

2020 SOTCH Scorecard - McDowell County



The 2018 Community Health Assessment priority areas are:

- **Mental Health and Suicide Prevention**
- **Substance Abuse Including Tobacco**

The following SOTCH Scorecard was created and submitted **May 28th, 2021** in order to meet the requirements for the **2020 McDowell County State of the County's Health Report**.

Clear Impact Scorecard™ is a strategy and performance management software that is accessible through a web browser and designed to support collaboration both inside and outside organizations. WNC Healthy Impact is using Clear Impact Scorecard™ to support the development of electronic CHIPs, SOTCH Reports and Hospital Implementation Strategy scorecards in communities across the region.

Scorecard helps communities organize their community health improvement efforts:

- Develop and communicate shared vision
- Define clear measures of progress
- Share data internally or with partners
- Simplify the way you collect, monitor and report data on your results

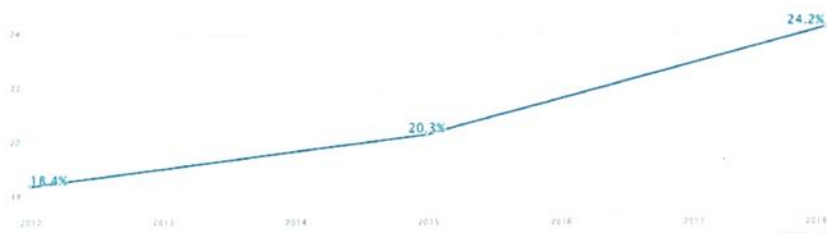
The following resources were used/reviewed in order to complete the SOTCH:

- [WNC Healthy Impact](#)
- WNC Healthy Impact Data Workbook - [Click Here to Upload](#)
- [NC DHHS CHA Tools](#)
- [NC DHHS County Health Data Book](#)
- [NC DHHS/ DPH CHA Data Tools](#)
- Healthy North Carolina 2020: A Better State of Health
- Healthy People 2020
- CDC The Community Guide
- County Health Rankings - What Works for Health

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention - Long Term CHIP

			Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
R	Mental Health	People in McDowell County are healthy, resilient and thriving.				
I	Mental Health	Percentage of Adults Reporting Greater than 7 Days of Poor Mental Health in the Past Month	2018	24.2%	↗ 2	32% ↗

Data Source: 2018 WNC Healthy Impact Community Health Survey

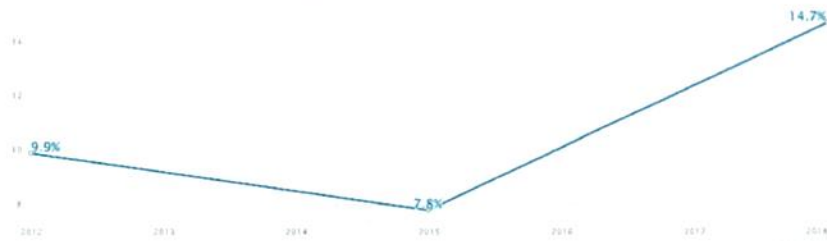


2015	20.3%	↗ 1	10% ↗
2012	18.4%	→ 0	0% →

Mental Health

Percentage of Adults Reporting They Did Not Get Mental Health Care or Counseling that was Needed in the Past Year

Data Source: 2018 WNC Healthy Impact Community Health Survey

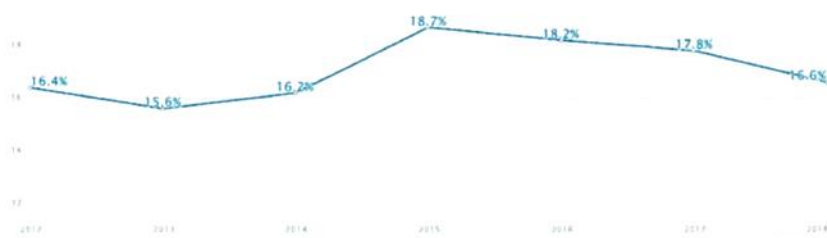


2018	14.7%	↗ 1	48% ↗
2015	7.8%	↘ 1	-21% ↘
2012	9.9%	→ 0	0% →

Mental Health

Suicide Mortality Rate

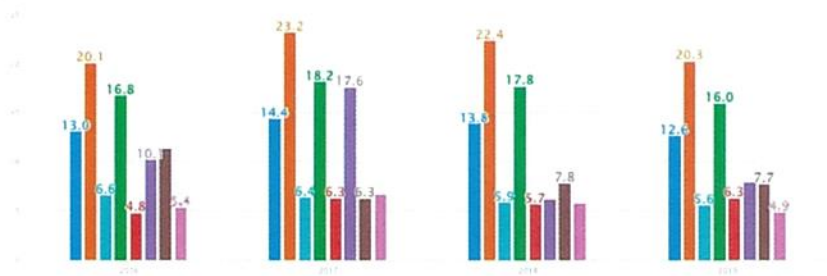
Data Source: North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics



2018	16.6%	↘ 3	2% ↗
2017	17.8%	↘ 2	10% ↗
2016	18.2%	↘ 1	12% ↗
2015	18.7%	↗ 2	15% ↗
2014	16.2%	↗ 1	0% →
2013	15.6%	↘ 1	-4% ↘
2012	16.4%	↗ 3	1% ↗
2011	15.6%	↗ 2	-4% ↘
2010	12.2%	↗ 1	-25% ↘

FHLI-NC HNC2030

Self-Harm Total



2019	12.6	↘ 2	-3% ↘
2018	13.8	↘ 1	6% ↗
2017	14.4	↗ 1	11% ↗
2016	13.0	→ 0	0% →

Mental Health Raise awareness of mental health services by implementing a community-wide messaging campaign.

What Is It?

Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
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Raising awareness about what community resources exist was identified as an action that when - combined with other actions in our community - has a reasonable chance of making a difference in mental health and suicide prevention in our community. This is an ongoing intervention in our community, but based on community feedback, this effort needs improvement. Although many community partners tirelessly work on this issue, the message is not being delivered to the community in its entirety. This campaign will serve to publicize ways to access mental health services including crisis services outside of emergency departments and encourage community members to seek help for mental health problems.

The priority population/customers for this intervention are individuals; children, adults and families alike. The intervention aims to make a difference at the individual/interpersonal behavior level. Implementation will take place in community/public setting. Raising awareness about what community resources exist would include the implementation of a community-wide messaging campaign through diverse communications tools such as resource lists, signage, newspaper articles/ads, social media messaging and publicity on community partner websites and community boards at local businesses.

Additionally, this intervention will also include surveys that will be completed by community members. Insight will be gained as to what kinds of additional improvements should be made in the county to continue to raise awareness of mental health services as well as to the reach and success, or lack thereof, of the messaging campaign.

According to Healthy North Carolina 2020: men are almost four times as likely to commit suicide as women (19.9 versus 5.6 suicides per 100,000 population in 2008). Whites have higher suicide rates than African Americans and individuals of other racial/ethnic groups. Suicide rates in the western part of the state are higher than in the Piedmont or eastern parts of the state (17.6 versus 11.4 and 12.2 suicides per 100,000 population, respectively, in 2008). Also, females report more poor mental health days in the previous 30 days than men (4.0 versus 2.8 days in 2008). Hispanics report having the fewest poor mental health days (2.2 days), compared with non-Hispanic whites (3.4 days) and non-Hispanic African Americans (3.8 days), whereas American Indians report the most poor mental health days (5.8 days) (2008).

Further, efforts to improve a person's mental health is essential as suicide is the second leading cause of death for age group 20-39 in McDowell County. Between 2006 and 2017, the number of McDowell County residents served by an Area Mental Health Program steadily increased from 1,492 to 2,286 (a 53.2% increase) and during 2012-2016 there were 42 reported suicides. In 2018, 16.3% of McDowell County adults indicated they are dissatisfied with life. This is more than double the rate in 2012 (7.9%) and that of 2015 (7.4%). This rate is also higher than that of the WNC region (10.5%).

By utilizing diverse avenues for disseminating information, our intervention aims to reach folks of all races, economic statuses, and educational backgrounds as well as those with or without internet service.

Updates

2020 Updates:

- With the increased recognition of mental health needs in McDowell County, many individuals and agencies came together and formed the McDowell County Mental Health Cohort. This group is focused on prevention and resiliency. Strategies and projects will focus on the concept of building a resilient culture, which includes approaches such as: normalizing and talking about mental health, building stronger communities through connections, advocacy and volunteerism, and bringing trauma-informed practices, already embedded in the schools, to the community and workplace to inform, educate and empower each other to manage personal trauma in a positive manner.
- Due to the Stay-at-Home order that took effect in March 2020, social media was heavily utilized to disseminate information promoting ways to reduce the risk of poor COVID-19 outcomes.
- Regional resource cards for mental health and substance use related assistance were printed. These were made available at the Health Department and the McDowell Tailgate Market. These cards were also placed in food boxes that were given away by the Foothills Food Hub.

2019 Updates:

- There is even greater recognition of the importance of community members having access to mental health and behavioral health services. This has caused heightened discussions of multiple community partners in varying sectors to engage in this conversation, which is a significant start.
- The McDowell County Health Coalition's Annual Meeting on December 13, 2019 included a substantial portion focused on mental/behavioral health, some available services, and its impact on youth.

PM	Mental Health	Percentage of community members reached by the community-wide messaging campaign (no current data)	—	—	—	—
P	Mental Health	Provide McDowell County Schools faculty and staff, and child care workers with an evidence-based mental health program and suicide prevention gatekeeper training.	Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change

What Is It?

Providing McDowell County Schools faculty and staff and child care workers with an evidence-based mental health program and suicide prevention gatekeeper training was identified as an action that - when combined with other actions in our community - has a reasonable chance of making a difference in mental health and suicide prevention in our community. This is an ongoing program in our community. Evidence-based programs and trainings such as Mental Health First Aid, Question Persuade Refer (QPR), and the like, have been offered in McDowell county over the last few years; however, it seems as though this intervention has not reached its maximum potential and should be expanded to a new target population to be more effective.

It is recognized that it is equally as important to offer youth-focused training to people who interact regularly with young people, specifically making Youth Mental Health First Aid trainings available to parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent. This training gives one the tools to appropriately manage a situation where a young person is experiencing a mental health challenge or is in crisis. Similarly, QPR Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention is designed to teach lay and professional "gatekeepers" the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to respond. Gatekeepers can include anyone who is strategically positioned to recognize and refer someone at risk of suicide.

According to Healthy North Carolina 2020, Men are almost four times as likely to commit suicide as women (19.9 versus 5.6 suicides per 100,000 population in 2008). Whites have higher suicide rates than African Americans and individuals of other racial/ethnic groups. The NC Office of State Budget and Management describes that in 2017 the total population of McDowell County was 46,171. The majority of residents are White (92.8%) with minorities represented as follows: Black or African American (3.9%), Hispanic or Latino (7.0%), Asian and Pacific Islander (0.9%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (1.0%).

Additionally, Healthy People 2020 states that approximately 20% of U.S. children and adolescents are affected by mental health disorders during their lifetime. Often, symptoms of anxiety disorders emerge by age 6, behavior disorders by age 11, mood disorders by age 13, and substance use disorders by age 15. Also, 15% of high school students have seriously considered suicide, and 7% have attempted to take their own life. Mental health disorders among children and adolescents can lead to school failure, alcohol or other drug abuse, family discord, violence, and suicide.

Updates

2020 Updates:

- The Stay-at-Home order that took effect in March 2020 caused the schools to shut down for a couple of weeks and students were then moved to remote learning for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. The 2020-2021 school year began under remote learning instruction and some were given the option for a hybrid plan. Extracurricular learning was placed on hold as it was imperative to utilize the limited class time for instruction of state-mandated lessons.
- Additional Executive Orders given by the Governor in 2020 banned mass gatherings and caused several employers to require their employees to work remotely. This created many challenges leading to the need to put many planned projects on hold.

2019 Updates:

- McDowell County Schools employs approximately 7 youth Mental Health First Aid trainers. All faculty and staff are required to receive training. The expense of manuals and coordination of time have been identified as barriers.

PM	Mental Health	Number of schools that participated in a mental health program or training (no current data)	—	—	—	—
PM	Mental Health	Percentage of persons who report a valued skill was learned or valuable knowledge obtained because of the provided mental health program or training (no current data)	—	—	—	—
PM	Mental Health	Number of persons who participated in a mental health program or training (no current data)	—	—	—	—

Substance Abuse Including Tobacco - Long Term CHIP

R	Substance Use	People in McDowell County feel supported and are connected to care.	Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
I	Substance Use	Percentage of Adults Who Used Opiates/Opioids in the Past Year, With or Without a Prescription	2018	18.7	→ 0	0% →

Data Source: 2018 WNC Healthy Impact Community Health Survey



Substance Use Percentage of Adults Who's Life Has Been Negatively Affected by Substance Abuse (by Self or Someone Else)

2018 43.4 → 0 0% →

Data Source: 2018 WNC Healthy Impact Community Health Survey



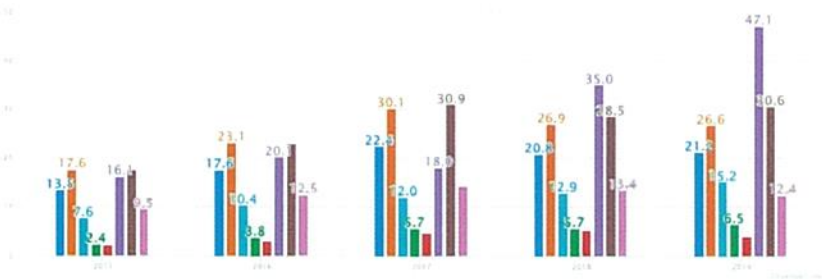
Tobacco Prevalence of Current Smokers

2018 21.9 ↘ 1 1% ↑
2015 29.6 ↗ 1 37% ↑
2012 21.6 → 0 0% →



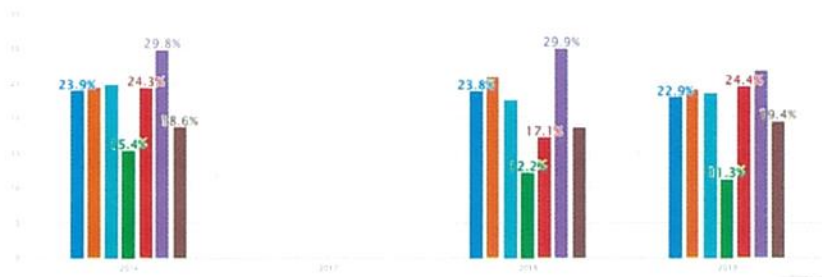
FHLI-NC HNC2030 Drug Poisoning Deaths Total

2019 21.2 ↗ 1 57% ↑
2018 20.8 ↘ 1 54% ↑
2017 22.4 ↗ 2 66% ↑
2016 17.6 ↗ 1 30% ↑
2015 13.5 → 0 0% →



FHLI-NC HNC2030 Adult Tobacco Use Total

2019 22.9% ↘ 2 -4% ↓



2018	23.8%	↓ 1	0% →
2016	23.9%	→ 0	0% →

P Substance Use Combat stigma against seeking help for substance abuse.

Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
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What Is It?

Combating the stigma against seeking help for substance abuse was identified as an action that - when combined with other actions in our community - has a reasonable chance of making a difference in substance abuse in our community. This is an ongoing program in our community. Worksite Wellness has gained heightened interest by community leaders and employers alike, but the focus has been geared more towards managing weight, chronic diseases and tobacco cessation. With the increased recognition of substance use disorder, incorporating support for treatment and recovery services for substance abuse into worksite wellness has become vital.

The priority population/customers for this intervention are working adults, and the intervention aims to make a difference at the individual/interpersonal behavior, organizational/policy, and environmental change level. Implementation will take place in worksites. Manufacturing is the largest sector of employment in McDowell County with over 6,100 employees followed by retail trade and health care and social assistance (1,858 and 1,447 respectively).

According to Healthy North Carolina 2020, young adults aged 18-25 years are more likely to report illicit drug use than people of other ages (19.5% versus 9.8% for those aged 12-17 and 5.6% for those aged 26 and older in 2007-2008). In McDowell County when looking at the leading causes of death by age group, other unintentional injuries is ranked number one as the leading cause of death followed by suicide and cancer, all sites, for young adults ages 20-39.

Moreover, substance abuse has adverse consequences for families, communities, and society. People who suffer from abuse or dependence are at risk for premature death, comorbid health conditions, injuries and disabilities. Nearly half (43.4%) of McDowell County residents indicated that their life has been negatively affected by substance abuse (by self or someone else) and 23.8% have experienced household substance abuse prior to age 18, an Adverse Childhood Experience.

Updates

2020 Updates:

- A Workforce Wellness Director, Karen Davis, was newly hired by Isothermal Planning and Development Commission.
- Covid restrictions did not freely allow collaboration among worksites and the Workforce Wellness Director. It was not possible for the Workforce Wellness Director to effectively implement a health assessment or identify needs and gaps due to the stay-at-home order and other precautions in place to slow the spread of Covid-19.

2019 Updates:

- New staff was recently hired by Isothermal Planning and Development Commission, including Sarah Kopkin and Nick Byrd, who serve as Project Managers in the Economic and Community Development division. Prior to staff being hired, the Workforce Wellness program had been placed on hold.

PM	Substance Use	Number of employees who report confidence and ability to access substance abuse help because of the Workforce Wellness program (no current data)	—	—	—	—
PM	Substance Use	Number of Work-sites who participated in a Workforce Wellness program (no current data)	—	—	—	—
PM	Substance Use	Number of employees who participated in a Workforce Wellness program and focused on substance abuse (no current data)	—	—	—	—
P	Tobacco	Stay up-to-date on evidence-based clinical preventive screenings, counseling, and treatment guidelines.	Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change

What Is It?

Advocating for community members to stay up to date on evidence-based clinical preventive screenings, counseling and treatment guidelines was identified as an action that - when combined with other actions in our community - has a reasonable chance of making a difference in substance abuse and tobacco use in our community. This is an ongoing program in our community that has demonstrated that raising awareness on key issues is instrumental to the wellbeing of a community; however, in McDowell County, it has been proven that disseminating information across the county to the different regions and different population groups is difficult. This intervention needs a more concentrated approach.

This intervention will include a mass media campaign to communicate to the general public about the importance of clinical preventive screenings, counseling and treatment, especially for individuals who are current or former smokers. The campaign will utilize diverse media outlets such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the internet. By utilizing diverse avenues for disseminating information, our intervention aims to reach folks of all economic statuses and educational backgrounds as well as those with or without internet service. Additionally, health education will be incorporated at health fairs and other community events to include a portion on the importance of clinical preventive screenings, counseling and treatment.

The priority population/customers for this intervention are current smokers, and the intervention aims to make a difference at the individual/interpersonal behavior level. Implementation will take place in the community/public setting.

Healthy North Carolina 2020 reveals that an estimated 13,000 North Carolinians aged 35 years of older died from a smoking-related cause each year during 2005-2009. North Carolina has the 14th highest smoking prevalence in the nation. Although overall smoking rates among adults in the state have dropped in the past decade, North Carolina still lags behind the national average. In McDowell County 21.9% of residents are current smokers, greater than the Healthy People 2020 target of 12% or lower. More residents in McDowell county are smokers than that of the WNC region (19.0%), the state (17.9%) and the country (16.3%). Further, 9.7% of residents use smokeless tobacco – again, greater than the Healthy People 2020 target of 0.3% or lower, and significantly higher than that of all comparator jurisdictions. Also, the newer phenomena of e-cigarettes has reached a new height and currently 5.4% of McDowell County residents are e-cigarette users. Finally, 14.0% of residents surveyed indicate that they have breathed someone else's cigarette smoke at work in the past week.

Moreover, individuals with less education and those with lower incomes are more likely to smoke. People with less than a high school education are three times as likely to smoke as college graduates and those with higher incomes are less likely to smoke (10.4% among those making \$75,000 or more versus 29.4% among those making less than \$15,000 in 2009). Among the total population age 25 and older, McDowell County has a 35.2% high school graduation rate, 21.9% some college with no degree and 14.6% who have a bachelor's degree or higher. The U.S. Census Bureau shows that in 2016 the median family income was \$45,431 and the per capita income was \$19,233. Lastly, 20.0% of the total population is below poverty level, which is higher than both the WNC region (16.5%) and the state (16.8%).

Updates

2020 Updates:

- Due to the Stay-at-Home order that took effect in March 2020, social media was heavily utilized to disseminate information promoting the health benefits of physical activity, healthy eating, and being tobacco free to help reduce the risk of poor COVID-19 outcomes.
- Additional Executive Orders given by the Governor in 2020 banned mass gatherings and caused several employers to require their employees to work remotely.
- Health Department resources and staff were critical to Covid-19 response. The pandemic took precedence and staff was asked to assist with contact tracing, mass testing, and mass vaccination clinics. This created many challenges leading to the need to put many planned projects on hold.

2019 Updates:

- On August 15, 2019 McDowell Access to Care and Health (MATCH) hosted a Back to School Community Health Fair. The health fair included free health screenings and over 15 community agencies on site to provide valuable information on community resources. There were also free back to school give aways, house hold cleaning supplies, and free produce from the YMCA mobile market.
- On October 19, 2019 MATCH hosted another community outreach event where participants could obtain free health screenings, flu shots, free giveaways and information on many available community resources.
- On November 7th and November 25th, community agencies hosted Health Coverage Enrollment events where health insurance navigators were available to assist community members sign-up for marketplace health insurance.

PM	Tobacco	Number of people who received health information at health fairs regarding tobacco related preventive screenings, counseling and treatment (no current data)	—	—	—	—
PM	Tobacco	Increase in number of participants utilizing QuitLine NC (no current data)	—	—	—	—

New and Emerging Issues and Initiatives

R	Monitor New and Emerging Issues	Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
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Notes

These are the new or emerging issues in our community in 2020 that were not identified as priorities in our CHA.

- Health Department staff, emergency responders and other healthcare providers were kept on high alert due to the widespread Coronavirus (COVID- 19) cases. As of 05/24/2021, there have been over 5,200 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in McDowell County and 63 deaths.
- The Stay-at-Home order, quarantine requirements, isolation and grief negatively impacted (anecdotal information) community members' mental health. Community members mentioned increased depression, stress, and anxiety each contributing to poor Covid-19 outcomes.

R	Keep Track of New Initiatives and Community Changes	Most Recent Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
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Notes

The following are new initiatives or changes in our community in 2020:

- In October 2020, Gov. Roy Cooper announced Triple Aught Design, a US-based adventure gear company, will invest \$1 million to build and operate a cutting-edge apparel and gear production facility and experience center in Old Fort. This would create 70 jobs in this community.
- In 2019, the West Marion Community Forum, Inc. was awarded a grant from the BlueCross BlueShield Foundation of North Carolina to develop strategies to address childhood obesity and the underlying factors that contribute to this health disparity in McDowell County, NC. In January 2020, as part of the planning phase of this grant, diverse stakeholders from across the clinical sector, school system, nonprofits, local government, and community were invited to participate in a "Whole Distance Exercise" to share their expertise and ideas for addressing childhood obesity and the effects on the family. Additionally, this grant also allowed for other projects and programs to come about including Community-Centered Health. Community-centered health is a new way of addressing health, building trust, and creating community change to improve health.
- Paula Swepson, executive director with the West Marion Community Forum, and Mary Snow, principal consultant with the Equitable Community Strategies, are the co-authors of "Shift Happens in Community: A Toolkit to Build Power and Ignite Change." This textbook or toolkit was released in December 2020 and shares best practices for engaging rural communities developed from a real-world model in McDowell County.
- Community Engagement Project (CEP) is a core team member of the Community-Centered Health initiative. CEP supports community driven changes in rural communities in McDowell County and models the success of the West Marion Community Forum, where leaders work together to strategize, share information, and foster positive changes in their community.
- The Foothills Food Hub is a program of the Local Food Advisory Council that will significantly address food insecurity, support a local food economy, and transform the food system and public health infrastructure of McDowell County. Amid the pandemic, the Foothills Food Hub and its many volunteers served the community by ensuring that community members had access to food.