



## STATE OF THE COUNTY'S HEALTH REPORT RELEASED

HICKORY, NC – Catawba County Public Health released the 2013 State of the County's Health (SOTCH) report, which notes cancer, heart disease, chronic lower respiratory disease, stroke, and Alzheimer's disease as the leading causes of death in Catawba County.

The SOTCH tracks data for health issues affecting Catawba County residents and important health indicators related to illness, death, and high-risk behaviors. The report is a supplement to the Catawba County Community Health Assessment, which is a comprehensive overview of the county's health status produced every four years (most recently in 2011).

Key findings in the 2013 SOTCH include the following:

- **Where Catawba County Is Faring Better:** Five-year trend data show significant improvement of several health issues, including lower incidence of colon cancer and decreased death rates for cerebrovascular disease, breast cancer, prostate cancer, diabetes, pneumonia and influenza, heart disease (among African Americans) and Alzheimer's Disease (among men).
- **Where Catawba County Is Faring Worse:** Five-year trend data show significant worsening of several health issues, including increased death rates for chronic lower respiratory diseases, all other unintentional injuries, and suicide (among men).
- **Where Catawba County Is Experiencing Health Disparities:**
  - African Americans experience a significantly disproportionate burden in several areas, including diabetes, cerebrovascular disease, cancer, and teen pregnancy. In most cases, significant health disparities among other minority populations cannot be measured due to data limitations.
  - Among health issues that affect both men and women, those with significantly higher death rates for men include cancer (especially trachea, bronchus, and lung cancer), all other unintentional injuries, and heart disease.
  - Other than breast cancer, issues affecting females at significantly higher rates of death include Alzheimer's Disease and chronic lower respiratory diseases.

Additional analysis and statistics are available in the full report, which can be accessed online at [www.catawbacountyhealthpartners.org/community.asp](http://www.catawbacountyhealthpartners.org/community.asp). The 2011 Community Health Assessment is also available on this site.

In addition, the SOTCH describes progress made toward improving access to care, cancer, obesity, and substance abuse, which were named Catawba County health priorities for 2012 through 2015 during the 2011 Community Health Assessment process. Catawba County Health Partners, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization managed by Catawba County Public Health, fosters community coalitions addressing these priorities.

"The health data provided in the SOTCH is key to providing insight on our community's health needs, as well as highlighting progress toward improving our county's health priorities," said Doug Urland, health director, Catawba County Public Health. "It is an important resource for organizations and residents seeking more information about the health of our county and how we are working together to address critical health issues."

Located off Fairgrove Church Road behind Catawba Valley Medical Center in Hickory, N.C., Catawba County Public Health provides health and education services to eligible men, women, and children in the community. For more information, please call (828) 695-5800 or visit [www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth](http://www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth).

*"Leading the Way to a Healthier Community"*