

Community Health Implementation Strategy

FY 2022 - 2025

Executive Summary

ECU Health Edgecombe Hospital (formally Vidant Edgecombe Hospital) is a full service, 101-bed, not-for-profit community hospital located in Tarboro, NC serving Edgecombe County and surrounding communities. The hospital provides medical, emergency, surgical, laboratory and radiology services. The hospital offers specialty programs including comprehensive rehabilitation services, a birthing center, outpatient clinics and more. ECU Health Edgecombe Hospital is especially proud of their new onsite cancer center that provides chemotherapy and infusion services in a modern, comfortable facility.

ECU Health Edgecombe is one of nine hospitals that comprises ECU Health. ECU Health is a regional health system serving 1.4 million people in 29 counties throughout rural eastern North Carolina. Most of the counties served by ECU Health are listed in the top 40 most economically distressed areas in the state (67% of ECU Health's counties are classified as Tier 1 counties; 33% of the counties are classified as Tier 2 counties). The system consists of ECU Health Medical Center (an academic medical center), eight community hospitals, an ambulatory surgery center, wellness and rehabilitation facilities, home health agencies, and other independently operated health services. ECU Health is affiliated with the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University. The mission of ECU Health is to improve the health and well-being of eastern North Carolina. Our vision is to become a national model for rural health and wellness by creating a premier, trusted health care delivery and education system. Integral to our mission is our commitment to be responsive to our community's needs and to provide high quality, cost-effective health care services.

Description of Community

The primary service area for ECU Health Edgecombe Hospital encompasses Edgecombe County, North Carolina which is located just east of the I-95 corridor in eastern North Carolina. Municipalities within Edgecombe County include Rocky Mount, Pinetops, Conetoe, Whitakers, Macclesfield, Leggett, Sharpsburg, Princeville and Tarboro.

According to the U.S. Census, as of 2019, Edgecombe County had a total of 721 businesses. In Edgecombe County, the largest industries in the county are manufacturing, healthcare and social assistance and retail trade. The most specialized industries are agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, manufacturing and transportation/warehousing. The highest paying industries are utilities, educational services and professional, scientific and tech services.

As of 2019, the estimated population of Edgecombe County was down to 51,472 from the 2016 population count of 53,318. According to 2019 data from the U.S. Census bureau, the majority of Edgecombe County citizens are African-American (57.6 percent), whereas Caucasians represent 39.4 percent of the population. U.S. Census data also shows the Hispanic population in Edgecombe County has grown from 4.3 percent to 4.6 percent in 2019. American Indian, Alaskan Native, Asian, Pacific Islander or persons reporting two or more races represent the remaining Edgecombe County population. Overall, the race distribution in Edgecombe County is quite different from that of North Carolina. In North Carolina, 68.7 percent of the population is Caucasian and 21.4 percent is African- American.

As of 2019, the median household income of Edgecombe County was \$36,866 compared to the state median household income of \$54,602. Edgecombe County's poverty rate of 24.0% was higher than the state rate of 15.0%. These factors contribute to the health challenges identified in the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment.

Since the previous CHNA conducted in 2019, the county has experienced increased incidence of chronic health conditions and communicable disease as we have also experienced the global Covid-19 pandemic. Community members and partners have worked to address such issues and found positive outcomes. With the newly analyzed data from the 2022 CHNA, we will continue to address unmet needs and health priorities in the county.

Participants

Health ENC – 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment

Initiated in 2015 by the Office of Health Access at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, Health ENC grew out of conversations with health care leaders about improving the community health needs assessment (CHNA) process in eastern North Carolina. Health ENC, now a partnership among county health departments and hospitals in eastern NC, coordinates a regional CHNA in 33 counties of eastern North Carolina. In addition, the Health ENC Program Manager works to build coalitions and partnerships that will address health issues identified through the regional CHNA process.

As part of the assessment process, members of ECU Health Edgecombe Hospital and Edgecombe County Health Department worked collaboratively to distribute a community health opinion survey to various segments of the population in Edgecombe County. The survey was printed in English and Spanish and distributed to a broad range of people in the community, targeting different income levels, including underserved members of the community, the elderly, and the general population. In addition to the paper surveys, a web-based survey tool was developed by Health ENC and made available to the public through different email lists. The survey was also publicized through the local newspaper and social media. The survey was used to collect primary data from April 1 - June 30, 2021. A total of 364 community members completed the survey.

Community Key Stakeholder Group – Edgecombe County

The following community stakeholders were represented in the planning, data review and prioritization process for the 2022 Edgecombe County CHNA:

- ECU Health Edgecombe Hospital
- Edgecombe County Health Department
- Access East
- Carolina Family Health Centers, Inc. (Federally Qualified Health Center)
- Conetoe Family Life Center
- Edgecombe County EMS
- EastPointe Human Services
- Opportunities Industrialization Center – Health (Federally Qualified Health Center)
- Project Momentum, Inc
- Rural Health Group (FQHC)

- Trillium Health Services

ECU Health Edgecombe Hospital Community Benefits Grants Program

ECU Health is committed to improving the health and well-being of eastern North Carolina. We partner and serve community members throughout the continuum of care. With our mission at the forefront of our efforts, ECU Health Medical Center (formerly Vidant Medical Center) made a substantial donation to the ECU Health Foundation (formerly Vidant Health Foundation) in 1998 to establish the Community Benefit and Health Initiatives Grants program. In 2006, the program extended its outreach by establishing a Regional Community Benefits Grants program which works with ECU Health regional hospitals to distribute grants to their communities.

The goal of the program is to support outreach projects that focus on wellness and prevention strategies. The Community Benefit Grants program supports community partners to educate people about disease prevention and management, provide people with the knowledge and tools to be successful in their own health care and establish programs within communities, making them available and more accessible to community members who need these programs/services. ECU Health Edgecombe Hospital distributes approximately \$100,000 annually to various agencies/organizations in Edgecombe County.

The committee's funding focus areas are based on the health priorities identified in the most recent CHNA.

2022 Community Health Priorities for Edgecombe County

The comprehensive 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment for Edgecombe County included significant input from community members, as well as a wealth of information from local, state, and national data sources. Key stakeholders reviewed primary and secondary data. Following an in-depth discussion of the assessment data and existing community resources, the key stakeholder group selected three health priorities for focus over the next three years.

These three health priorities are:

- Health Equity and Health Disparities
- Substance Use, Mental Health, and Overdose
- Social Determinants of Health

Implementation Strategies

Priority Health Need: Health Equity and Health Disparities

Goal: To address differences in health needs based on race, age, income, and other vulnerable populations.

Strategies:

- Collaborate with local agencies and local industry to conduct community-based health screenings for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer.
- Promote at least three nationally recognized health events such as breast cancer awareness, women's heart health, stroke awareness, and diabetes.
- Offer charity care to patients who are unable to pay due to financial hardships.
- Lead the Edgecombe County Rural Health Network – a multi-disciplinary partnership of nine health and human services organizations in Edgecombe County.
- Assist patients in the Emergency Department to establish primary care by partnering with Access East through the Access to Care Program for the uninsured residents of Edgecombe County.
- Collaborate with federally qualified health centers for referrals to primary care.
- Partner with the Edgecombe County Health Department to provide education and outreach on services available through the health department and public health initiatives.
- Establish and/or renew contracts and business associate agreements with appropriate organizations to provide patient care.
- Collaborate with FQHCs and Access East for ACA enrollment events.
- Co-lead the Edgecombe County Barbershop Partnership with local barbers to address health disparities in African American men.
- Accept and review applications through the Community Benefits Grants and Health Initiatives program from qualified applicants that are addressing access to care for vulnerable populations. Provide support and/or funding to appropriate organizations.
- Continue to work with ECU Health Physician Recruitment Office in an attempt to recruit qualified health physicians to this community.

Priority Health Need: Substance Use, Mental Health, and Overdose

Goal: To improve access to mental health and substance abuse services.

Strategies:

- Provide referrals to behavioral health services.
- Continue providing placement assistance to patients with Involuntary Commitment orders.
- Hold at least one mental health workshop through collaboration with a mental health services organization.
- Serve on the multi-disciplinary Coordinated Opiate Recovery Effort (CORE) collaborative team led by the Edgecombe County Health Department.

- Provide referrals to the MAT program at Freedom Hill Community Health Center.
- Accept and review applications through the Community Benefits Grants and Health Initiatives program from qualified applicants that are addressing mental health and substance abuse needs. Provide support and/or funding to appropriate organizations.

Priority Health Need: Social Determinants of Health

Goal: To assess and address the needs of patients and community members that are related to social determinants of health.

Strategies:

- Participate in the NC Care 360 program to make individual referrals to organizations providing services that address social determinants of health.
- Provide financial and/or in-kind support to organizations focusing on SDoH.
- Collaborate with the American Cancer Society to provide transportation assistance to cancer patients to remove the barrier to treatment.
- Accept and review applications through the Community Benefits Grants and Health Initiatives program from qualified applicants that are addressing social determinants of health.

Approval

ECU Health Edgecombe Hospital's Implementation Strategy for 2022-2025 was approved by the ECU Health Community Hospitals' Board of Directors on July 26, 2022.



Chair, ECU Health Community Hospitals' Board of Directors

7/26/22

Date