

COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Atlantic County, New Jersey

2019

INTRODUCTION

As a leading healthcare provider in southeastern New Jersey, AtlantiCare is committed to delivering high-quality care and an outstanding patient experience to the thousands of individuals and families we serve each year. We're also committed to enriching and improving the well-being of those we are proud to serve.

Beyond the traditional role hospitals play in providing inpatient and outpatient medical care and working to help people remain healthy, AtlantiCare has the responsibility to identify, understand and meet the diverse healthcare needs of the individuals and families residing in its service area. To meet these needs, AtlantiCare has the important role of understanding the root causes of disease and breaking through the barriers that impede health.

AtlantiCare's vision, mission and services are focused on delivering all of the elements necessary to achieve, maintain or return each member of the community to optimal health. These elements include:

- Access to safe, equitable and quality healthcare;
- The promotion of healthy lifestyle behaviors;
- A commitment to understanding and improving the social determinants that impact one's health and quality of life.

From the casino district in Atlantic City to the sandy Pine Barrens, small coastal towns and rural farmlands, the communities served are as diverse as the people who reside in them. The residents of AtlantiCare's community represent a broad array of ages, ethnicities and religions; speak a variety of languages; and have unique healthcare needs. Whether serving families with young children, active adults in the prime of life, or older residents facing age-related issues, AtlantiCare strives to provide people-centered care to everyone it serves.

BACKGROUND

To better understand the highest-priority health concerns and areas of unmet needs among the regions differing populations, AtlantiCare engaged in a comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) for Atlantic County, New Jersey, in 2019. Previous assessments were conducted in 2013 and 2016. The CHNA is required as part of specific provisions in the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act for non-profit charitable hospitals. Updated assessments are required every three years.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

In addition to health status, AtlantiCare's CHNA for Atlantic County looked at a number of factors believed to influence health and personal lifestyle behaviors. The results of our assessment, shared in this report, will assist AtlantiCare in its ongoing efforts to improve the health of specific populations residing throughout our service area.

In particular, this CHNA will allow AtlantiCare to:

- Respond to identified needs and gaps in services through the development of evidence-based public health and clinical interventions;
- Allocate health and wellness resources for maximum intervention and service efficacy and impact;
- Determine appropriate and realistic targets to improve the health of our collective community; and
- Form partnerships to strategically address the healthcare challenges for maximum impact.

METHODOLOGY

This CHNA was conducted following a disciplined approach to collecting, analyzing and using a combination of primary and secondary data sources.

PRIMARY DATA SOURCES

Primary sources included feedback collected through the administration of online and paper surveys in the summer of 2019 focused on residents' behaviors and beliefs. Survey promotion was conducted at various community events throughout the county, on AtlantiCare's website, and via an AtlantiCare email distribution list. In total, we received 939 completed surveys. Survey results exceeded a confidence interval of three percent and a confidence level of 95 percent.

In addition to the online and written surveys, AtlantiCare hosted two resident feedback sessions in the community, which assisted in better understanding healthcare perceptions and trends among our target populations. These feedback sessions took place throughout the fall of 2018 and targeted a broad range of income, age, and geographic subgroups to further ensure representation of all populations residing in the county.

All the tools utilized to capture primary feedback were implemented through a third-party vendor. To ensure we collected feedback from a broad representative sample, the following steps were taken:

- Surveys were administered in both English and Spanish, the top two languages spoken in the area.
- Respondent demographics were monitored to include a broad range of income, race, and education levels.
- Focus groups were held in varying locations, with cohorts differing in age, sex, employment status, and income level.

SECONDARY DATA SOURCES

Secondary data sources included published data from a variety of federal, state, and local agencies. A sampling of sources includes:*

- 2019 County Health Rankings
- The Centers for Disease Control 2018 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey
- New Jersey State Health Assessment Data (NJSHAD)

**Please see the appendix for a full bibliography.*

Both primary and secondary data were instrumental in determining the priority order in which the community perceives its needs. Documentation of needs were shared with community leaders working within and outside the discipline of health.

AtlantiCare did not collaborate with any other institutions to complete this CHNA. It did review and take into account other available public health assessments and household reports on the same population within the same time frame.

Data for this report was pulled together by internal staff at AtlantiCare and also through the use of a third party for primary data and resident feedback. No known data gaps impact the ability of this report to reflect the community's needs.

This document provides a summary of the findings reflected in the report. It is available for public use. While AtlantiCare maintains hard copies of the report, an electronic version is also available on AtlantiCare’s website at www.atlanticare.org/community.

AtlantiCare intends to analyze the findings and will coordinate with the proper community partners to determine impactful actions to address stated needs and gaps.

FINDINGS FROM PRIOR ASSESSMENTS

At the conclusion of each CHNA, AtlantiCare is required to develop an Implementation Strategy to specifically state how, along with its community partners, it intends to meet some of the community’s stated needs. While it is not realistic that all needs would be able to be addressed, as part of each report, AtlantiCare has asked the community to assist us in prioritizing our interventions.

Below is a high level summary of the stated needs that came out of the reports, and our responses

Report Year	Reported Community Need	Interventions to Address Stated Need
2013	Care Coordination	Imbedded Case Managers: Case managers were assigned to specific Primary Care Plus practices to assist patients with chronic conditions and with complex need.
	Cost of Care	Expanded Clinic Offerings: Expanded AtlantiCare’s Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) to treat more individuals with complex needs. Expanded services now include an anticoagulation clinic, substance use treatment and pediatrics. The FQHC now sees patients in both Atlantic City and Galloway.
	Access to Care	<p>AtlantiCare Access Center: AtlantiCare’s call center has expanded its hours to ensure that individuals are able to seek the care and navigation they need, beyond the traditional work day.</p> <p>Extended Appointment Hours: Many of AtlantiCare’s primary and specialty care offices, in addition to Urgent Care, offer non-traditional appointment times to ensure that patients can access care when needed in a setting that is more affordable and resource efficient.</p> <p>Expanded Primary & Specialty Care: AtlantiCare’s Physician Group has significantly expanded the number of primary and specialty providers that are available to patients in this region. Significant investments have been made in Cardiology, Orthopaedics, Oncology, and other specialties to ensure that our community can access care locally.</p>

Report Year	Reported Community Need	Interventions to Address Stated Need
2016	Behavioral /Mental Health	<p>Healthy Lifestyle Programing: AtlantiCare has launched several programs to assist communities, populations, and individuals in starting and sustaining healthy lifestyle practices. Our efforts in this area include, but aren't limited to:</p> <p>Growing Green - A school and community gardening initiative</p> <p>Senior University - An healthy lifestyle and education series geared to individuals 65 years and older</p> <p>Matters of Balance - A fall-prevention course</p> <p>Employee Workforce Initiatives - On-site education and resources to promote and encourage healthy behaviors</p>
	Behavioral Health/Mental Health Prevention & Treatment	<p>Suicide Prevention: Given the high rates of suicide and poor mental health days, AtlantiCare launched a Zero Suicide Initiative to educate our clinicians, patients, caregivers, and the broader community about the warning signs of suicide. This initiative also promotes local and national resources to assist, and includes the National Suicide Hotline as a 24/7 resource, in the event clinical help wasn't immediately available.</p> <p>Depression: Depression screening was implemented system-wide to assist in identifying those accessing our services at greatest risk. When necessary, patients are referred for additional care and support.</p>
	Substance Use Disorders	<p>Healing Atlantic County: An initiative aimed at reducing opioid related deaths, has introduced to our community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/7 Peer Recovery Coaches • Expanded outpatient medication assisted treatment services • Employment opportunities for individuals in recovery • Stigma reduction education for clinicians • Medication disposal • Prescription monitoring • Pain Management

Report Year	Reported Community Need	Interventions to Address Stated Need
	Food Insecurity/ Access to Healthy Foods	<p>Pantry at the Plex: a healthful food pantry offered at the William L. Gormely HealthPlex in Atlantic City for patients deemed food insecure.</p> <p>Summer Meals Lunch & Learn Series: a partnership with the Community Food Bank of New Jersey, where nutritious meals are offered to children and their parents with limited resources during the summer months, when school is not in session, and children and families are at greatest risk to be food insecure. Meals are complemented with yoga, art classes, and other educational offerings to enrich youth as well.</p> <p>Pop-Up Farm Markets: Pop-up produce markets occur at the William L. Gormley HealthPlex at least two times a month, and periodically in the surrounding community, providing fresh fruits and vegetables to patients, visitors, and Atlantic City residents.</p>

AtlantiCare’s responses to its 2019 CHNA findings can be found in its 2019-2020 Implementation Strategy. This document can be found at www.atlanticare.org/community.



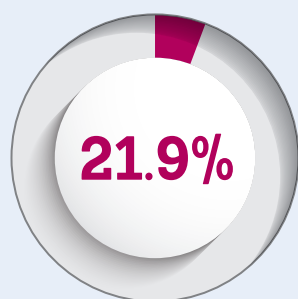
Community Description

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

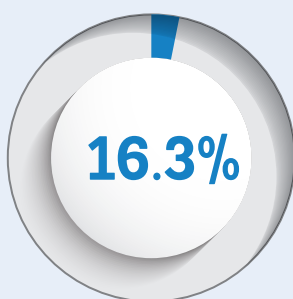
Atlantic County is one of 21 counties in New Jersey. It is located in the southeastern corridor of the state. In 2017, an estimated 269,918 individuals resided in Atlantic County. Between 2015 and 2016, the population of Atlantic County decreased by 1.18%. The five largest municipalities in Atlantic County are Egg Harbor Township, Atlantic City, Galloway Township, Hamilton Township, and Pleasantville.

AGE AND GENDER

Of the individuals who reside in Atlantic County:



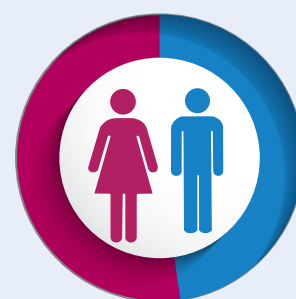
are below
18 years of age



are 65
and older



Median
age



52.3% are female
47.7% are male

HOUSING

Atlantic County had an estimated 127,809 total housing units in 2017. Approximately 100,660 are occupied by households. The remaining 27,149 remain vacant. This represents one fifth of the housing inventory in the county.

On average, there are about 2.65 persons residing in each household, and 87.5% of residents have lived in the same house for longer than a year.

58% of the available housing inventory are single units; whereas 10.5% are comprised of multi-family properties with over 20 units. 14.8% of the county's homes were built within the last 20 years (year 2000 or after). 59.6% of the county's homes were built before 1978. Aged housing inventory presents additional challenges on a community's health.

The county's home ownership rate is 67.4%. This is slightly higher than that of the state, at 63.8%. Ownership rates have declined slightly since 2015, and vary widely among municipalities. The highest homeownership rate in the county can be found in Northfield. The lowest home ownership rate can be found in Atlantic City with some wards in the city as low as 6.8%. Homeownership is important to a community's health as it plays a vital role in assisting families establish financial security and a sense of place. It bolsters a community's economy through taxes. Communities with high homeownership rates also reap many social benefits, including reduced crime, improved health outcomes and increased civic engagement.

The median value of owner-occupied housing units in 2017 for Atlantic County is \$219,000. This number is reduced from 2015, when the median value was \$230,200. This number is also significantly lower than the New Jersey state median value of owner-occupied housing units for 2017 of \$321,100.

Median selected monthly household costs, including a mortgage, are \$1,950. Without a mortgage, monthly housing costs equate to \$863. Median gross rent is estimated to be \$1,070. 45.4% of Atlantic County households are spending 30% or more of their monthly income on homeownership costs. In the City of Atlantic City, this rate jumps to a staggering 66.7%. These rates are much higher than both the New Jersey and national averages of, 34.4% and 27.5%, respectively.

Higher rates can be found among renters, with 60.8% paying over 30% or more of their monthly income on rent and other housing costs. This too is significantly higher than the state at 51.7% and the national at 49.5%.

***HOMEOWNERSHIP IS IMPORTANT TO A COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH AS IT PLAYS A VITAL ROLE IN ASSISTING
FAMILIES ESTABLISH FINANCIAL SECURITY AND A
SENSE OF PLACE.***

INCOME & EMPLOYMENT

The median household income in 2017 was \$57,514. This is well below the New Jersey state median household income in 2017 of \$76,475, but is on par with the national average of \$57,652.

The percentage of county residents living at or below the poverty level in 2017 was estimated to be around 14.4%. This number has decreased from 2015 where the number was 15.1%. This number is larger than the 10% New Jersey state average of persons in poverty; however when looking at Atlantic City specifically, this number jumps to 36.3%. Atlantic City has the highest poverty rate in the county.

The percentage of children living in poverty has declined since 2015, where it was 27%. In 2017 it was 21%. This number is still much higher than the 14% New Jersey average. 41% of children living in Atlantic County live in single parent households. This is significantly higher than the state rate at 29% of children living in a single parent household.

In 2018, there was an unemployment rate of 8.5% in Atlantic County. This is lower than the 2014 rate of 11%. The county offers approximately 106,000 jobs. These are mainly comprised from healthcare, social services, tourism and hospitality industries. Additional employers include utilities, retail, and trades.

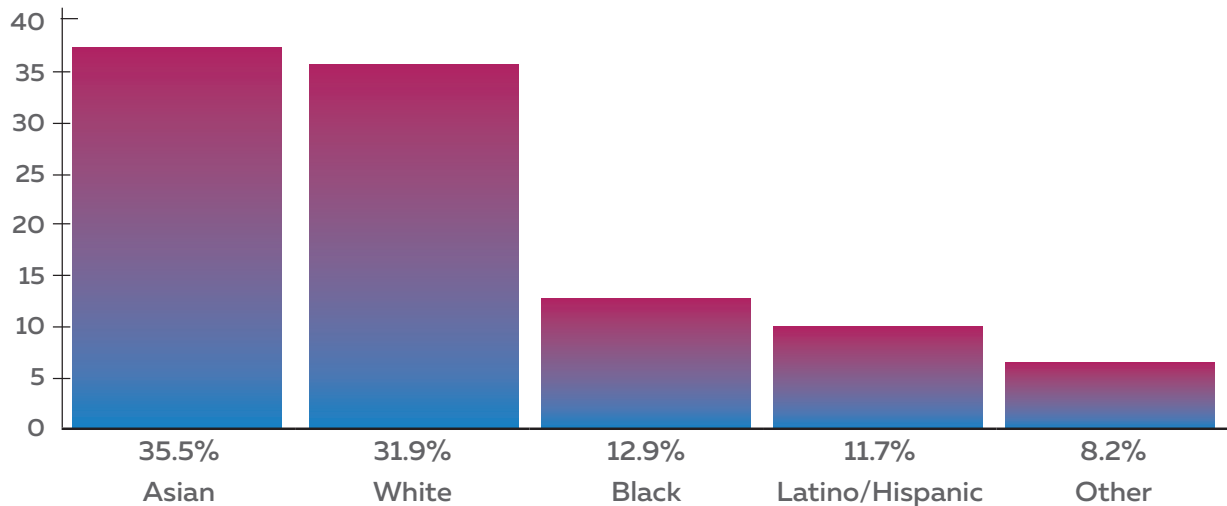
The average commute time to work for Atlantic County residents is 24.2 minutes. 27% of the population reports driving greater than 30 minutes to work. 77% report driving alone to work.

EDUCATION

COLLEGE

In 2018, an estimated 86.3% of Atlantic County residents have a high school diploma. 58% report having received some college education, and 26.6 % have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. This rate is lower than the state's rate of 37.7% of individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher. There are great disparities when looking at the population of college graduates by race.

% OF POPULATION WITH BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER

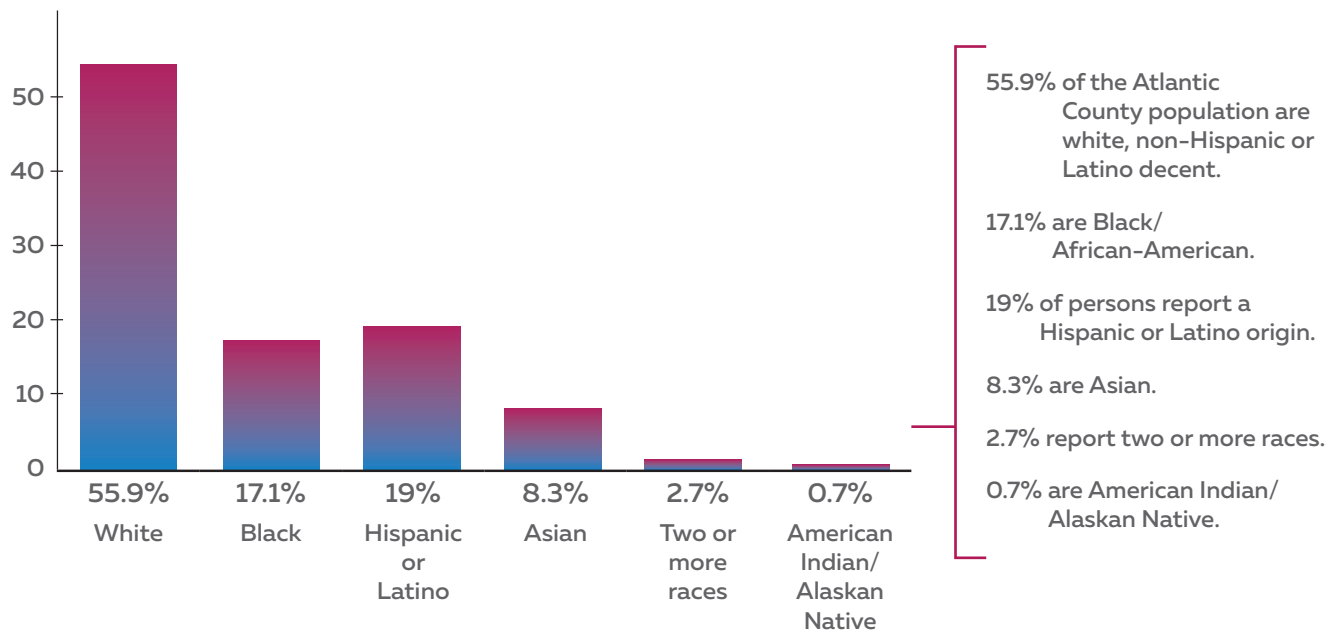


PRESCHOOL

In recent years, many efforts in New Jersey have been made to connect three and four year olds to preschool. Expansion of preschool offerings have occurred in many Atlantic County school districts. A number of private preschool programs also exist to ensure children are ready to learn when they enter kindergarten. Early childhood education also assists in developing a child's social and emotional skills. Children who have attended preschool have higher high school graduation rates; are more likely to attend college; and have been linked to higher employment earnings. 53.7% of Atlantic County toddlers are enrolled in a preschool program. While this average is lower than that of the state at 64.2%, it is higher than the national average at 48.0%.

ETHNICITY, RACE AND LANGUAGE

ETHNICITY, RACE AND LANGUAGE



Since 2015, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and two or more races are all areas that have grown. The number of American Indian/Alaskan Native, and black/African American are the two ethnicities or races have stayed the same. The number of white residents in Atlantic County has decreased.

In Atlantic County, as of 2017, 16.3% of individuals are foreign born, and 27.2% of households speak a language other than English at home. This number has increased since 2015. After English, the most common language spoken is Spanish.

COMPUTER & CELL PHONE OWNERSHIP

87.2% of Atlantic County households cite owning a computer. Likewise, 78.4% of households report having a broadband internet subscription. 94% of residents indicate owning a cell phone.

Findings

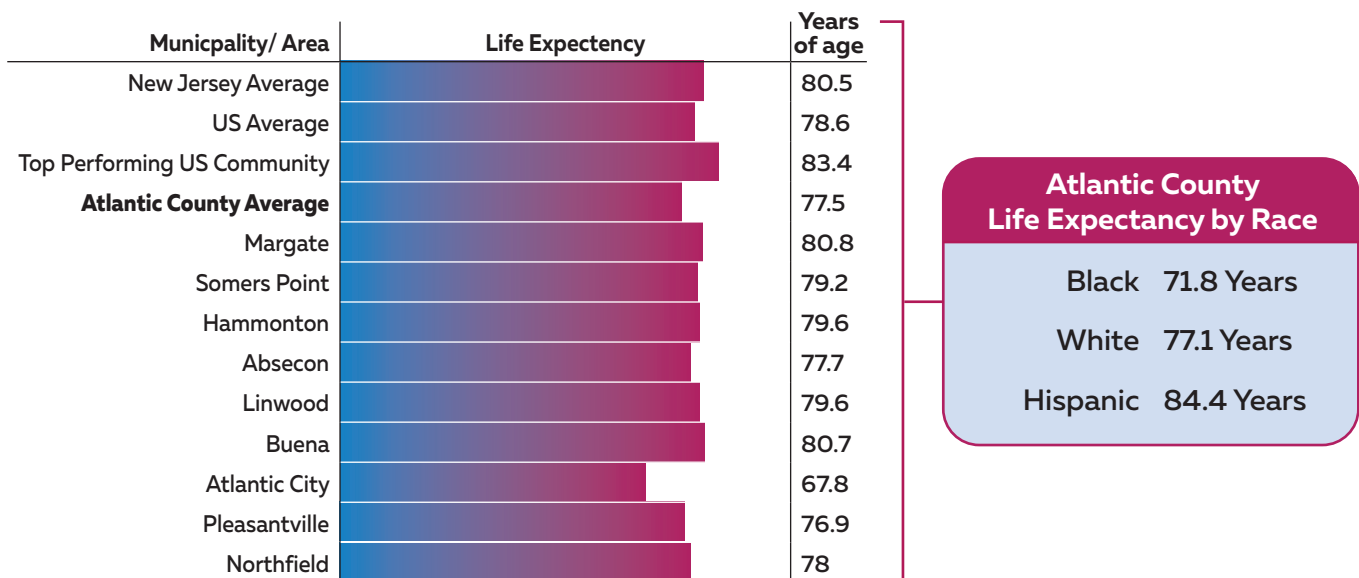
Health Outcomes

There are two ways in which health outcomes are ultimately measured; longevity and the quality of life one experiences while living. There are numerous indicators which allow us to ascertain how healthy Atlantic County residents are currently. The below information provides us insight into how well our community is fairing, given the medical care available, the environment that surrounds, societal factors that promote or impede health, and the health behaviors in which the residents participate.

LIFE EXPECTANCY

By reviewing life expectancy, and comparing it to that of other communities, we are able to determine if individuals are dying prematurely. There are many factors which can cause a community to have lower than average life expectancy. Root cause analysis enables communities to understand how and why their residents aren't able live to their full potential.

The below chart, provides insight into which Atlantic County communities are living longer. You can also see how race impacts longevity.



HEALTH STATUS AND PRODUCTIVE DAYS

Self-reported health status measures how healthy the population is while they are alive. This measure gives insight into the burden of chronic disease and other disabling factors. 81% of Atlantic County residents indicated having a “Good, Very Good, or Excellent” health status. In comparison, 83% of New Jersey residents report the same.

To further explore health status, we surveyed our population asking them to rank their overall health broken out by the following areas: Mental Health, Emotional Health, Physical Health, and Financial Health. When ranking, the population ranked their financial health as the worst and their mental health as the best.

The number of mentally unhealthy days (days when an individual is unable to be productive due to poor mental health status) and the number of physically unhealthy days (days when one’s physical health impacts his or her ability to be productive) are additional indicators used to assist in determining quality of life. In Atlantic County, residents report an average of 3.7 mentally unhealthy days and 4.0 physically unhealthy days in a 30-day period. This is slightly above the state average of 3.4 days, and well above the national average of 3.1 days for mentally unhealthy days. The county data is elevated compared to state and national averages for physical days as well with 3.5 days reported for the state and the 3.0 days for the nation.

Access to Care



HOSPITAL AND CLINIC SUPPLY

Atlantic County is home to two hospitals: AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center, which has two campuses, located in Pomona and Atlantic City; and Shore Medical Center, which can be found in Somers Point. AtlantiCare also maintains a Satellite Emergency Department in Hammonton.

In addition, Atlantic County is home to Bacharach Institute for Rehabilitation, located in Pomona, which is the county’s only rehabilitation hospital. Acuity Specialty Hospital, a long term acute care facility, can be found in Atlantic City.

AtlantiCare and Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers, Inc. operate four federally qualified health centers in Atlantic County. These centers are located in Hammonton, Pleasantville, and two in Atlantic City. In addition, the Atlantic County Division of Public Health maintains several clinics. Services include a men’s, women’s, and children’s clinic. There is also a clinic for sexually transmitted diseases and adult vaccinations. Cancer and substance use screenings are also offered as part of the clinic offerings. These are located in Northfield.



PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER SUPPLY AND UTILIZATION

It is recommended for optimal and continuous medical care that individuals should have an established relationship with a primary care provider. Atlantic County has 221 primary care providers. This creates a primary care provider ratio of 1,230:1. This ratio is below the state ratio of 1,190:1 and well behind the top decile national performers at 1,050:1 individuals to one primary care provider.

85% of survey respondents indicated that they had one person they considered to be their primary care provider. Women were more likely to indicate having a relationship with a primary care provider.

Annual wellness visits are recommended for all ages to review family history, receive any recommended vaccinations, and also conduct any preventative screenings. At these visits individuals along with their provider can create or update any prevention or wellness plans that they have established. 81% of survey respondents indicated that they received a wellness visit within the last year, and another 16% received one in the last three years. 4% acknowledged not visiting a doctor in more than three years.

URGENT CARE

Urgent care is a walk-in medical clinic, which typically is staffed with clinicians who are trained in emergency medicine. Urgent care centers provide convenience for the consumer as no appointments are required. Urgent care centers often operate outside of the traditional medical office hours. It is intended to provide medical care when one is unable to obtain a timely appointment to see their primary care provider. Atlantic County is home to six urgent centers. These are located in Egg Harbor Township, Hammonton, Galloway, Somers Point, Northfield, and Atlantic City.

ACCESS TO CARE

57% of respondents reported always being able to see their primary care provider when necessary. Another 31% indicated that they could usually get in to see their primary care provider. 12% acknowledged having difficulty seeing their primary care provider.

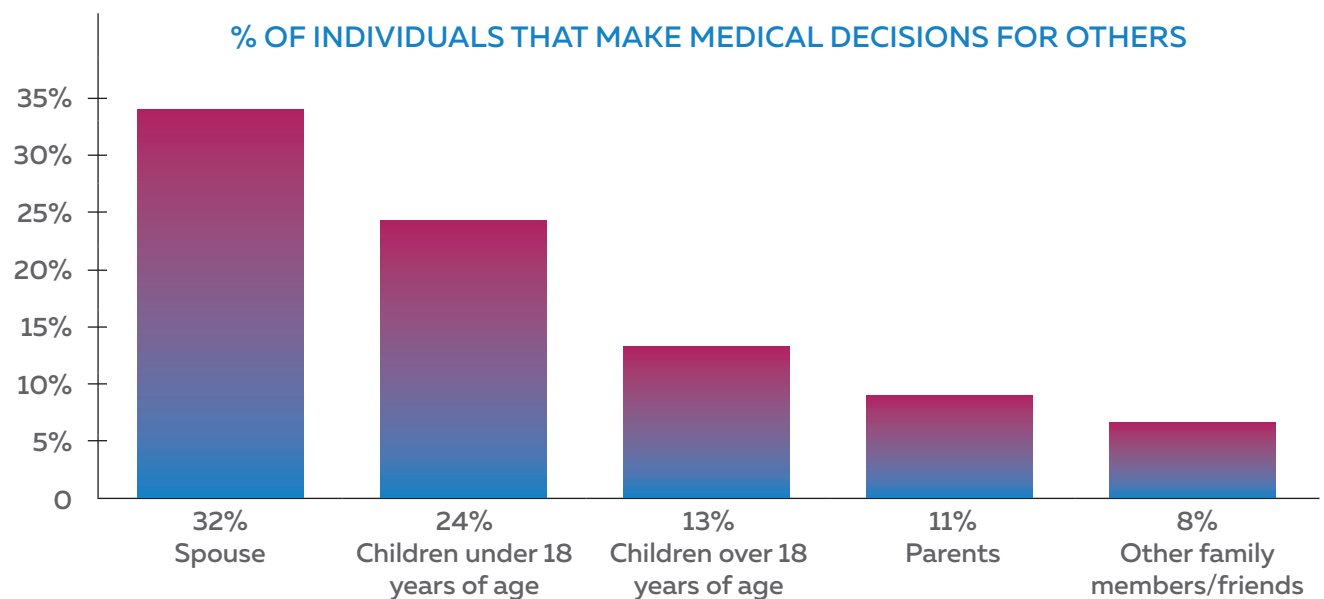
When surveyed about barriers to accessing care, the following reasons were the five most common answers provided:

- Appointment times aren't available when convenient for the patient (30%)
- Wait times are too long (25%)
- Unable to afford co-pays and/or medications (14%)
- Provider not sensitive to needs, language or culture (5%)
- No transportation available (2%)

HEALTHCARE DECISIONS & INFLUENCES

Healthcare providers remain the most influential factor when making healthcare related decisions. 83% of the population surveyed indicated that their provider influenced their healthcare decisions. Additional influences include family members or friends (43%) and the internet or social media (30%).

In addition to one's own healthcare decisions, many residents indicate making decisions for other members of their household or extended family.

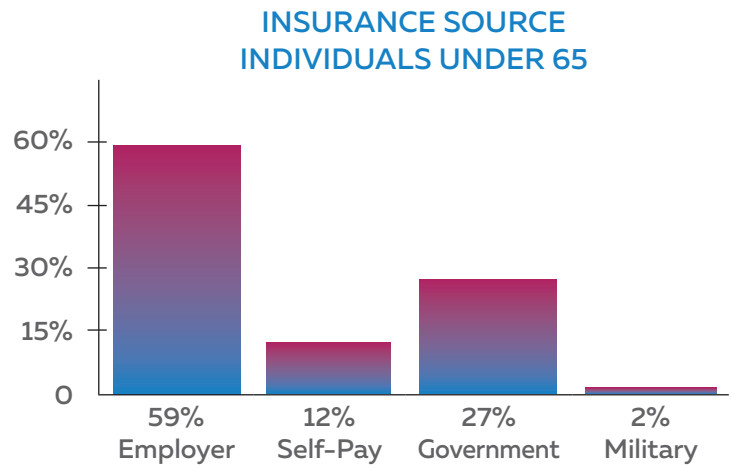
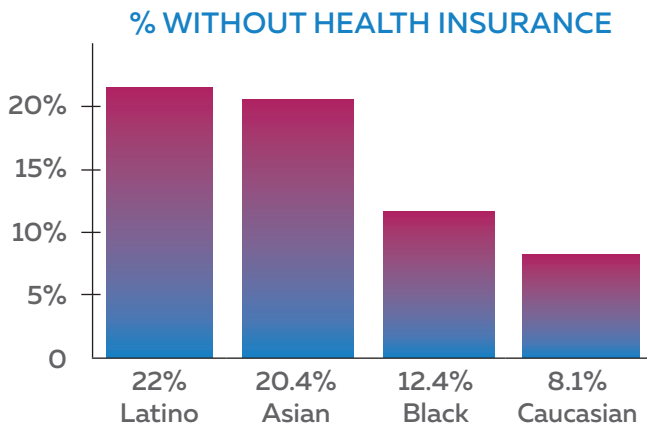


HEALTH INSURANCE

Health insurance enables individuals to access preventative healthcare and seek treatment for injuries and illnesses. Having health insurance protects monetary assets and ensures that individuals don't experience financial difficulty or a crisis as a result of a healthcare need.

With the continued roll out of the Affordable Care Act, and with Medicaid Expansion in New Jersey, the number of individuals in Atlantic County who are uninsured continues to decrease. In Atlantic County, 11% of the population are uninsured. 8% of Atlantic County children are without insurance.

ADVANCED HEALTHCARE DIRECTIVES

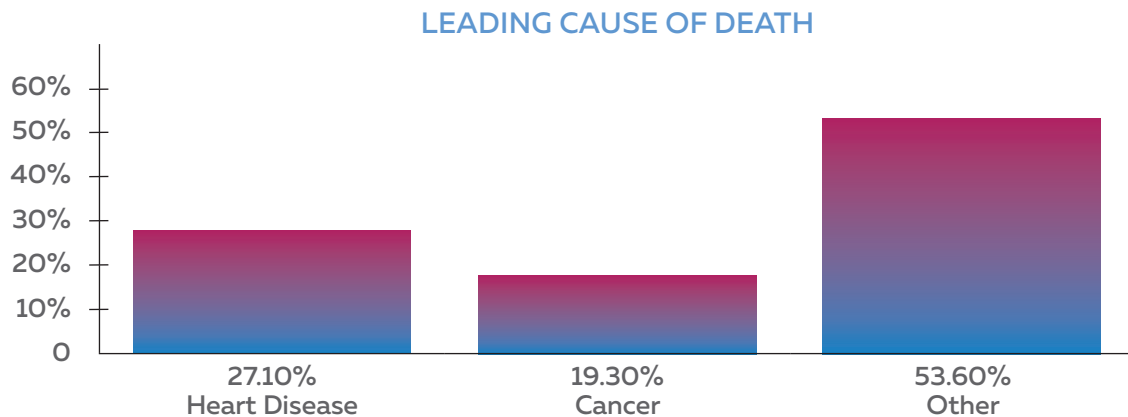


Having an advance care plan, also known as an advanced healthcare directive, enables you to provide insight to those making decisions for you at the end of your life. It is never too early to begin planning for your end of life care, as medical crises can happen at any age.

45% of Atlantic County residents indicate having either a living will or a medical power of attorney in place to make their treatment wishes known should they become unable to make their own healthcare decisions. The presence of an advanced care plan can reduce stress on family members or other designees who may be asked to make critical healthcare decisions on your behalf. This also ensures that your healthcare preferences are carried out, when you are unable to make these decisions for yourself.

Chronic Conditions & Unintended Injury

LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH



The leading causes of death in Atlantic County are heart disease and cancer. These are consistent with state and national leading causes of death. Following heart disease and cancer, the third highest cause of death is unintentional injury.

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Cardiovascular diseases are conditions that affect the structures or function of your heart. This includes heart failure, heart attacks, arrhythmias, coronary artery disease, and vascular disease among other conditions. These conditions are caused by a variety of factors. Many conditions

are preventable or manageable via healthier lifestyle habits such as proper nutrition, abstinence from tobacco products, regular physical activity, and stress management.

Age Adjusted Death Rate by Heart Disease in Atlantic County is 207.2 per 100,000 residents. Comparatively, New Jersey's rate is 162.3 and the national rate is 165.0. If you just consider the death rate by coronary heart disease, the most common type of heart disease, that rate for Atlantic County is 132.4 per 100,000 residents versus, 99.0 for the state and 105.0 for the nation. Stroke is also associated with cardiovascular health, while also impacting the brain. In Atlantic County death rates by stroke are 29.0 per 100,000 residents compared to 30.2 for the state.

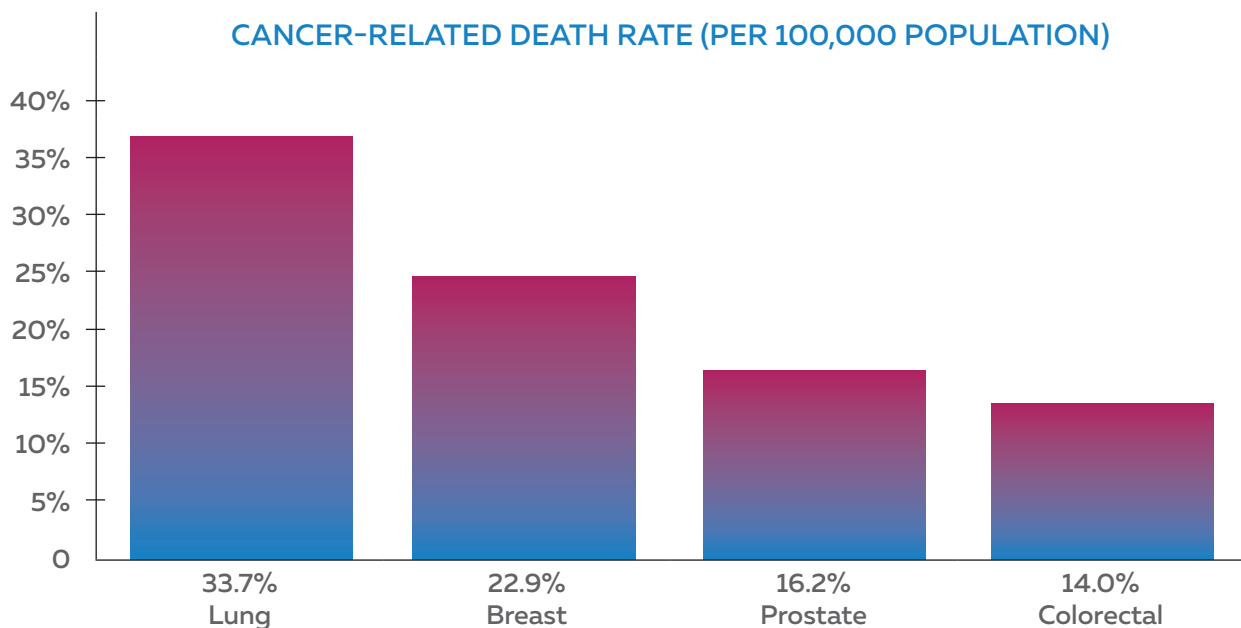
Cardiovascular disease and specifically coronary heart disease can be monitored via regular blood pressure and cholesterol screenings. It is recommended that individuals with a high risk of cardiovascular disease get their blood pressured screened annually. For those with low risk, blood pressure screening recommendations include once every three years for all persons over the age of 18. The recommendation for cholesterol is that a healthy adult receive a screenings every 4 to 6 years. In Atlantic County only, 77.8% of the population reported having their cholesterol checked within the last five years.

Of those screened, it is estimated that 30.0 % of Atlantic County adults have been diagnosed with high blood pressure. This is comparative to the New Jersey state average. It is also estimated that 35.8% of Atlantic County adults have been diagnosed with high cholesterol. This is comparatively higher than the state average of 32.7%.

CANCER

Cancer is a disease caused by abnormal cell growth. It can start in any location of the body and may or may not originate with the development of a tumor. Although researchers continue to make strides in understanding and preventing cancer, some factors, such as family history, age and certain genetic changes are beyond your control. Fortunately, simple lifestyle changes like eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, maintaining a healthy weight, not smoking, limiting alcohol consumption and regular physical activity are important to cancer prevention, and are factors you can control.

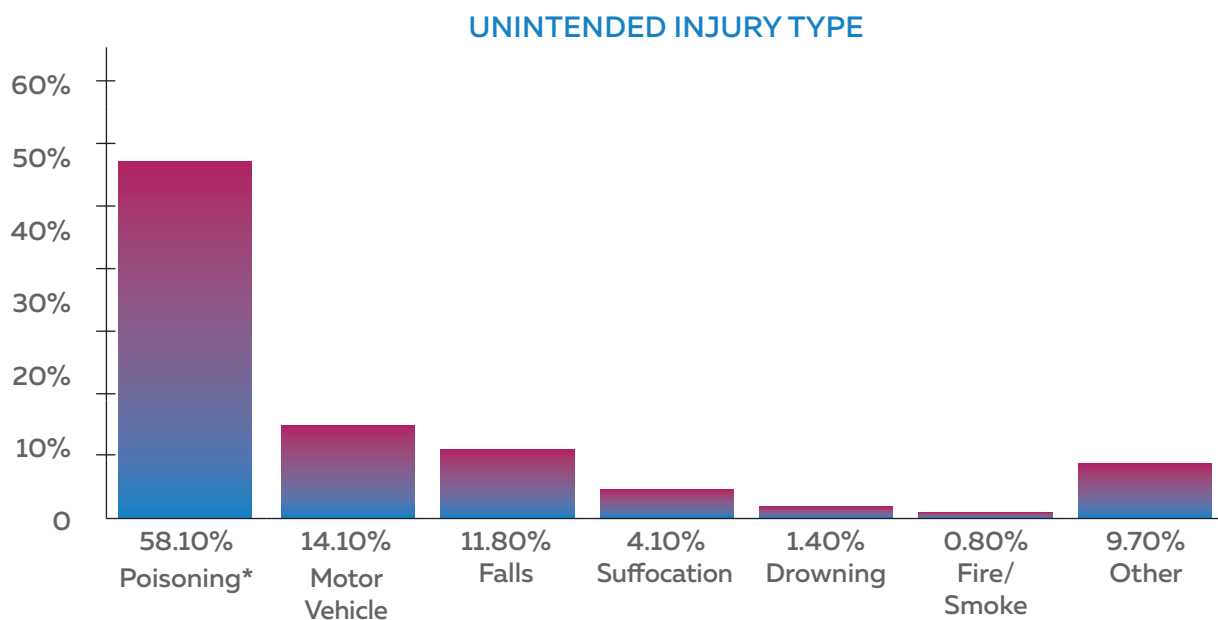
In Atlantic County, the age-adjusted cancer incidence rate is 477.21 per 100,000 of the population. The top cancer sites for the county are displayed below with their associated death rates:



In most instances the early detection of cancer enables measures to be taken when the disease is most easily treated. Cancer screenings include mammograms and pap tests in women. These include PSAs in males, and also include recommendations around colorectal checks that all can benefit from at a certain age. In Atlantic County, 83.9% of all women, aged 50-74 years of age received a mammogram in the last two years. This is above the state average of 79.6%. Of women aged 21-95, 81.5% of women received a pap test within the last 3 years. Conversely, only 22.8% of men aged 50 years and older reported have a conversation with their provider as to whether or not they should receive a PSA test. Collectively, 66.7% of adults ages 50-75, all genders, are current with the recommended colorectal screenings. While a great deal of work needs to be done to ensure that all have access and receive the necessary cancer screenings, these rates are comparable to those of the state.

UNINTENTIONAL INJURY

Following heart disease and cancer, the third highest cause of death is unintentional injury. Unintentional injury is a broad category that consists of accidents and injuries related to external factors, including falls, motor vehicles crashes, poisoning including alcohol and other substances, drownings, etc. In recent years, this number has gone up significantly as a result of the opioid crisis. Atlantic County is third in the state, following Cape May and Cumberland counties for deaths by unintentional injury. Common external factors causing these high rates of death are outlined below:



*Chemical, includes overdoses

DIABETES

Diabetes is a disease that is caused by high levels of glucose in one's blood. Having diabetes can lower one's life expectancy and increase the risk of heart disease. It is the leading cause of kidney failure, lower limb amputation, and adult-onset blindness.

In Atlantic County, 10.9 % of the population has been diagnosed with diabetes. Atlantic County has the second highest prevalence rates for diabetes, following Cumberland County, where 12.9% of the population has been diagnosed. The state average is 8.8%.

It is important that individuals with diabetes continue to monitor their blood sugar levels. Monitoring assists with ensuring that individuals receive the correct medication levels. Monitoring also enables the individual to understand the impact of their lifestyle (i.e.: physical activity, stress) on their disease. Recommendations include that individuals 18 years of age and older with diabetes should have their hemoglobin A1c level monitored at a minimum of twice a year. In Atlantic County, only 55.6% of patients report receiving the recommended measurement. In addition, it is recommended that a person with diabetes receive an eye exam each year to allow for timely action should the eye be impacted as a result of diabetes. This prevents blindness. 74.5% of Atlantic County residents with diabetes reported receiving this exam in the last year.

OBESITY

Obesity is a complex disease caused by excessive amounts of body fat, and is linked to increased risk for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and heart disease. Obesity is caused by a combination of genetic factors, environmental causes, and personal health behaviors including physical inactivity and poor nutrition. In Atlantic County, 27% of residents are considered obese, meaning they have a Body Mass Index of 30 or higher. The overall state average for this is 26%, and thus comparable.

ASTHMA

Asthma is a chronic condition involving an individual's airway and lungs. Individuals with asthma may experience times

when it is difficult to move air in and out of one's lungs. As a result, they often experience fits of coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath. Times when it is difficult to breath, are called asthma attacks. Asthma can be managed by a series of lifestyle modifications and can be treated with medications. While manageable, asthma can be associated with elevated emergency room use and may require significant attention when a life-threatening attack occurs.

7.5% OF THE POPULATION AGED 18 YEARS OF AGE OR HIGHER, HAS RECEIVED AN ASTHMA DIAGNOSIS.

In Atlantic County, 7.5% of the population aged 18 years of age or higher, has received an asthma diagnosis. Asthma also contributes to 13.4 hospital visits, whether emergency room or inpatient per 100,000 residents per year. This is significantly higher than the state average of 7.8.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES/UNSAFE SEXUAL PRACTICES

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancy result from lack of participation in safe-sex practices. Recently the incidence of STIs nationally has been on the rise. STIs are associated with a significantly increased risk of morbidity and mortality. This includes increased risk of cervical cancer, involuntary infertility, and in extreme cases, premature death. Evidence also suggests that STIs place a high economic burden on society.

Incidence of chlamydia is used as an indicator to gauge how widespread STIs are. Chlamydia is selected because it is the most common bacterial STI. In 2018 in Atlantic County, per 100,000 residents, there are 495 diagnosed cases of chlamydia, higher than the average rate of 319.6.

Gonorrhea is another sexually transmitted infection. In Atlantic County, during the year 2018, 124.7 cases were reported per 100,000 population.

In New Jersey alone, there were 47,391 diagnosed bacterial STI cases in 2018. This is a 21.6% percent increase since 2014 across the entire state.

Pregnancy and Birth Outcomes

The total number of births in Atlantic County for the year 2017 was 2,808. This number is 11% less than 5 years ago. 9.9% of births are considered preterm, meaning that they take place prior to 38 gestational weeks. 8.4% of birth weights are considered low. Also impacting Atlantic County, are the high rates of births to women aged 15-17, or teen births. Per 1000 females aged 15-17, 20 have given birth. Comparatively, the state average is 14 births per 1000 females aged 15-17; however the national average is higher at 9.9 births.

73.8% of pregnant women residing in Atlantic County receive early prenatal care. This is similar to the state average at 74.7%.

Atlantic County has high rates of infant mortality. Infant mortality rates are 6.8 per 1000 infants deceased prior to the age of 1. This is higher than state and national rates of 4.5 and 5.9 respectively.

Behaviors that Impact Health

Daily habits like the foods you eat, the time you go to sleep and how much activity you get throughout the day have a significant influence on your health. Each of these behaviors positively or negatively affects you and dictates the overall state of your health.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

There are many benefits to participating in routine physical activity. This reduces the risk of many chronic conditions by maintaining a healthy weight, improves cognition and mobility. It also has proven to reduce social isolation as well as improves one's mental health status. In Atlantic County, 73 percent of community members reported participating in some sort of physical activity during a 30-day period, while 27 percent of the population didn't participate in any form of physical activity during the same time frame.

Living in safe environments and having access to exercise opportunities improves the likelihood that one will participate in physical activity. 93% of our population has considerable access to locations which offer physical activity. While this may be reduced in select county municipalities, mainly those underserved; the majority of Atlantic County residents live near a park, have access to sidewalks, or gyms providing them the resources necessary to support their being active.





NUTRITION/ ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables is believed to lower one's risk for cardiac disease, diabetes, obesity and other chronic conditions. Proper nutrition is linked to improved health outcomes; and yet, proper nutrition is not attainable to all due to elevated prices for healthy foods and restricted access in some communities with limited resources. 8% of Atlantic County's population has limited access to healthy foods, which is defined as living within 10 miles of a grocery store for suburban communities and within one mile for urban communities like Atlantic City.

In Atlantic County, only 14% of residents report eating the recommended minimum of at least five servings of fruits and vegetables per day. Much of this is impacted by the fact that 13% of Atlantic County's residents are deemed food insecure, or without adequate access to food. Atlantic County ranks second in the state for food insecurity. It shares this ranking with Salem and Cumberland Counties, falling behind only Essex County.

ALCOHOL & OTHER SUBSTANCE USE

Alcohol and other substance use disorders are the main leading cause of unintended deaths in the United States. This number is rapidly on the rise.

Excessive drinking is defined as either participating in binge drinking activities; consuming more than four drinks (women) or five drinks (men) on a given occasion within a 30-day period; or participating in heavy drinking of more than one drink per day consistently for women or two drinks per day for men. Excessive drinking is linked to increased frequency of heart disease and heart attacks, increased sexually transmitted diseases, sudden infant death syndrome, suicide, violent behaviors, and other adverse health outcomes.

In Atlantic County, 17.1 percent of adults reported participating in drinking practices that would be labeled excessive. This is comparable to overall rates in New Jersey.

One specific adverse outcome attributed to excessive drinking is alcohol-related motor vehicle accidents. Many of these lead to death. In Atlantic County, 24 percent of all motor vehicle accident-related deaths were attributed to alcohol.

There has been a significant increase in the prevalence of substance use disorder in recent years. Atlantic County has experienced high rates of overdose deaths. In the year 2018, there were 180 overdose related deaths. The rate of overdose death rates is 63.5 for every 100,000 in the population. The highest death rates are attributed to heroin and fentanyl, at 95 and 82 respectively.



TOBACCO USE

Tobacco use is the largest preventable cause of death, disease, and disability in the United States. Smoking can harm nearly every organ in a smoker's body and also affects non-smokers exposed through secondhand smoke. Smoking rates in Atlantic County are the highest in the state, with 19.7% of the population reporting that they smoke. This is much higher than the state average of 14%.

An additional 3% of the population uses smokeless tobacco products. This number doesn't reflect vaping, juuling, or e-cigarette usage, which is believed to also be used by a sizable portion of the population.

Also of concern for Atlantic County, is that 3% of pregnant women report smoking in their last three months of their pregnancy. Not only does smoking impact the mother, it also harms the fetus by increasing their risk of developing significant health concerns. These include preterm birth, low birth weight, and other birth defects.

Secondhand smoke can cause heart disease, lung cancer and stroke. Another factor contributing to the tobacco burden in our community is the exposure to secondhand smoke, as smoking is still allowed in Atlantic City gaming facilities. The presence of this smoke impacts the many workers, visitors and vendors who pass through these facilities.



VACCINATIONS

Vaccines prevent the spread of infectious diseases by protecting those who receive the vaccine from getting the disease when they come into contact with someone who has the infection or unvaccinated. Vaccinations protect our community's health by building immunity against select communicable diseases, and in many cases have either eradicated such diseases or have significantly reduced their burden.

Vaccinations are recommended for both children and adults. While there are a series of vaccinations suggested for children, there are few vaccinations recommended for adults. The two predominate ones are influenza and pneumococcal. It is important to discuss the recommended vaccinations that might be appropriate for you with a healthcare provider.

Influenza vaccinations are recommended for all adults ages 18 and older, and strongly recommended for high risk populations which include those with compromised immune systems, seniors over the age of 65 years, and pregnant women. In Atlantic County, 42.8% of the population ages 18 years of age or older report receiving an influenza vaccination. As it relates to high-risk groups, 48% of seniors aged 65 and older have received the vaccination. This is comparable to state averages.

SLEEP

Sleep is an important component of overall health and well-being. Sleep provides the body the time it needs to repair itself, rest, and get ready for another day. Getting adequate sleep can also be attributed to preventing excessive weight gain, high blood pressure, heart disease and other conditions. Sleep is linked to better management of stress, and the lack of it has been proven to weaken one's immune system.

It is recommended that adults receive at least seven to nine hours of sleep to function at their best. When one receives less than seven hours, they are receiving an insufficient level. In Atlantic County, 38% of the population is receiving an insufficient amount of sleep. This not only puts these individuals at greater risk for chronic conditions, it also increases the likelihood of risky behaviors. Sleepiness is often a reason for many accidents and unintended injuries, including motor vehicle crashes. Sleepiness can put the lives of others in jeopardy.

Community Health Needs & Perceptions

As part of AtlantiCare’s Community Health Needs Assessment process, representatives from our community are surveyed about their participation in various health impacting behaviors; unmet healthcare needs that exist; and their perceptions and/or opinions regarding what should be a priority in our community as it relates to health. This information is helpful as AtlantiCare and other community agencies determine responses and actions to address stated needs. Please see the findings from our survey below.

HEALTH INFLUENCING BEHAVIORS

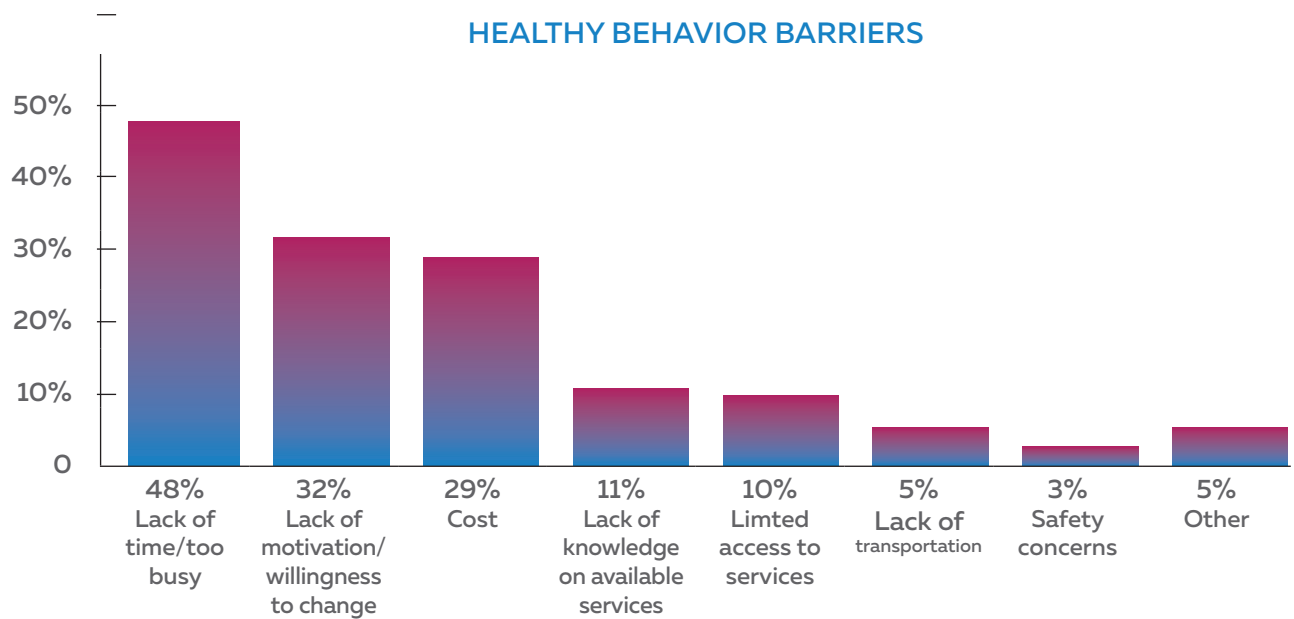
Atlantic County residents were asked to indicate whether or not they participate in health influencing behaviors. Those listed below are the top six behaviors that presented as opportunities for those completing the survey. This means that the least number of residents indicated that they participated in these health impacting behaviors:

Behavior	% of the Population Who Reported Not Participating in the Behavior
Regular Physical Activity	44%
Sufficient Sleep	37%
Recommended Vaccinations	21%
Healthy Eating	21%
Refraining from Tobacco Use	10%
Getting the Recommended Preventative Screenings	10%
Stress Management Practices/ Support	9%
Safe Sex Practices	6%
Responsible Alcohol Use	5%
Appropriate Uses for Prescription Medications	3%
Responsible Substance Use	3%

*THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS WERE THEN ASKED TO RANK THESE SAME BEHAVIORS AS OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY. THEY IDENTIFIED THE TOP THREE THAT NEEDED ATTENTION. THOSE IDENTIFIED INCLUDE: **SUBSTANCE USE, STRESS MANAGEMENT, AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.***

HEALTHY BEHAVIOR BARRIERS

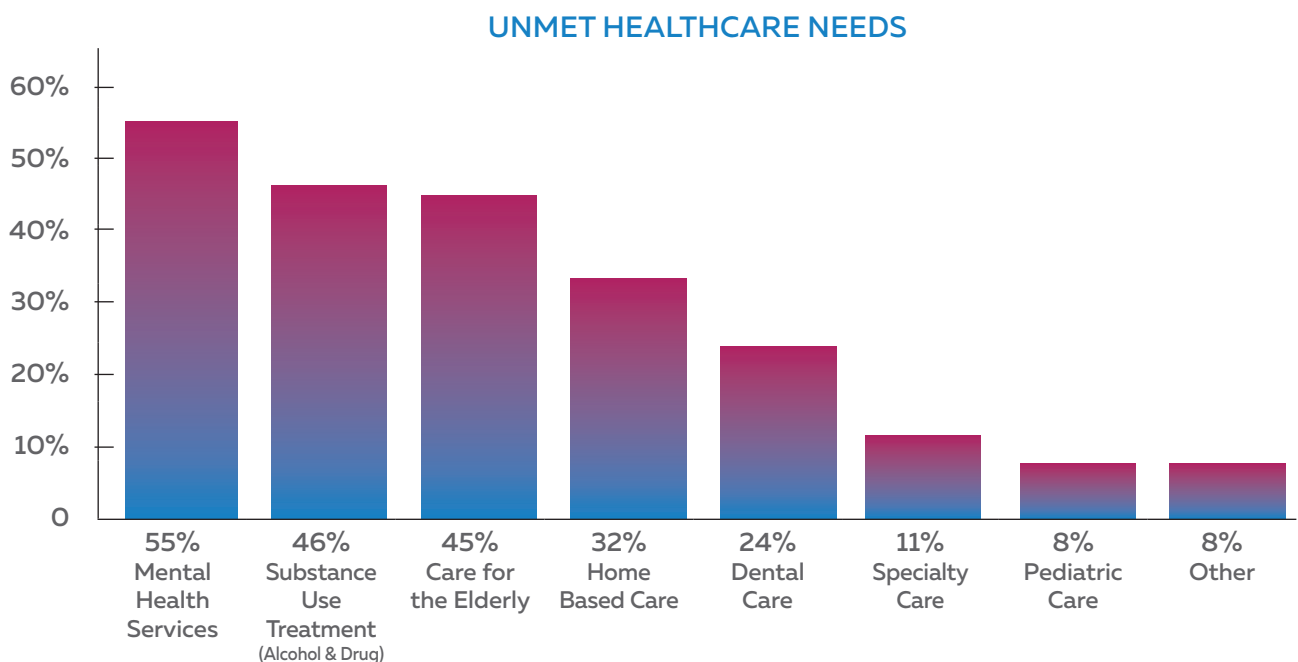
There are a number of barriers that impede healthy lifestyles. Many of these can be a result of environmental factors, cultural norms, or current policies or system practices. Below are the barriers indicated by Atlantic County residents as preventing their participation in healthy lifestyles, listed in the order in which they are perceived to have the strongest impact.



UNMET HEALTHCARE NEEDS

Atlantic County residents identified the community’s unmet healthcare needs. The list below, provides insight into what the community is indicating as a gap in the healthcare services available to this community.

Of those listing specialty care being an unmet need, those most common specialties stated were Endocrinology, Dermatology, Psychiatry, and Rheumatology.



NEIGHBORHOOD FACTORS

Where we live impacts our health. There are many factors that can influence the health of a neighborhood. The factors often don't involve healthcare services, and can be associated with the presence or lack of various environmental and social supports.

Atlantic County residents were asked to indicate what factors they believed influenced the health of their specific neighborhood. Here is what they indicated as opportunities for their specific neighborhood.

Neighborhood Factors	% of the Respondents who Identified the Factor
Lack of Quality Child Care	52%
Insufficient Affordable Housing	45%
Limited Employment Opportunities	44%
Availability of Life-Supporting Incomes	42%
Limited Access to Resources	39%
Transportation	37%
Inadequate Social Supports	36%
Food Insecurity	36%
Community Safety	28%
Available Community Spaces/Community Centers	19%
Exercise Opportunities	16%
Educational Opportunities	15%

*THE RESIDENTS WERE THEN ASKED TO IDENTIFY THE TOP THREE PRIORITIES THAT SHOULD BE FOCUSED ON AS A MEANS TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY. THE TOP THREE FACTORS IDENTIFIED AS PRIORITIES FOR INTERVENTION INCLUDE: **AFFORDABLE HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT AND FOOD ACCESS.***

Data Sources

The following sources of demographic and public health data were used in the compilation of this report:

- 2019 Community Health Needs Survey, AtlantiCare; Survey Administrator: Qualtrics
- 2018 Community Health Perceptions Focus Groups, AtlantiCare; Administrator: Spirit of Purpose
- 2017-2018 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey; New Jersey Department of Health and Human Services
- New Jersey State Health Assessment Data, New Jersey Department of Health
- 2019 County Health Rankings, University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- 2019 Atlantic County, New Jersey Kids Count Data, Annie E. Casey Foundation, published by Advocates for Children in New Jersey
- 2018 American Community Survey, Atlantic County, New Jersey, United States Census Bureau
- Healthy Homes: National Center for Healthy Housing. 2019. Viewed at: <https://nchh.org/information-and-evidence/learn-about-healthy-housing/lead/>
- Research on Early Childhood Education. National Education Association, 2019. Viewed at: <http://www.nea.org/home/18226.htm>
- *Why Homeownership Matters: The Triple Bottom Line*: Freddie Mac. June 4, 2018. Viewed at: http://www.freddiemac.com/blog/homeownership/20180604_national_homeownership_month.page
- 2010 Quick Facts, Atlantic County, New Jersey, United States Census Bureau

Atlantic County Hospitals and Clinics

HOSPITALS

AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center
Atlantic City, Galloway, Hammonton
(888) 569-1000
www.atlanticare.org

Shore Medical Center
Somers Point
(609) 653-3500
www.shoremedicalcenter.org

CLINICS

AtlantiCare Health Services
Adult Medicine
Atlantic City
(609) 572-6055

Galloway
(609) 404-7300

AtlantiCare Health Services
Pediatrics
Atlantic City
(609) 572-8686

Atlantic County Division of Public Health
Northfield
(609) 645-5933

Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers, Inc.
Hammonton (609) 567-0200
Pleasantville (609) 383-0880
Atlantic City (609) 572-0000
www.sjfm.org

Volunteers in Medicine Clinic
Egg Harbor Twp.
(609) 463-2846
www.vimsj.org

**FOR ADDITIONAL SERVICES AND RESOURCES,
PLEASE VISIT:**

<https://www.atlantic-county.org/documents/publications/the-source-2019.pdf>

Atlantic County Map



1 - AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center, Satellite Emergency Department, Hammonton

2 - AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center, Pomona

3 - AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center, Atlantic City and AtlantiCare HealthPlex, Atlantic City

4 - Bacharach Institute for Rehabilitation, Pomona

5 - Shore Medical Center, Somers Point

6 - Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers, Inc., Hammonton

7 - Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers, Inc., Pleasantville

8 - Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers, Inc., Atlantic City

9 - Atlantic County Division of Public Health, Northfield



Atlantic County, New Jersey