

Wichita County Health Facts

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Executive Summary

The Wichita Falls-Wichita County Public Health District (WFWCPHD) has been working for a number of years to compile the information needed to identify public health needs in Wichita County. A Community Health Assessment was prepared in 2010. The report is an update of the initial Assessment. The information provided has been limited to those public health concerns that have been identified as highest priority in the near term.

Four health status problem areas are identified: 1) High rates of heart disease; 2) High rates of cancer; 3) High infant mortality rates, and 4) High low-birth weight rates. These are listed in the blue box in the figure on the facing page.

The red box includes a list of a number of factors identified in the health assessment data that may contribute negatively to health status problem areas including high birth rates among women 18 and under, obesity, smoking, excessive drinking, and physical inactivity. Many of these are factors that can be changed to improve the health status of the residents of Wichita County. Wichita County's shift in demographics to an older population, of course, increases the number of residents who are at risk for some health problems. This, in turn, may reduce improvements associated with positive changes in other factors.

A number of factors were identified that may contribute to improvement in community health. The results suggest the number of smokers appears to be declining. There is an indication that the proportion of individuals who are inactive also is declining. Although very slow, there appears to be a gradual improvement in the economy. Finally, community residents continue to have access to quality health services.

Forces Positively and Negatively Affecting Health Status

Factors Negatively Affecting Community Health

- High birth rate to women under 18
- High obesity rates
- High proportion of physically inactive adults
- High proportion of excessive drinking
- Increasing older population
- High proportion of uninsured
- Low median household income

Factors Positively Affecting Community Health

- Improving economy
- Decline in tobacco use
- Use of flu vaccine
- Proportion indicating physical activity increasing
- Low rates of binge drinking
- Good access to health services

Health Status Problem Areas

- High rates of heart disease
- High rates of cancer
- High infant mortality rates
- High low-birth weight rates

Introduction

The purpose of the report is to provide a brief profile of health factors for Wichita County to aid in the development of health improvement strategies¹. Information for three different categories that contribute to the health and quality of life of Wichita County residents is provided: 1) Health status patterns; 2) Demographic patterns; and 3) Economic patterns.

Health Status

Health status includes information on mortality and morbidity patterns in Wichita County. Patterns of mortality and morbidity provide insight into community health status.

Mortality

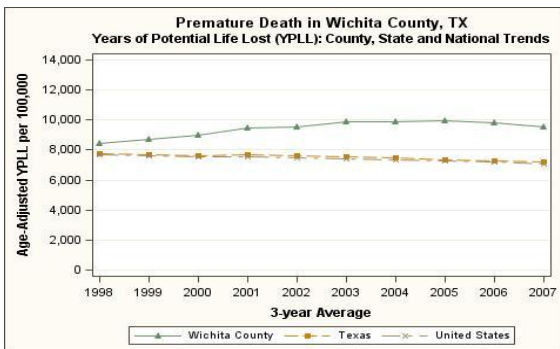
Mortality rates serve as indicators of the health of the population.

- Wichita County has higher premature years of life lost than the national benchmark and Texas, although there has been a slight decline in premature years of life lost in Wichita County. As shown in Figure 1, the decline began in 2005.

Table 1. Age Adjusted Premature Years of Life Lost					Rank Among 221 Texas Counties
Years Included in 3 Year Average	Wichita County	Error Margin	National Benchmark*	Texas	
2006-2008	9,570	8,991-10,150	5,466	7,186	159
2005-2007	9,787	9,204-10,369	5,564	7,289	174
2004-2006	9,946	9,358-10,534	6,324	7,340	177

¹ The author is solely responsible for any information or interpretations presented in this report. Wichita Falls-Wichita County Public Health District and Midwestern State University provided partial funding for this project.

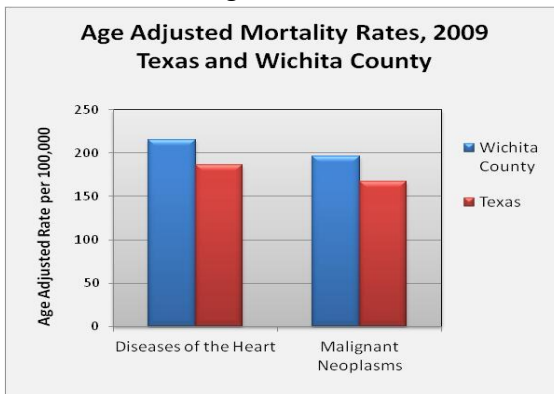
Figure 1



Source for table and chart: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/-app/texas/2012/wichita/county/1/overall>.

- Heart disease and Cancer were the two leading causes of death in Wichita County in 2007, 2008, and 2009. This is similar to Texas and the United States. As shown in Figure 2, Wichita County has slightly higher mortality rates in these two causes of death than Texas.

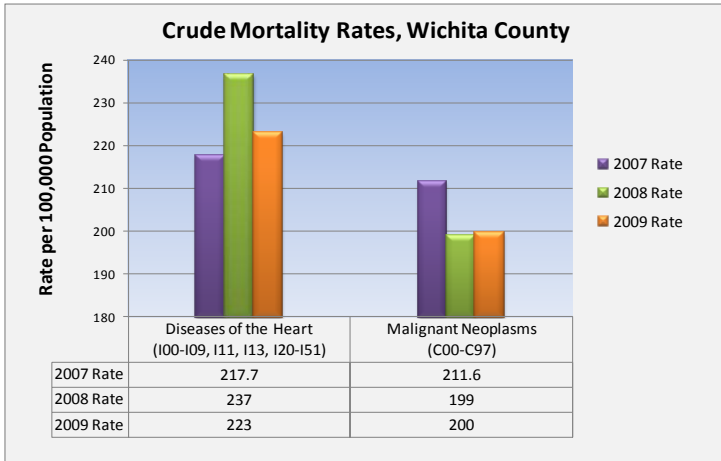
Figure 2



Source: Texas Department of State Health Services, <http://soupin.tdh.state.tx.us/>

- The crude mortality rate from heart disease declined from 2008 to 2009, although the rate in 2009 was higher than the rate in 2007 (See Figure 3).
- Mortality rates for Malignant Neoplasms declined from 2007 to 2008, and remained at the lower rate in 2009.

Figure 3



- The crude mortality rates by age group presented in Table 2 indicated that higher mortality rates in the 65 to 74 age group contribute to the premature years of life lost for Wichita County.

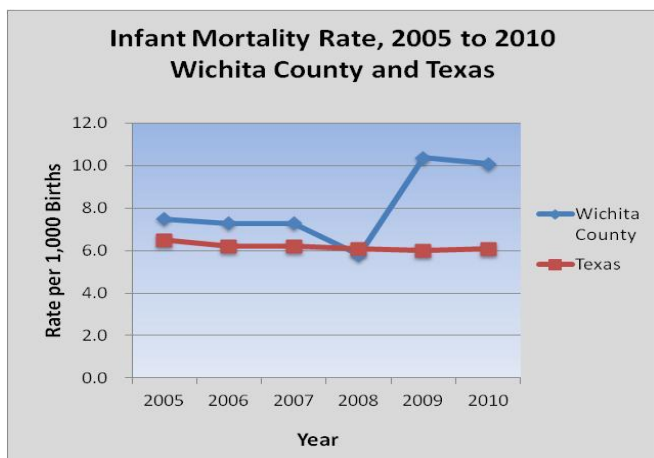
Table 2. Crude Mortality Rates per 100,000 Population				
Diseases of the Heart				
	Wichita County		Texas	
Age	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
35 to 44	6	38.7	822	23.2
45 to 54	23	135.8	2,841	84.4
55 to 64	29	225.6	5,250	214.3
65 to 74	62	745.8	6,278	453.0
75 to 84	89	1,473.30	10,119	1,279.80
85 and over	85	3,458.10	12,221	4,111.20
All Ages	298	222.9	38,008	153.4

Source: Texas Department of State Health Services,
<http://soupfin.tdh.state.tx.us/>

Table 2 Continued.				
Crude Mortality Rates per 100,000 Population				
Malignant Neoplasms				
	Wichita County		Texas	
Age	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
35 to 44	4	NA	996	28.2
45 to 54	17	100.4	3,577	106.2
55 to 64	51	396.8	7,253	296.0
65 to 74	79	950.3	9,169	661.6
75 to 84	70	1,158.70	9,195	1,162.90
85 and over	45	1,830.80	4,763	1,602.30
All Ages	267	199.7	35,531	143.4

- Wichita County has experienced an increase in infant mortality (Infant deaths to live births) in recent years. Although the absolute number of infant deaths in a year is under 20, the County's six-year rate was 8.0 per 1,000 live births compared to 6.2 per 1,000 for Texas.

Figure 4



Source: Texas Department of State Health Services,
<http://soupfin.tdh.state.tx.us/imr.htm>

Morbidity and Health Behaviors

Morbidity and health behavior data provide information about the health status of Wichita County residents, as well as the extent to which they engage in activities that may affect health status.

- Table 3 indicates Wichita County has a number of areas of morbidity and health behavior that are weak when compared with the national benchmark, including adult smoking, adult obesity, low birth weight births, high teen birth rates, and sexually transmitted disease.
- The county also has relatively high proportions of the population indicating physical inactivity, excessive drinking, and smoking, all of which correlate with higher rates of disease and mortality.

**Table 3. Morbidity and Health Behavior Indicators
County Health Rankings, 2012***

Ranked Year	Wichita County			National Benchmark**	Texas
	2010	2011	2012	2012	2012
Poor or fair health	16%	17%	17%	10%	19%
Poor physical health days	3.6	3.8	4.0	2.6	3.6
Poor mental health days	3.0	2.7	2.8	2.3	3.3
Low birth weight	8%	8%	8%	6%	8%
Adult smoking	21%	18%	17%	14%	19%
Adult obesity	26%	27%	31%	25%	29%
Physical inactivity		31%	31%	21%	25%
Excessive drinking		17%	17%	8%	16%
Motor vehicle crash death rate	16	17	17	12	17
Sexually transmitted infections	444	574	533	84	435
Teen birth rate	65	65	64	22	63

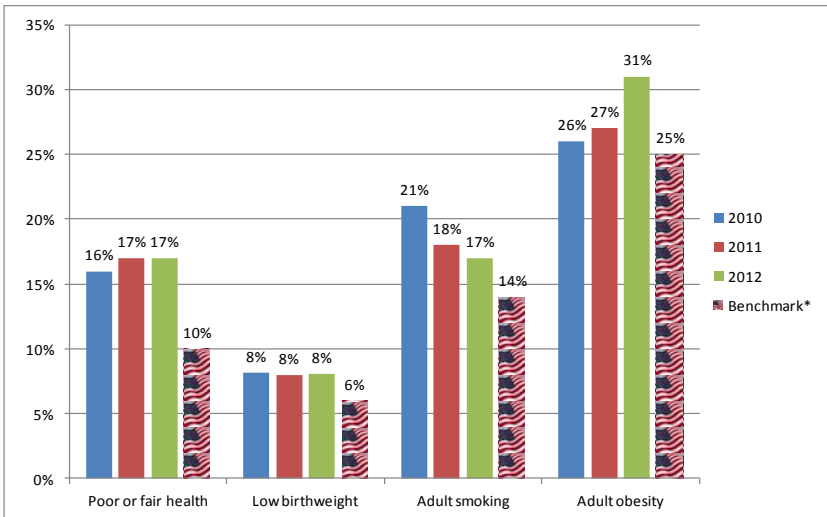
*County Health Rankings include data up through 2010 for calculations. The results for a Ranked Year are based on data from two years earlier. See: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/#app/texas/2012/rankings/outcomes/overall>.

**National benchmark data are the values at the 90th percentile, i.e., only of the counties are better.

***Trends should be interpreted very cautiously. Small changes from year-to-year may be due to natural variation.

- Figure 5 shows that there has been a decline in adult smoking, but an increase in the proportion of the population identified as obese. It also indicates that Wichita County has a higher proportion of adults experiencing poor health than the national benchmark.

Figure 5
Morbidity and Health behaviors, 2010 through 2012



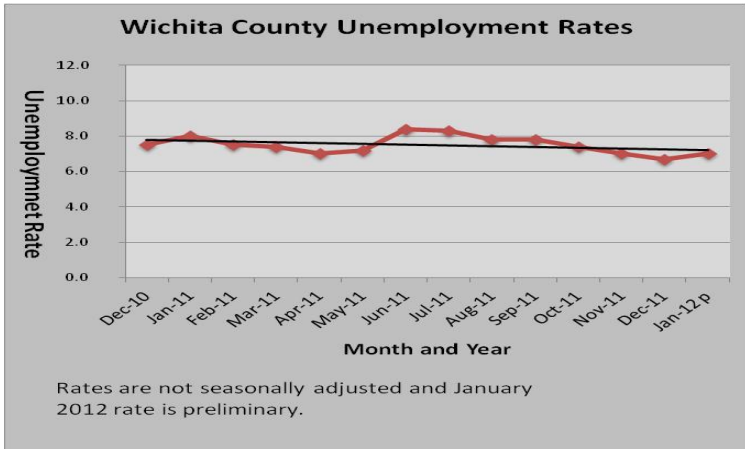
Data are from the County Health Rankings include data up through 2010 for calculations. See: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/#app/texas/2012/rankings/outcomes/overall>. National benchmark data are the values at the 90th percentile, i.e., only 10% are of the counties are better.

Economic Patterns

The economic well being of Wichita County affects resident's health status. Levels of unemployment, rates of insurance coverage, poverty rates, and income levels all affect health status.

- Unemployment has gradually declined from December 2010 through Jan 2012 (See Figure 6).

Figure 6



Source: Texas Workforce Commission, <http://www.tracer2.com/>

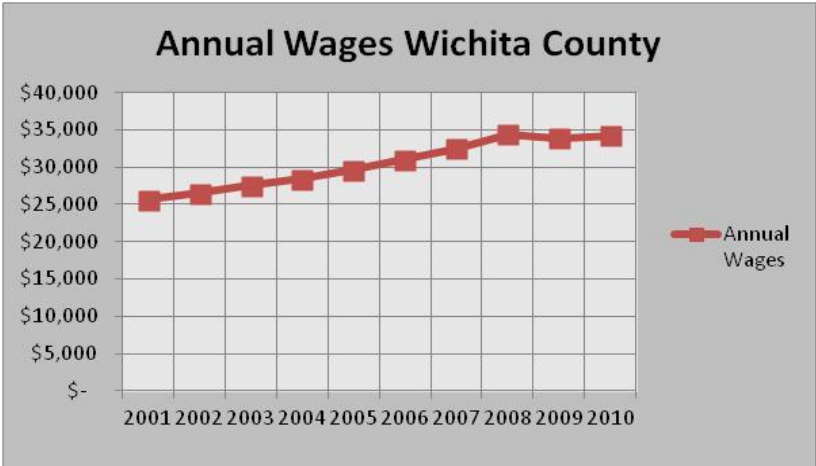
- Wichita County has lower median per capita income than Texas and the United States, and a poverty rate slightly higher than the U.S., but slightly lower than Texas.
- Median household income was slightly lower in Wichita County than in Texas and the United States.

Table 4. Income and Poverty for Wichita County, Texas, and USA			
	Wichita County	Texas	USA
Per capita money income in past 12 months (2010 dollars) 2006-2010	\$22,837	\$24,870	\$27,334
Median household income 2006-2010	\$42,971	\$49,646	\$51,914
Persons below poverty level, percent, 2006-2010	15.3%	16.8%	13.80%

Source: Bureau of the Census, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48/48485.html>

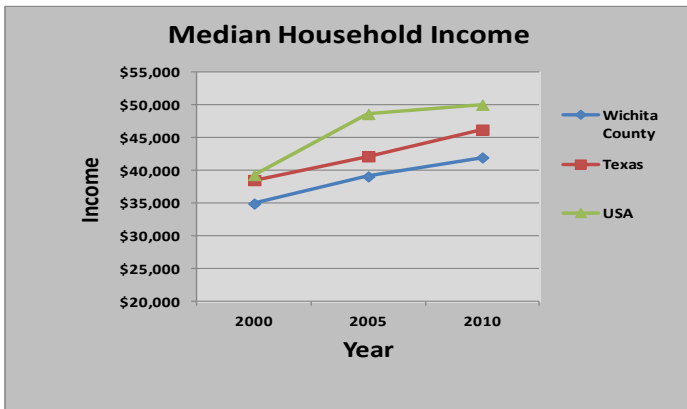
- Average annual wages in Wichita County have plateaued, although median household income has increased from 2000 to 2010.

Figure 7



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly census on employment and wages, <http://data.bls.gov/pdq/querytool.jsp?survey=en>

Figure 8



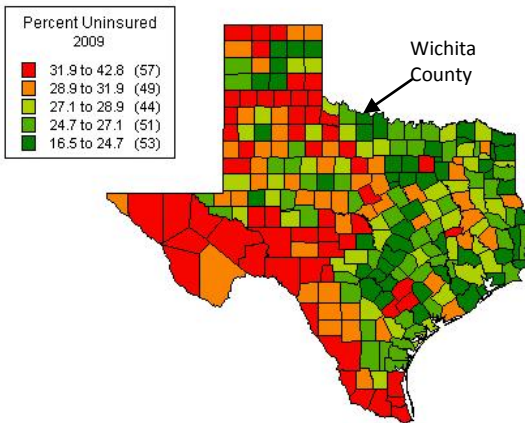
Source: Bureau of the Census, <http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/data/statecounty/data/index.html>

Access to Health Services

In addition to the typical economic data, data about access to health care are presented.

- Wichita County had about 24% of its residents uninsured in 2009 (See Figure 9). Although this is relatively good within Texas, the national benchmark based on the County Health Rankings is 11%.²
- Other data from the County Health Rankings suggest that the ratio of primary care physicians to population exceeds that of national benchmark.³ While there is a relatively high rate of uninsured in Wichita County, access to health resources is quite good including services within the local health department, as well as services provided by a local community health center.

Figure 9
Uninsured by County, 2009



Source: U.S. Census Bureau,

<http://www.census.gov/did/www/sahie/data/maps/index.html?reload>

² For complete data see: County Health Rankings,

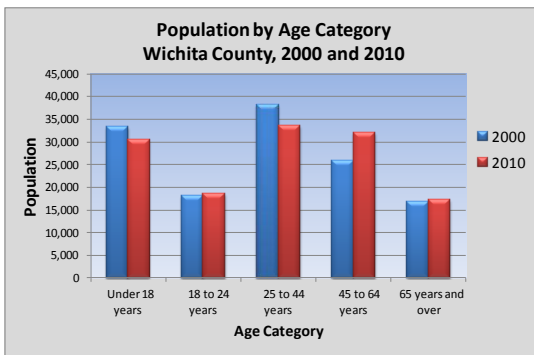
<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/#app/texas/2012/wichita/county/1/overall> .

³ Ibid.

Demographics

- The 2010 population of Wichita County was 131,500. It has remained relatively unchanged over the past 10 years and is not expected to change much in the next decade.
- 13.1% of the county population was over 65 in 2010 compared to 10.3% for Texas. This population group as a proportion of the total county population is expected to increase slightly over the next decade.
- 23.1% of the county population was under age 18 compared to 27.3% for Texas. The under age 18 population is expected to decline slightly over the next decade, while the proportion of the population over 65 is expected to increase (See Figure 10).

Figure 10



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census Summary File 1, Tables P12, P13, and PCT12. U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1, Matrices P13 and PCT12.

- The 2010 county population was 68.4% White persons not Hispanic, 16.6% Hispanic of Hispanic origin, and 10.5% Black.⁴
- Over the next decade, the demographic structure of Wichita County is likely to remain relatively unchanged. It will continue to have a proportionately older population than Texas. It will also have significant numbers of Hispanic origin and Black individuals, although smaller proportions than other areas of Texas.

⁴Hispanics may be of any race and may be included in other race categories.

Summary

A summary of the information presented in the report is provided in Figure 11. Four health status problem areas are identified in the blue box on the facing page: 1) High rates of heart disease; 2) High rates of cancer; 3) High infant mortality rates, and 4) High low-birth weight rates.

The red box lists a number of factors that negatively contribute to the health status problems including births among women 18 and under, obesity, smoking, excessive drinking and physical inactivity. Many of these are factors that can be changed to improve the health status of the residents of Wichita County. The shift in demographics to an older population, of course, increases the number of residents who are at risk for some health problems. This, in turn, may reduce improvements associated with positive changes in other factors.

There are a number of factors that may contribute to improvement in community health as presented in the green box. The number of smokers appears to be declining. There is an indication that the proportion of individuals who are inactive also is declining. Although very slow, there appears to be a gradual improvement in the economy. Finally, community residents continue to have access to quality health services.

Two additional comments are merited. First, the health status problem areas that are noted are those that are most salient, but not necessarily the only problems that should be addressed. As noted, Wichita County is above both Texas and the national benchmark on the premature years of life lost, suggesting that there are other areas of concern.

Second, steps to improve community health need not focus only on areas that are identified as problems. As Vince Lombardi said, "Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence."⁵

⁵ Source: [Brainyquote.com](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/v/vince_lombardi_1001.html)

Figure 11
Forces Positively and Negatively Affecting Health Status

