

CHEROKEE COUNTY, NC 2009 STATE OF THE COUNTY HEALTH REPORT

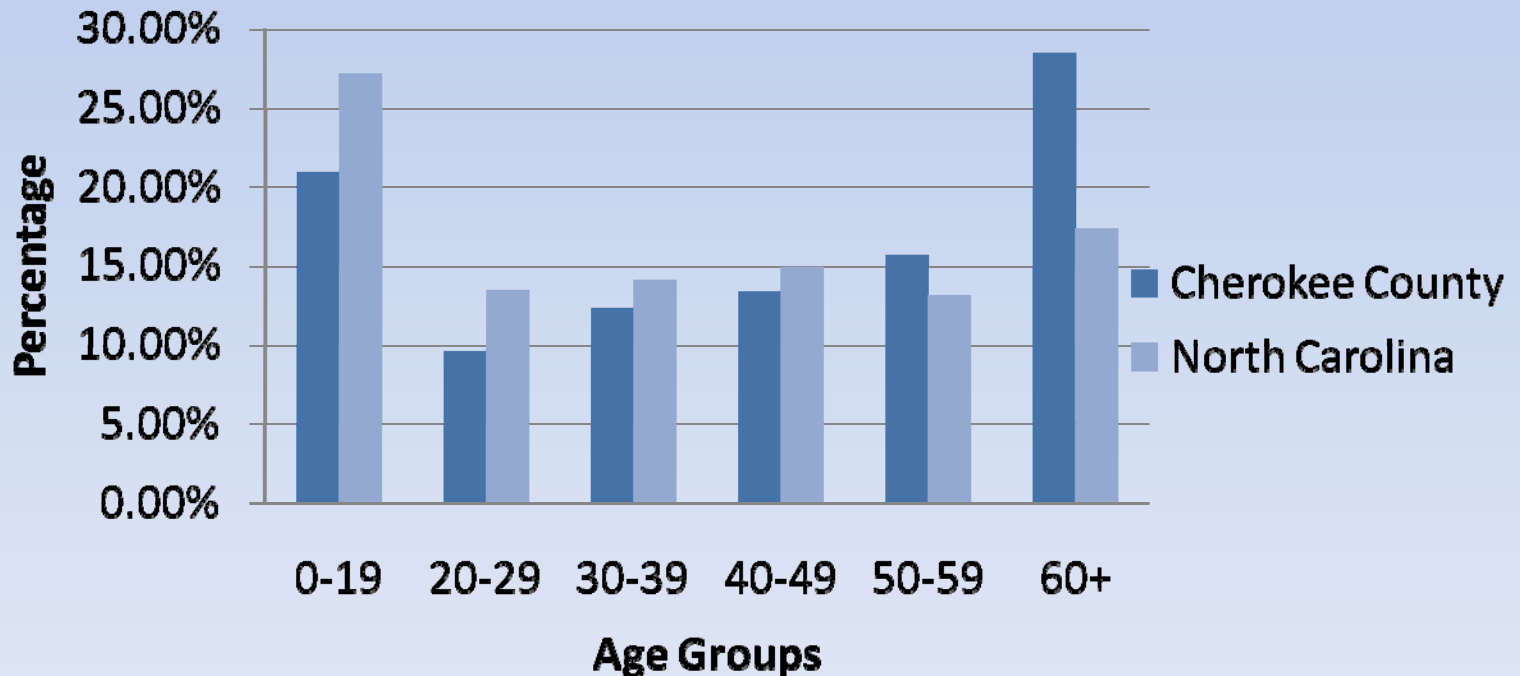


PREPARED BY CHEROKEE COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

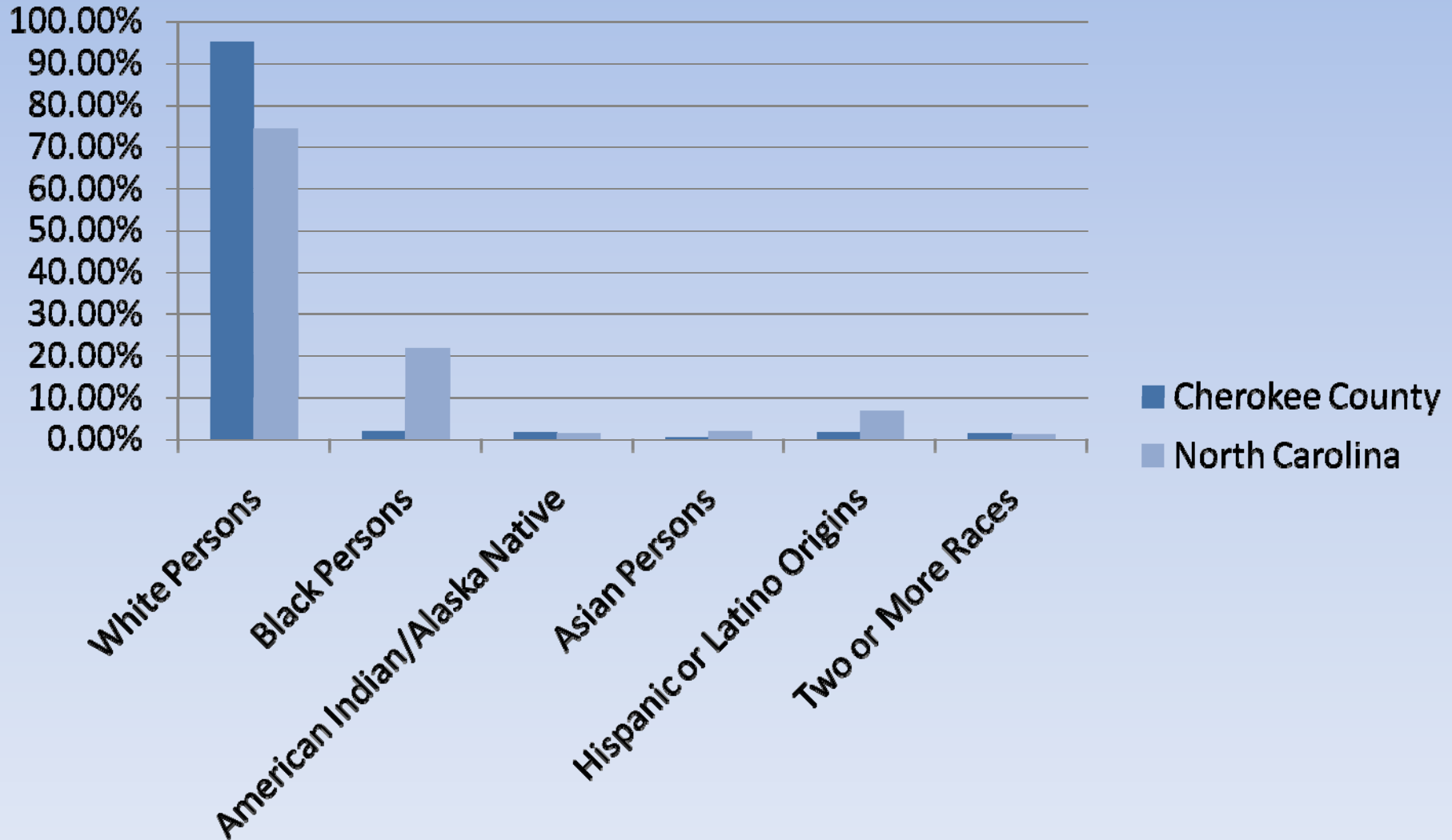
DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Total Population: 26,335

Age Breakdown for Cherokee County vs North Carolina (2007 EDIS)



Population by Ethnicity-2006 Census



Health Priorities from the 2008 Community Health Assessment

Substance Abuse: Illegal Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco Use

- Substance abuse was identified as a priority as a result of the 2008 Community Health Assessment
- 23.9% of adults currently smoke cigarettes
- 30% of women smoke while pregnant
- 45% of 11th graders have used tobacco, 53% have used alcohol, and 23% have used marijuana
- Cherokee County is 19th in the state for numbers of alcohol related crashes and fatalities
- Estimated cases of substance abuse in persons age
 - 12-17 145
 - 18-25 382
 - 26+ 1374
- Lung/Bronchus Cancer rate per 100,000 population is 69.5

Progress

- Cherokee County Health Department has drafted a county ordinance in correspondence with the upcoming smoking legislation that would make county buildings, vehicles and premises smoke free. This ordinance is being reviewed by the Board of Health and will hopefully go into effect when the new smoking law takes effect on January 2, 2010.
- CCHD works closely with the county Tobacco Prevention Coordinator doing programs in the schools and participating in health fairs. TATU (Teens Against Tobacco Use) clubs have been formed in all middle and high schools in the county.
- Cherokee County has 100% Tobacco Free Schools, 1 100% Tobacco Free Hospital and a 100% Tobacco Free Community College.
- Smoking Cessation programs are being developed as a community wide initiative.
- Quitline NC information has been placed at the local library and will be placed at restaurants in the form of coasters as part of the new legislation.

Progress Continued

- CCHD houses a grant called HEART A+ (Help Eliminate Alcohol Related Traffic Accidents). This grant works to raise community awareness about drinking and driving. The program specialist also does presentations at church youth groups and at the schools. He does presentations in classrooms and health fairs to discuss underage drinking as well as the negative affects that alcohol has.
- SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) clubs are being started in the high schools as a result of HEART A+ program. This club will work closely with the TATU programs.
- HEART A+ is very active in restaurants and bars that serve alcohol. A cab service has been started in Cherokee County as a result of HEART A+.
- Alcohol related accidents in Cherokee County are down more than 11% since January 2008. Alcohol related citations have increased.

Obesity and Lack of Physical Activity

- Obesity and lack of physical activity was identified as a priority as a result of the 2008 Community Health Assessment
- 8 out of 13 schools in Cherokee County have 25% or more of their students with BMIs greater than 95% (obese)
- 46% of school age children are overweight or obese
- Approximately 61.5% of adults are overweight or obese
- 13.5% of children ages 2-4 are obese
- 25% of adults consume 5 or more servings of fruit or vegetable daily
- 47.6% of adults meet daily physical activity requirements

Progress

- Cherokee County Health Department as well as Cooperative Extension and Cherokee County Schools are working together to lower BMIs in the schools.
- Health Rocks is being conducted at 2 elementary schools.
- CCHD health educator has conducted nutrition and physical activity presentations at Cherokee County schools as well as health fairs.
- BMIs are collected annually and have recently been collected in all schools. The overall percentage of students who are overweight or obese has gone down from 46% to 41% in the last school year.
- All schools have been trained in ISPOD and Fitness Gram.

Progress Continued

- Cherokee County Health Department is in the planning stages of developing a County Health and Wellness Program that will offer education, cooking classes, competitive programs and free classes through the pool and wellness center for county employees as well as their families.
- The Riverwalk Phase III has been completed. Phase III was a three mile addition to the Riverwalk in Murphy.

Mental Health Care and Access

- Mental health care and access was identified as a priority as a result of the 2008 Community Health Assessment
- Estimated persons with developmental disabilities
 - Ages 3-17 146
 - 18+ 150
- Estimated persons with severe emotional disturbances
 - Ages 0-17 544
 - 18+ 1194
- Rate of psychologists per 10,000 population is 2.7
- Rate of psychological associates per 10,000 population is 1.6

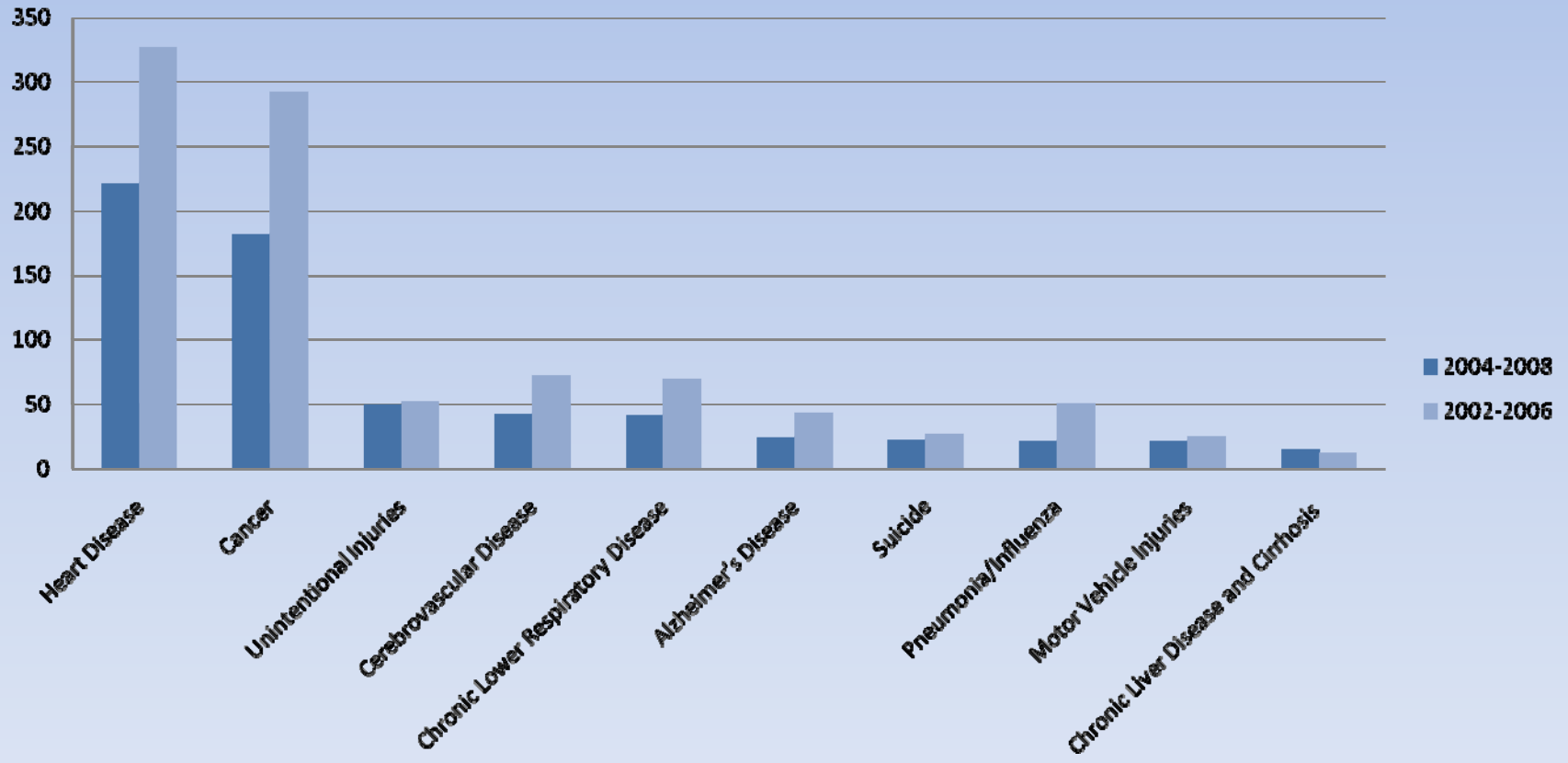
Progress

- Cherokee County Health Department has a program called Medication Management. This program works closely with mental health agencies in Cherokee County to assist those who are unable to receive medication. Medication Management helps those who cannot afford to get their medications any other way. Approximately 65% of those seen through this program are mental health patients.
- Cherokee County Detention Center along with Appalachian Community Services provides substance abuse counseling to male inmates who enter the facility with substance abuse issues. Counseling sessions are continued once the inmate is released in hopes to prevent a relapse of substance use. This program was started in June, 2009 and will continue only until June of 2010 due to county budget cuts. The program has served 71 inmates and has provided 44 group sessions.

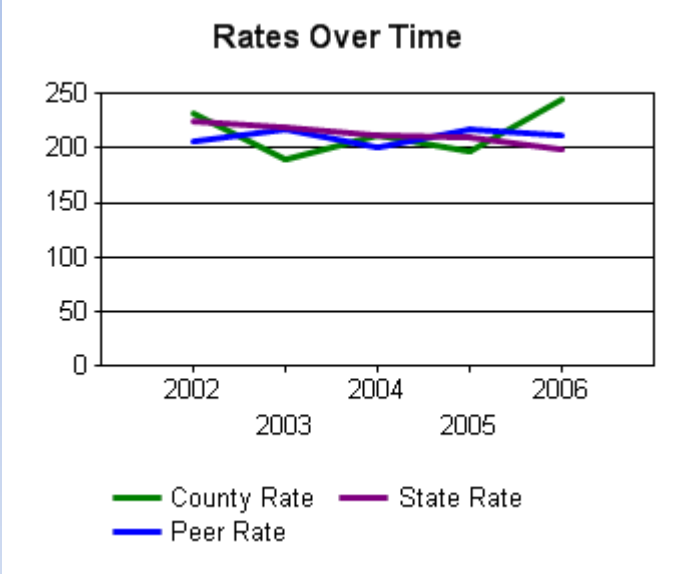
REVIEW OF MAJOR HEALTH INDICATORS

Leading Causes of Death

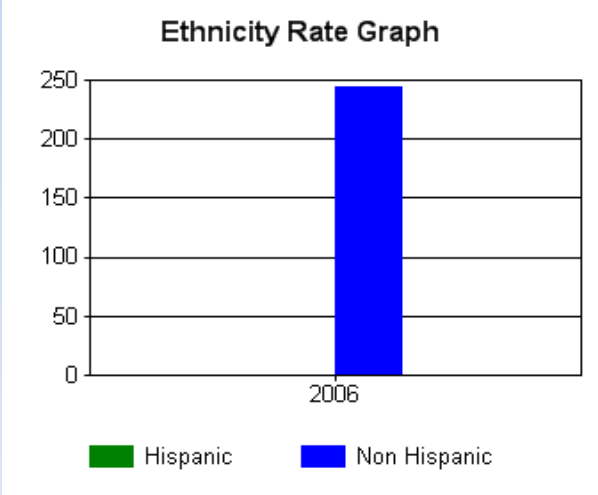
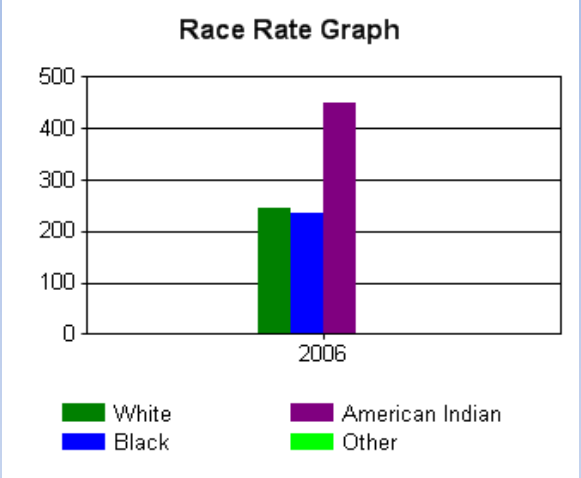
Leading Causes of Death per 100,000 Population



Heart Disease Deaths per 100,000 Population

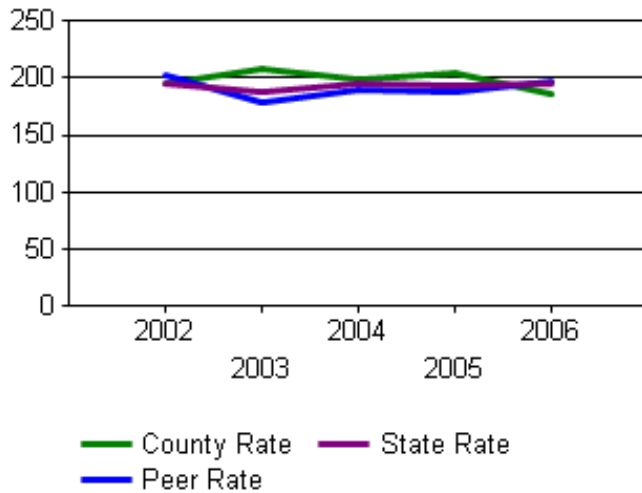


Peer Counties: Ashe, Haywood and Mitchell

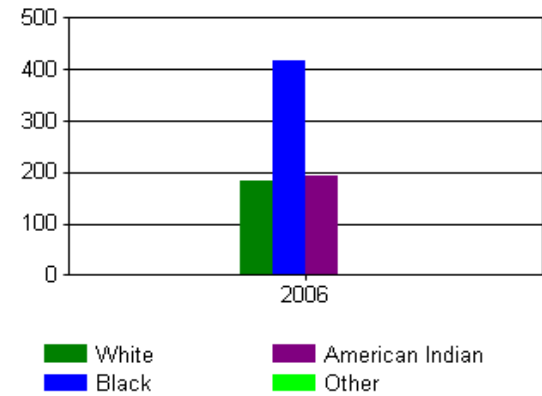


Cancer Deaths per 100,000 Population

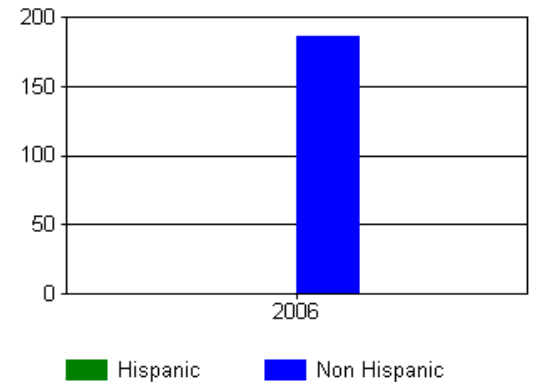
Rates Over Time



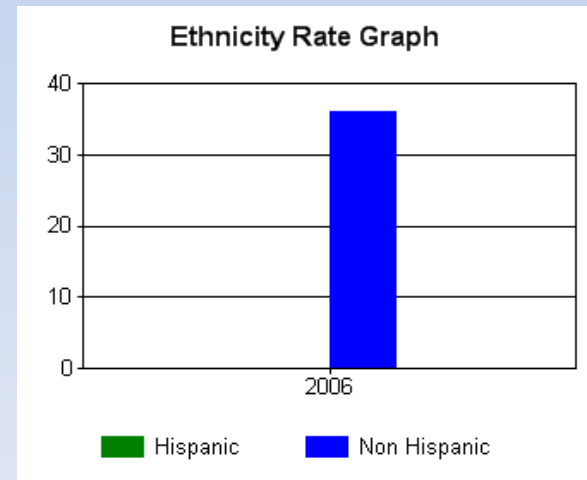
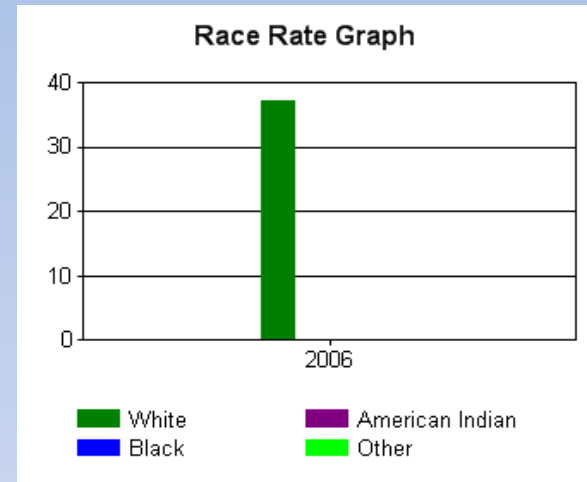
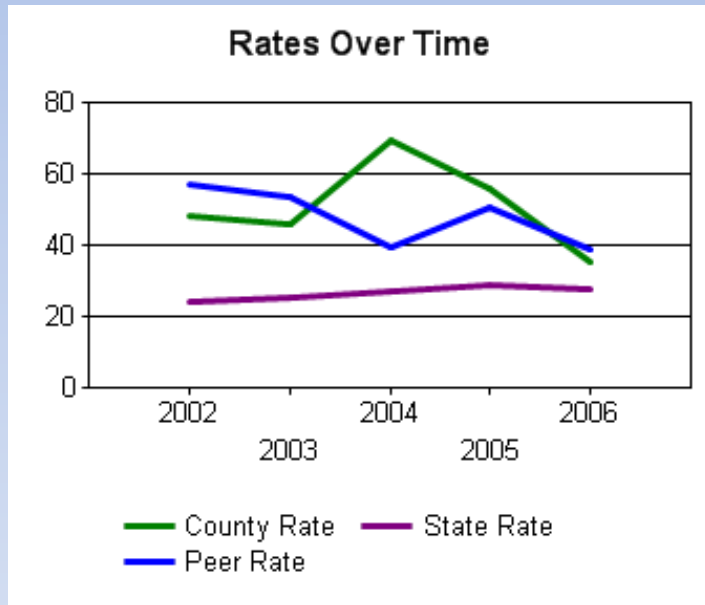
Race Rate Graph



Ethnicity Rate Graph



Unintentional Injury Deaths per 100,000 Population



NEW AND EMERGING ISSUES

Rabies

- Cherokee County has had a recent outbreak of rabies. The first case in over 50 was confirmed in February, 2008.
- 20 cases were confirmed in 2008
- 32 cases have been confirmed in 2009 (27 raccoons, 4 foxes, and 1 skunk)
- 4 persons have received post-exposure prophylaxis for rabies bites

WHAT IS BEING DONE?

- Cherokee County Health Department along with 3 local veterinarians provide biannual rabies clinics. The shots are given at a reduced cost.
- Radio Q&A sessions as well as newspaper articles have been used to educate the public on how to prevent the spread of rabies and what to do if it is suspected.
- An aerial vaccine bait drop of 73,000 baits was conducted over the northwestern half of Cherokee County on October 13, 2009.
- Trapping and testing of raccoons for density study will begin December 7, 2009.

H1N1

H1N1 has become a huge public health concern in the past year for Cherokee County. CCHD has used media to inform the public of the new influenza virus, precautions, cough/sneeze etiquette as well as vaccine information. CCHD has held 6 vaccine clinics for the public and will continue the clinics as long as vaccine is available. Preventative measures are being taken throughout county buildings by providing masks and hand sanitizer to those who utilize county services. Educational materials have been placed throughout the county at the public library, Chamber of Commerce, Tri-County Community College and within county buildings. So far, CCHD has given over 2,500 H1N1 vaccines.

Personnel Changes

Cherokee County Health Department has recently had administration changes with the resignation of the health director in August, 2009. County Manager, David Badger, is the Interim Health Director. Cherokee County Board of Health is currently in the process of interviewing applicants.

Note: As of March 1, 2010, Cherokee County a new health director, Jim Higgins.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Cherokee County has recently received a large five-year grant called Drug Free Communities. This grant will focus on efforts to prevent and reduce substance abuse among youth. It will also reduce substance abuse among adults by addressing the factors in the community that increase the risk of substance abuse.

New Initiatives Continued

- The Safe Schools Healthy Students grant held by Cherokee County Schools will be up in June of 2010. This will affect several school positions funded through the grant. Two school nurse positions as well as the school fitness coordinator will be effected.

DISSEMINATION OF SOTCH

The SOTCH will be disseminated in the following ways:

- Presented to the Board of Health in January 2010
- Presented to the county manager in January 2010
- Posted on the Cherokee County website
- Placed at the Nantahala Regional Library in Murphy
- Placed at the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce

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