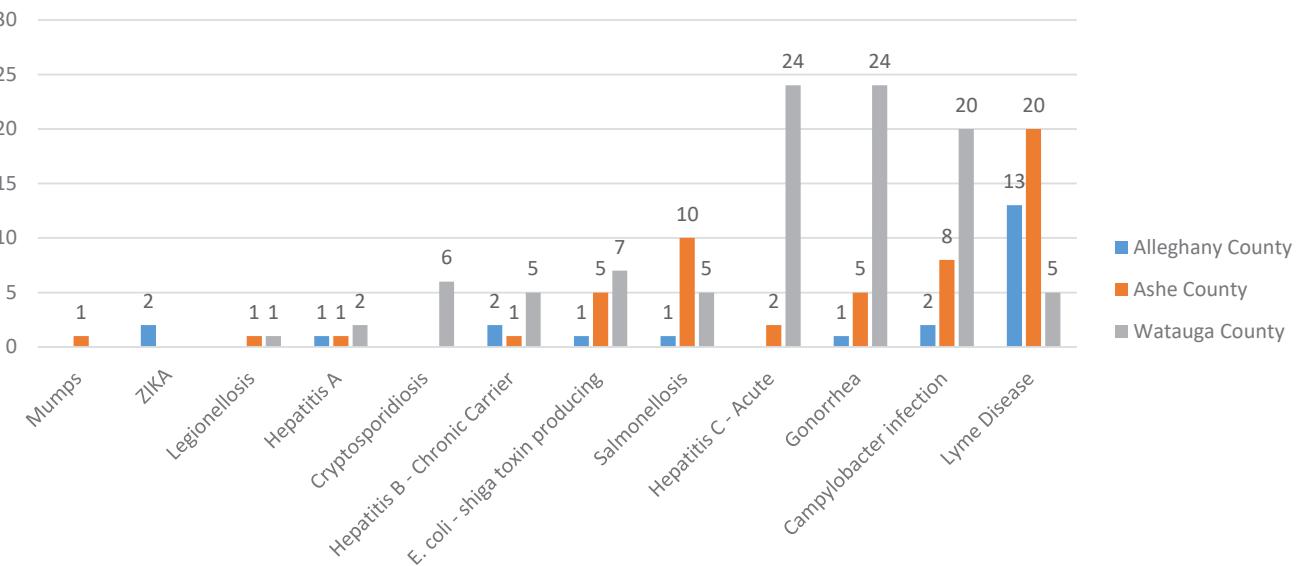
## Response: Communicable Disease Investigation and Epidemiological Surveillance

There are 74 reportable communicable diseases in North Carolina. The lists of reportable diseases vary slightly from state to state. North Carolina's list of reportable diseases and the timeframes in which they are required to be reported to DPH is specified in the N.C. Administrative Code rule (10A NCAC 41A .0101; Communicable Disease Manual).

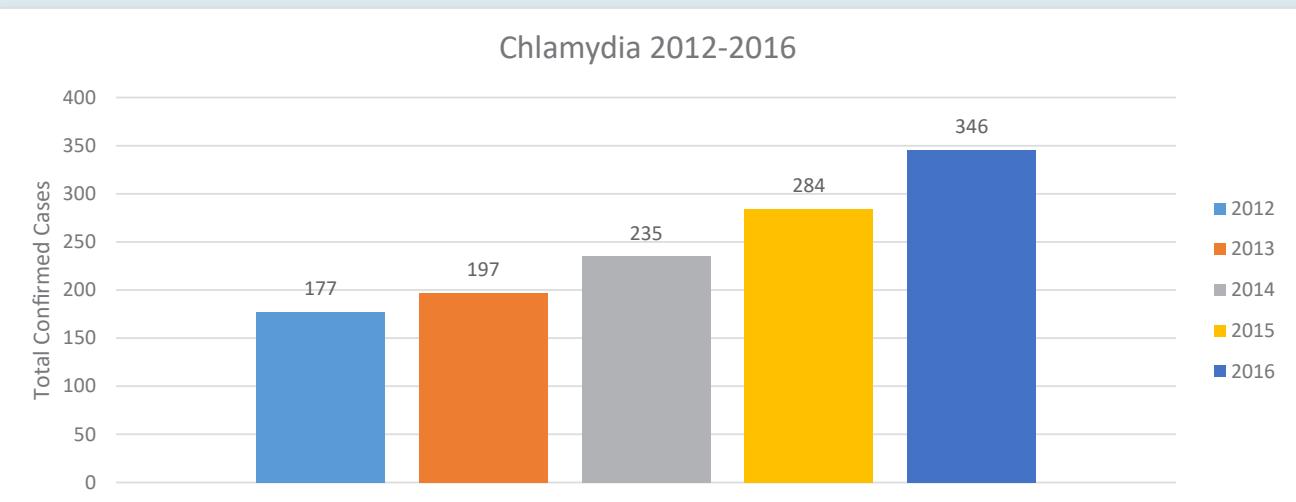




## Total Various Reportable Communicable Diseases 2016



## Trending Data Snapshot: Chlamydia



## Rabies

Across all three counties, hundreds of rabies cases are investigated. This includes management of bites/exposure reports, procedures for animals who tested positive for rabies and the support people who are recommended for Post Exposure Rabies Therapy. In 2016, we had multiple raccoons, a bobcat, a couple of bats and a skunk test positive for Rabies.

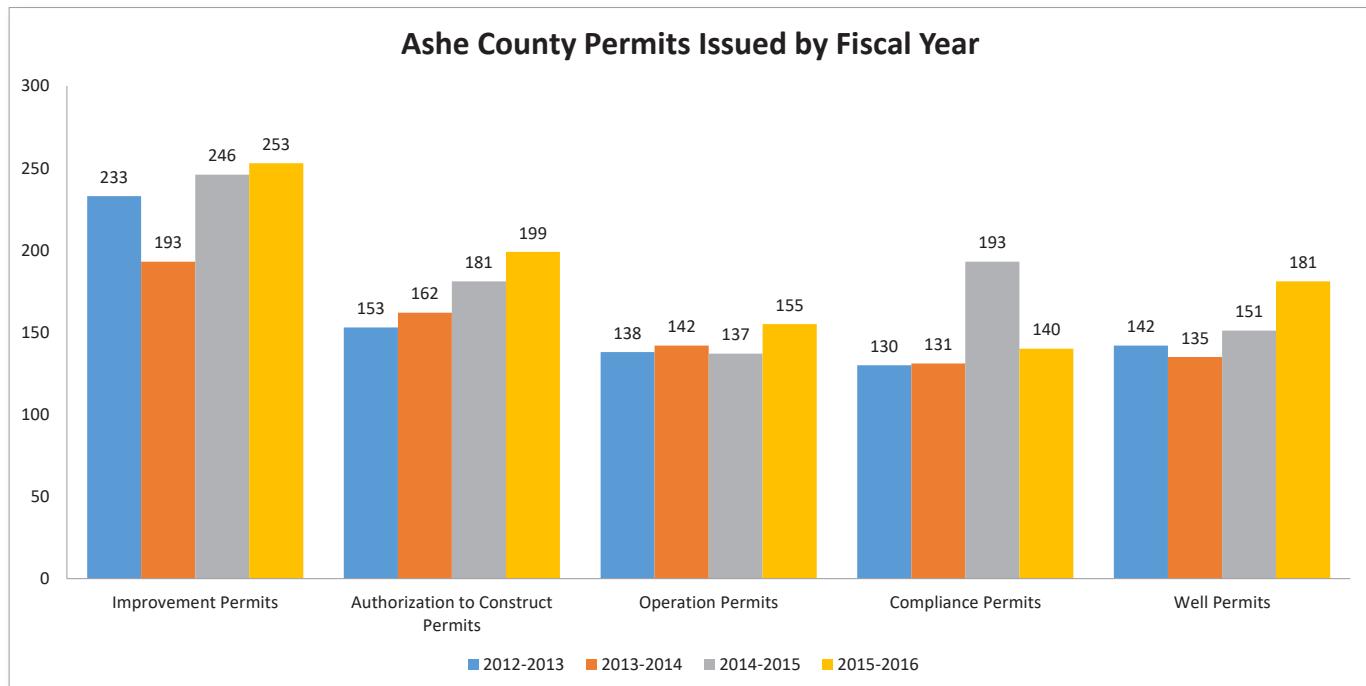
# Environmental Health Services



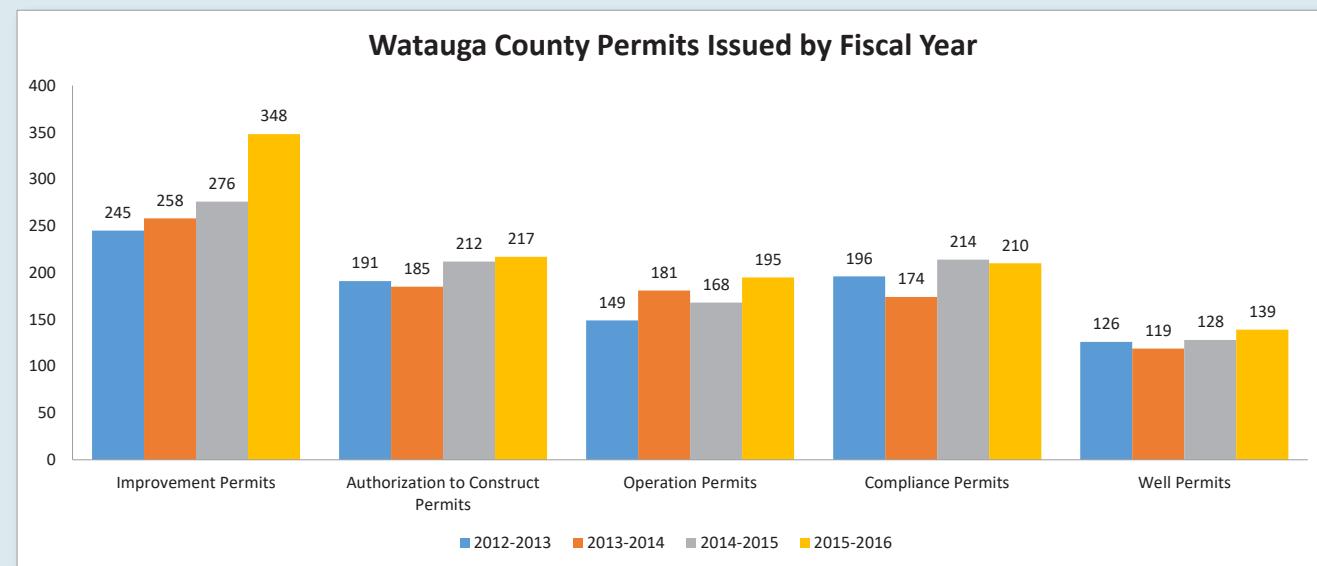
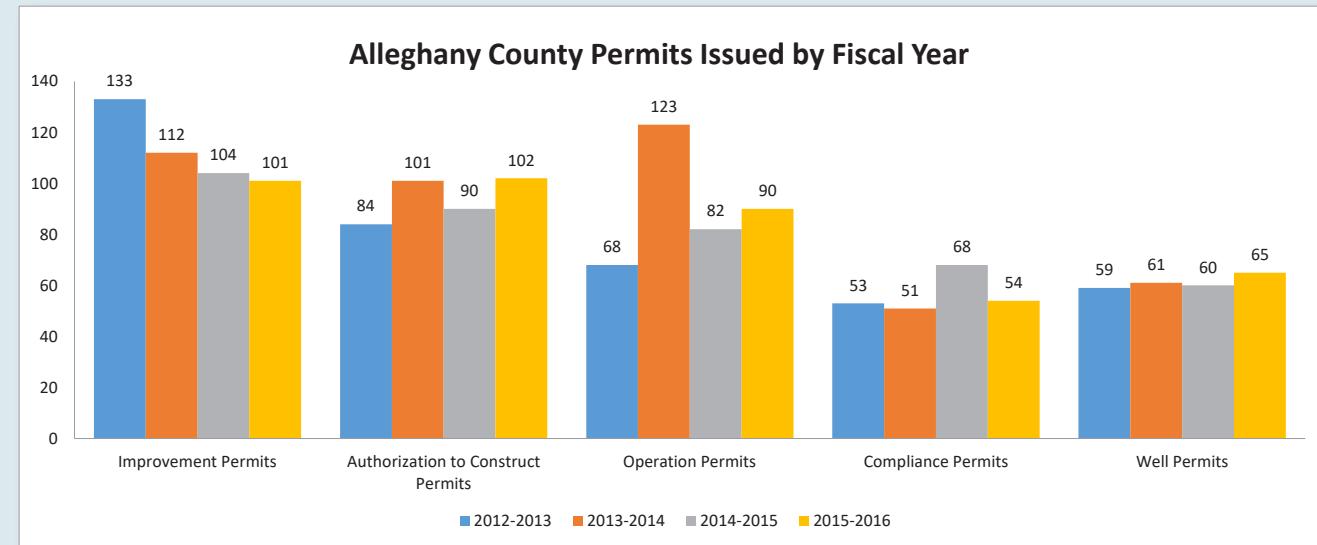
The Environmental Health Section of the Appalachian District Health Department continues to serve the public we are charged with protecting through the enforcement of a wide range of state rules and regulations pertaining to food and lodging, on-site wastewater, private drinking water wells, child care facilities, lead investigations, public swimming pools, tattoo artists, migrant housing and methamphetamine lab decontamination.

The Onsite Water Protection Section has continued working very diligently to maintain its stated two week goal for the issuance of new septic and well permits. Staff have continued putting in a lot of after hour/weekend/holiday time to keep the permit application process moving. We have also added two new staff and expect them to be fully authorized by the start of the spring building season.

## Well and Septic Permitting

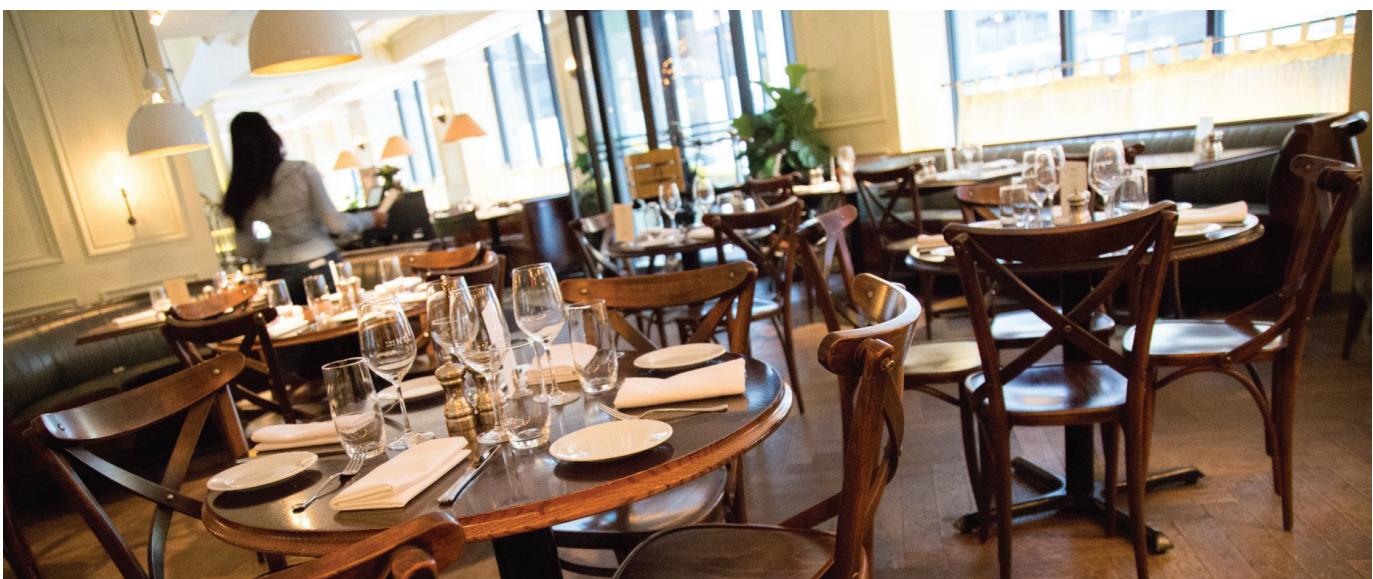
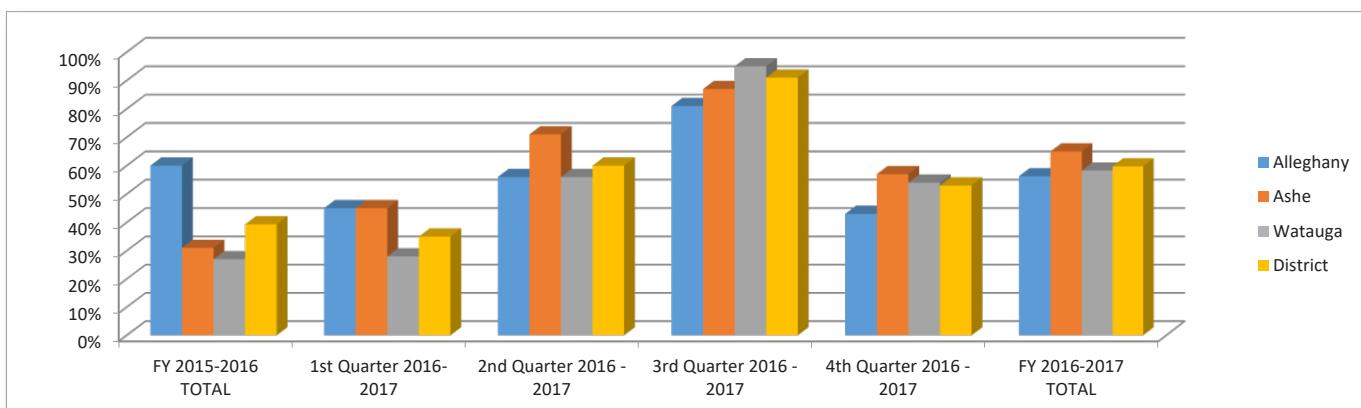


# Well and Septic Permitting



## Food and Lodging Permitting

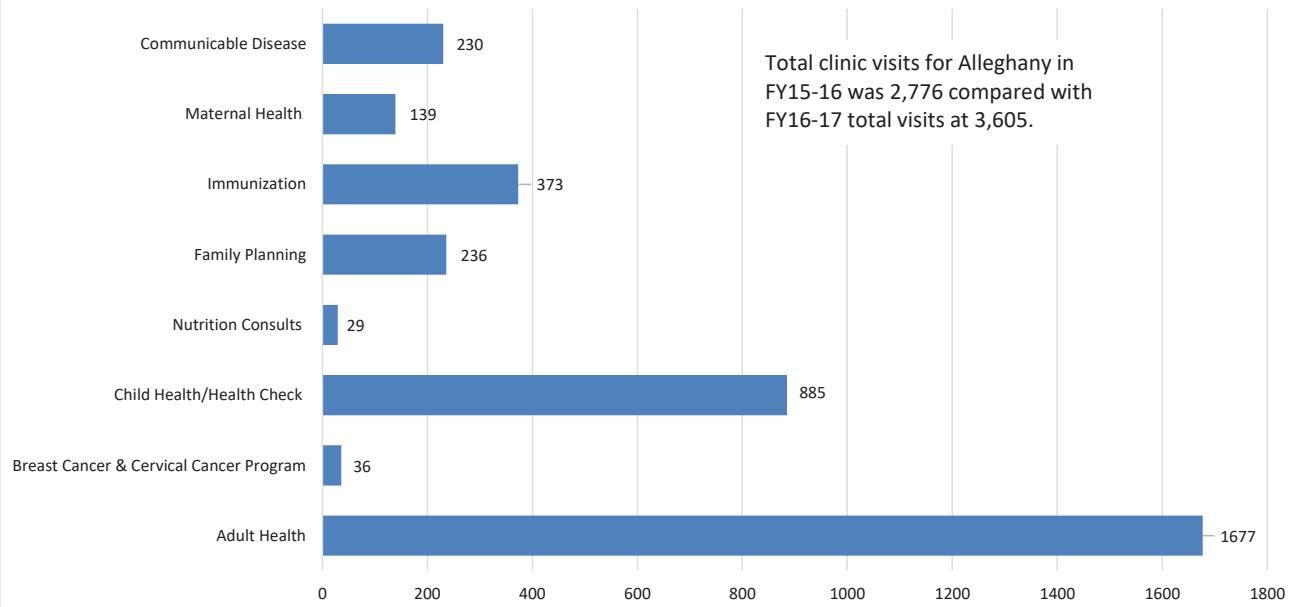
Throughout 2016-2017 the Food Protection and Facilities Section has focused on improving the inspection percentages for restaurants across the district. In addition to filling three vacant positions and hiring a REHS Intern for the water protection section that is also authorized in food and conducting inspections our staff are working with the Quality Improvement Council to look at specific ways of improving the efficiency of inspecting category 4 (quarterly inspections) restaurants while maintaining the highest standards. It should be noted that the State is currently using our staff's inspection times in food facilities to update their manpower study template which sets the length of time a "quality" inspection should take.



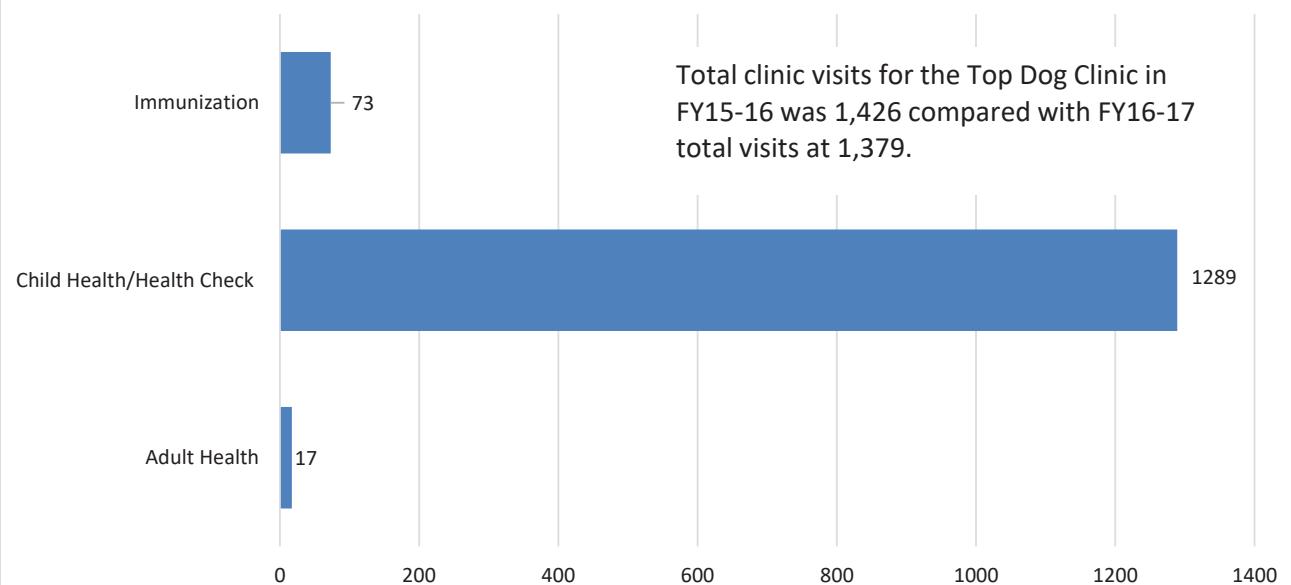
# Clinical Services



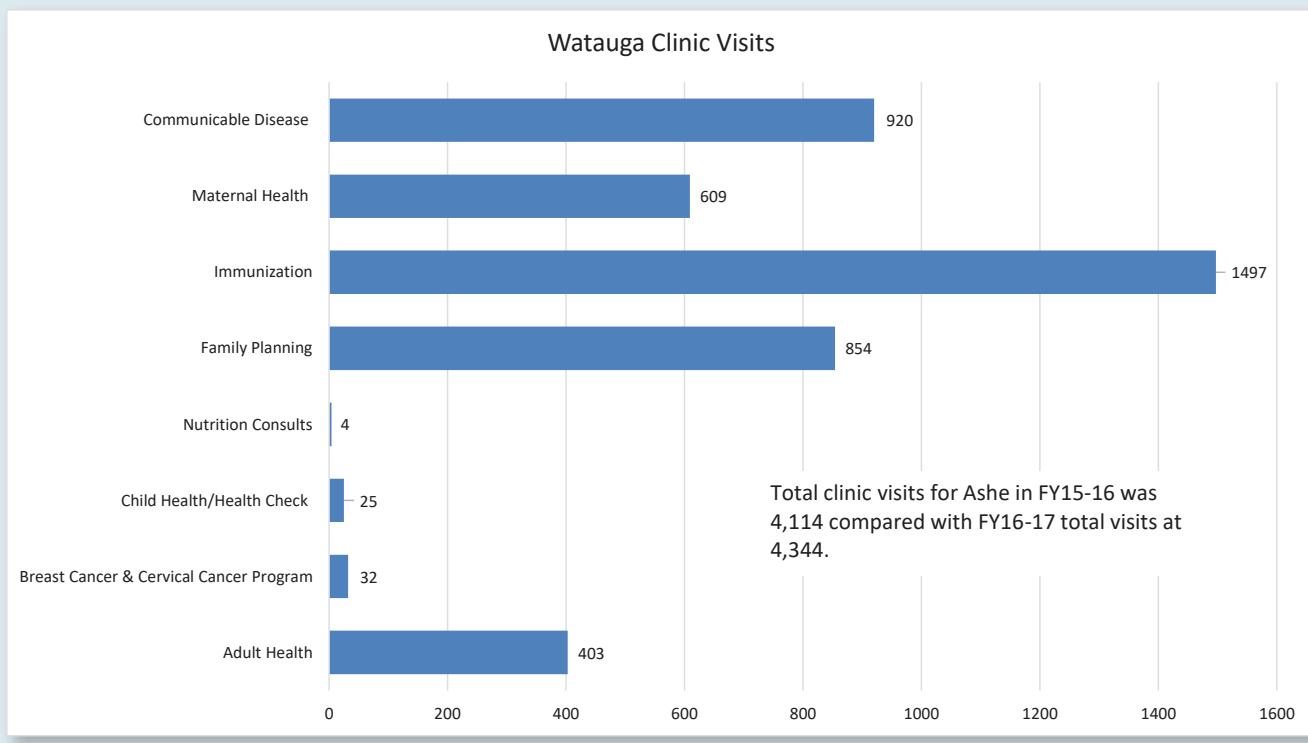
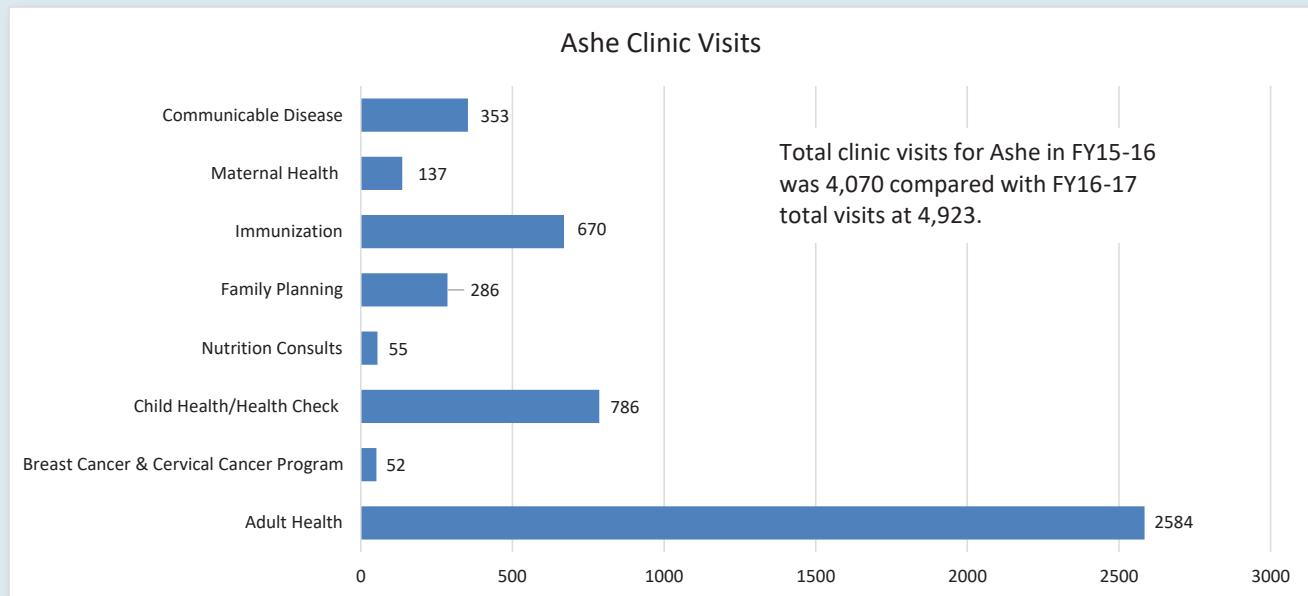
Alleghany Clinic Visits



Top Dog Clinic Visits



# Clinical Services



# Nutrition Services



AppHealthcare Nutrition Services consists of the Woman, Infant and Children (WIC) Program, Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME) and Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT). Having the WIC program fully staffed with 3 Nutritionist and 2 interviewer positions has meant the ability to serve more families through increasing caseload. On day a week a Registered Dietitian (RD)/ Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) had a dedicated schedule to seeing patients for DSME and MNT, working to prevent and treat chronic disease.

County	Jul 16	Aug 16	Sep 16	Oct 16	Nov 16	Dec 16	Jan 17	Feb 17	Mar 17	Apr 17	May 17	Jun 17	Avg
Alleghany	256	269	272	261	261	265	277	285	277	263	259	262	267
Ashe	545	598	620	609	560	541	552	566	568	550	577	565	571
Watauga	658	644	658	664	673	666	680	686	672	645	657	648	663
Total	1459	1511	1550	1534	1494	1472	1509	1537	1517	1458	1493	1475	1501
% Caseload	90%	94%	96%	95%	92%	91%	93%	95%	94%	90%	92%	91%	93%

AppHealthcare WIC has increased caseload from the previous year and has consistently remained above the state average caseload of 91%.

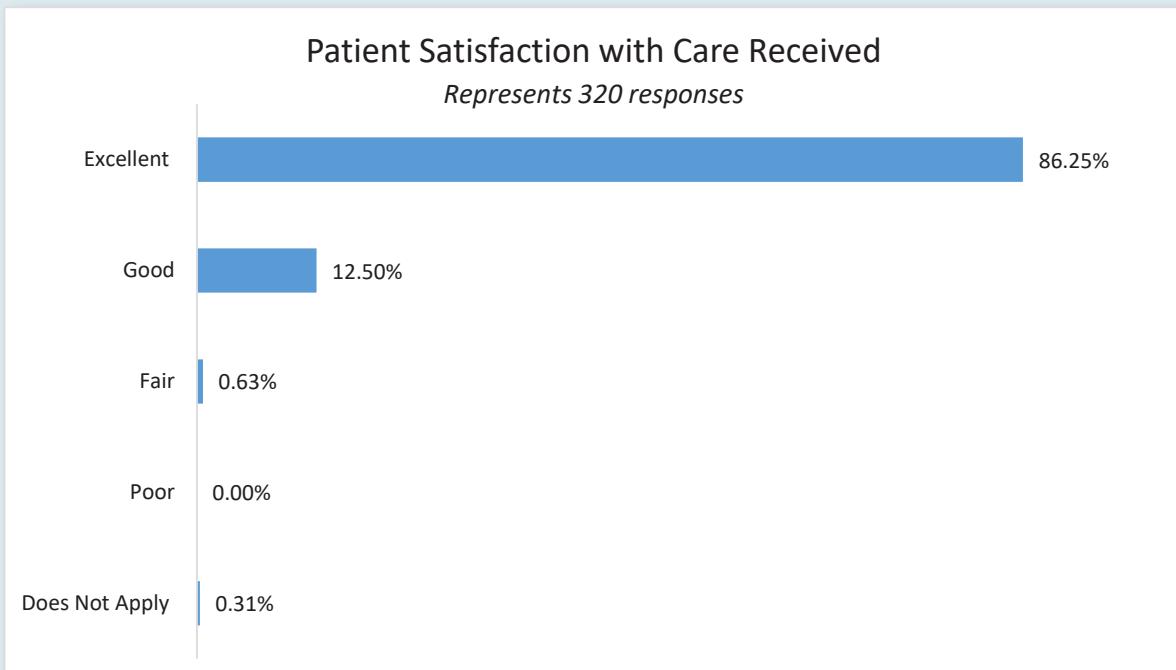
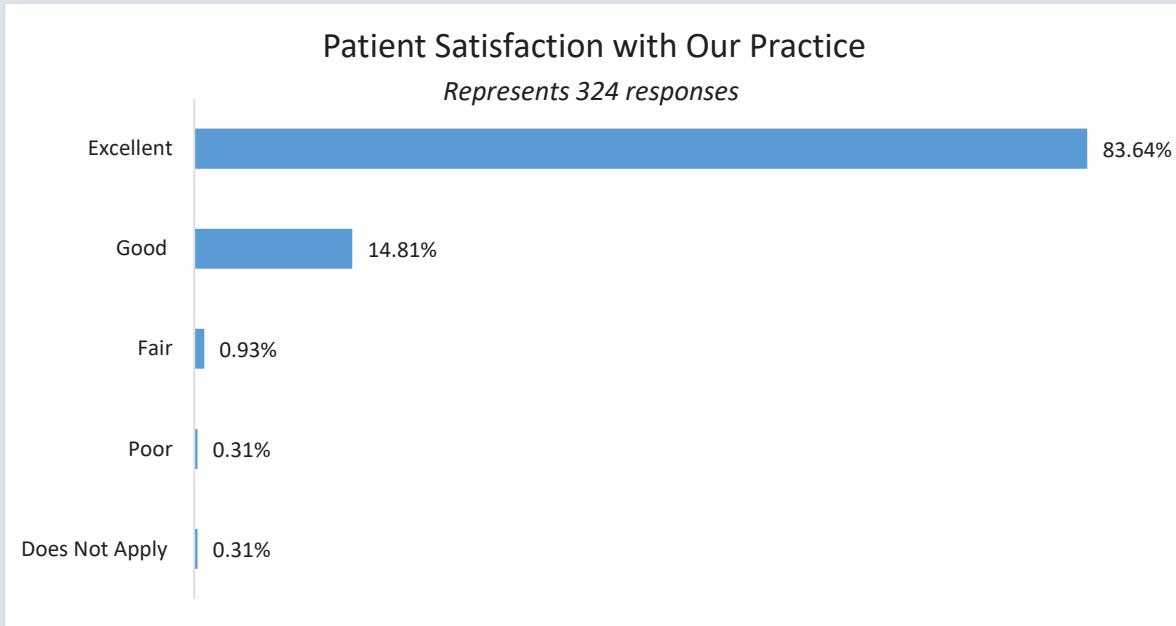
Breastfeeding promotion and support is one of the core services provided by WIC. Our dedicated breastfeeding coordinator seeks promote breastfeeding in all aspects of the community. This year that was achieved through surveying our early learning centers and day care facilities in order to assess their education needs and their desire to become a “designated breastfeeding friendly childcare center.” The information collected will be used to host a training for centers interested.

The DSME and MNT program had growth in fiscal year 2016-2017 as well. With a dedicated day each week to see patients the RD/CDE was able to see 80 patients. These patient are both Apphealthcare patients as well as patients of other physicians in the community that have been referred for nutrition services.

AppHealthcare Nutrition Services has also become hosts to numerous Graduate level Dietetic Interns from Appalachian State University (ASU) and University of North Carolina (UNC) Chapel Hill. We were preceptors for a total of three 8-week long rotations training future Dietitians in public health nutrition. Additionally, we serve as a site for undergraduate students to receive required volunteer hours in the WIC office.

# Patient Satisfaction

The Quality Improvement Council, in partnership with the Partners in Public Health Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Committee, edited the patient satisfaction survey this year to be more user friendly and to gather more qualitative data such as patient experience with clinic space and care they received.



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