

Polk County Public Health Services Staff Exploratory Report

03/18/2019



We Reviewed and Assessed:

Public Health...

- Where We Have Been
- Where We Are Now
- Where We Could Go

Where We Have Been

- 1970's Polk County first joined with Rutherford County and later McDowell County in a joint health district
- Financial model was feasible and successful due to revenues from a home health venture that is no longer in existence
- Minor County increase in contributions until the 2000's when increase requests became significantly larger
- Model supported Polk County for many years

Where We Are

- In 2015, Polk County Commissioners supported efforts by Community Partners to invite a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) called Blue Ridge Health Center in Polk County (replacing Polk Wellness) to Polk.
- Blue Ridge Health Services has been in operation since the 1960's and started operations in Polk County in 2016.
- Currently serves uninsured, underinsured, and insured clients in Polk County.

Where We Are (continued)

- In North Carolina the County Operated Health Department is the most common model.
- Each health department operates based on local needs and addresses three essential functions:
 - Policy Development
 - Assessment
 - Assurance
- Public Health Agencies in NC must effectively engage partners to achieve positive outcomes in their communities.

Where We Are (continued)

- In 2016, the Polk County Board of Commissioners' enhanced the service delivery for Human Services to the CHSA (Consolidated Human Services Agency) model.
- A model focusing on the whole person utilizing:
 - Social and Economic Services, Public Transportation, Senior Services, and Veterans Services.
- Provided greater collaboration between partnering organizations and government agencies to support clients.

Where We Could Go

- Local focus:
 - Existing assets, community partners, county structure, and service needs
- Reduction in competing governmental functions and expenses
- Whole person emphasis and integrated care
- Quicker response to identified issues and gaps
- Improve outcomes for direct consumers and the community
- A strategic and visionary approach to service delivery

Where We Could Go (continued)

Analysis

- Reviewed statutory and legal requirements
- Reviewed existing and potential costs
- Reviewed existing and historic service counts
- Reviewed existing programs and potential changes
- Assessed the coordination/integration of existing CHSA Services
- Developed proposed structure with input from local and state partners:
 - NC DPH, RPM HD, Blue Ridge Health, public health professionals, local community groups
- Developed proposed structure with future variables in mind

Where We Could Go (continued)

RPM Health District Polk County Dollar Allocations

- FY 2020 \$238,562
- FY 2022 \$280,840

Polk County Standalone Health Department County Dollar Allocations

- FY 2020 \$236,850
- FY 2022 Projected to Save \$63,000

Proposed Timeline

Phase 1 – April 2019

- Preparations
- BAAs/MOUs/Contracts
- Recruiting and Hiring (team onboarded June 2019)
- Begin data sharing with RPM

Phase 2 – July 2019

- Launch
- Relocate Environmental Health Staff to Building Inspections

Controlling costs and improving outcomes through a dynamic shift in public health and promotion services in Polk County and increased coordination of in-county whole person health and human services.

