

Alexander County Public Health

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COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT -----2025-----



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

VISION STATEMENT

The mission of the Alexander County Health Department is to promote, protect, and ensure the health and well-being of every citizen in Alexander County.

OVERVIEW

In the practice of public health, the health of the community is monitored and evaluated by examining key indicators such as leading causes of death, access to health care, and health trends such as nutrition. Every four years, the Alexander County Health Department conducts a state developed process known as the Community Health Assessment (CHA). Findings from the CHA are used by the Health Department to conduct strategic planning and to guide collaborate community action addressing identified priority issues. The CHA is also used to meet the requirements for state accreditation of local health departments.

The 2025 Community Health Assessment is designed to:

- Evaluate the quality of life in Alexander County.
- Define Alexander County’s needs, priorities, and health assets.
- Identify various trends in the chronic disease, cause of death, and high-risk behaviors within Alexander County.
- Show the systematic collection, assembly, analysis, and dissemination of information about health in Alexander County.

LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP

Alexander County Health Department (ACHD) works with a variety of community agencies in providing care and services to residents of Alexander County. ACHD is not the only responsible party for improved health outcomes in the community, as improving overall health is a collaborative process. Currently, Alexander County does not have a hospital; therefore, the CHA is conducted by the Alexander County Health Department. ACHD did not receive help from a privately contracted vendor to conduct the 2025 CHA, but did utilize DellaRe Consulting for graphics in the CHA Report.

Partnerships	Number of Partners
Public Health	1
Hospital/Health Care System	0
Healthcare Provider(s)- other than behavioral health	9
Behavioral Healthcare Provider(s)	4
Dental Health Provider(s)	5
EMS Provider	1
Pharmacies	5
Community Organizations- advocacy, charitable, NGO	10
Businesses- employers, not organizations	57
Educational Institution- colleges, university	2
Public School System	1
Media/Communication Outlet(s)	3
Public Member(s)	18
Other- specify	4- Chiropractors 6-Veterinarians

Alexander County Health Department collaborated with representatives from Alexander County Department of Social Services (DSS), Alexander County Schools, Alexander County Partnership for Children, Alexander County Head Start and Early Head Start, Alexander County Emergency Management, Alexander County Cooperative Extension, and citizens from the community. The Healthy Alexandrians Task Force chose priorities based off of the CHA results presented and the Advisory Board approved the CHA Report. Members listed below:

Healthy Alexandrians Task Force Members

Alexander County DSS

Keri Jerrell

Alexander County Schools

Amanda Blackburn

Jessica Anderson

Alexander County Partnership for Children

Paula Cline

Alexander County Health Start & Early Head Start

Cathy Knepp

Angela Revell

Michelle Fox

Alexander County Administration

David Moose

Guardian Ad Litem Alexander County

Cassie T. Hileman

Alexander County Emergency Management

Daniel Fox

Alexander County Health Department

Mallory Barnes

Dorian Maltba

ICGH Treatment Centers

Julie Walker

NC Cooperative Extension-Alexander

Der Holcomb

Alexander County Senior Center

Kristy Hunt

Citizens

Mike Richmond

Pedro Renteria

Donna Mayberry

Current Health Advisory Board Members

Crystal Adams

Barbara Hayes

Chris Howes

Doug Howes

Dr. Jennifer Hull

Betty Long

Lauren Kiziah, PharmD

Dr. Jonathan Goodnight

Vance Carrigan

Former Health Advisory Board Members

Vickie Rogers, RN

Robbie Sheffield, DDS

Macy Jones

DATA COLLECTION

The Alexander County Health Department utilized both primary (data collected directly) and secondary (data provided by other organizations identified) sources to compile the data.

- Primary data collection tool, the 2025 Alexander County Community Health Assessment Survey, was distributed to the public in both web-based formats and paper copies around the community from February 2025 until June 2025. Paper and electronic copies were both available in English and Spanish and facilitated broad participation.
- A link to the 2025 Alexander County Community Health Assessment was posted to www.alexanderhealth.org, Alexander County Health Department Facebook Page, and sent via email to all county employees and community partners. Paper versions were distributed at the Health Department, Libraries, Community Events, and a QR code was published in the Taylorsville Times Newspaper and distributed to the public. One thousand one hundred sixty responses were collected through these formats. However, we could only use results from one thousand one hundred and one surveys, due to the fact that fifty-nine stated they did not live in Alexander County.
- Additional primary data was collected through a Male Focus Group performed by the Health Department Health Educator I in September of 2025 due to the low male response rate on the primary survey tool.
- Secondary data was gathered by the Alexander County Health Department Health Educator I & Preparedness Coordinator/Epidemiology from November 2024-January 2025 from local, state, and national sources and also collected from outside organizations. Data was used in assessing the severity of health issues within Alexander County.

KEY FINDINGS

In September 2025, members of the Healthy Alexandrians Task Force reviewed secondary data, CHA survey results, along with additional secondary data provided by DellaRe Consulting via PowerPoint presentation. Indicators specific to the following eight areas were made available.

1. Accessibility of Care
2. Mental/Brain Health
3. Substance Use
4. Healthy Eating
5. Healthy Living
6. Disability Support
7. Elder Care
8. Dental Health

Following the September meeting, members voted to narrow these down to the following four areas via email vote:

Access to Care, Mental Health, Substance Use, and Healthy Living.

In October of 2025, members of the Healthy Alexandrian Task Force met again to make formal priority selections utilizing the Hanlon Method, which includes the following ranking criteria: Severity, Magnitude, and Feasibility.

HEALTH PRIORITIES

Participants of the Healthy Alexandrians meeting in October 2025 made recommendations for the top two health issues to address over the next three to four years: **Mental Health and Healthy Living**

Mental Health

- Rebuild behavioral health program at Alexander County Health Department by hiring a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) available to the community and any county employees
- Increase public awareness of existing counseling resources for mental health within the county
- Provide early intervention training to community leaders
- Provide evidenced-based early intervention strategies to youth and parents/guardians

Healthy Living

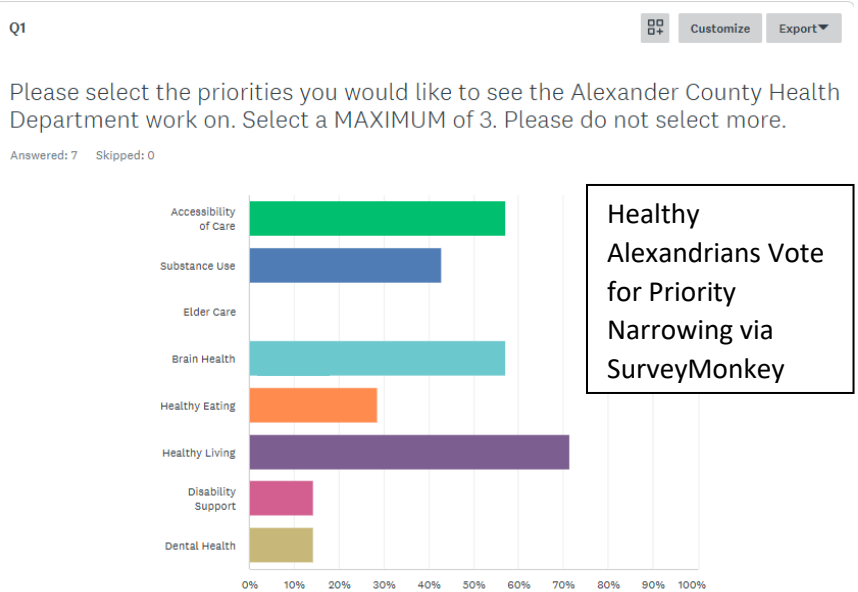
- Coordinate with Cooperative Extension & other nutrition-based organizations to increase education in the community on healthy eating habits
- Create educational campaigns/advertisements for the community to promote local and safe areas to exercise

This report is available for download on the Alexander County Health department website at www.alexanderhealth.org, or by visiting the Health Department located at 338 1st Avenue SW in Taylorsville, NC.

Respectfully Submitted,

Billie C. Walker

Alexander County Health Director



BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Every four years the Alexander County Health Department completes a comprehensive Community Health Assessment as required by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. This assessment allows us to gather information used to better understand the community's health concerns, document health status trends, as well as to catalyze developing strategies to assess the community health problems.



Community Health Assessments are the foundation for improving and promoting the health of community members. The role of the Community Health Assessment is to identify factors that affect the community to adequately address these factors. In 2025, the Alexander County Health Department (ACHD) collaborated with the Central Carolina Community Collaborative in order to share data across the regions' local health departments and hospitals. This put ACHD on a three-year data collection cycle. The 2025 CHA process consisted of four primary steps: analyze secondary data, survey the community, analyze the primary data collected, and select health priorities. While the Alexander County Health Department is the lead agency in conducting the assessment, existing community partnerships are utilized

throughout the process to ensure the evaluation truly reflects the community's needs. The Healthy Alexandrians Task Force is commissioned with analyzing and determining the health priorities for Alexander County. The task force is comprised of a mixture of government agencies, private industry leaders, the non-profit community, and interested community members who are concerned with the ongoing health needs of our community. These individuals, along with the Alexander County Health Advisory Board and Board of County Commissioners, reviewed survey results and health data to make a final determination of health priorities for the next three to four years.

Statistical data presented in the report represents the most recent information available at the time the assessment was completed. Health survey results may vary and represent the opinion of the person completing the survey.

FRAMEWORKS

The Alexander County Health Department elected to utilize the following three CHA frameworks in combination: Health Equity in secondary data collection & developing the primary data collection tool; RBA for the purposes of Scorecard and future action planning; and The Hanlon Method in identifying priority areas.

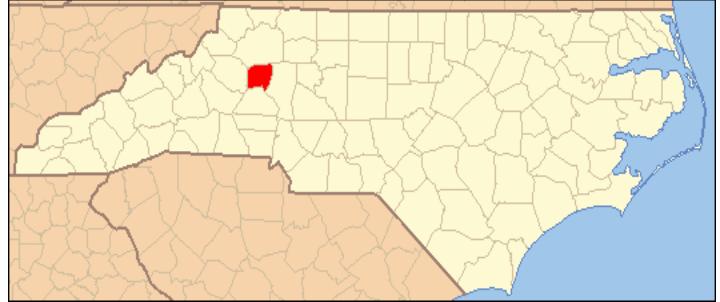
PEER-COUNTIES

Peer Counties were obtained through analysis of the suggested list of counties accessed via the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps website.²⁹ Alexander County was coded as a peer county of group 20 along with 6 others in North Carolina. This list was narrowed down to 4 comparison counties for the 2025 CHA through analysis of regional borders, population breakdown of ethnicity, and age and gender breakdown. These were especially important to analyze for the Alexander County CHA in interpretation of data on infant mortality and chronic diseases. Peer Counties include: Burke, Caldwell, Madison, and Stokes.

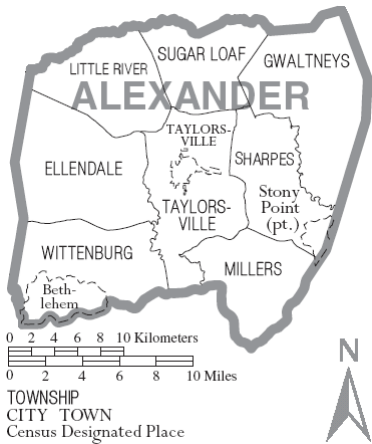
COMMUNITY PROFILE

COUNTY OVERVIEW

Alexander County, North Carolina is located in the scenic foothills of North Carolina’s Appalachian Mountains. Bordered on the south by the Catawba River, the county offers numerous recreational activities, upscale and moderate housing, and opportunities for industrial and commercial operations. Taylorsville, incorporated in 1851, is the county seat. Other townships include Bethlehem, Ellendale, Stony Point, Wittenburg, Hiddenite, Sugar Loaf, and Vashti.



The county is comprised of 263 square miles, two-thirds of which is covered in farmland, with an average farm size of 90 acres producing commodities such as poultry, dairy, tobacco, apples, forestry products, grain crops, and beef cattle. Other primary industries include furniture, textiles, education, health services, professional, business services, trade, transportation, and utilities.



Alexander County offers a variety of outdoor attractions for residents and visitors to enjoy. Some attractions include hiking or rock climbing at Rocky Face Mountain Recreational Park, gem mining at the Emerald Hollow Mine in Hiddenite, swimming at East Park Pool in Stony Point, running in one of the county’s numerous road race events, boating or fishing on Lake Hickory, spending time at the new Wittenburg water access point, or golfing at Brushy Mountain Golf Course. The community strives to offer residents and visitors numerous opportunities to remain active, fit, and healthy.



Wittenburg Access, Wittenburg NC

POPULATION TRENDS

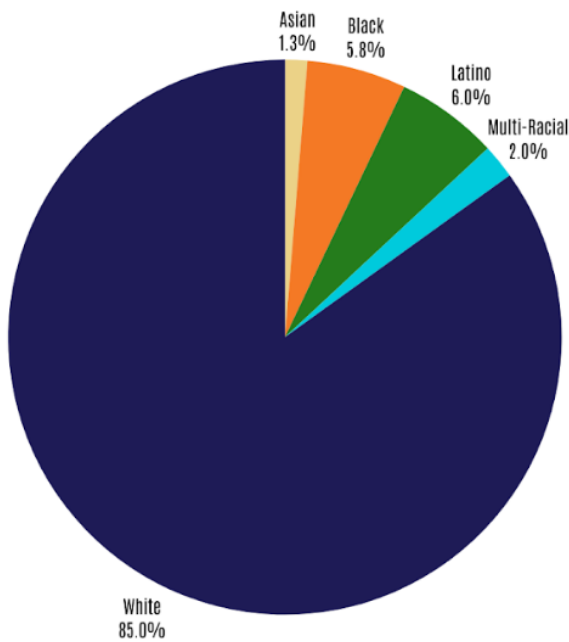
The total estimated population for Alexander County for 2024 (2025 data not yet available) is 36,505. This is a slight increase from the recorded 36,444 in the 2022 Community Health Assessment.⁸

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS 2023²⁴

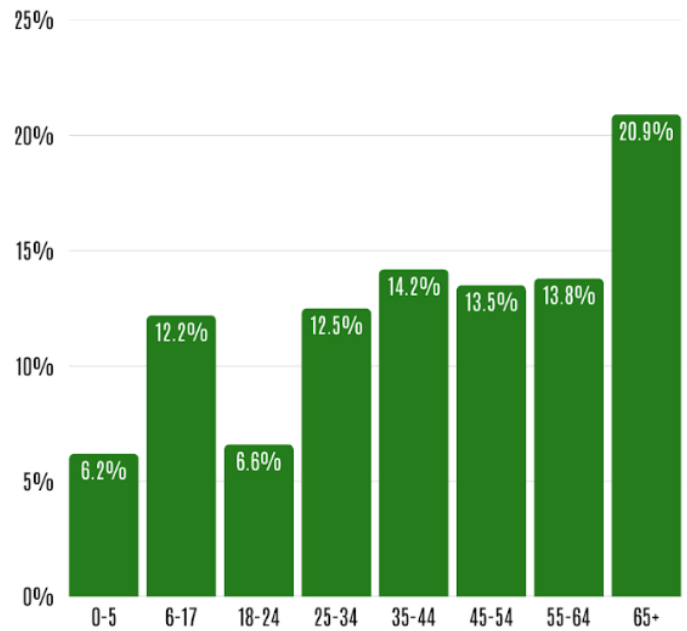
Gender Distribution

	Alexander County	North Carolina
Male	51.8%	49.1%
Female	48.2%	50.9%

Population by Race



Age Distribution



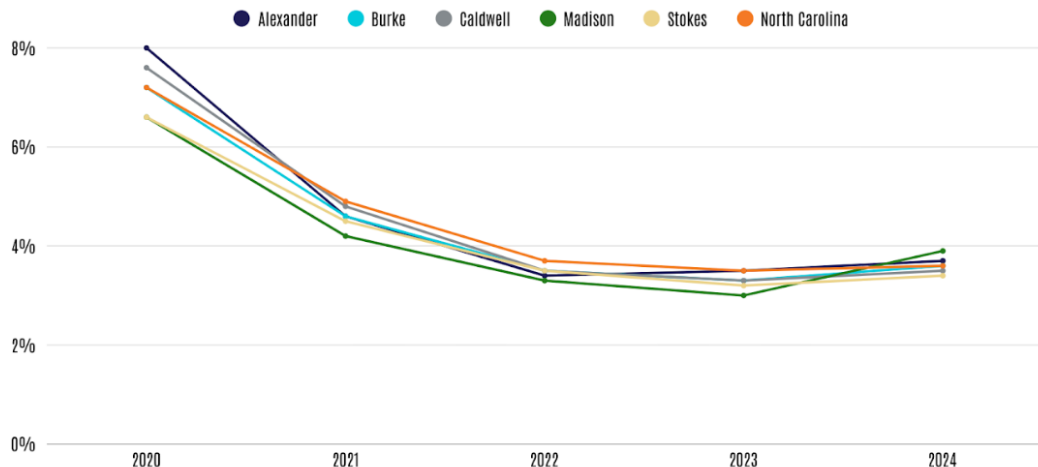
Education

- There are twelve public schools throughout Alexander County including the Alexander Early College. Alexander County Head Start and NC Pre-K Programs serve approximately 145 preschool children. Throughout the county there are nine NC Pre-K classrooms. The sites that serve these children include: Bethlehem Elementary, Wittenburg Elementary, Hiddenite Elementary, Taylorsville Elementary, and Stony Point Elementary.²¹
- In collaboration with Alexander Central High School and CVCC, there is an Alexander Early College Program for high school students at the CVCC satellite campus in Alexander County. Alexander Central High School also has an alternative learning program, the Student Success Center. CVCC satellite campus provides classes for adult learners. Alexander Christian Academy, a private institution has two locations in Hiddenite and Bethlehem of North Carolina. Millersville Christian Academy opened in the fall of 2018 and is located in Taylorsville, North Carolina.
- The Alexander County high school graduation rate between the years 2020-2021 was 86.9% compared to North Carolina at 87.6%. However, 14% of Alexander County Residents aged 25 and older do not have a High School Diploma or Equivalent, compared to 10.6% in NC. Student language proficiency scores in Alexander County tested above the State average.²⁶
- 15.3% of Alexander County’s population 25 years and older between the years of 2017-2021 have a Bachelor’s degree or higher compared to North Carolina at 33.9%.²⁴

Unemployment

The Covid-19 Pandemic that started in late 2019 drastically affected Alexander County. There existed a significant increase in unemployment for 2020, not only in Alexander County, but in peer counties as well. The unemployment rate reported in 2021 was 5.8%. That number decreased to 4.3% for 2023 following the conclusion of the pandemic.²⁷ ACS 5-year unemployment rate for Alexander County was 5.58%, slightly higher than the state at 5.08%.³² The peer counties included in this graph are

Unemployment Rates (2020-2023)
not seasonally adjusted



Burke County, Caldwell County, Madison County, and Stokes County. Given the data provided you can see that even though Alexander County has struggled like the rest of the nation, we have maintained a lower or equal unemployment rate to the surrounding peer counties.

Poverty

Poverty and health are interrelated. Poverty is considered a key determinant of health because families and individuals who struggle financially often struggle with poor environmental conditions, low education attainment, financial barriers in accessing health services, and a lack of resources necessary to maintain good health status.

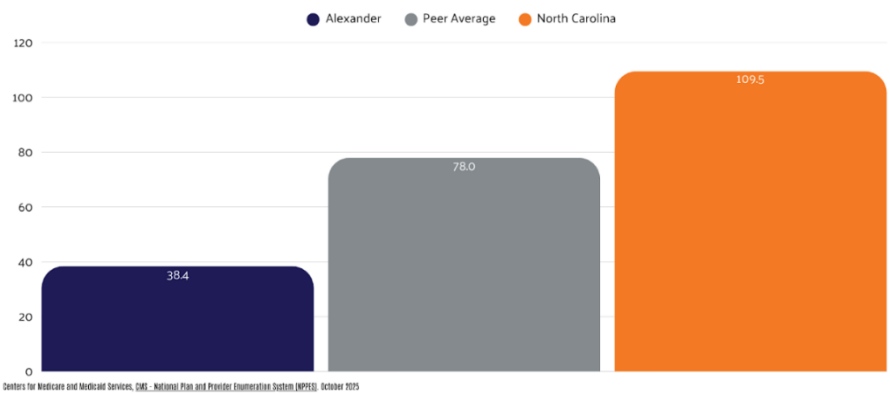
- In 2021, 13.8% of people in Alexander County reported incomes below the United States poverty level. North Carolina’s poverty level is 12.8%.²⁸
- Food insecurity rate in Alexander County for 2023 was 14.9% which is slightly higher than the state at 14%.²⁸

Access to Health Care

Alexander County is a medically underserved community. There exists a shortage of medical care providers in all medical areas. The ratio of health care providers to citizens in Alexander County compared to the state average is listed in the chart below. Alexander County does not have a hospital in the county, and there existed only one urgent care served after hour health needs through 8:30pm.²³ This urgent care is not currently available due to facility changes. However, People’s Drug is currently offering an Express Care for after hours and on weekends, and the Alexander County BOCC has agreed to authorize a building reuse grant to assist the urgent care in relocating. The figure above represents the shortage of Primary Care Providers in Alexander County, showing us significantly behind both the state and peer counties.

Primary Care Providers - 2025

Rate per 100,000



2024 Health Professionals per 10,000 Population

Profession	Alexander County	North Carolina
Primary Care Physicians	2.5	7.5
Physician’s Assistant	1.7	8.8
Nurse Practitioners	4.7	12.5
Dentist	1.9	5.7
Pharmacists	6.6	11.0
Registered Nurse	39.8	109
Psychologists	0.3	2.2
Optometrists	0.3	1.2
Physical Therapy	2.2	7.2
Occupational Therapists	3.3	4.5

Environmental Issues

Currently, public water services are an issue in Alexander County because it is not available in all areas of the county. There is a proposed water expansion to expand public water service in order to help better serve the citizens of Alexander County as federal funding allows. Funding was awarded to Alexander County from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to develop plans for additional water lines to achieve these goals. In November 2024, Commissioners approved a bid for the Bethlehem water tank. The BOCC awarded the project to Locke-Lane Construction of Stony Point, which submitted the low bid of \$4,758,200. The total project cost is \$6,813,600, which includes a 750,000-gallon elevated water tank, 1,110 linear feet of water lines, a future pump station, planning and design, and engineering. The majority of the project will be funded by state grants totaling \$4,648,248.¹⁹ For more information regarding water quality, see the most recent water quality report.²

The Environmental Health Division at Alexander County Health Department provides various services such as: conducting food and lodging inspections, inspections/permitting wastewater systems, testing/inspections of private water wells, along with a variety of other services to keep the residents of Alexander County safe. The Environmental Health Department conducted 347 food and lodging inspections during the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Decrease in Fatal Overdoses

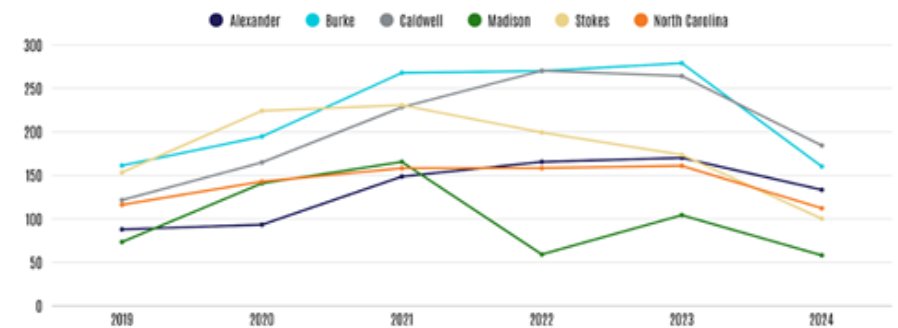
Across the United States, fatal overdoses have been a major concern for over a decade. Alexander County saw a record low for Overdoses in 2025, potentially as a result of the establishment of the Alexander County Post Overdose Response Team (PORT) as developed and planned by the Substance Use Disorder Coalition under the Alexander County Health Department. This team was developed utilizing Opioid Settlement Funds, and began working in the community in October of 2023 alongside the efforts of the health department to provide free drug prevention education in churches and schools.

With the new CHA priorities, the SUD Coalition is now housed under AC PORT/EMS and was renamed SUPPORT. This program is housed under Alexander County EMS and has grown to have:

- 2 community paramedics
- 1 full time peer-support
- 1 part-time peer-support
- 2 volunteer peer-supports

Overdose ED Visits

Rate per 100,000



Statistics represent a significant decline in rates of overdose and fatal overdoses for Alexander County since the implementation of this program, and with the increase of the availability of Narcan.

Renovated Bethlehem Park

Alexander County renovated the Bethlehem Park in 2025. Improvements at Bethlehem Park include a new 30×96-foot picnic building, which represents a significant upgrade from the previous structure. The new building features double the number of restrooms, a new kitchen area, two serving windows, and picnic areas on both sides. Other amenities include a new playground, conversion of two tennis courts to six pickleball courts, half-court basketball play areas, new lighting with steel poles and LED lights, conversion of the large baseball field to a soccer field, new baseball/softball batting cages, new ADA sidewalks and entry, parking lot resurfacing, drainage improvements, and more. The new playground features areas for ages 0-5 and 5-12, including swings, slides, sensory areas, nature features, and more. Having safe places for families to go and share in physical activity and fun is important for healthy living, mental health, and community. We hope Alexander County can continue to enhance these free, public spaces.



AREAS OF CONCERN

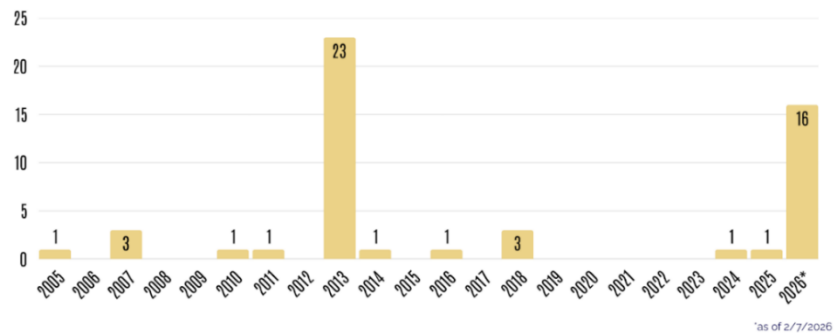
Measles

There has been a growing concern surrounding vaccination rates across the United States since the previous CHA, with an increase in vaccine preventable communicable diseases.³⁰ Prior to 2019, Measles cases remained consistently around 200 or less per year, with steady vaccination rates for school-aged children.³⁰

In 2025, the United States saw the highest rate of Measles cases, since 1993, with 93% of 2,144 infected individuals having unknown or unvaccinated status.³⁰

Alexander County has a 94% vaccination status for the 2024 school year, approximately 2% higher than the state rate, while a minimum of 94% vaccination is recommended.³¹

Number of Statewide Measles Cases



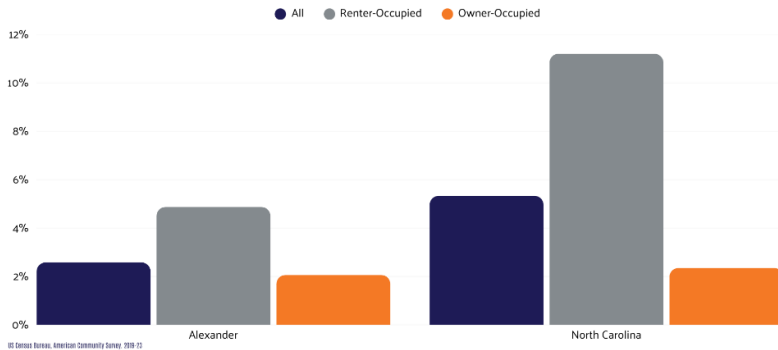
Alexander County has been fortunate to not have any confirmed Measles cases in the county or surrounding counties. The Alexander County Epi Team, state and regional partners, and surrounding counties, are preparing and monitoring the Measles situation. The health department also operates an Immunization Clinic, which encourages and provides recommended vaccines.

Transportation

Transportation has been and continues to be a major concern in Alexander County. We are a rural county, with no hospital, limited resources, and the only sources of transportation for individuals with no vehicle are Greenway Transportation Services, friends and family members, or PORT for eligible participants. This can be difficult when individuals have appointments in surrounding counties. Data indicates that only 2.8% of homes

do not have a motor vehicle.²⁸ However, the majority of homes in Alexander County are occupied by at least 2 working adults. There are many individuals who walk to and from work each day to make a living because of the Greenway wait times or family members and friends are busy. Alexander County Health Department has reached out to Greenway and they are attending meetings to see how they could be of better service to Alexander County Residents.

Households with No Vehicle

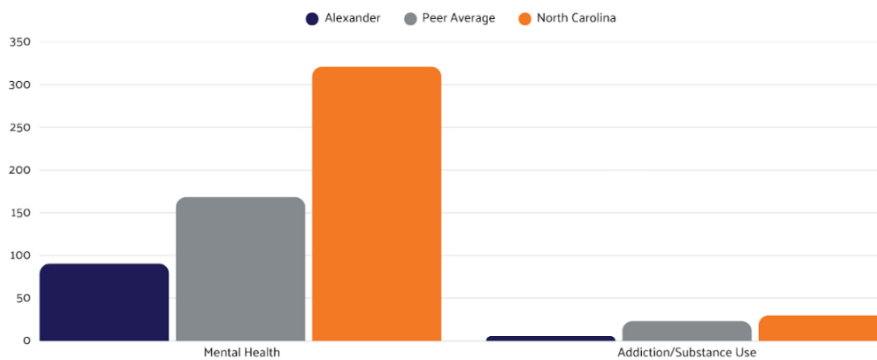


AT-RISK POPULATIONS

After collecting primary and secondary data, the planning group identified the following sectors of our population that could be at risk of poor health outcomes in Alexander County. This data is similar to the 2018 and 2022 CHA as we are a rural community with limited access and limited resources to offer to individuals. However, those with substance use have been removed from this list due to the introduction and work performed by the Alexander County PORT and former SUD Coalition.

Provider Types & Availability - 2025

Rate per 100,000



Adults and Children in need of Mental Health Services:

Alexander County has limited mental health services that are available to residents. Currently, individuals have to seek services outside of the county. We can refer individuals to RHA within county if necessary.

The figure on the previous page indicates Alexander County is behind both peer counties and the state in terms of Mental Health and Addiction/Substance Use providers.

Low-income/Uninsured: Alexander County Health Department does not currently have the Rural Health Grant. Therefore, individuals who are uninsured or have a low income can still be seen for primary care services. However, they have to pay a minimum of 40% based on our sliding scale fees. If individuals cannot afford that, we will refer them to Catawba Valley Family Medicine in Taylorsville, NC to be seen because they have the Rural Health Grant and can serve those individuals. If individuals need more in-depth medical care, they could be referred to an adjacent county for additional care, which can create transportation issues, issues for individuals having to ask off work, etc.

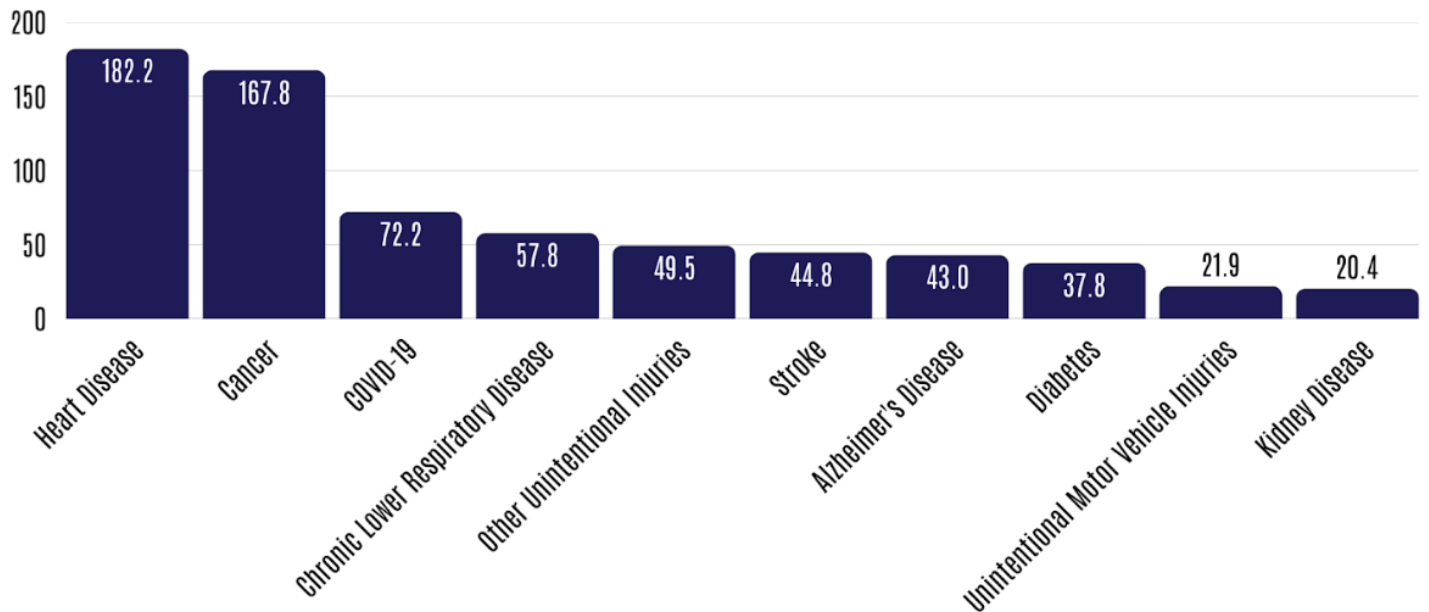
Non-English Speaking: Accessing health care can be a challenge for non-English speaking residents in Alexander County. Alexander County Health Department now has a full time Spanish Interpreter available for all health department services. We also have a dial-in service that can allow providers at the health department to call when in need of translation services for other languages. Although the Health Department has translation options, other providers within the community may not and this can be a challenge for individuals when they are being referred to a different healthcare provider.

MORTALITY AND MORIDITY INFORMATION

The NC Center for Health Statistics reports the top ten causes for death for each county annually. Alexander County’s top ten causes of death shows that diseases of the heart and cancer are ranked the highest as seen in prior CHA reports. This was the case for the 2018 and 2022 CHA data, as well as years past. Similar data has been consistent for years.³²

Top Ten Leading Causes of Death (2019-2023)

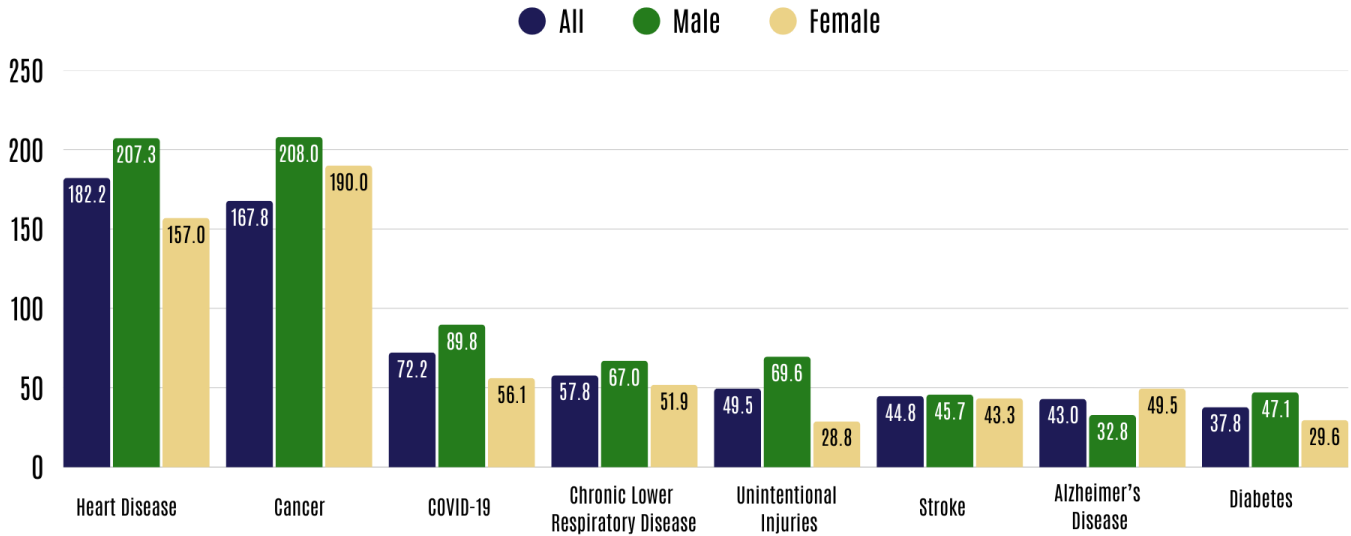
Age-adjusted rate per 100,000



The chart below details leading causes of death in Alexander County for 2019-2023 averaged per the State Center for Health Statistics by gender.³²

Leading Causes of Death by Gender (2019-2023)

Age-adjusted rate per 100,000



OVERVIEW

The three leading causes of death have not changed over time; however, they may vary in the spot they hold. Cancer, Diseases of the Heart, COVID-19, Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease, Unintentional Injuries, and Alzheimer’s disease are the leading causes of disease death in Alexander County. The leading cause of death in Alexander County for the 2019-2023 average is Diseases of the Heart. Diabetes is now in the top ten leading causes of death, which differs from the 2018 and 2022 CHA reports.

Positive Trends

- Septicemia, homicide, and intentional self-harm (suicide) did not make the top ten leading causes of death in Alexander County for 2019-2023.¹³

Areas of Improvement

- Heart disease and cancer remain the leading causes of death.
- Assault and homicide have not made the list for the top eight causes of death in Alexander County for the 2019-2023 average.
- Diabetes continues to be a concern for the county considering the continuous increase in number of related deaths.

CANCER

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Alexander County and the number one leading cause of death in North Carolina. There are five main types of cancer that are responsible for the majority of deaths: Lung/Bronchus, Female Breast, Pancreatic, Prostate, and Colon/Rectum Cancers.³³ There are many risk factors associated with these cancers such as smoking/tobacco use, sun exposure, and genetics, just to name a few, while other causes of cancer continue to remain unknown.¹

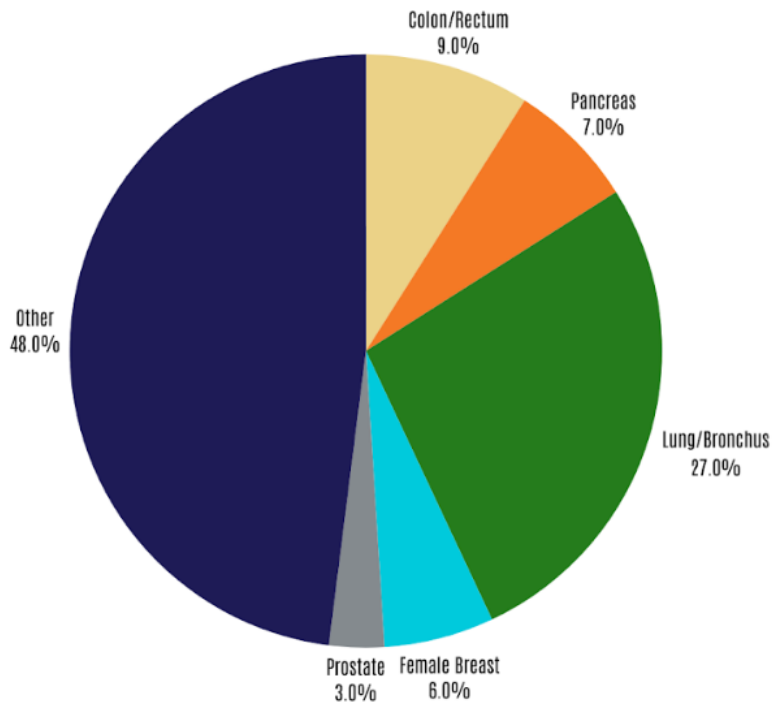
In the Community Health Assessment, we asked if survey takers used tobacco products. We received 825 total respondents, out of these responses:

- 97 confirmed tobacco usage
- 47 confirmed electronic cigarettes usage

E-cigarettes contain tobacco products. This expresses that the general population misunderstands these devices and the potential harms.

For certain types of cancer there are vaccines made available. For example, Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine is made available at the Alexander County Health Department and can help prevent certain types of cervical cancer. The health department works to promote the vaccine and education of HPV. Early detection of cancer is very important when it comes to survivability, therefore, the Alexander County Health Department will continue to promote early detection screenings. The Alexander County SUPPORT Coalition will continue to advocate for the community, promoting anti-vaping and tobacco use campaigns in the schools, around the community, and on social media. This is in the hopes of raising awareness of the effects and dangers of vaping and tobacco use.

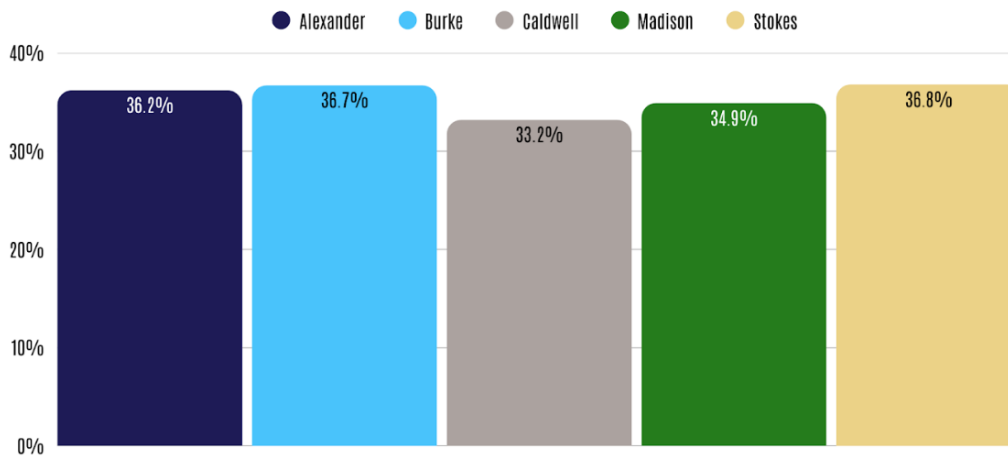
Cancer Deaths by Site (2023)



OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY

Obesity is an underlying cause and contributing factor to many diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, stroke, and cancers, which is the second leading cause of death in Alexander County. Obesity in the United States of America, and in North Carolina, has continued to increase over the years. As of 2023, Alexander County surpassed the North Carolina rate for adult obesity.³⁴

Adult Obesity (2023)



When asked on the 2025 CHA Survey, “Which of the following health conditions do you currently have?” overweight and obesity were the most commonly selected choices.

According to the Community Health Assessment respondents, 36% of Alexander County residents stated that they were overweight or obese.

In addition to this, 24% of residents said they did not consume servings of fruits and vegetables in a day as they are too expensive where they shop. A total of 15% of survey respondents stated that they did not engage in any exercise that lasts at least half an hour during a normal work week, which is a significant improvement from the 50% in the 2022 CHA.

HEALTH DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Residents of Alexander County were encouraged to complete the Community Health Assessment Survey from February 2025 through July 2025. The survey was available to residents in electronic and hard copy formats, distributed throughout the community, and was created in both English and Spanish to collect a variety of feedback. The survey was published in the Taylorsville Times and advertised on our local radio station, WACB 860AM, in order to increase the number of survey respondents. County staff (for completion and distribution to their contacts), a random sample of Health Department clients, the public at various community events, and at various community meetings. A link to the survey was available to the public on alexanderhealth.org (health department webpage), as well as health department social media outlets.

1,101 completed surveys were collected, analyzed, and presented to the Healthy Alexandrian Task Force and Advisory Board for their consideration. Survey answers were obtained anonymously, and protected through software. Personally identifying information was collected and used in the assessment process.

Demographic information of respondents is included on the following page. The Alexander County Health Department works diligently each CHA cycle to survey a diverse set of individuals that accurately represents our community. A breakdown of all survey responses is available in Appendix A, found later in this document.

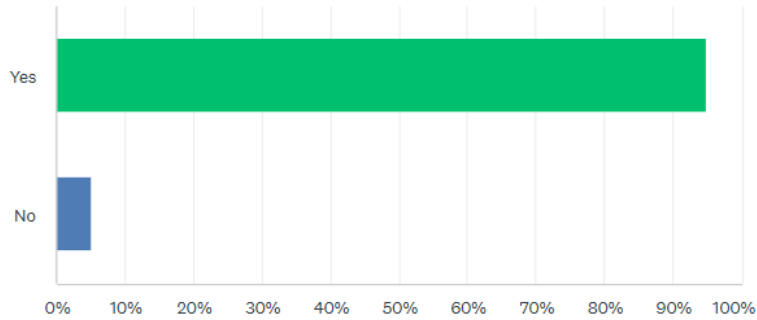
SURVEY RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Q1

Customize Export

Do you live in Alexander County?

Answered: 1,160 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	94.91%	1,101
No	5.09%	59
TOTAL		1,160

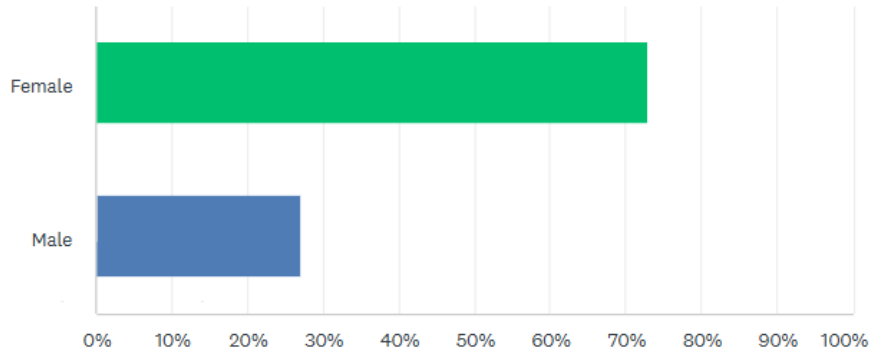
Surveys were distributed throughout the community where there was the potential for individuals who do not live in the county to complete the survey. The question was asked to ensure that respondents were residents of Alexander County. The survey was designed to filter out all non-resident responses. Individuals who answered ‘No’ to this question were forwarded to survey completion, and did not answer any more questions on the CHA Primary Tool.

Q4

☐☐+
Customize
Export ▾

Which gender do you most identify with?

Answered: 1,072 Skipped: 88

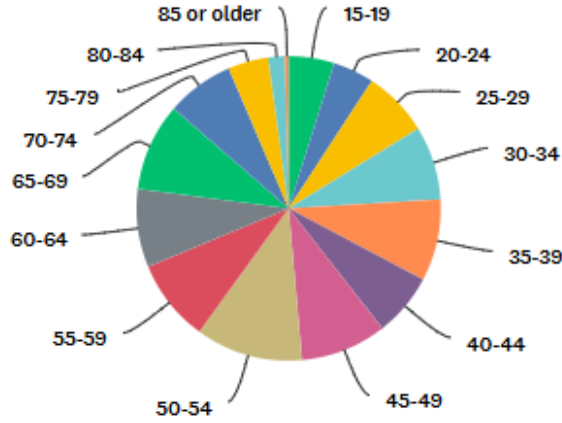


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Female	72.95% 782
Male	27.05% 290
TOTAL	1,072

The Alexander County Health Department received more male responses in the 2025 CHA than from any prior CHA survey. However, male responses to the 2025 CHA survey were lower than female. We will strive to obtain more male input going forward and supplement with Male Focus Groups when possible.

What is your age? (Choose one)

Answered: 1,072 Skipped: 88

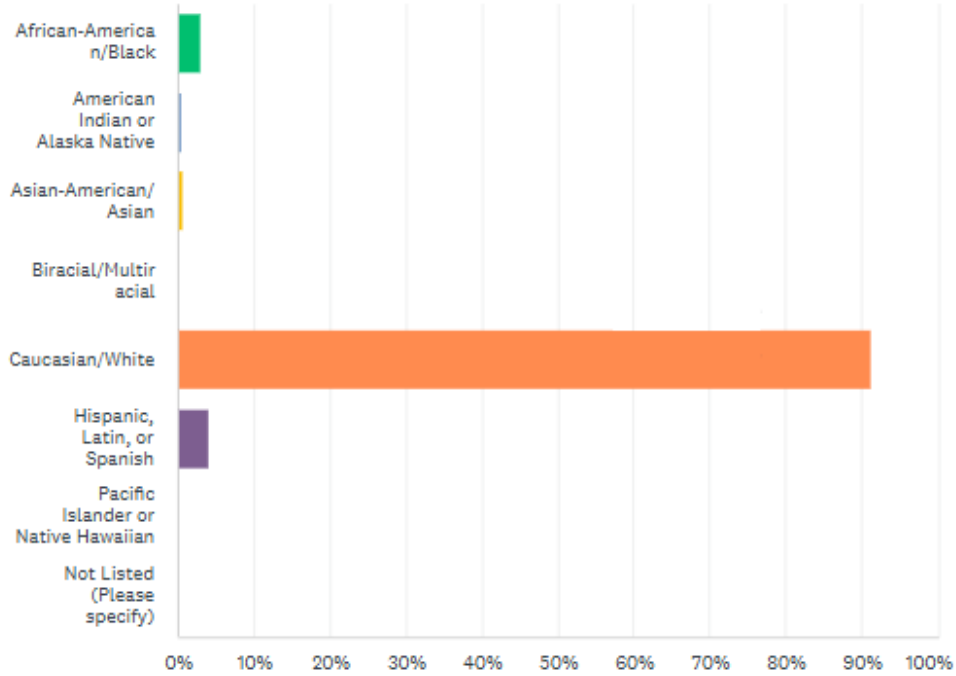


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
15-19	4.85% 52
20-24	4.38% 47
25-29	7.00% 75
30-34	7.84% 84
35-39	8.68% 93
40-44	6.72% 72
45-49	9.14% 98
50-54	11.38% 122
55-59	8.77% 94
60-64	8.30% 89
65-69	9.33% 100
70-74	7.18% 77
75-79	4.29% 46
80-84	1.77% 19
85 or older	0.37% 4
TOTAL	1,072

There was a vast representation of age breakdown in respondents that accurately represented the true demographics of Alexander County.

Which race or ethnicity do you most identify with? (Choose one)

Answered: 1,072 Skipped: 88

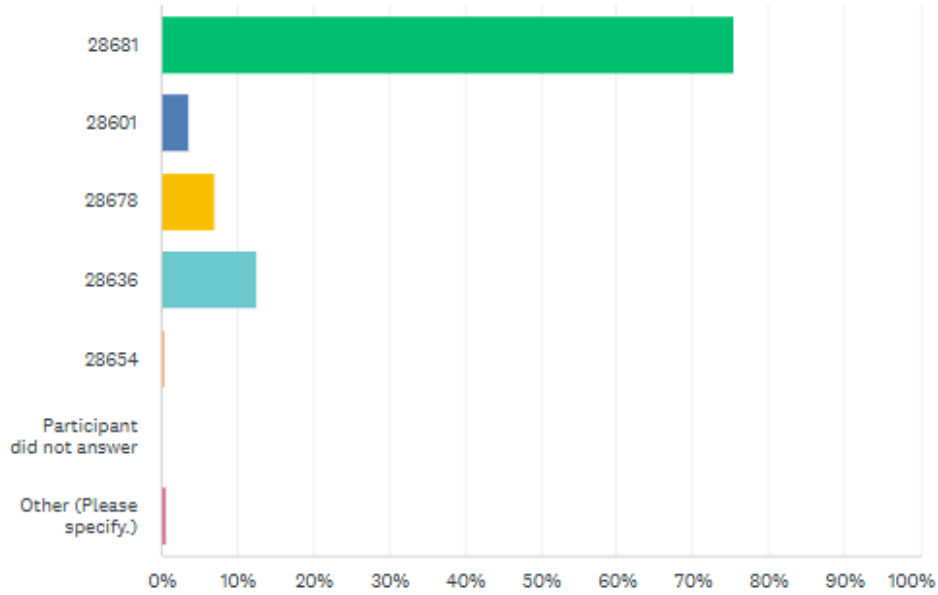


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ African-American/Black	3.08% 33
▼ American Indian or Alaska Native	0.47% 5
▼ Asian-American/Asian	0.65% 7
▼ Biracial/Multiracial	0.19% 2
▼ Caucasian/White	91.32% 979
▼ Hispanic, Latin, or Spanish	4.01% 43
▼ Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian	0.00% 0
▼ Not Listed (Please specify)	Responses 0.28% 3
TOTAL	1,072

There was a vast representation of race/ethnicity breakdown in respondents that accurately represented the true demographics of Alexander County.

In what ZIP code is your home located? (Enter your 5-digit ZIP if not listed)

Answered: 1,072 Skipped: 88



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
28681	75.56% 810
28601	3.73% 40
28678	7.00% 76
28636	12.69% 136
28654	0.47% 5
Participant did not answer	0.00% 0
Other (Please specify.)	Responses 0.56% 6
TOTAL	1,072

PRIORITY SELECTION

The priority selection for this process was completed through a partnership between Alexander County Health Department staff, Healthy Alexandrian Task Force Members, community respondents, and the Alexander County Health Advisory Board members. The Healthy Alexandrians Task Force and the Advisory Board reviewed all compiled secondary data to begin initial priority selection. Task force members then reviewed CHA data along with additional secondary data from DellaRe Consulting at the September 2025 Healthy Alexandrians meeting. Task force members voted on the following areas of focus after the September 2025 meeting via email:

Access to Care, Mental Health, Substance Use, and Healthy Living.

The Hanlon Method was then utilized at the October 2025 Healthy Alexandrians meeting to officially select the top two priorities for the 2025 CHA.

1. Mental Health
2. Healthy Living

The Healthy Alexandrian Task Force then worked to identify resources that were currently available in the community to address the top identified priorities. Resources and agencies assisting in the action phase for each priority area include:

MENTAL HEALTH: Vaya Health, RHA Behavioral Health, ACHD Behavioral Health Clinic, school counselors, churches, media outlets (mental health campaigns/education), counseling and support associates, local medical providers, law enforcement, Pre-Trial Release.

HEALTHY LIVING: YMCA, walking trails, churches (what is available to the public to use, gyms), schools (walking tracks), Rocky Face Mountain Recreation Area, educational media campaigns through media outlets, local parks, courthouse park, Partnership for Children, health department, school counselors, EMS, Cooperative Extension, Alexander County Parks and Recreation, local farmers markets/apple orchards, Med South and Med Instead Program.

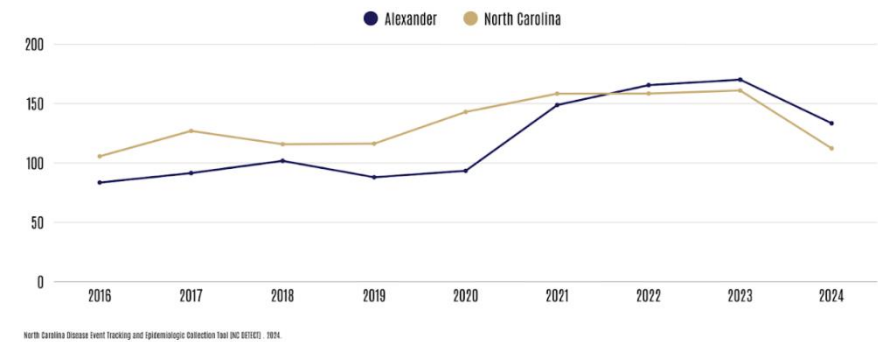
COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

For the 2022 Community Health Assessment, the priorities chosen were Mental Health, Substance Use, Elder Care, Childcare and Parenting, and Healthy Living. For the 2025 CHA, similar priorities were chosen, with some removed due to improvements in data, potentially as a result of programming.

The Health Department has collaborated with other community agencies to continue to address these needs and priorities of the community. The chart to the right shows a decline in overdose (OD) Emergency Department visits, resulting in the removal of SUD as a CHA priority.

Overdose ED Visits

Rate per 100,000

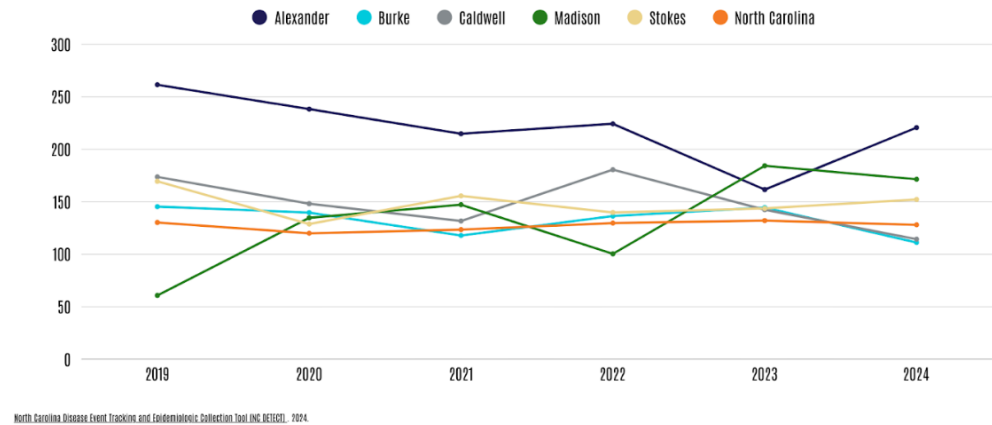


MENTAL HEALTH

One of the priority areas chosen for this Community Health Assessment was Mental Health. Mental Health has been a priority since the 2014 CHA and has consecutively been the topic of conversation in meetings and around the community. The Alexander County Child Collaborative and Healthy Alexandrian Task Force plan to work closely together to

Emergency Department Visits Related to Suicide/Self Harm

Rate per 100,000



address mental health. Currently, Alexander County has RHA Behavioral Health Services to offer for individuals, Peer Support Counseling Associates, the PORT program coordinating with CASA Counseling, and the health department is working on hiring a LCSW for the Behavioral Health Program who will be able to serve any employee and the community, as necessary. Vaya Health is also very involved in meetings and in the community regarding mental health. They assist and provide resources when and where available. The AC Community Paramedic Program has paramedics that respond to opioid calls, but can also respond to any mental health calls that are received. The Alexander County Child Collaborative is working on coordinating a crisis response team for early intervention for youth and adults. The chart above represents Alexander County Suicide/Self-Harm visits to the ED, with comparison to peer counties. Note the increase in visits from 2023-2024.

HEALTHY LIVING

Living a healthy life is key to better health outcomes, quality of life, and the health of the overall community. Healthy Living was another priority selected by the task force. This topic was selected to enhance the community’s overall health and well-being and has continued to be a priority since the 2022 CHA. The Alexander County Health Department plans to investigate areas within the community such as churches, parks, schools, etc. that already have existing space available for the public to use at little to no cost. This will be used to advertise local and safe areas within each community so that it may be more accessible to residents who do not want to pay or drive very far in order to maintain their health and physical activity.

Farmers markets will continue to be promoted in the county offering fresh fruits and vegetables to the community as our residents have indicated that access to healthy foods is difficult (see Figure 1).

Access to Food in Alexander County

Low Income Population with Low Food Access - 2019

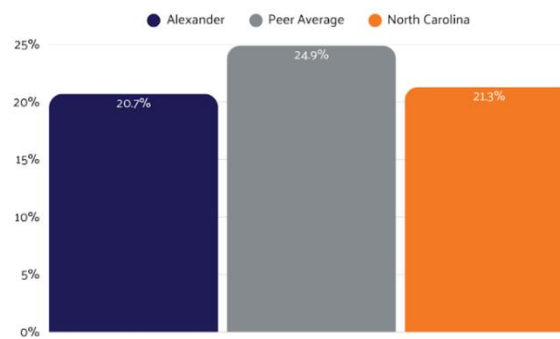


Figure 1

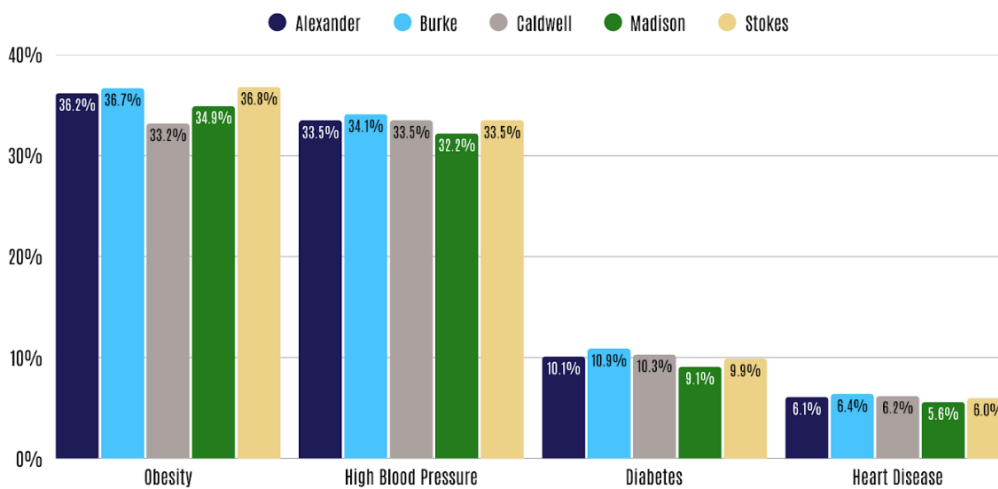
24.4% of survey respondents indicated that the cost of fresh fruits and vegetables was a barrier.

Currently, the Alexander County Health Department has a Health Educator position that individually goes around the community. The Health Educator teaches about various health topics, services offered by the health department, and whom those services are available to within the community and in schools. There are many diet-related chronic conditions that can be mitigated through proper nutrition and exercise habits (see Figure 2).

Alexander County has various food pantries and a soup kitchen that offers healthy meals to the public and a Women, Infants, Children (WIC) program serving the health department so there is an access to healthier food

Diet-Related Chronic Conditions Age-Adjusted Prevalence (2023)

Figure 2

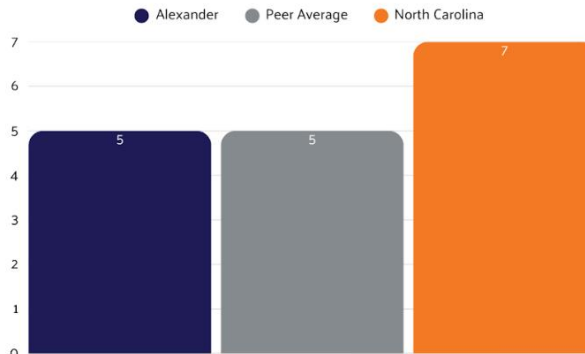


options. WIC also offers breastfeeding support and education for mothers and expectant mothers. The Alexander County Health Department also plans to continue the partnership with Cooperative Extension to provide free or low-cost education on nutrition to the community, potentially targeting the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population.

Rocky Face Park in Alexander County is open to the public and provides a variety of outdoor physical activity opportunities such as the vertical mile challenge. Alexander County has a low walkability score, on par with peer counties, making it difficult for residents to obtain the recommended requirement for daily physical activity.

Physical Activity in Alexander County

Walkability Index Score (1-20) - 2021



Environmental Protection Agency, EPA - Smart Location Database, 2021.

23% of adults reported no leisure-time physical activity in 2022.

15.2% of survey respondents indicated they don't exercise because they're too tired and **10.4%** don't have the time.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Alexander County Health Department would like to thank the following agencies for their contributions during the 2025 Community Health Assessment process. These agencies bring extensive knowledge and continually support the health and well-being of Alexander County residents. Without the combined efforts, this assessment process would not have been possible.

Healthy Alexandrians Task Force

Alexander County CHA Leadership Team

Board of Health/Board of County Commissioners

Consolidated Human Services Advisory Board

Alexander County Government

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APPENDIX A

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESPONDENT DATA

Q1

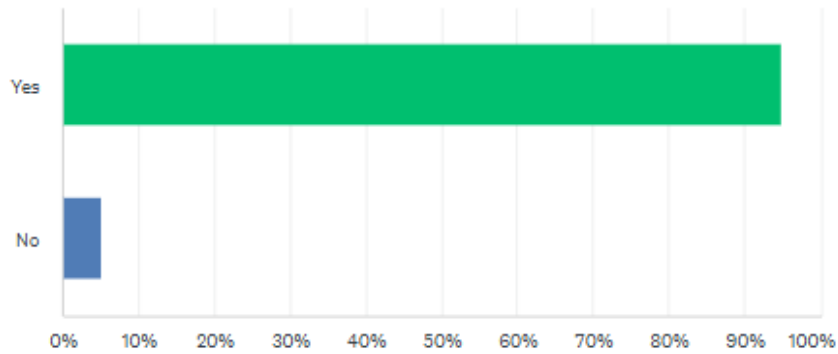


Customize

Export

Do you live in Alexander County?

Answered: 1,160 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	94.91% 1,101
No	5.09% 59
TOTAL	1,160

Q2

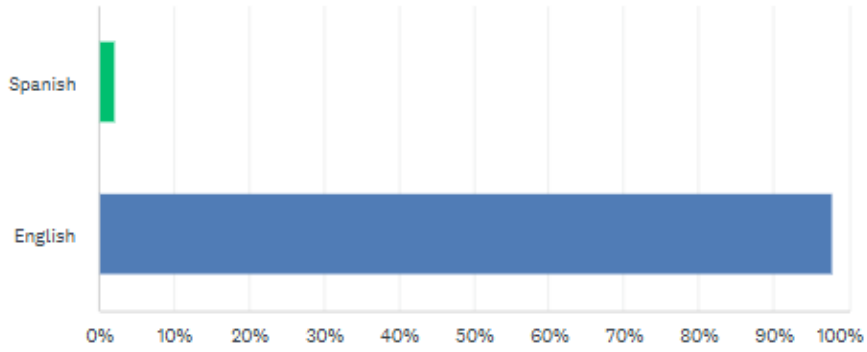


Customize

Export

Which language have you chosen to respond to this survey with?

Answered: 1,072 Skipped: 88



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Spanish	2.05% 22
English	97.95% 1,060
TOTAL	1,072

Q3

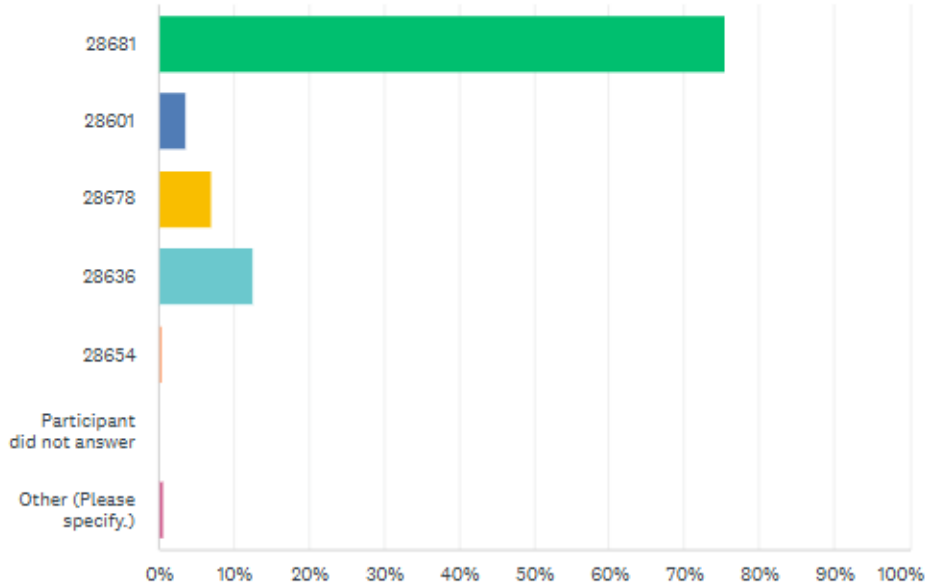


Customize

Export

In what ZIP code is your home located? (Enter your 5-digit ZIP if not listed)

Answered: 1,072 Skipped: 88



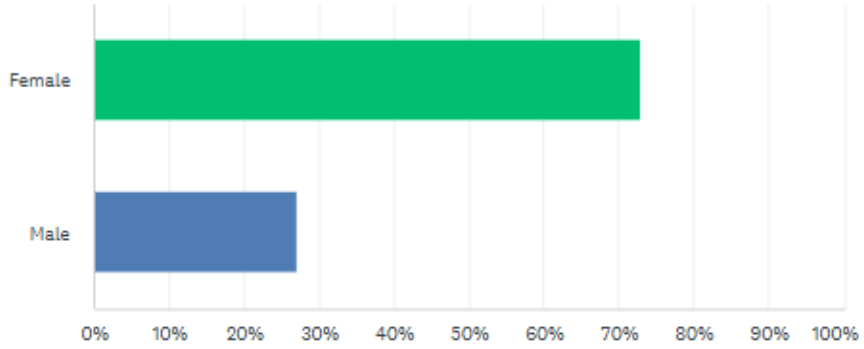
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
28681	75.56% 810
28601	3.73% 40
28678	7.00% 75
28636	12.69% 136
28654	0.47% 5
Participant did not answer	0.00% 0
Other (Please specify.)	0.56% 6
TOTAL	1,072

Q4

Customize Export

Which gender do you most identify with?

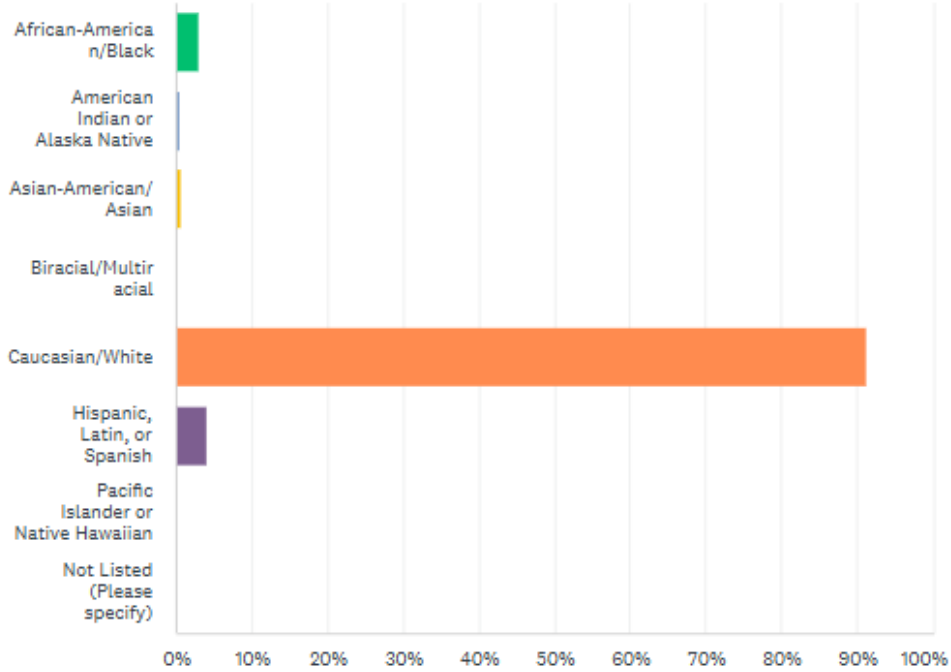
Answered: 1,072 Skipped: 88



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Female	72.95% 782
Male	27.05% 290
TOTAL	1,072

Which race or ethnicity do you most identify with? (Choose one)

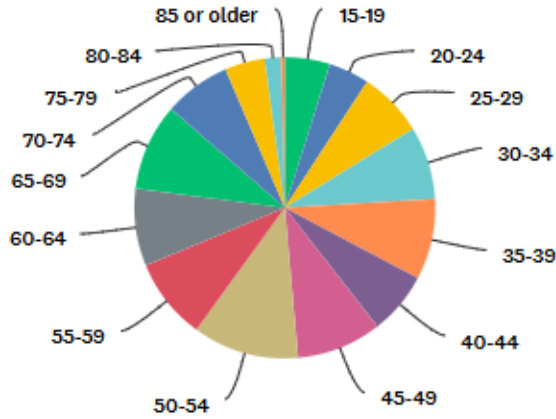
Answered: 1,072 Skipped: 88



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ African-American/Black	3.08% 33
▼ American Indian or Alaska Native	0.47% 6
▼ Asian-American/Asian	0.65% 7
▼ Biracial/Multiracial	0.19% 2
▼ Caucasian/White	91.32% 979
▼ Hispanic, Latin, or Spanish	4.01% 43
▼ Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian	0.00% 0
▼ Not Listed (Please specify)	Responses 0.28% 3
TOTAL	1,072

What is your age? (Choose one)

Answered: 1,072 Skipped: 88



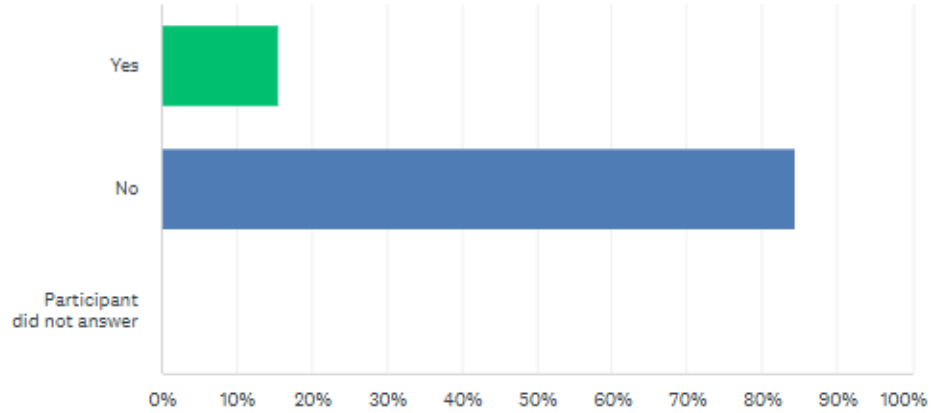
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
15-19	4.85% 82
20-24	4.38% 47
25-29	7.00% 76
30-34	7.84% 84
35-39	8.68% 93
40-44	6.72% 72
45-49	9.14% 98
50-54	11.38% 122
55-59	8.77% 94
60-64	8.30% 89
65-69	9.33% 100
70-74	7.18% 77
75-79	4.29% 46
80-84	1.77% 19
85 or older	0.37% 4
TOTAL	1,072

Q7

Customize Export

Do you have a parent/guardian that misuses substances and/or drugs?

Answered: 90 Skipped: 1,070



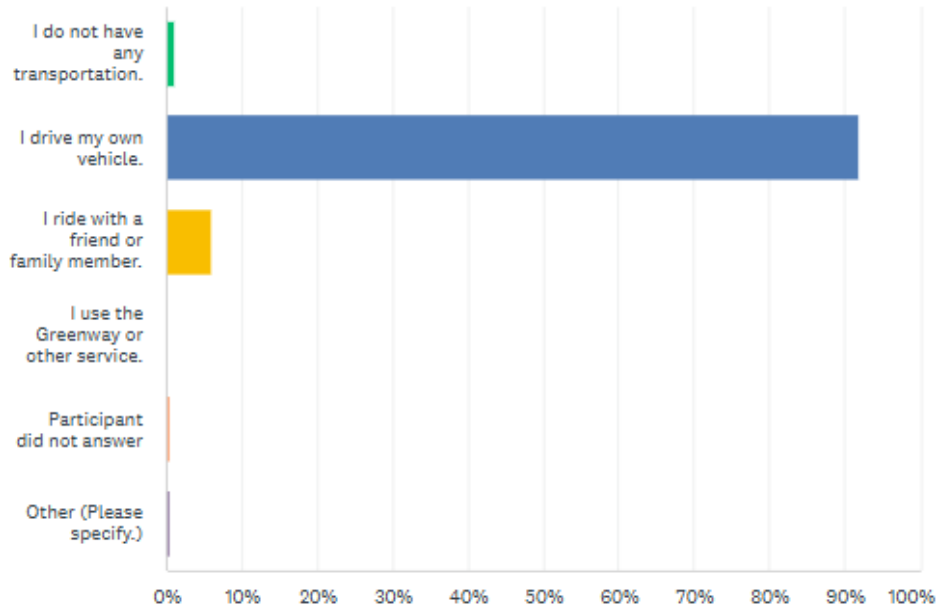
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	15.56% 14
No	84.44% 76
Participant did not answer	0.00% 0
TOTAL	90

Q8

Customize Export

What is your main source of transportation?

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



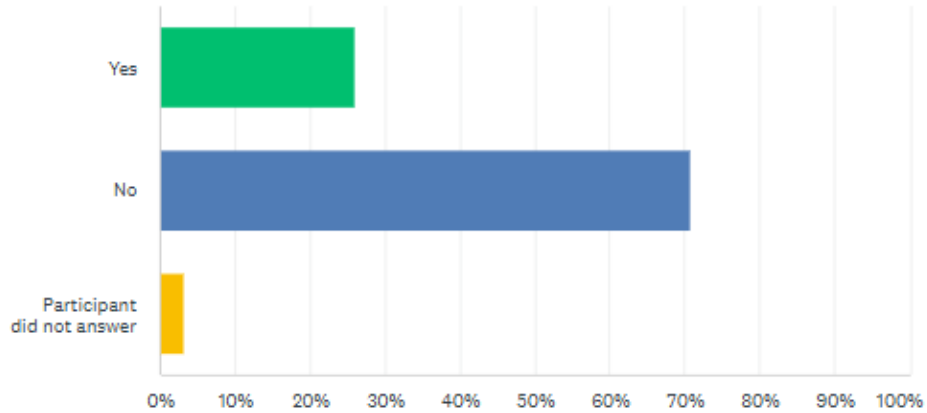
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I do not have any transportation.	0.97% 8
I drive my own vehicle.	91.88% 758
I ride with a friend or family member.	5.94% 49
I use the Greenway or other service.	0.24% 2
Participant did not answer	0.48% 4
Other (Please specify.)	Responses 0.48% 4
TOTAL	825

Q9

Customize Export

During the past 2 Years (24 months), was there a time when you needed mental health treatment or counseling?

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	26.06% 215
No	70.79% 584
Participant did not answer	3.15% 26
TOTAL	825

Q10

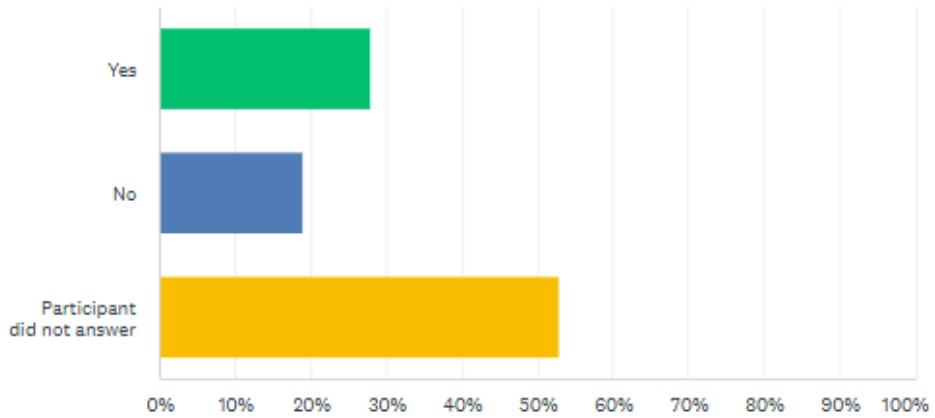


Customize

Export

If you needed mental health treatment or counseling within the past 24 months, were you able to get the help that you needed?

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



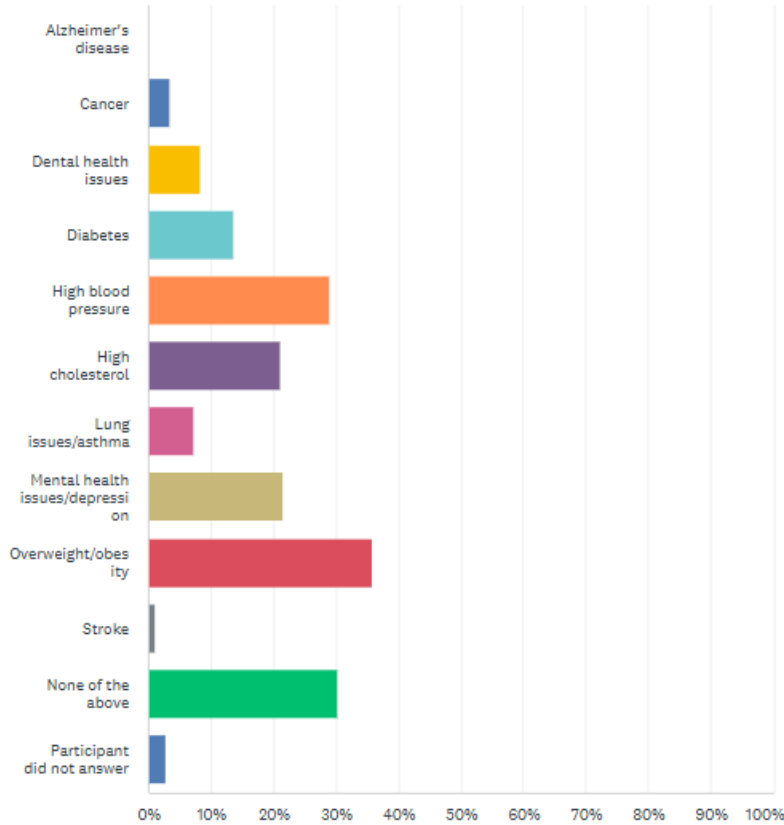
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	28.00% 231
No	19.03% 167
Participant did not answer	52.97% 437
TOTAL	825

Q11

Customize Export

Which, if any, of the following health conditions do you currently have?
(Check all that apply)

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



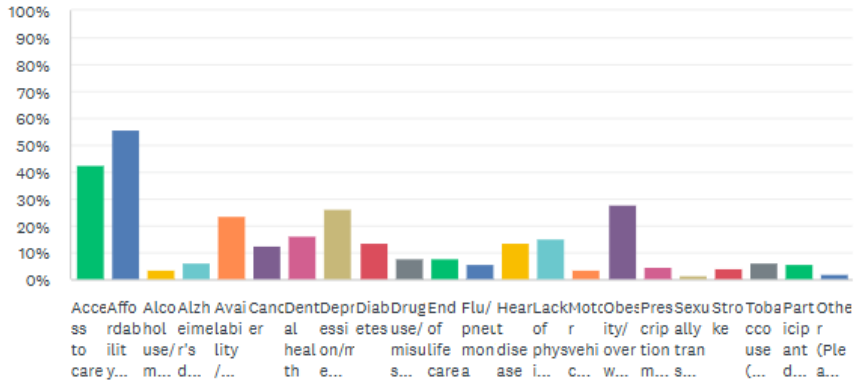
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Alzheimer's disease	0.24% 2
Cancer	3.39% 28
Dental health issues	8.36% 69
Diabetes	13.70% 113
High blood pressure	28.97% 239
High cholesterol	21.21% 176
Lung issues/asthma	7.27% 60
Mental health issues/depression	21.58% 178
Overweight/obesity	35.76% 296
Stroke	0.97% 8
None of the above	30.30% 250
Participant did not answer	2.79% 23
Total Respondents: 825	

Q12

Customize Export

Which of the following health concerns are most important to you? (Please check your top 3 concerns)

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



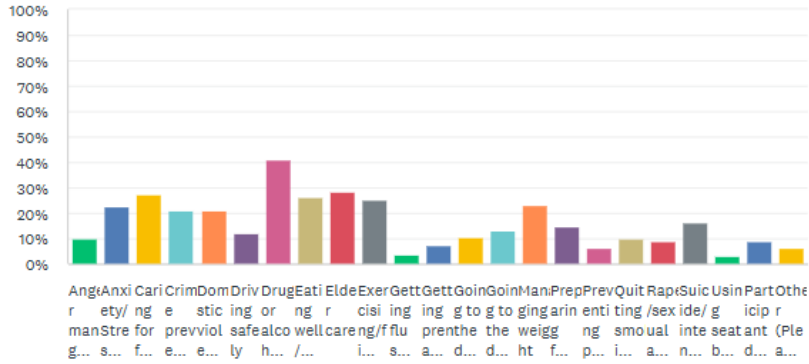
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Access to care	42.42% 350
Affordability of care	55.88% 461
Alcohol use/misuse/abuse	3.76% 31
Alzheimer's disease	6.18% 51
Availability/affordability of healthy food	23.88% 197
Cancer	12.73% 105
Dental health	16.36% 135
Depression/mental health	26.18% 216
Diabetes	13.70% 113
Drug use/misuse/abuse	8.12% 67
End of life care	7.88% 65
Flu/pneumonia	5.94% 49
Heart disease	13.82% 114
Lack of physical activity	15.27% 126
Motor vehicle injuries	3.64% 30
Obesity/overweight	27.64% 228
Prescription medication/misuse/abuse	4.61% 38
Sexually transmitted infections/diseases, HIV	1.58% 13
Stroke	4.12% 34
Tobacco use (including vapes/e-cigarettes)	6.30% 52
Participant did not answer	5.82% 48
Other (Please specify.)	Responses 2.30% 19
Total Respondents: 825	

Q13

Customize Export

Which of these areas does Alexander County need improvement? (Please choose your top 4 answers)

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



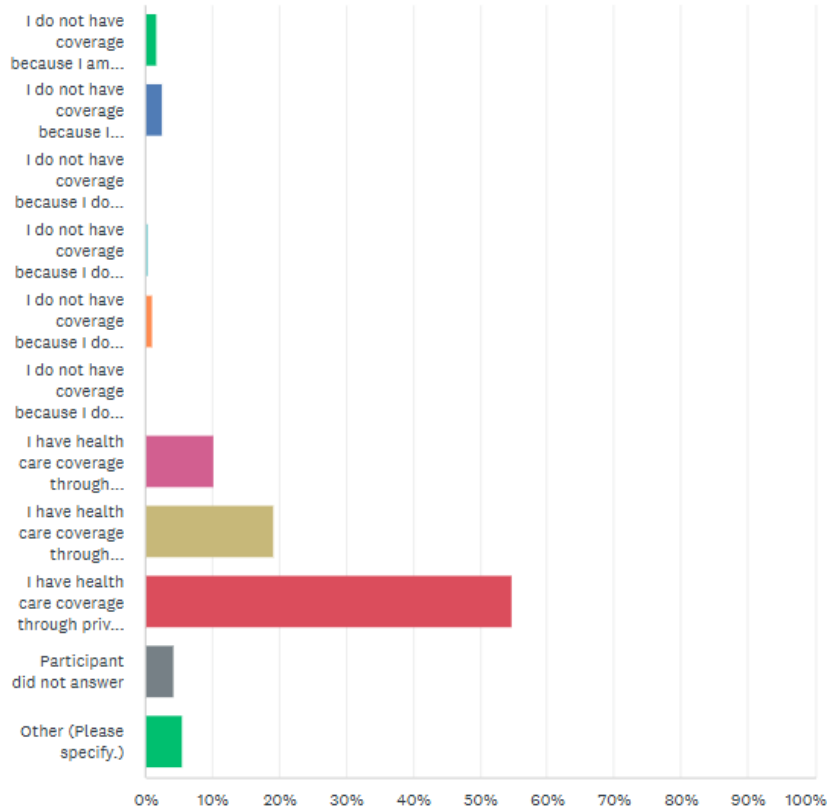
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Anger management	9.94% 82
Anxiety/Stress management	22.42% 185
Caring for family members with special needs/disabilities	27.39% 226
Crime prevention	20.85% 172
Domestic violence prevention	20.97% 173
Driving safely	12.00% 99
Drug or alcohol abuse/prevention	40.97% 338
Eating well/nutrition	26.18% 216
Elder care	28.48% 235
Exercising/fitness	25.21% 208
Getting flu shots/other vaccines	3.88% 32
Getting prenatal care during pregnancy	7.39% 61
Going to the dentist for check-ups/preventative care	10.30% 85
Going to the doctor/healthcare provider for yearly check-ups/preventative care/screenings	12.97% 107
Managing weight	23.27% 192
Preparing for an emergency/disaster	14.79% 122
Preventing pregnancy and/or sexually-transmitted infections/diseases	6.06% 50
Quitting smoking, tobacco/e-cigarette use prevention	9.82% 81
Rape/sexual abuse prevention	8.73% 72
Suicide/intentional self-harm prevention	16.12% 133
Using seat belts	3.15% 26
Participant did not answer	9.09% 75
Other (Please specify.)	Responses 6.42% 53
Total Respondents: 825	

Q14

Customize Export

What is your current situation with health care coverage? For example: private health insurance, government health plans such as Medicaid or Medicare? (Choose one)

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



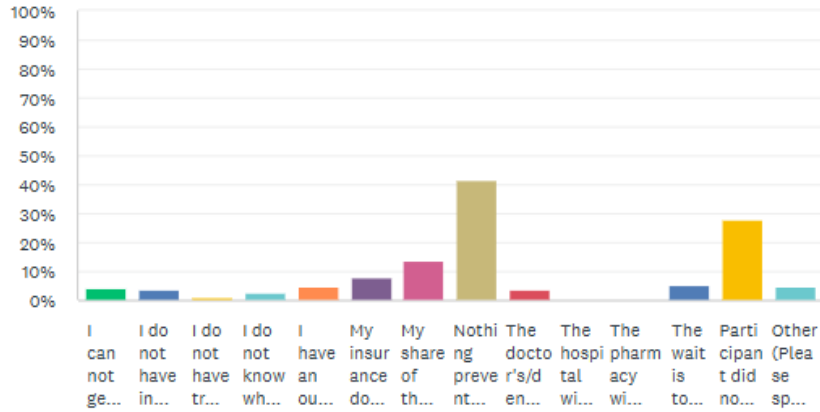
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I do not have coverage because I am unemployed.	1.70% 14
I do not have coverage because I cannot afford it.	2.55% 21
I do not have coverage because I do not know my options.	0.12% 1
I do not have coverage because I do not qualify for a government subsidy to help pay for insurance.	0.36% 3
I do not have coverage because I do not qualify for Medicaid or Medicare.	1.09% 9
I do not have coverage because I do not want it.	0.12% 1
I have health care coverage through Medicaid.	10.18% 84
I have health care coverage through Medicare.	19.27% 159
I have health care coverage through private insurance.	54.79% 452
Participant did not answer	4.24% 35
Other (Please specify.)	Responses 5.58% 46
TOTAL	825

Q15

Customize Export

Which, if any, of the following prevents you from getting health care? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I can not get an appointment.	4.36% 36
I do not have insurance, Medicaid or Medicare.	3.64% 30
I do not have transportation.	1.09% 9
I do not know where to go.	2.42% 20
I have an outstanding balance/unpaid bill.	4.85% 40
My insurance does not cover the care I need.	8.00% 66
My share of the cost (deductible/co-pay/co-insurance) is too high.	13.45% 111
Nothing prevents me from getting health care.	41.70% 344
The doctor's/dentist's office will not take my insurance, Medicaid or Medicare.	3.64% 30
The hospital will not take my insurance, Medicaid or Medicare.	0.61% 5
The pharmacy will not take my insurance, Medicaid or Medicare.	0.73% 6
The wait is too long.	5.09% 42
Participant did not answer	27.88% 230
Other (Please specify.)	Responses 4.73% 39
Total Respondents: 825	

Q16

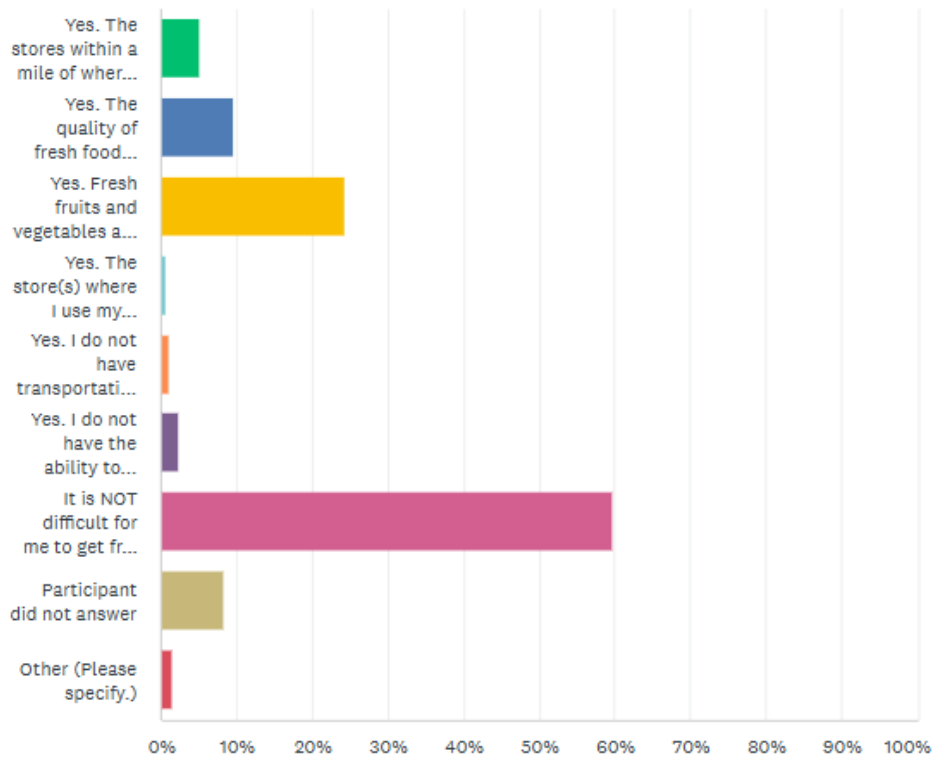


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Is it difficult for you to consume the recommended daily amount of fruits & vegetables? (The recommended amount is 3-5 fruits or vegetables per day) If yes, please select the reasons why it may be difficult for you to get fresh fruits and vegetables. (Select all that apply)

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



Q17

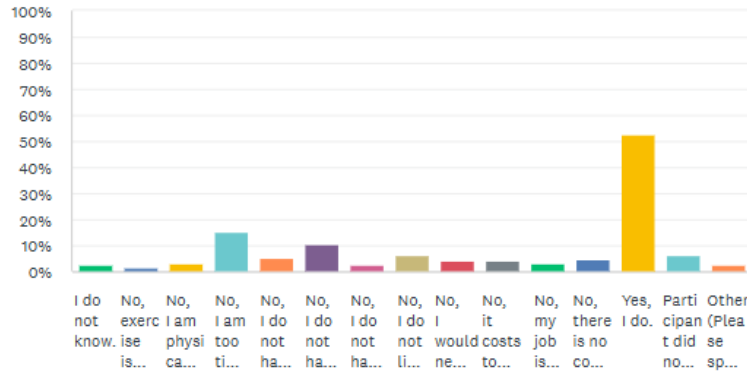


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During a normal week, other than in your regular job, do you engage in any exercise that lasts at least half an hour? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ I do not know.	2.79% 23
▼ No, exercise is not important to me.	1.45% 12
▼ No, I am physically disabled.	3.27% 27
▼ No, I am too tired to exercise.	15.52% 128
▼ No, I do not have access to the equipment/facilities that I need to exercise (shoes, weights, pool, track, etc.).	5.33% 44
▼ No, I do not have enough time to exercise.	10.42% 86
▼ No, I do not have/know how to find exercise partners.	2.79% 23
▼ No, I do not like to exercise.	6.30% 52
▼ No, I would need child care/elder care and I do not have it.	4.24% 35
▼ No, it costs too much to exercise.	4.24% 35
▼ No, my job is physical or hard labor.	3.27% 27
▼ No, there is no convenient/safe place to exercise.	4.85% 40
▼ Yes, I do.	52.85% 436
▼ Participant did not answer	6.18% 51
▼ Other (Please specify.)	Responses 2.42% 20
Total Respondents: 825	

Q18

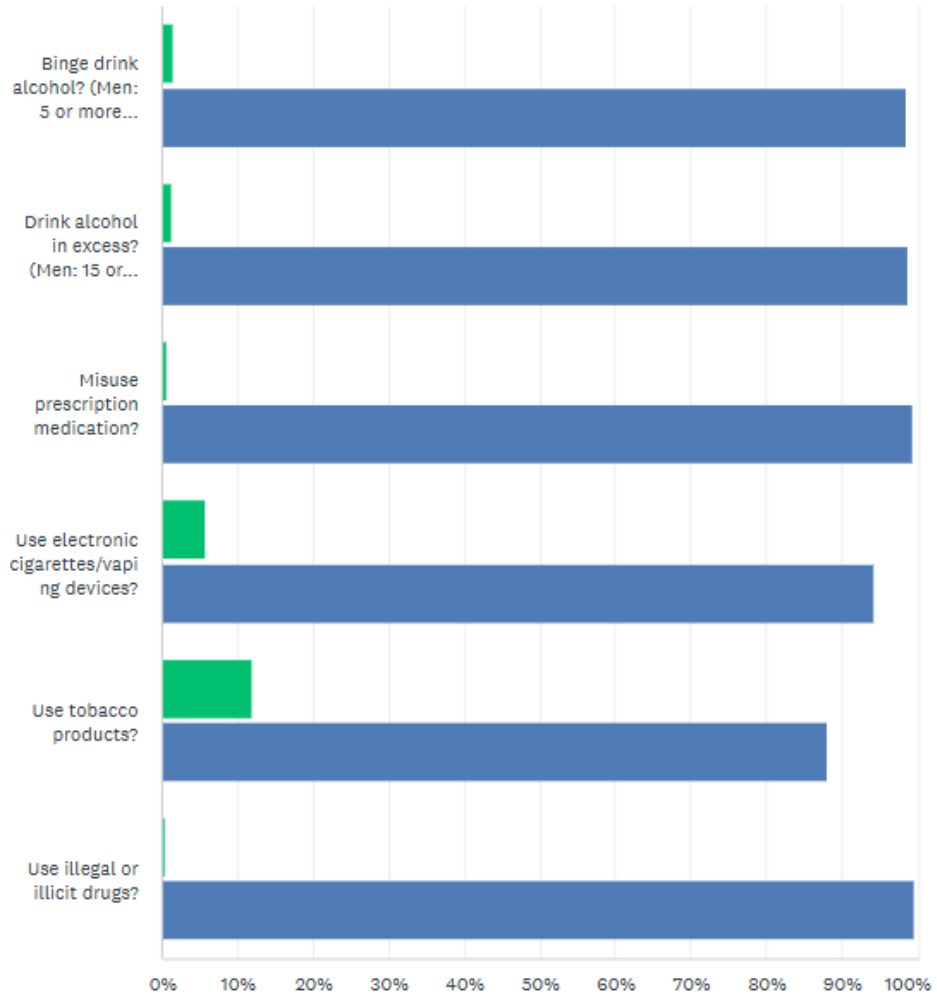


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Do you:

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335

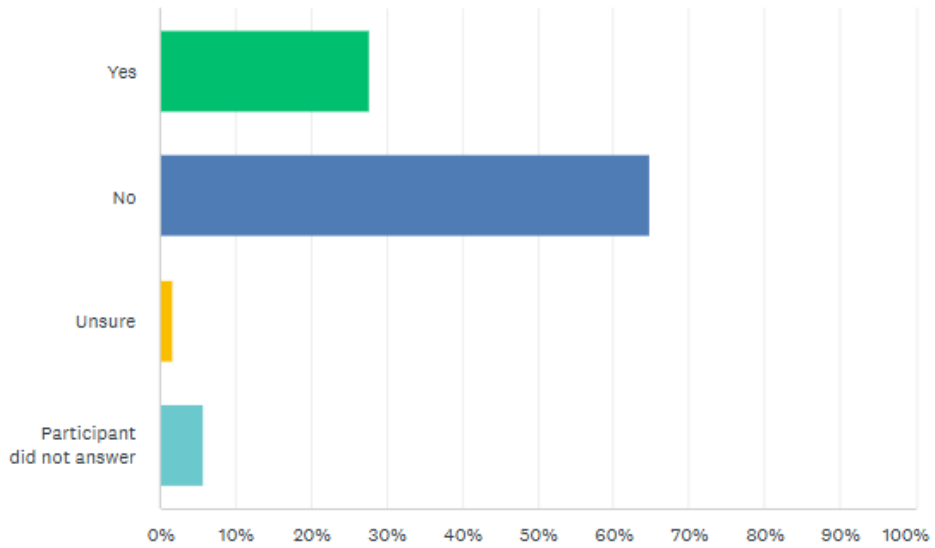


Q19

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Customize
Export ▾




Do you keep your prescription medications in your home in a locked cabinet, locked drawer or locked container?

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



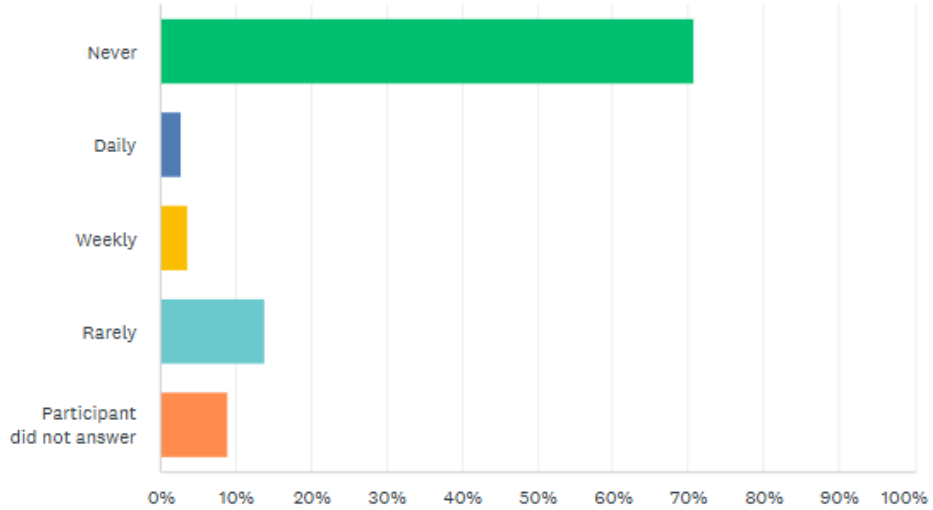
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	27.64%	228
▼ No	64.85%	535
▼ Unsure	1.70%	14
▼ Participant did not answer	5.82%	48
TOTAL		825

Q20

  [Customize](#) [Export](#) 

How often does substance use by you, or someone close to you negatively affect your usual activities, such as work, school, and spending time with family or friends?

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



Q21

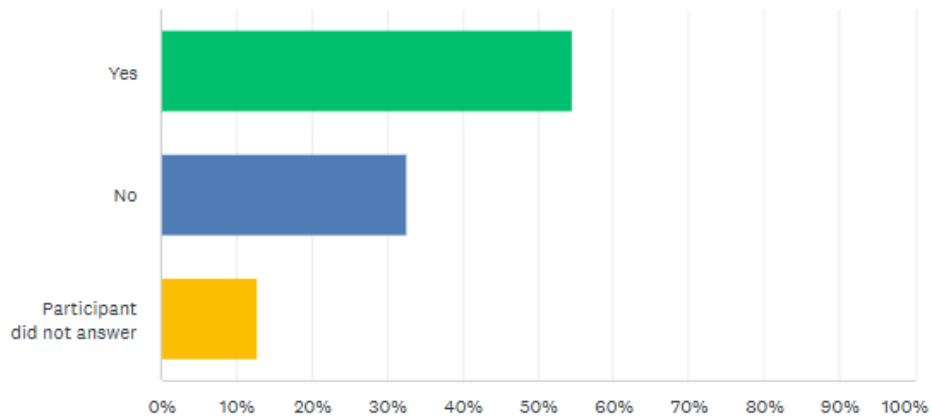


Customize

Export

Do you know where to find support for yourself, family members, and/or friends with substance use or addiction?

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



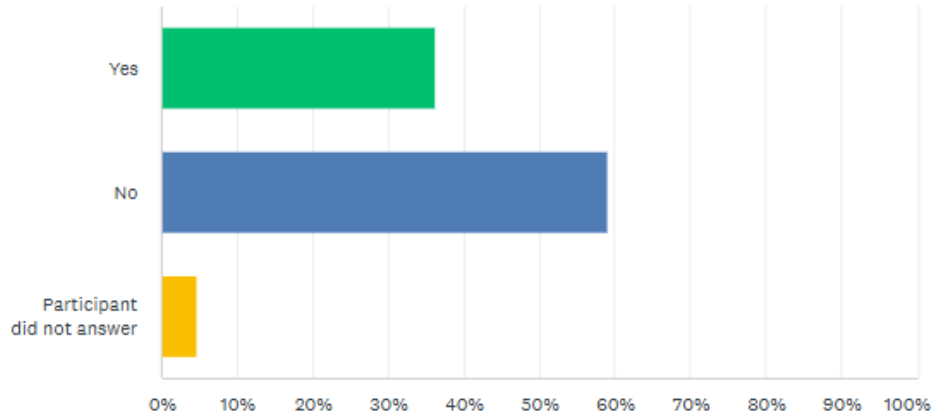
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	54.55% 450
No	32.73% 270
Participant did not answer	12.73% 105
TOTAL	825

Q22

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Export ▾

Did you know that Alexander County has FREE substance use, addiction, and homeless supplies available in public vending machines? These are located at the 957 Mobile Cafe in Taylorsville and the Stony Point Library.

Answered: 825 Skipped: 335



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Yes	36.24% 299
▼ No	59.03% 487
▼ Participant did not answer	4.73% 39
TOTAL	825

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT MALE FOCUS GROUP RESPONDENT

Please submit a request to view the deidentified Male Focus Group transcript by emailing the Alexander County Health Department via kgansrow@alexandercountync.gov

APPENDIX C

ALEXANDER COUNTY ASSET INVENTORY LIST

Alexander County Resources searchable list run by the Alexander County Health Department via <https://acresources.org/>

For a paper copy of quick list resources, please submit a request to view the document by emailing the Alexander County Health Department via kgansrow@alexandercountync.gov