

2023 STATE OF THE COUNTY'S HEALTH

Watauga County, North Carolina



54,234

Population
(Census 2021)

Leading Causes of Death

- 1 Cancer
- 2 Diseases of the Heart
- 3 Alzheimer's Disease

Median Household Income

North Carolina
\$66,186



Watauga
\$50,034

HEALTH PRIORITIES

The Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative selected the health priorities in August 2021. These priorities were chosen based on the 2020 Watauga County Community Health Assessment. Highlights to the priorities are below and additional detail can be found in the full report ([view full report on AppHealthCare's website](#)).

MENTAL & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Our State, Our Wellbeing

Watauga County is one of 15 communities in NC participating in *Our State, Our Wellbeing* initiative which aims to focus on implementing strategies to prevent suicide and suicidal ideation and improve resources available for mental and behavioral health. This initiative will work with various agencies and organizations in the community.

FAMILY & SOCIAL SUPPORT

STABLE Workplaces recognizes that the business sector is facing unprecedented recruitment and retention challenges alongside complex challenges among staff (family needs, mental health and substance use concerns, lack of housing, etc.). STABLE is exploring ways to better deliver resources to the business sector and other employers through unified messaging, collaborative training efforts, toolkit development and incentivized participation.



Mother-Baby Home Visiting

This program provides support and care for families of newborns within the comfort of their own homes. As of October 2023, the home visitors were reaching 63% of all eligible births in its service area and 100% of all post-visit referrals were being completed.

HOUSING



The Watauga Housing Council was formed in June 2022 and has three committees working on:

- ✓ Community Outreach
- ✓ Housing Solutions
- ✓ Structure & Fiscal/Sustainability

EMERGING ISSUES

Substance Use and Misuse Prevention

For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, Watauga County authorized use of opioid settlement funds for the following projects:

- AppHealthCare for the purchase of a mobile health bus as well as expansion of the Mother-Baby Program to serve families impacted by substance use disorder
- Mediation & Restorative Justice Center/Homestead Recovery Center for Recovery Friendly Housing
- High Country Community Health for peer support services as well as expanded medication-assisted treatment services

724 individuals
served by NC Peer Support Specialists across Alleghany, Ashe & Watauga Counties

21,390 syringes
returned



905 naloxone kits
distributed



158 justice-involved
persons served

