

D I R E C T O R Y

SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME COUNSELING AND INFORMATION PROGRAM

State of North Carolina

Michael F. Easley, Governor

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Acting Deputy Secretary for Health and State Health Director

Leah Devlin, D.D.S., MPH

Women's and Children's Health Section

Kevin Ryan, M.D., MPH, Chief

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Counseling and Information Program

Program Coordinator

2004

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INTRODUCTION

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), often referred to as "Crib Death", is defined as the sudden death of an infant under one year of age which remains unexplained after the performance of a complete postmortem investigation, including an autopsy, an examination of the scene of death, and review of the case history. SIDS continues to be the leading cause of death in infants between the ages of one month and one year. As many as 4,000 babies die each year in the United States as a result of SIDS. In North Carolina, as throughout the nation, the number of infants who die as a result of SIDS has slowly decreased in the past ten years. In spite of the reduction, we continue to see a significant disparity in the African American community, where babies are twice as likely to die from SIDS. More Latino families are making North Carolina their home and, as a result, we are observing increasing numbers of SIDS deaths in this population. In 2002, 102 infants in North Carolina died of SIDS; 81 were attributed to SIDS in 2003.

Instances of SIDS have been recorded since biblical times, but it is only in more recent years that it has been recognized as a specific medical entity. Because SIDS occurs unexpectedly, many parents feel somehow responsible for the death of their child, wondering if there might have been something they could have done to prevent the death. This sudden and unexpected death of a child is only the beginning of an agonizing journey for the parents! The North Carolina SIDS Program is available to help these parents understand and deal with their child's death.

Below are some facts about SIDS:

- **Victims appear healthy prior to death.**
- **Research to date indicates that the cause of SIDS is not suffocation, aspiration or regurgitation.**
- **Death occurs very rapidly, usually during sleep.**
- **SIDS is not known to be hereditary; it can happen in any family.**
- **There are numerous risk factors that increase the likelihood of SIDS; our responsibility is to educate families and communities about reducing those risks and creating a safe sleep environment.**

North Carolina law (G.S. 130A-383) requires that all cases of sudden death with no apparent cause be referred to a medical examiner for a postmortem investigation. An autopsy is performed to determine cause of death. The names of all SIDS infants come to the SIDS Program through the SIDS Counselors, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and numerous other local sources. Two objectives of the SIDS Program include the collection and analysis of information about SIDS in our state and the provision of counseling and information services to SIDS families. With our current xxx trained SIDS Counselors, we are able to provide assistance statewide. In addition to making home visits and regular telephone contacts, these local counselors are available to review the autopsy findings with the family as well as link them with other resources in their community. **This service is provided at no cost to the family.**

Timely identification of possible SIDS families enables us to provide immediate support. For more information or to report a possible SIDS death, call your local health department and ask for the SIDS Counselor or call the main office of the NC SIDS Program at (919) 715-8430 Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., or write to: SIDS Program, Division of Public Health, Women's and Children's Health Section, 1916 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1916. Families members who wish to talk with others who have lost an infant to SIDS can contact the National SIDS Alliance/First Candle Hotline at 1-888-671-7437 24 hours a day. They may also find support through online resources at <http://www.sidsalliance.org>.

NORTH CAROLINA RESOURCES

John Butts, M.D.
Office of Chief Medical Examiner
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
1-800-672-7024

Ross Vaughan, M.D.
Wake Medical Center
3000 New Bern Avenue
Raleigh, NC 27602

Gerald Berkowitz, M.D.
10620 Park Road
Suite 102 Building 400
Charlotte, NC 28210
(704) 542-3150

John Wimmer, M.D.
ECU – School of Medicine
Department of Pediatrics/NICU
Greenville, NC 27834
(252) 757-4665

Margaret Miles, Ph.D.
University of NC School of Nrsng.
Carrington Hall 214-H
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
(919) 966-5499

Robert Dillard, M.D.
Bowman Gray School of Medicine
Department of Pediatrics
Winston-Salem, NC 27103
(336) 748-4445

NATIONAL RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS

National SIDS/ID Program Support Center
1314 Bedford Ave., Suite 205-B
Baltimore, MD 21208
1-800-638-7437 or (410) 415-6628
FAX (410) 415-5093
e-mail: sds.62@aol.com
www.sids-id-psc.org

The American SIDS Institute
6065 Rosewell Road, Suite 876
Atlanta, GA 30328
1-800-232-SIDS or (404) 843-1030
www.sids.org

National Center for Cultural Competence
SIDS/ID Component
Georgetown University Child Dev. Ctr.
3307 M Street, NW, Suite 401
Washington, DC 20007
1-800-788-2066 or (202) 687-5387
FAX: (202) 687-8899
e-mail: cultural@gunet.georgetown.edu

National SIDS Resource Center
2070 Chain Bridge Road
Suite 450
Vienna, VA 22182
(703) 821-8955, ext. 249 or 474
FAX : (703) 821-2098
e-mail: sids@circsol.com
www.sidscenter.org

Association of SIDS/Infant Mortality Programs
Center for Infant and Child Loss
630 W. Fayette St., Rm. 5-684
Baltimore, MD 21201-1585
1-800-FOR-BABY
www.ASIP1.org

SIDS Alliance/First Candle
1314 Bedford Ave., Suite 210
Baltimore, MD 21208
(410) 653-8226
FAX: (410) 653-8709
www.sidsalliance.org

CENTRAL OFFICE

SIDS Counseling and Information Program

Division of Public Health

Women's and Children's Health Section

Women's Health Branch

1929 Mail Service Center

Raleigh, NC 27699-192916

(919) 715-8430

Courier: 56-23-01

ALAMANCE

Robin Clapp, RN (336) 513-5540
Robin Jordan, RN (336) 513-5529
Janice Tilley, RNC (336) 513-5521
Alamance County Health Department Fax: (336) 513-5593
319 N. Graham-Hopedale Road, Suite B Courier: 17-42-02
Burlington, NC 27217

ALEXANDER

Leeanne Whisnant, RN (828) 632-9704, Ext. 307
April Galloway, BSW (828) 632-9704, Ext. 315
Alexander County Health Department Courier: 15-83-08
338 First Avenue, S.W.
Suite 1
Taylorsville, NC 28681

ALLEGHANY (Appalachian Health District)

Katherine Holder, RN (828) 264-6635
Appalachian District Health Department Courier: 15-90-01
126 Poplar Grove Connector
Boone, NC 28607

ANSON

Sue Oakes, RN (704) 694-5188
Anson County Health Department Courier: 03-82-07
P.O. Box 473
Wadesboro, NC 28170

Elizabeth Thomas, RN (910) 997-9240
Wadesboro DEC
110 S. Hancock St.
Rockingham, NC 28379

ASHE (Appalachian Health District)

Katherine Holder, RN (828) 264-6635
Appalachian District Health Department Courier: 12-30-01
126 Poplar Grove Connector
Boone, NC 28607

AVERY (Toe River Health District)

Vivian Greene, RN (828) 733-6031
Avery County Health Department Fax: (828) 733-6034
P.O. Box 325 Courier: 12-40-02
Newland, NC 28657

BEAUFORT

Angela Boyd, RN
Beaufort County Health Department
P. O. Box 579
1436 Highland Drive
Washington, NC 27889

(252) 946-1902, Ext. 275
Fax: (252) 946-8430
Courier: 16-06-01

BERTIE

Christine Dudley, BS
Bertie County Partnership for Children
P.O. Box 634
228 US13, South Bypass, Suite 3
Windsor, NC 27983

(252) 794-3438
Fax: 252-794-2831
Courier: 10-93-15

JoAnn Jordan, RN
Bertie County Health Department
502 Barringer Street
Windsor, NC 27983

(252) 794-5322

BLADEN

Ruth Huggins, RN
Bladen County Health Department
P. O. Box 189
300 Mercer Mill Road
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

(910) 862-6900
Fax: (910) 862-6859
Courier: 14-56-48

BRUNSWICK

Deborah Maxwell, MSW
Jere McMillan, BSW
Brunswick County Health Department
P.O. Box 9
25 Courthouse Drive
Bolivia, NC 28422

(910) 253-2292
(910) 253-2313
Fax: (910) 253-2370
Courier: 04-20-08

BUNCOMBE

Betsy Brower, RN
Diane Frankel, RN
Buncombe County Health Center
35 Woodfin Street
Asheville, NC 28801

(828) 250-5060
(828) 250-5067
Courier 12-58-02

BURKE

Leslie Arnold, RN	(828) 439-4400
Jeanette Alexander, RN	(828) 439-4456
Burke County Health Department	Courier: 15-01-04
700 E. Parker Road	
P.O. Drawer 1266	
Morganton, NC 28602-1266	

CABARRUS

Suzanne Knight, RN	(704) 920-1322
Kay Robertson, RN	(704) 939-1200, Ext. 1236
Cabarrus Health Alliance	Courier: 05-09-01
1307 S. Cannon Blvd	
Kannapolis, NC 28083	

CALDWELL

Shirley Stamey, RN	(828) 426-8400
Anita Redding, RN	(828) 426-8446
Caldwell County Health Department	Fax: (828) 426-XXXX
1966B Morganton Boulevard, S.W.	Courier: 15-23-15
Lenoir, NC 28645	

CAMDEN (Albemarle Regional Health District)

Virginia Bailey, RN	(252) 426-2113
Debbie Farmer, RN	(252) 482-6014
P. O. Box 189	Courier: 10-32-05
Elizabeth City, NC 27909	

CARTERET

Angela Andrews, BSW	(252) 728-8550
Laura Wade, RN	(252) 728-8550
Carteret County Health Department	Courier: 11-13-12
3820 Bridges Street, Suite A	
Moorehead City, NC 28557	

CASWELL

Benton Thompson, RN	(336) 694-4129
Caswell County Health Department	Courier: 02-51-06
P. O. Box 1238	
189 County Park Road	
Yanceyville, NC 27379	

CATAWBA

Linda Greene, RN, BSN (828) 695-5840
Kerry Masterson, Retired EMT (828) 695-5806
Catawba County Health Department Courier: 09-70-01
3070 11th Avenue Drive., S.E.
Hickory, NC 28602

Stan Bolton, MA (828) 345-6975
Counseling and Substance Abuse Services
1985 Tate St., SE
Suite 300
Hickory, NC 28602

CHATHAM

Dolly Clayton, MSW, LCSW-P (919) 545-8367
Barbara Harviala, BA (919) 545-8333
Victoria Meyer, BA (919) 545-8369
Faye Street, BA (919) 545- 8367
Chatham County Health Department Courier 13-27-01
P.O. Box 130
Pittsboro, NC 27312

CHEROKEE

Brenda Gardner, RN (828) 837-7486
Cherokee County Health Department Courier: 08-52-01
228 Hilton St.
Murphy, NC 28906

CHOWAN (Albemarle Regional Health District)

Debbie Farmer, RN (252) 482-6003
Albemarle Regional Health Services Courier: 10-62-08
P.O. Box 808
Edenton, NC 27932

CLAY

Ellen Shope, RN (828) 349-2081 (Macon)
(*contract with Macon County) (828) 389-8052 (Clay)
Clay County Health Department Courier: 08-52-01
P. O. Box 55
Hayesville, NC 28904

CLEVELAND

Cindy Wells, LCSW (704) 484-5254
Evan Sealey, LBSW (704) 484-5253
Cleveland County Health Department Courier: 06-55-03
315 E. Grover Street
Shelby, NC 28150-3998

COLUMBUS

Lisa Cartrette, RN (910) 640-6615
Columbus County Health Department Courier: 04-23-27
Box 810, Miller Building
Rt. 304 Jefferson Street
Whiteville, NC 28472

CRAVEN

Carol Erwin, CSWM (252) 656-4920, ext. 3712
Craven County Health Department Fax: (252) 636-4970
P.O. Drawer 12610 Courier: 16-66-01
New Bern, NC 28561

Shanna Nesmith, MSW (252) 514-4770, ext. 247
New Bern Developmental Evaluation Center Fax: (252) 514-4773
1405 S. Glenburnie Road
New Bern, NC 28562

CUMBERLAND

Michelle Thompson, RN (910) 433-3800
Cumberland County Health Department Fax: (910) 433-3626
227 Fountainhead Lane Courier: 14-59-32
Fayetteville, NC 28301

CURRITUCK (Albemarle Regional Health District)

Debra Farmer, RN (252) 482-6014
Virginia Bailey, RN (252) 426-2113
Albemarle Regional Health Services Courier: 10-69-04
P.O. Box 26
Currituck, NC 27929

DARE

Beverly Lafferty, RN, BSN (252) 473-1101
Betsy Robinson, RN (252) 475-5016
Dare County Health Department Courier: 16-30-11
109 Exeter Street
P.O. Box 1000
Manteo, NC 27954

DAVIDSON

Susan Odom, RN
Davidson County Health Department
P.O. Box 439
Lexington, NC 27292

(336) 242-2332
Fax: (336) 242-1535
Courier: 13-54-24

DAVIE

Julie Coleman, BS
Davie County Health Department
P.O. Box 848
Mocksville, NC 27028

(336) 751-8700
Courier: 09-40-06

DUPLIN

Ruth Cooper, RN, FNP
Cam Ward, RN
Duplin County Health Department
340 Seminary Street
Kenansville, NC 28349

(910) 296-2130
(910) 296-2130
Fax: (910) 296-2139
Courier: 11-20-08

Betty Rose, RN
Duplin County Schools
459 Norwood-Ezzell Rd.
Mt. Olive, NC 28365

(910) 296-6609

DURHAM

Shirley Lacy, BSW
Wanda Edinger, BSW
Durham County Health Department
414 East Main Street
Durham, NC 27701

(919) 560-7749
(919) 560-7741
Fax: (919) 560-7740
Courier: 17-23-01

EDGECOMBE

Delphine Wiggins, ACBSW
Edgecombe County Health Department
2909 Main Street
Tarboro, NC 27886

(252) 641-7828
Fax: (252) 641-7565
Courier: 07-50-01

FORSYTH

Robin Macklin, BA
Forsyth County Health Department
799 N. Highland Avenue
P.O. Box 686
Winston Salem, NC 27101-0686

(336) 727-2890, ext. 3667
Courier: 13-07-03

FRANKLIN

Tina Green, BA
Franklin County Health Department
107-C Industrial Dr.
Louisburg, NC 27549

(919) 496-2533
Courier: 07-06-03

GASTON

Kimberly Carter, RN
Gaston County Health Department
991 W. Hudson Boulevard
Gastonia, NC 28052

(704) 853-5024
Courier: 06-34-01

GATES

Rachel Perry,
Hertford-Gates Health Agency
801 N. King St
P. O. Box 246
Winton, NC 27986

(252) 357-1380
Courier: 10-13-06

GRAHAM

Brenda Gardner, RN
(*contracts with Cherokee)
Graham County Health Department
PO Box 546
Robbinsville NC 28771

(828) 837-7486 (Cherokee)
(828) 479-7900 (Graham)
Courier: 08-40-01

GRANVILLE

Leigh Anne Hughes, RN
Granville-Vance Health District
P.O. Box 367
Oxford, NC 27565

(919) 693-2141(Granville)
Fax: (919) 693-8517
Courier: 17-01-01

GREENE

Angela Allen, RN
Sheila Alexander, BSW
Greene County Health Department
227 Kingold Blvd, Suite B
Snow Hill, NC 28580

(252) 747-8181
Courier: 01-83-16

GUILFORD

Greensboro

Betsy Wilcox, RN, BSN (336) 641-6651
Deborah Goddard, BSW (336) 202-3387
Guilford County Human Services
1203 Maple St., 3rd. Floor
Greensboro, NC 27405

Christine Murdock, RN, BSN (336) 641-6635
Tennie Skladanowski, BA (336) 641-3723
Avis Wright, RN, BSN (336) 641-6716
Guilford Co. Health Dept. Fax: (336) 641-6106
1100 E. Wendover Avenue Courier: 02-17-31
Greensboro, NC 27405

High Point

Linda Dumas, RN, BSN (336) 845-6530
Judi Casterline, RN cell phone (336) 880-0926
Guilford County Health Department Courier: 02-17-31
501 E. Green Drive
High Point, NC 27260

HALIFAX

Robert Sykes, MS (252) 583-5021, Ext. 299
Yvonne Scott, BA (252) 583-5021, Ext. 226
Halifax County Health Department Fax: (252) 583-2975
P.O. Box 10 Courier: 07-43-06
19 N. Dobbs Street
Halifax, NC 27839

Vandell Mills, BSW (252) 536-2800
Roanoke Amaranth Comm. Hlth.Grp., Inc.
819 Roanoke Rapids Rd.
Weldon, NC 27890

HARNETT

Brenda Smith, LPN
Harnett County Health Department
307 Cornelius-Harnett Blvd.
Lillington, NC 27546

(910) 893-7550
Courier: 14-73-01

HAYWOOD

Debbie Hyatt, RN
Haywood County Health Department
2177 Asheville Road
Waynesville, NC 28786

(828) 452-6675
Courier: 08-12-06

HENDERSON

Kathy Baluha, BSN
Louise Brezillac, RN
Beth Barber, RN
Judy Swensen, RN
Henderson County Health Department
1347 Spartanburg Hwy.
Hendersonville, NC 28792

(828) 692-4223, Ext. 237
(828) 692-4223, Ext. 237
(828) 692-4223, Ext. 311
(828) 692-4223, Ext. 243
Fax: (828) 697-4709
Courier: 06-92-01

HERTFORD

Sharon Roehl, RN
Hertford-Gates Health Agency
P.O. Box 246
801 N. King St.
Winton, NC 27986

(252) 862-4054
Courier: 10-13-06

HOKE

Sonya Ross-Currie, BSW
Hoke County Health Department
429 East Central Avenue
Raeford, NC 28376

(910) 875-3717, Ext. 245
Fax: (910) 875-6351
Courier: 14-80-04

HYDE

Luanna Gibbs, RN
U. S. 264 E. Business
Box 100
Swan Quarter, NC 27885

(252) 926-4398 (Hyde)
Fax: (252) 926-3702
Courier: 16-40-01

IREDELL

Diane Pemberton, RN
Iredell County Health Department
318 Turnersburg, Hwy 25
Statesville, NC 28625

(704) 878-5300
Courier: 09-36-07

JACKSON

Lisa Shearer, RN
Jackson County Health Department
538 Scotts Creek Rd., Ste 100
Sylva, NC 28779

(828) 586-8994
Courier: 08-24-21

JOHNSTON

Kathy Hodge, RN
Johnston County Health Department
517 Brightleaf Boulevard
Smithfield, NC 27577

(919) 989-5200
Courier: 01-63-28

JONES

Sylvia Bryan, RN
Jones County Health Department
401 Highway 58 South
P. O. Box 216
Trenton, NC 28585

(252) 448-9111
Courier: 11-18-07

LEE

Debbie Scott, RN
Sharon Lucas, RN
Lee County Health Department
106 Hillcrest Drive
Sanford, NC 27330

(919) 718-4640, Ext. 5315
(919) 718-4640, Ext. 5379
Fax: (919) 718-4632
Courier: 14-42-11

LENOIR

Amanda Arnette, RN
Lenoir County Health Department
P.O. Box 3385
201 N. McLewean Street
Kinston, NC 28502

(252) 526-4200
Courier: 01-25-01

LINCOLN

Tracy Pyant, BA
Lincoln County Health Department
151 Sigmon Rd.
Lincolnton, NC 28092

(704) 736-8633
Courier: 09-02-04

MACON

Ellen Shope, RN
Macon County Health Department
1830 Lakeside Drive
Franklin, NC 28734

(828) 349-2081
Courier: 08-50-19

MADISON

Rachel Smith, RN, BSN
Madison County Health Department
140 Health Care Lane
Marshall, NC 28753

(828) 649-3531
Courier: 12-20-02

MARTIN

Sheryl Needham, RN
Martin-Tyrrell-Washington
District Health Department
210 W. Liberty St.
Williamston, NC 27892

(252) 793-3023
Fax: (252) 793-0129
Courier: 10-83-13

McDOWELL

Beverly Thompson, RN
Rutherford Polk McDowell District
Health Department
408 Spalding Road
Marion, NC 28752

(828) 652-6811, Ext. 1320
Courier: 02-92-08

MECKLENBURG

Lisa Sammons, MSW (704) 336-6443
Conchita Bailey, MSW (704) 336-6400
Mecklenburg County Health Department Courier: 05-15-18
2845 Beatties Ford Rd
Charlotte, NC 28216

MITCHELL (Toe River District)

Kathy Garland, BSW (828) 688-2371
Mitchell County Health Department Courier: 12-71-04
130 Forest Service Dr., Ste. A
Bakersville, NC 28705

MONTGOMERY

Vera Richardson, SW (910) 572-1393
Montgomery County Health Department Courier: 14-56-48
217 S. Main Street
Troy, NC 27371

MOORE

Myra McIntyre, MSW (910) 947-3300
Moore County Health Department Courier: 03-45-01
P.O. Box 279
705 Pinehurst Avenue
Carthage, NC 28327

NASH

Judy Gatling, RN (252) 459-9819
Nash County Health Department Courier: 07-72-06
214 South Barnes Street
Nashville, NC 27856

NEW HANOVER

Paula Calvert, BSW (910) 343-6693
New Hanover County Health Department Courier: 04-17-37
2029 South 17th Street
Wilmington, NC 28401

NORTHAMPTON

Greta Flythe, BS (252) 534-5841
Northampton County Health Department Courier: 10-02-06
P.O. Box 635
Jackson, NC 27845

ONSLow

Trecinda Kinsey, RN (910) 347-2154, ext. 8218
Kimberly Bailey, BSW (910) 347-0728, ext. 8287
Onslow County Health Department Fax: (910) 347-7941
612 College Street Courier: 11-06-91
Jacksonville, NC 28540

ORANGE

Betsy Knop, LCSW (919) 968-2022, Ext. 295
Southern Human Serv. Ctr. Courier: 17-64-01
2501 Homestead Rd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Sabrina Brown, RN (919) 245-2443
Orange County Health Department Fax: (919) 644-3007
300 W. Tryon St. Courier: 17-50-07
Hillsborough, NC 27278

PAMLICO

Judy Styron, RN (252) 745-5111
Pamlico County Health Department Fax: (252) 745-7684
P.O. Box 306 P.O. Box 306 Courier: 16-50-06
Bayboro, NC 28515

PASQUOTANK (Albemarle Regional Health District)

Virginia Bailey, RN (252) 426-2113
Albemarle Regional Health Services Courier: 10-32-05
P.O. Box 189
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

PENDER

Mary Williams, BA	(910) 259-1230
Melvon Rice, RN	(910) 259-1230
Pender County Health Department	Courier: 04-69-10
803 S. Walker St.	
P. O. Box 1209	
Burgaw, NC 28425	

PERQUIMANS (Albemarle Regional Health District)

Virginia Bailey, RN	(252) 426-2113
Perquimans Health Department	Courier: 10-52-02
103 ARPDC Street	
Hertford, NC 27944	

PERSON

Elizabeth Brooks, RN	(336) 597-2204, Ext. 238
Linda Laws, MSW	(336) 597-2204
Person County Health Department	Courier: 02-33-15
325 South Morgan Street	
Roxboro, NC 27573	

PITT

Wanda Gurkins, BSW	(252) 902-2359
Nancy Stone, RN	(252) 902-2318
Susan Shelton, RN	(252) 902-2348
Connie Clark, RN	(252) 902-2357
Pitt County Health Department	Courier: 01-40-01
201 Government Circle	
Greenville, NC 27834	

POLK

Beverly Thompson, RN	(828) 652-6811, Ext. 1320
Rutherford Polk McDowell District	Courier: 06-66-01
Health Department	
221 Callahan-Koone Road	
Spindale, NC 28160	

RANDOLPH

Cynthia Grantham, RN	(336) 318-6245
Terri Chamblee, RN, BSN	(336) 318-6160
Jean Graham, RN	(336) 318-6763
Randolph County Health Department	(336) 318-6241
2222-B S. Fayetteville Street	Courier: 13-66-24
Asheboro, NC 27203	

RICHMOND

Cheryl Speight, RN	(910) 997-8300
Richmond County Health Department	Courier: 03-81-08
127 Caroline Street	
Rockingham, NC 28379	

ROBESON

Elizabeth Rowell, RN	(910) 671-3281
Robeson County Health Department	Courier: 14-92-02
460 Country Club Road	
Lumberton, NC 28360	

ROCKINGHAM

Diane Stott, RN, BSN	(336) 342-8174
Debbie Southard, RN	(336) 342-8156
Melinda White, BSW	(336) 342-8158
Rockingham County Health Department	Fax: (336) 342-8356
P.O. Box 204	Courier: 02-28-23
Wentworth, NC 27375-0204	

ROWAN

Patricia Yost, RN	(704) 638-2928
Jean Longo, RN	(704) 638-2966
Rowan County Health Department	Fax: (704) 638-3129
1811 East Innes Street	Courier: 05-34-01
Salisbury, NC 28146	

RUTHERFORD

Geraldine (Deany) Martin, RN	(828) 287-6237
Rutherford Polk McDowell District	Courier: 06-66-01
Health Department	
221 Callahan-Koon Rd.	
Spindale, NC 28160	

SAMPSON

Wanda Robinson, RN	(910) 592-1131
Sampson County Health Department	Courier: 11-33-26
360 County Complex Road	
Clinton, NC 28328	

SCOTLAND

Margaret Nicholson, LCSW	(910) 610-1508, Ext. 524
Melinda Salley, MS	(910) 610-1508, Ext. 521
Nicki Peek, BA	(910) 610-1508, Ext. 519
Mary Cox, BSW	(910) 277-2440, Ext. 437
Scotland County Health Department	Courier: 14-38-02
1405 West Blvd.	
PO Box 69	
Laurinburg, NC 28353	

STANLY

Belinda Phillips, RN	(704) 986-3015
Alison Klontz, BSW	(704) 986-3047
Stanly County Health Department	Fax: (704) 982-8354
1000 N. First Street, Suite 3	Courier: 03-23-01
Albemarle, NC 28001	

STOKES

Wanda George, RN	(336) 593-2400
Teresa Valdes, BA	(336) 721-8898
Stokes Family Health Ctr.	Fax: (336) 593-9361
P.O. Box 187	Courier: 09-16-07
Danbury, NC 27016	

SURRY

Emily Mayes, RN	(336) 401-8555
Jeanna Read, BS	(336) 401-8544
Surry County Health & Nutrition Center	Fax: (336) 401-8599
118 Hamby Road	Courier: 09-90-07
Dobson, NC 27017	

SWAIN

Charlotte Wilson, BSN, RN	(828) 488-3198
Swain County Health Department	Courier: 08-30-07
P.O. Box 546	
Bryson City, NC 28713	

TRANSYLVANIA

Debbie Mackey, BSN	(828) 884-3135
Cathy Nicholson, LPN	(828) 884-3135
Transylvania County Health Department	Courier: 06-02-11
Community Services Bldg.	
Brevard, NC 28712	

TYRRELL

Sheryl Needham, RN	(252) 793-3023
Linda Clough, MOA	(252) 793-1750
Martin-Tyrrell-Washington	Courier: 10-83-13
District Health Department	
P. O. Box 238	
Columbia, NC 27925	

UNION

Judy Liles, RN	(704) 296-4832
Debora Carpenter, RN	(704) 296-4837
Union County Health Department	Fax: (704) 296-4887
1224 W. Roosevelt Blvd.	Courier: 03-03-09
Monroe, NC 28110	

VANCE

Leigh Anne Hughes, RN	(252) 492-7915, ext 249 (Vance)
Granville-Vance Health District	(919) 693-2141 (Granville)
P.O. Box 367	Fax: (919) 693-8517
Henderson, NC 27536	Courier: 17-01-01

WAKE

Jan Wood, MSW	(919) 250-1049
Lenay Richardson, BA	(919) 250-1036
Lois Hinton, BS	(919) 250-4675
Teresa Dilday, BSN	(919) 250-4660
Rosa Vazquez, BS	(919) 250-4634
Wake County Human Services	Fax: (919) 212-7946
P. O. Box 14049	
Raleigh, NC 27620-4049	
10 Sunnybrook Road	
Raleigh, NC 27610-4049	Courier: 51-91-00

Cathy Sauls, BA	(919) 557-1055
Wake County Human Services	
Southern Regional Center	
PO Box 1089	
Fuquay Varina, NC 27526	

Jan Burdick, BSN, RN	(919) 554-3313
Wake County Human Services	
247 S. Allen Rd.	
Wake Forest, NC 27587	

WARREN

Cheryl Coffman, RN	(252) 257-4081
Warren County Health Department	Courier: 07-31-17
544 West Ridgeway Street	
Warrenton, NC 27589	

WASHINGTON

Sheryl Needham, RN	(252) 793-3023
Linda Clough, MOA	(252) 766-3200
Martin-Tyrrell-Washington	Courier: 10-83-13
District Health Department	
P. O. Box 238	
Columbia, NC 27925	

WATAUGA (Appalachian Health District)

Katherine Holder, RN	(828) 264-6635
Waydell Bicking, RN	(828) 264-6635
Appalachian District Health Department	Courier: 15-90-01
126 Poplar Grove Connector	
Boone, NC 28607	

WAYNE

Linda Thompson, BA	(919) 731-1000
Wayne County Health Department	Fax: (919) 731-1232
301 North Herman Street	Courier: 01-15-30
Box CC	
Goldsboro, NC 27530	

WILKES

Linda Flora, RN	(336) 651-7481
Betsy Lane, RN	(336) 651-7588
Wilkes County Health Department	Fax: (336) 651-7532
306 College St.	Courier: 15-10-06
Wilkesboro, NC 28697	

WILSON

Barbara Evans- Williams, BS	(252)237-3141, ext.6681
Karen Boyette, BS	(252) 237-3141, ext. 6666
Elizabeth Horne, BS	(252) 237-3141
Kay Aycock, RN	(252) 237-3141
Wilson County Health Department	Fax: (252) 293-8301
1801 Glendale Drive	Courier: 01-50-25
Wilson, NC 27893	

YADKIN

Yvonne Walker, BA
Yadkin County Health Department
PO Box 457
Yadkinville, NC 27055

(336) 679-4203
Fax: (336) 679-6358
Courier: 09-12-20

YANCEY (Toe River Health District)

Kathy Garland, BSW
Department Courier: 12-45-02
10 Swiss Avenue
Burnsville, NC 28714

(828) 682-6118

Yancey County Health

