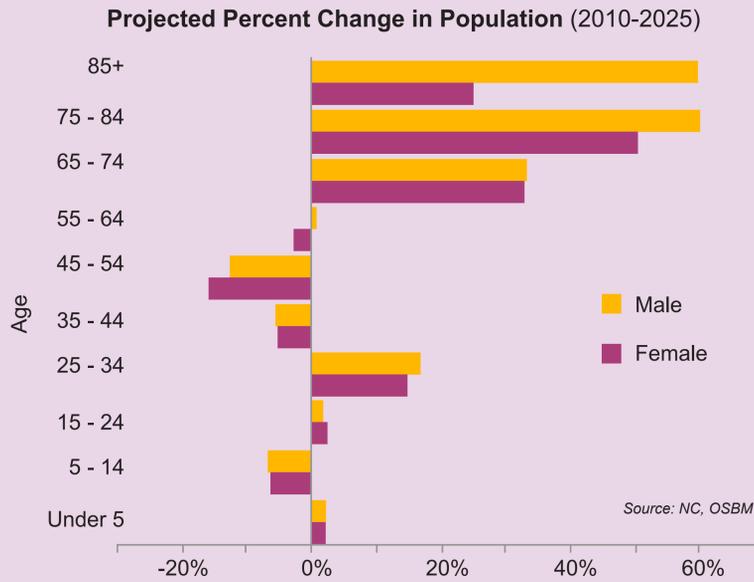


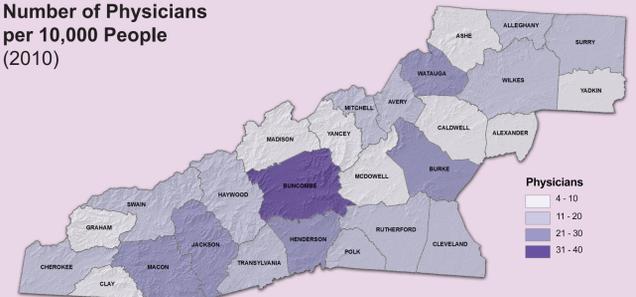
In recent years, health care professionals in Western North Carolina have expanded the way we think about health care to consider prevention and health promotion as components of a well-rounded approach to health and wellness.

The need for health priorities change as particular medical resources are required to treat or care for the health challenges that arise with age.

With expected increases in aging populations within the next 15 years, efforts to provide sufficient access to care, specialty clinics, and preventative treatment become a regional priority.



Number of Physicians per 10,000 People (2010)

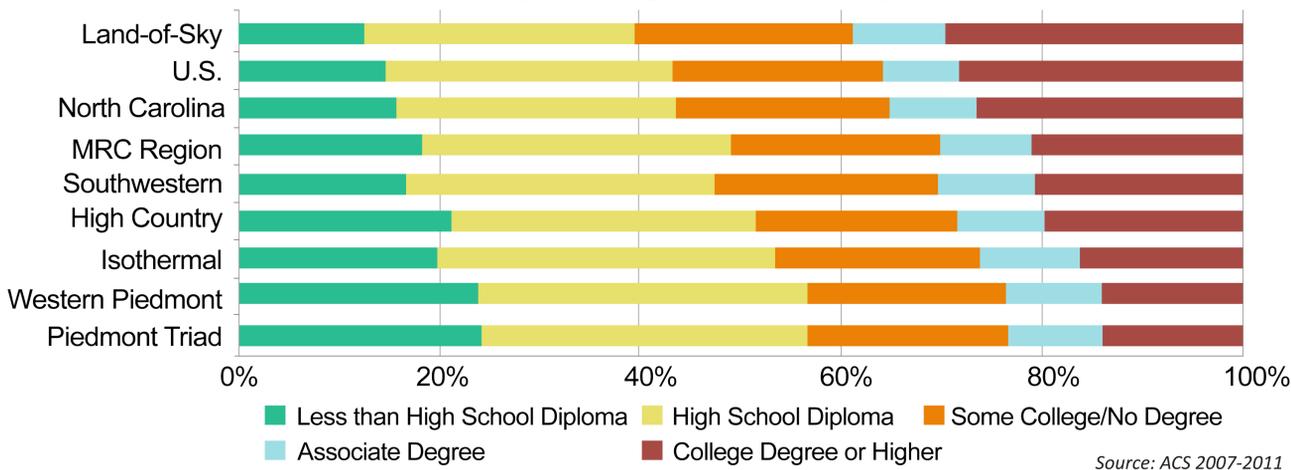


The number of physicians per 10,000 people varies widely throughout the MRC region, from a rate of only 3.2 per 10,000 people in Alexander County to a high of 35.2 per 10,000 people in Buncombe County.

Education as a Determinant of Health

Fewer college graduates than the state or national estimates may be due to the departure of young degree-holders as they seek employment opportunities outside of the region. Considering the projected population change for the region, with much of the wage-earning population expecting to decrease, the individuals making higher incomes may also decrease. What implications might this have on the accessibility of affordable health care in Western North Carolina?

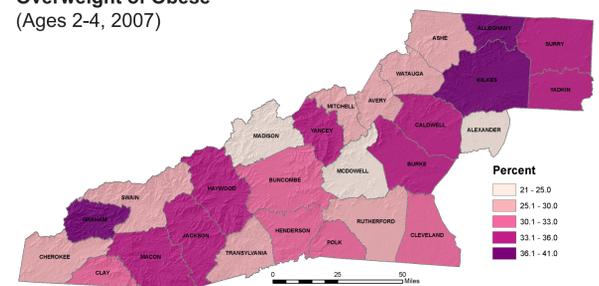
Highest Degree Attained (Ages 25+)



Children's Health

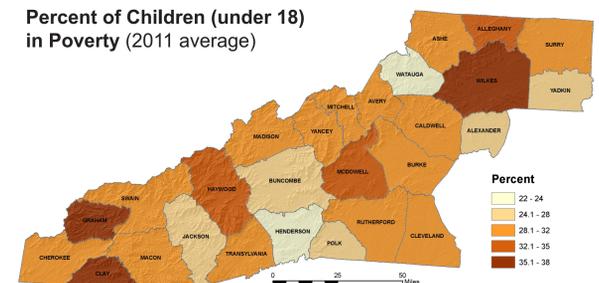
Health and poverty are inextricably intertwined. Having the resources available to afford health care, healthy food, or the ability to provide safe living or working conditions is dependent on the economic well-being of an individual or household.

Percent of Children who are Overweight or Obese (Ages 2-4, 2007)



Childhood obesity in the MRC region is slightly higher than in the State of North Carolina as a whole. In 2010, the percentage of children aged 2-4 in the MRC region who were overweight or obese was 31.9 percent, compared to 31.7 percent for the state.

Percent of Children (under 18) in Poverty (2011 average)

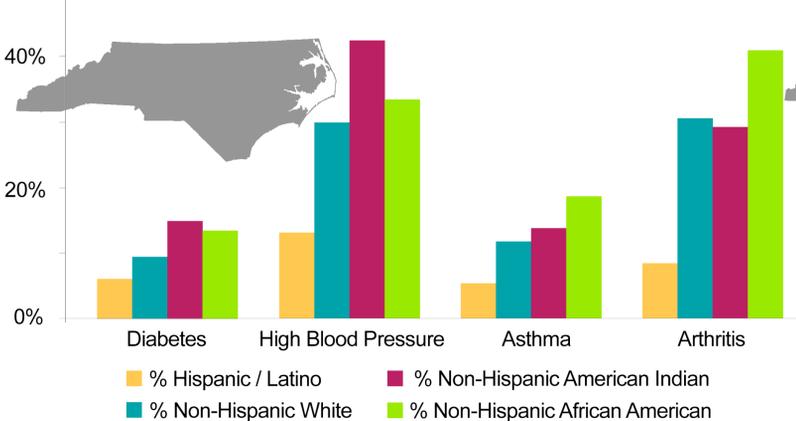


The poverty rates for children (under age 18) in the MRC region are higher than those for the general population. In 2011, an estimated 28.5 percent of children in the MRC region were in poverty, higher than both the state (25.4 percent) and national (22.5 percent) rates.

Disease Incidence by Age and Race

Health measures vary significantly along demographic populations, and are not affected by race or ethnicity alone, but by the social stratification or allocation of resources which can lead to certain health disparities. The graph at bottom left illustrates this variation, indicating uneven distributions of incidence among each race/ethnicity. However, incidences tend to increase drastically with age, which is not accounted for in this chart, so consider the median ages at bottom right.

NC Adults with Select Chronic Conditions, by Race/Ethnicity



Median Ages by race/ethnicity:
FOR THE STATE

- Hispanic » 25 yrs
- African American » 34 yrs
- American Indian » 34 yrs
- White » 41 yrs

Source: SCHS, NC Office of Minority Health (2008)

Source: BRFSS, 2005/2007, 2006-2008

