



2009-2010 Community Health Needs Assessment

Final Executive Report
March 8, 2010

Research Completed by:



Acknowledgements

By their very nature, community health needs assessments are a collaborative effort. Accordingly, we would like to thank the numerous individuals and organizations who made the 2009-2010 Community Health Needs Assessment possible. Foremost, we would like to thank our project sponsors for their generous support of this study. We also owe a debt of gratitude to all who served on our project steering committee, helped collect valuable hand-distributed survey data, hosted or helped recruit participants for community focus group discussions, and provided invaluable support throughout the community health needs assessment process.

PROJECT SPONSORS

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Apostolic Temple Church

Rod Gereda, The Peace Center

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to those listed above and to the entire community for participating in this very important process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Szydowski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "S".

Dr. Steve Szydowski
Executive Director Healthy Northeast Pennsylvania Initiative

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PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This report summarizes the methodology and key findings of the 2009-2010 Community Health Needs Assessment. The study's main objective was to complete a comprehensive assessment of the healthcare access needs, health status, and quality of life indicators of residents living in the Lackawanna County and Luzerne County communities. More specifically, the project goals were:

- To obtain statistically valid information on the health status and socioeconomic/environmental factors related to health of residents of the counties Healthy Northeast Pennsylvania Initiative (HNPI) serves.
- To supplement the general population survey data that is currently available to HNPI as an organization.
- To assure that community members, including those of broad racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic minority groups, are the primary participants in the needs assessment survey process. In addition, educators, health-related professionals, media representatives, local government, human service organizations, institutes of higher learning, religious institutions and the private sector will be engaged at some level of the survey process.
- To develop accurate comparisons to the state and national baselines of health measures, utilizing the most current validated data available.
- To utilize data obtained from the assessment to address the identified health needs of the HNPI service area.
- To provide HNPI with appropriate data comparisons, on like survey questions, to the 1997-98 and 2003-04 community health needs assessments' household survey data. These data comparisons will allow HNPI to discover both positive and negative community health trends.
- To complete a comprehensive community health needs assessment which not only reaches minority/underserved populations but also addresses a wide variety of community health topics including, but not limited to: access to care, chronic disease prevalence, preventive health, health status, access to community programs and services, quality of life indicators, and healthy lifestyle behaviors.

METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

The Community Health Needs Assessment process used both quantitative and qualitative research strategies in a coordinated effort to ensure a representative response from the Lackawanna County and Luzerne County communities. This strategy involved a project planning meeting with the project steering committee to ensure all Lackawanna County and Luzerne County populations were included in the study. Research steps included in this study are:

1. Community Leader Interviews;
2. Socioeconomic Profile;
3. Secondary Data;
4. Focus Groups; and
5. Household Survey.

STUDY GEOGRAPHY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

Special emphasis was made on capturing a representative sample of the population located in the Lackawanna and Luzerne County communities throughout the household survey process, focus group discussions, and secondary data research. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the geography encompassed by the research efforts of this study.

Household survey data was further grouped by regions within the study geography in an attempt to understand unique healthcare access needs and health status issues faced by residents living in different parts of the study region. Tables 1 and 2 enumerate the zip codes and communities that make up the color-coded zip-code regions illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Lackawanna County Study Geography

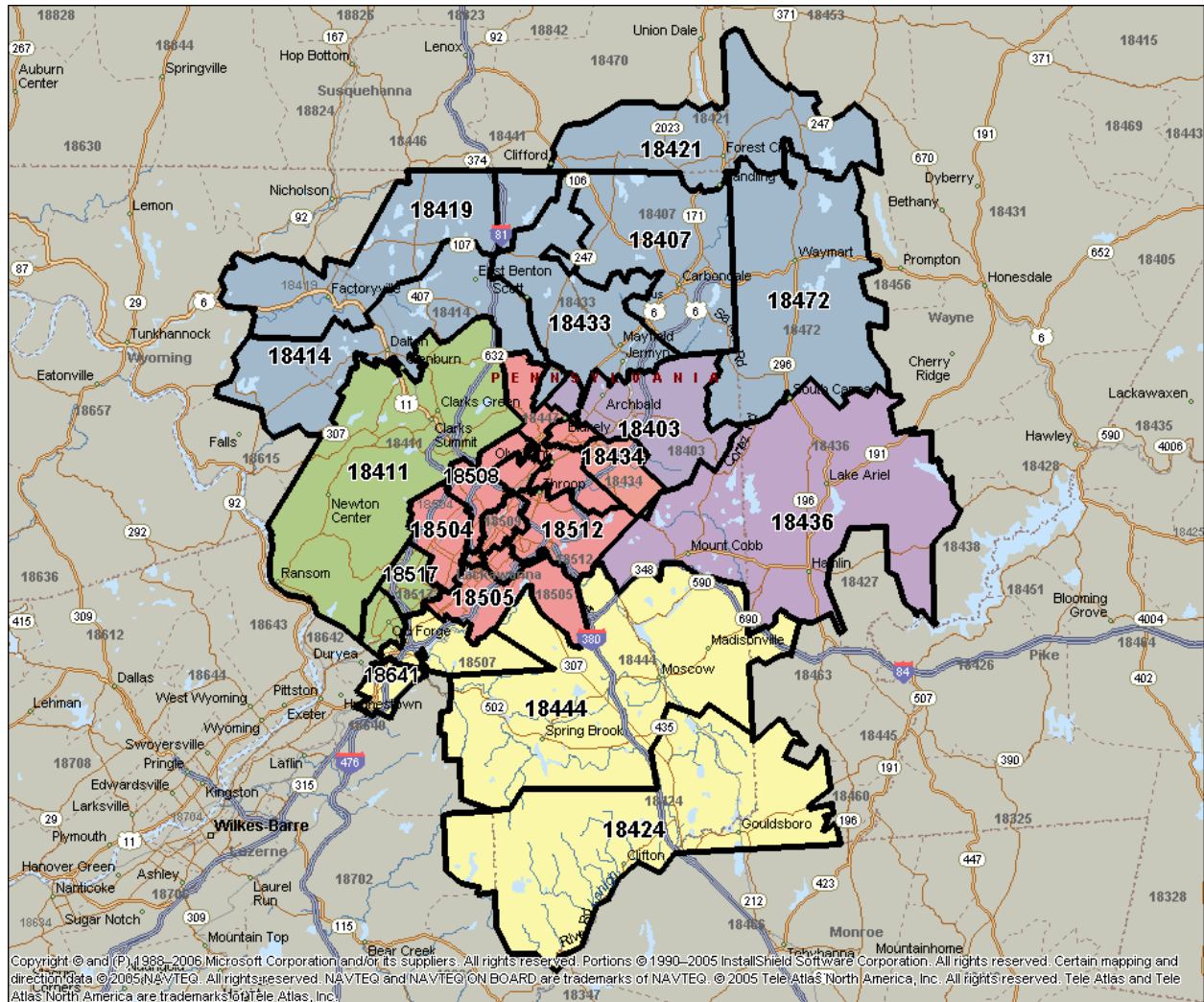


Table 1: Lackawanna County Zip Codes by Region

Region	Zip Codes
North (Blue)	18407, 18414, 18419, 18421, 18433, 18472
Central (Red)	18434, 18447, 18452, 18503, 18504, 18505, 18508, 18509, 18510, 18512, 18519
South (Yellow)	18424, 18444, 18507, 18641,
East (Purple)	18403, 18436
West (Green)	18411, 18517, 18518

Figure 2: Luzerne County Study Geography

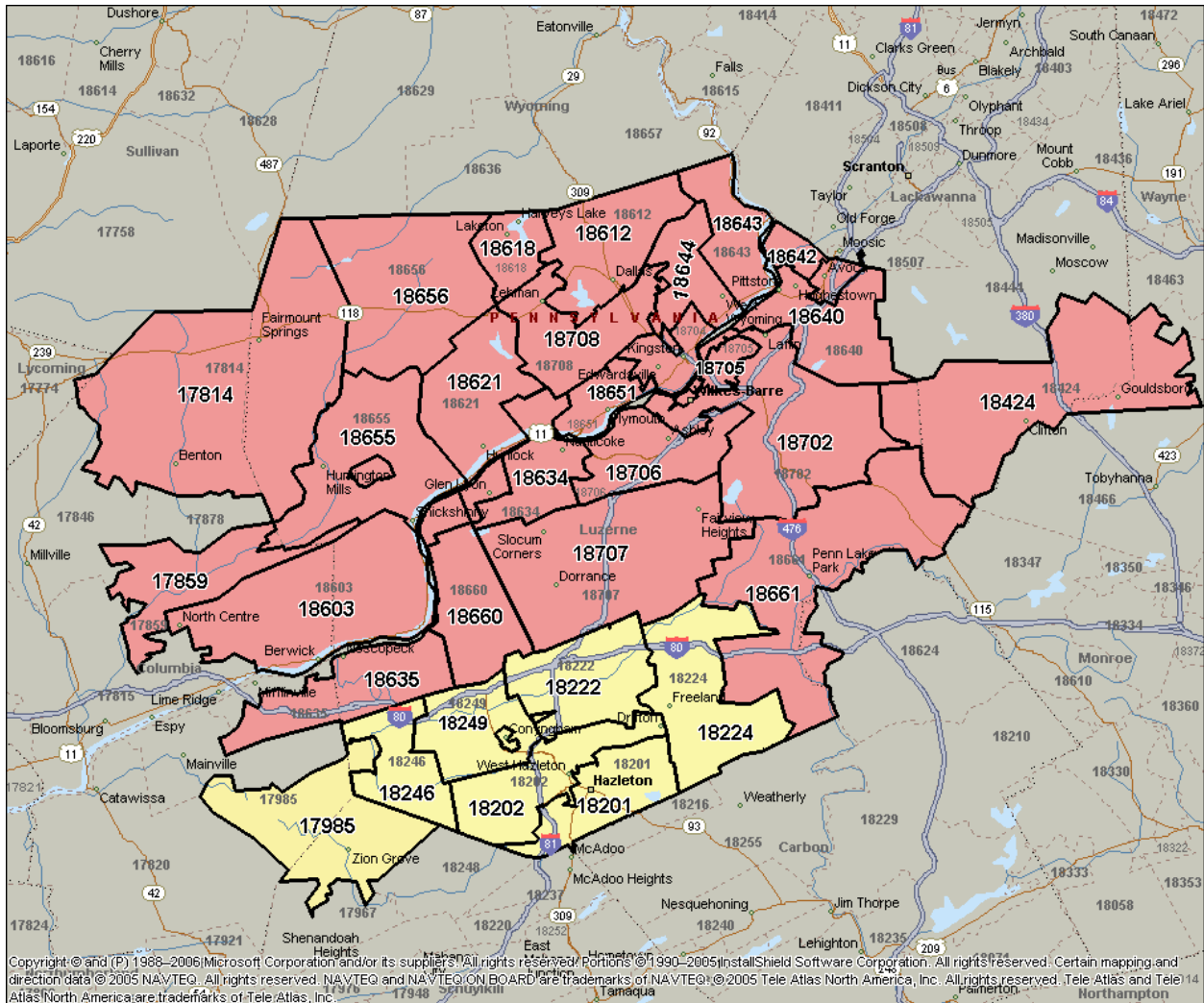


Table 2: Luzerne County Zip Codes by Region

Region	Zip Codes
North of Interstate 80 (Red)	17814, 17859, 18242, 18603, 18612, 18617, 18618, 18621, 18622, 18634, 18635, 18640, 18641, 18642, 18643, 18644, 18651, 18655, 18656, 18660, 18661, 18701, 18702, 18704, 18705, 18706, 18707, 18708, 18709
South of Interstate 80 (Yellow)	17895, 18201, 18202, 18219, 18222, 18224, 18246, 18249

POPULATION

The study area is home to 514,982 residents living in 213,941 households.¹ Table 3 shows a breakout of population and households by county. The population within the study region is projected to decline by 0.71% by 2014, with Lackawanna County declining at the fastest rate (0.75%) during that time.²

Table 3: 2008 Population and Household Counts³

Lackawanna County		Luzerne County		Total Study Area	
Population	Households	Population	Households	Population	Households
206,262	85,829	308,720	128,112	514,982	213,941

RACE

Claritas Census estimates for 2009 show the study area population is predominately self-defined as White/Caucasian in both Lackawanna (94.5%) and Luzerne (93.5%) counties, as illustrated in Figures 3 and 4. The overall study area is significantly less diverse than the state of Pennsylvania (83.9% White/Caucasian), and the U.S. (74.1% White/Caucasian), according to the 2005-2007 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure 3: Lackawanna County by Race

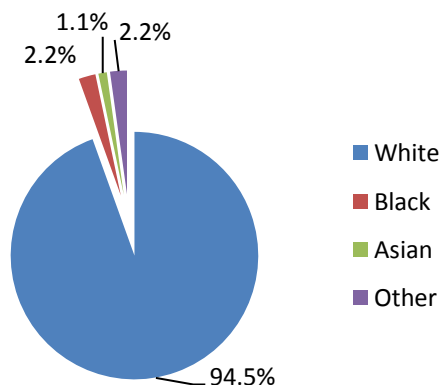
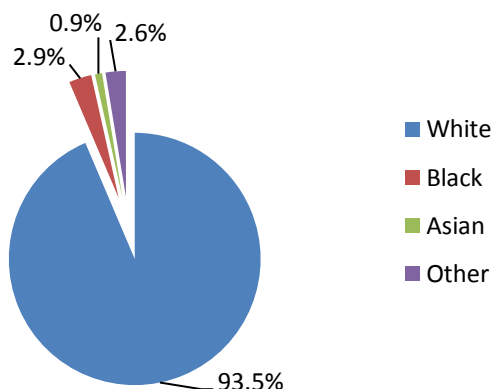


Figure 4: Luzerne County by Race



¹ 2009 Claritas Census estimate

² 2009-2014 Claritas five year Census projections

³ 2009 Claritas Census estimate

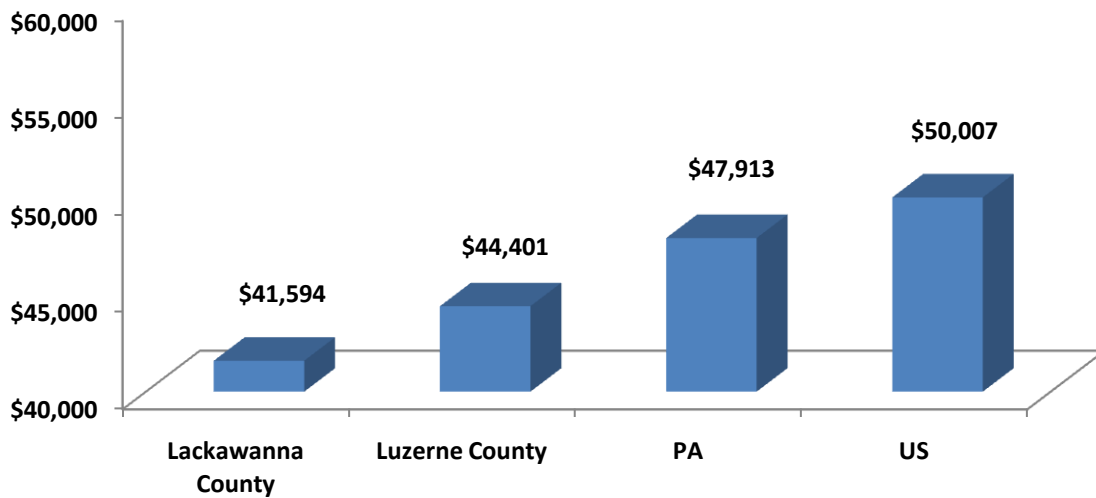
AGE

Compared to the state of Pennsylvania, the study region is older. The state of Pennsylvania has a population aged sixty-five and older that makes up 15.2% of its total population, while 18.6% of the population in Lackawanna County and 18.8% of the population in Luzerne County is sixty-five and older. In the under age eighteen category, the state of Pennsylvania has 22.6% of its population while Lackawanna County has 20.6% of its population and Luzerne County has 19.8% of its population.⁴

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Figure 5 shows the median household income for Lackawanna and Luzerne counties.⁵ Compared to Pennsylvania's median household income of \$47,913, the study area has weak average earnings. The study area is also below the national median household income of \$50,007.⁶

Figure 5: Median Household Income



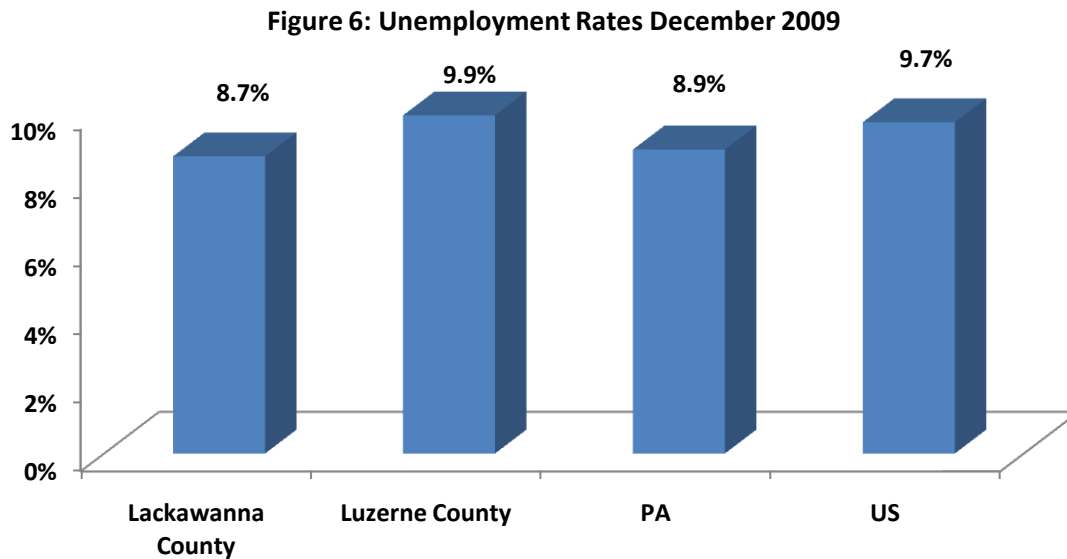
⁴ 2005-2007 American Community Survey, Bureau of the Census

⁵ 2009 Claritas Census estimates

⁶ 2005-2007 American Community Survey, Bureau of the Census

UNEMPLOYMENT

Figure 6 illustrates the unemployment rates for the study area.⁷ By comparison, the Pennsylvania unemployment rate is 8.9% and the national unemployment rate is 9.7%, both as of December 2009, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Educational attainment is a category in which the overall study area is considerably behind. Only 19.5% of residents age twenty-five and older within Lackawanna County and 16.6% of residents age twenty-five and older within Luzerne County have a Bachelor's degree or higher.⁸ By comparison, 25.6% of the Pennsylvania population age twenty-five and older has a Bachelor's degree or higher and 27% of this age group in the U.S. has a Bachelor's degree or higher.⁹

⁷ Bureau of Labor Statistics, www.bls.gov

⁸ 2009 Claritas Census estimates

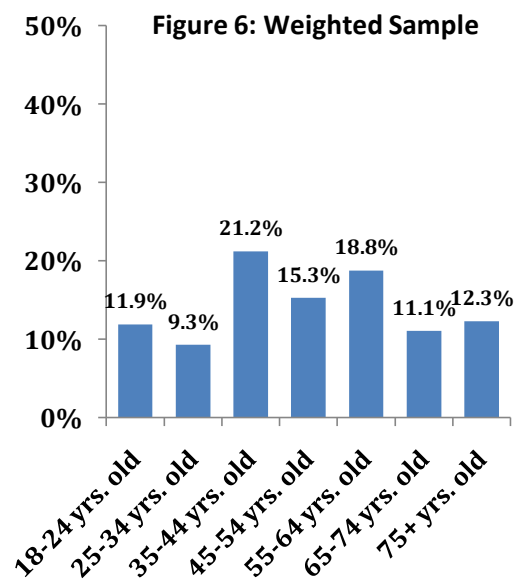
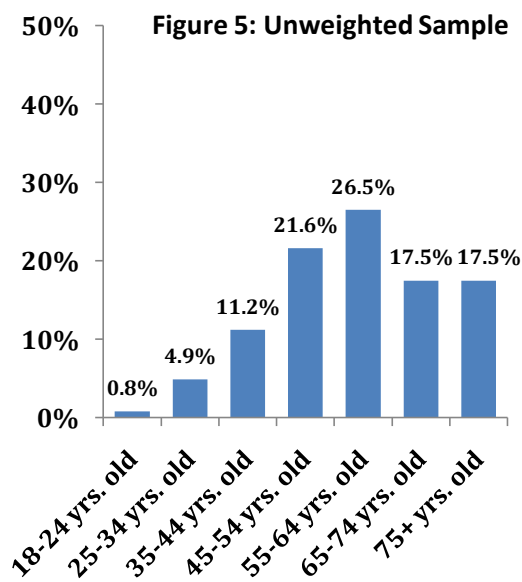
⁹ 2005-2007 American Community Survey, Bureau of the Census

QUANTITATIVE STRATEGY

Tripp Umbach’s quantitative research strategy involves four different components.

- 1. Household Mail Survey Administration:** Tripp Umbach mailed 12,000 surveys on November 4, 2009 to random households throughout the study area. Surveys were mailed in proportion to the number of households within each zip code in order to obtain a representative sample of the overall study area. In total, Tripp Umbach collected 1,143 surveys for analysis, which equates to a 10% response rate after accounting for 628 undeliverable surveys. Given the number of households within the study region, the household survey sample is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval with a margin of error of +/- 2.9%.

Tripp Umbach compared the demographics of the collected sample to the Census demographics for Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties to ensure that a representative sample was collected. The collected sample compared well to Census data for all demographic variables with the lone exception being age. Tripp Umbach’s experience shows that younger age cohorts between the ages of 18-34 typically are underrepresented in mail survey samples. To account for the older sample that was collected, Tripp Umbach weighted the sample based on the age variable to match Census data. Figures 5 and 6 illustrate this change.



2. **Hand Distributed Survey Administration:** Tripp Umbach conducted a preliminary review of local census data to evaluate minority populations from which the mail survey would not generate a significant response for analysis. After reviewing this information with the project steering committee, the committee recommended that surveys be collected by hand from the following minority populations (a minimum of fifty surveys were required from each subpopulation in order to conduct meaningful statistical analysis):
 - a. **Hispanic/Latino Community:** A total of 100 surveys were collected, comprised of 50 from Lackawanna County and 50 from Luzerne County.
 - b. **African American Community:** A total of 100 surveys were collected, comprised of 50 from Lackawanna County and 50 from Luzerne County.

3. **Household Survey Data Analysis:** Tripp Umbach completed quantitative data analysis for each of the 135 questions on the household survey instrument. Tripp Umbach completed cross tab analysis for multiple indicators, including gender, age, income, educational attainment, insurance status, and access to providers. Tripp Umbach also completed geographic breakouts of the data for the North, South, East, West, and Central regions of Lackawanna County as well as the Northern and Southern regions of Luzerne County as defined in Tables 1 and 2. Table 4 provides a demographic overview of the mail and hand distributed survey samples for both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties.

Table 4: Mail and Hand Distributed Survey Demographics

Demographic Category	Mail Sample Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties	Hispanic/Latino HD Surveys		African American HD Surveys	
		Lackawanna County	Luzerne County	Lackawanna County	Luzerne County
Gender					
Male	46.2%	41.9%	28.3%	31.4%	41.2%
Female	53.8%	58.1%	71.7%	68.6%	58.8%
Age					
18-24	11.9%	10.5%	8.7%	10.2%	6.0%
25-34	9.3%	20.0%	17.4%	16.3%	20.0%
35-44	21.2%	30.5%	26.1%	22.4%	26.0%
45-54	15.3%	20.0%	39.1%	22.4%	22.0%
55-64	18.8%	12.6%	4.3%	18.4%	24.0%

Demographic Category	Mail Sample	Hispanic/Latino HD Surveys		African American HD Surveys	
65 -74	11.1%	6.3%	2.2%	10.2%	2.0%
75 +	12.3%	0.0%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Educational Attainment					
< 9 th Grade	.7%	32.6%	53.1%	4.0%	3.9%
Some High School	9.1%	17.4%	6.1%	10.0%	11.8%
High School Degree/GED	32.2%	21.7%	4.1%	40.0%	33.3%
Vocational/Trade School	8.3%	2.2%	4.1%	2.0%	11.8%
Some College	13.7%	19.6%	6.1%	36.0%	15.7%
Bachelor's Degree	24.1%	2.2%	16.3%	8.0%	19.6%
Graduate Degree	11.9%	4.3%	10.2%	0.0%	3.9%
Annual Household Income					
Less than \$25K	32.8%	87.9%	68.1%	55.4%	49%
\$25K - \$39,999	13.3%	4.9%	29.8%	23.4%	27.5%
\$40K - \$49,999	9.9%	2.4%	2.1%	4.3%	9.8%
\$50K - \$74,999	21.2%	0.0%	0.0%	14.9%	9.8%
\$75K +	22.9%	4.8%	0.0%	2.4%	3.9%
Race					
White	95.2%	0.0%	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Hispanic	2.2%	100%	100%	2.0%	0.0%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Other	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Black	.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100%	100%
Asian American	.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Employment Status					
Working Full Time	42.0%	34.7%	42.9%	50.0%	45.1%
Retired	25.9%	4.1%	2.0%	10.0%	9.8%
Working Part Time	14.5%	20.4%	34.7%	10.0%	17.6%
Homemaker	12.6%	16.3%	14.3%	8.0%	3.9%
Unemployed	9.4%	20.4%	4.1%	16.0%	9.8%
Unable to Work/ Disability	5.8%	4.1%	4.1%	10.0%	5.9%
Working More than One Job	5.4%	6.1%	6.1%	6.0%	11.8%
Student	3.8%	6.1%	2.0%	6.0%	3.9%

4. **Secondary Data Research:** Tripp Umbach prepared secondary data PowerPoint reports for Lackawanna and Luzerne counties that include socioeconomic data and demographic projections from Nielsen Claritas and the U.S. Census Bureau, health prevalence data from the BRFSS, CDC, and HRSA, and references to secondary data reports, including Governor Ed Rendell's "Prescription for Pennsylvania" (2007) and the Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development Indicators Report (2009).

QUALITATIVE STRATEGY

The qualitative component of the 2009-2010 Community Health Needs Assessment study includes phone interviews with community leaders and focus group discussions with subpopulations that are typically underrepresented in the household survey response.

1. **Community Leader Interviews:** Tripp Umbach facilitated twenty phone interviews with community leaders representing Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. The purpose of the interviews is to understand the top community health issues affecting residents of the study area as well as identifying existing community strengths and resources. The group of community leaders who participated in the interview process is comprised of political leaders, business owners, leaders in higher education, representatives of social service organizations, and providers.
2. **Focus Groups:** Tripp Umbach worked collaboratively with the project steering committee to identify target audiences for focus group research during the project kickoff meeting on October 20, 2009. Tripp Umbach facilitated focus group discussions with:
 1. Caretakers of Children with Special Needs;
 2. Young Adults Ages 18-34;
 3. Senior Citizens; and
 4. Providers of Services to Teens.

Each focus group discussion was two hours in length. The purpose of each discussion group was to identify healthcare, human service, and quality of life issues affecting the targeted sub-populations.

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

Based upon the data gathered through the research methodology outlined previously, Tripp Umbach identified five community health areas of need that are considered priorities for Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. Listed in alphabetical order, the top five priority areas are:

- Access to Care
- Chronic Disease/Obesity
- Employment
- Mental Health
- Substance Abuse

According to a project known as Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health (MATCH), Lackawanna County and Luzerne County rank 51st and 57th, respectively, out of the 67 Pennsylvania counties in overall health status. MATCH is a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.¹⁰

The rankings developed as part of the MATCH project incorporate the same community health variables studied in the 2009-2010 Community Health Needs Assessment completed by HNPI and Tripp Umbach. The variables studied by MATCH and Tripp Umbach include health outcomes, health behavior, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment. Tripp Umbach's use of secondary data provides for relevant comparisons to primary data collected for the study region since 1997, allowing HNPI and the local community to determine the areas of need that have seen negative trends or are below state and national averages. Tripp Umbach's findings from this study support the county health rankings developed by MATCH; Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties do not compare well to state and national averages for many of the key community health indicators evaluated as part of the 2009-2010 Community Health Needs Assessment.

¹⁰ <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/about-project/background>

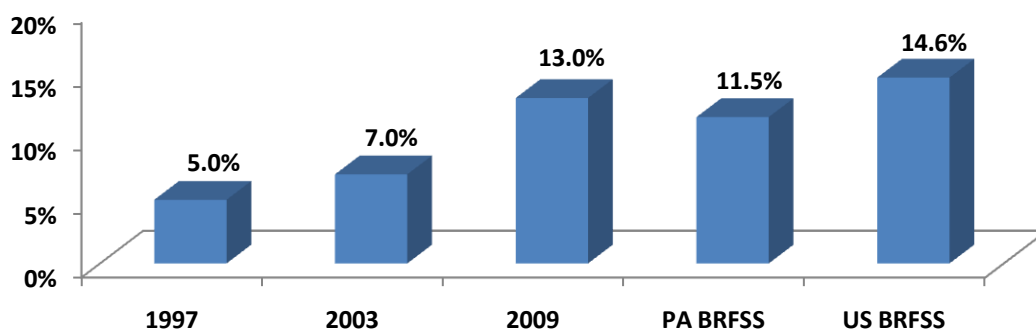
ACCESS TO CARE

Concern over access to healthcare services is a consistent theme throughout each research methodology employed in this study. While this theme is troubling, it is consistent with the concerns that Americans have with healthcare reform, currently at the forefront of national policy debates. From the perspective of community leaders, who participated in the community leader interview process, there is a significant number of residents without any health insurance and/or adequate insurance coverage that provides access to necessary healthcare services. This perception was also echoed by focus group participants, whether it was senior citizens with concerns regarding paying for needed prescription medicines or young adults who lack the ability to seek primary or specialty care services due to a lack of insurance.

INSURANCE STATUS

A closer look at the household survey data shows that the percentage of respondents within the study region without health insurance has steadily increased since 1997. Tripp Umbach facilitated community health studies in Lackawanna and Luzerne counties in 1997, 2003, and 2009 using the same mail survey methodology for each study. In 1997, only 5% of survey respondents reported not having any form of healthcare insurance coverage. By 2009, this statistic increased to 13%. Figure 7 illustrates this trend. By comparison, the 2008 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports the state of Pennsylvania has an 11.5% uninsured rate and the United States has a 14.6% uninsured rate.

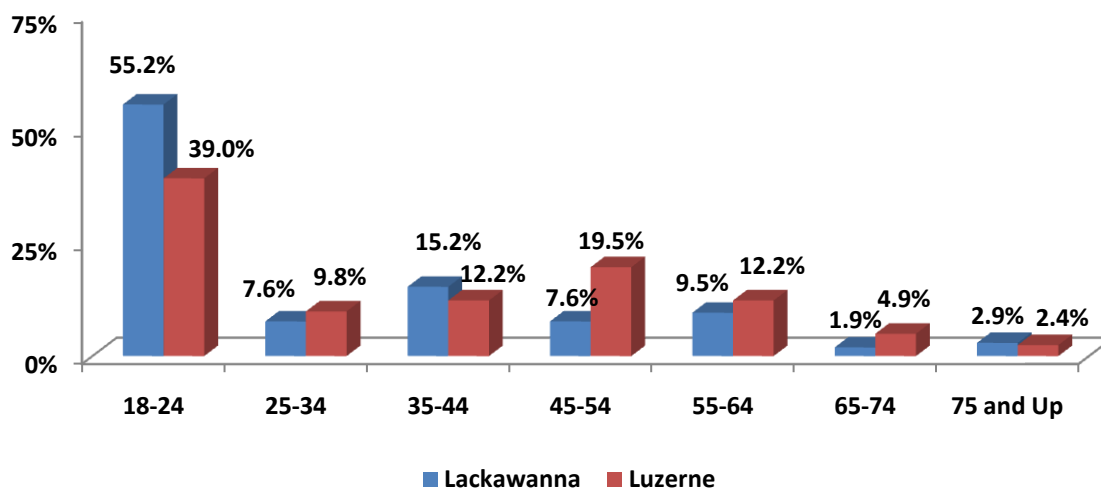
Figure 7: Uninsured Population



Lackawanna County residents are twice as likely to not have health insurance as Luzerne County residents. The 2009 household mail survey finds 18% of respondents in Lackawanna County do not have health insurance, compared to 7.2% in Luzerne County. The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development Indicators Report for 2009 also shows a two to one ratio for this statistic, reporting that 10.6% of the residents in Lackawanna County and 5.2% of residents in Luzerne County are without health insurance.

Of the respondents who were surveyed in 2009, individuals ages 18-34 are the most likely to not have health insurance. In Lackawanna County, 62.8% of the respondents who reported not having health insurance are between the ages of 18 and 34, while 48.8% of the respondents who reported not having health insurance in Luzerne County are between the ages of 18 and 34. Figure 8 illustrates this data. By comparison, a 2007 report entitled “Prescription for Pennsylvania” produced by Governor Ed Rendell’s office reports that 49% of uninsured residents in Pennsylvania are between the ages of 18 and 34.

Figure 8: Uninsured Population by Age



The majority of uninsured survey respondents in Lackawanna County live in the Central part of the county and in Luzerne County, the majority of uninsured are from the Northern region, above Interstate 80. Table 5 shows a complete breakout of the uninsured survey respondents by geographic region.

Table 5: Uninsured Population by Region

Lackawanna County					Luzerne County	
North	South	East	West	Central	North (Above I-80)	South (Below I-80)
17.5%	4.9%	1.9%	11.7%	64.0%	89.7%	10.3%

Table 6 shows the percentage of uninsured hand distributed survey respondents (by subpopulation).

Table 6: Hand Distributed Survey Respondents without Insurance

Lackawanna County		Luzerne County	
African American	Hispanic/Latino	African American	Hispanic/Latino
19.6%	82.0%	22.4%	60.4%

The top five reasons why overall mail survey respondents do not have health insurance are:

- 1.) Became ineligible because of age or because left school (24.9%);
- 2.) Lost job or changed employer (22.8%);
- 3.) Couldn't afford premiums (19.2%);
- 4.) Employer doesn't offer or stopped offering coverage (17.0%); and
- 5.) Lost Medicaid or Medical Assistance eligibility (16.5%).

HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Similar to the lack of health insurance, a disparity also exists between Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties with regard to having a primary healthcare provider. In Luzerne County, 6.3% of survey respondents reported not having a primary healthcare provider, while 10% of Lackawanna County survey respondents reported not having a primary healthcare provider.

The Central region is home to the majority of survey respondents without a primary healthcare provider in Lackawanna County (80.4%) and in Luzerne County, most respondents without a primary healthcare provider (88.6%) live in the Northern part of the county.

Table 7 shows the percentage of hand distributed survey respondents who do not have a primary healthcare provider (by subpopulation).

Table 7: Hand Distributed Survey Respondents without a Primary Healthcare Provider

Lackawanna County		Luzerne County	
African American	Hispanic/Latino	African American	Hispanic/Latino
15.7%	50.0%	21.6%	59.2%

The top three reasons why overall mail survey respondents do not have a primary healthcare provider are:

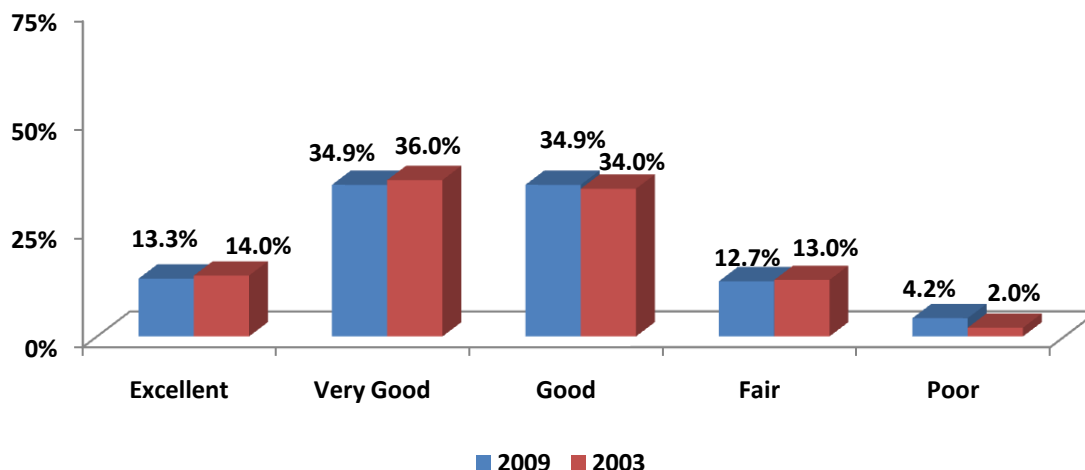
- 1.) Can't pay for a provider visit (64.1%);
- 2.) Don't need a healthcare provider (16.5%); and
- 3.) Can't find a provider I like or trust (4.0%).

CHRONIC DISEASE/OBESITY

HEALTH STATUS

The overall health status of residents within the study region has not changed significantly since the community health study completed in 2003. The data presented in Figure 9 shows that 16.9% of 2009 survey respondents and 15% of 2003 survey respondents rate their health status as fair or poor. By comparison, the 2008 BRFSS reports that 16.3% of Pennsylvania residents and 14.7% of Americans rate their health status as fair or poor.

Figure 9: Health Status



While there is not a significant difference in health status between Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties, Luzerne County survey respondents rate their health status as fair or poor more frequently (18.4%) than Lackawanna County survey respondents (15.4%). Within Lackawanna County specifically, a significantly higher percentage of survey respondents from the Central region (7.5%) rate their health status as fair or poor.

Table 8 shows the percentage of hand distributed survey respondents, by subpopulation, reporting their health status as fair or poor.

Table 8: Hand Distributed Survey Respondents Reporting Fair or Poor Health Status

Lackawanna County		Luzerne County	
African American	Hispanic/Latino	African American	Hispanic/Latino
17.6%	38.8%	17.6%	20.4%

OBESITY

Obesity is an issue that many communities face across the state of Pennsylvania and nationally and is a contributing factor to poor health status and chronic disease prevalence. Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties are no exception. The 2009 household survey instrument was used to calculate the BMI of survey respondents within the study region, based on their height and weight. The percentage of overweight and obese survey respondents in 2009 (64.4%) is not significantly higher than the percentage of overweight and obese survey respondents in 2003 (64.0%), as illustrated by Figure 10. By comparison, 63.2% of national 2008 BRFSS participants are overweight or obese and 64.4% of Pennsylvania 2008 BRFSS participants are overweight or obese.

Figure 10: BMI Ratings

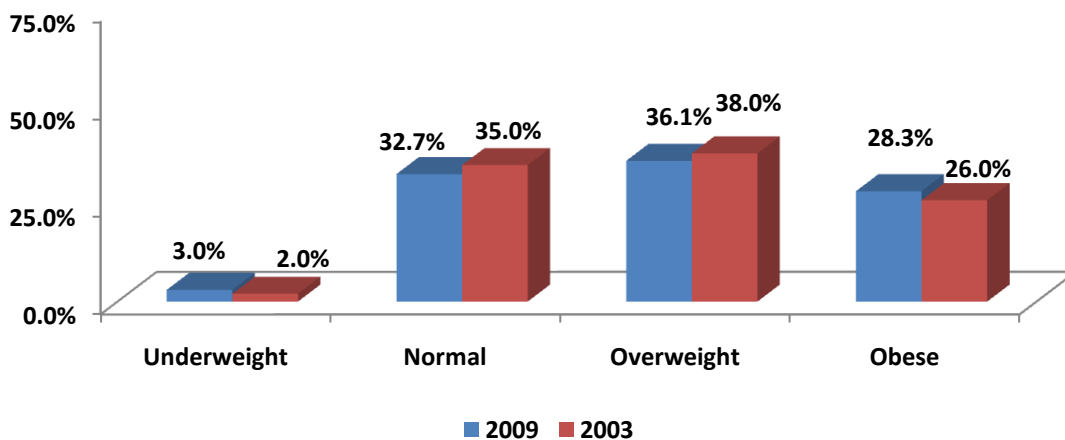


Table 9 shows the percentage of hand distributed survey respondents, by subpopulation, who have a BMI rating of overweight or obese.

Table 9: Hand Distributed Survey Respondents Who Are Overweight or Obese

Lackawanna County		Luzerne County	
African American	Hispanic/Latino	African American	Hispanic/Latino
84.0%	75.0%	58.9%	61.4%

CHRONIC DISEASE PREVALENCE

The 2009 household survey asked participants to report “if they have or if they are being treated by a doctor, nurse, or other healthcare professional” for a chronic disease. Based upon the findings from this series of survey questions, the top five most prevalent chronic diseases in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties are blood pressure problems, cholesterol problems, arthritis, heart problems, and respiratory problems (such as asthma, chronic lung disease, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis). Table 10 illustrates the top five chronic diseases reported by survey participants with comparisons to state and national averages where available.¹¹ Blood pressure problems reported within the study region are higher than both the state and national averages.

Table 10: Chronic Disease Prevalence

Chronic Disease	Lackawanna and Luzerne County 2009 Survey Data	PA	US
1. Blood Pressure Problems	36.2%	28.1%	27.5%
2. Cholesterol Problems	34.7%	39.7%	37.5%
3. Arthritis	22.0%	32.1%	27.5%
4. Heart Problems	15.8%	N/D	N/D
5. Respiratory Problems	14.3%	N/D	N/D

*N/D = No Comparable Data

¹¹ Table 10 PA and US data comparisons are from the 2007 BRFSS.

EMPLOYMENT

Community leaders, young adults, and caretakers of children with special needs, who participated in the qualitative portion of this study, all view employment as a major concern within the local community. Each group, however, looks at this issue from a different perspective.

- 1.) **Community Leaders:** This audience sees a need to marry workforce training and development efforts, with the recruitment and development of new businesses matching workforce capabilities. Community leaders stressed concerns regarding unemployment rates as well as developing quality job opportunities which will provide for a better quality of life for local residents.

- 2.) **Caretakers of Children with Special Needs:** Currently, finding employment for children with special needs is a challenge. Participants were excited to learn from one focus group participant about current community leadership's efforts to develop a task force designed to help special needs children find local employment. An RFQ is being developed to find a provider to manage and build support services, providing continued support for employed children instead of "walking away" after they are placed into jobs.

- 3.) **Young Adults Ages 18-34:** The majority of participants within the young adults' focus group are college students or recent college graduates who are seeking gainful employment. Participants in this focus group are concerned over the lack of entry level workforce opportunities available to them after graduation.

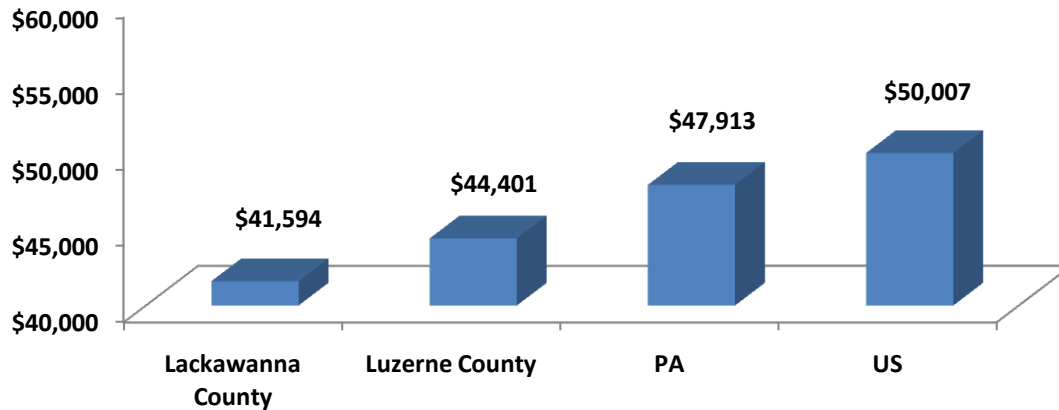
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

From a quantitative perspective, median household income figures, workforce composition data, unemployment rates, and educational attainment numbers support the experiences describe by interview and focus group participants. Figure 11 shows the median household income for Lackawanna and Luzerne counties in comparison with state and national averages.¹² Compared to Pennsylvania's median household income of \$47,913, the study area has weak

¹² 2009 Claritas Census estimates

average earnings. The study area is also below the national median household income of \$50,007.¹³

Figure 11: Median Household Income



WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

In addition to median household income statistics, workforce composition data presented in Table 11 demonstrates the lack of quality job opportunities within the study area. The percentages representing management, professional, and related occupations within the Lackawanna County and Luzerne County workforces are significantly lower than state and national figures.

Table 11: 2006-2008 Workforce by Occupation¹⁴

Workforce Occupation	Lackawanna County	Luzerne County	PA	US
Management, professional, and related occupations	30.6%	28.5%	34.6%	34.5%
Service occupations	17.5%	17.6%	16.2%	16.8%
Sales and office occupations	29.0%	28.2%	25.9%	25.6%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.1%	0.2%	0.5%	0.7%

¹³ 2005-2007 American Community Survey, Bureau of the Census

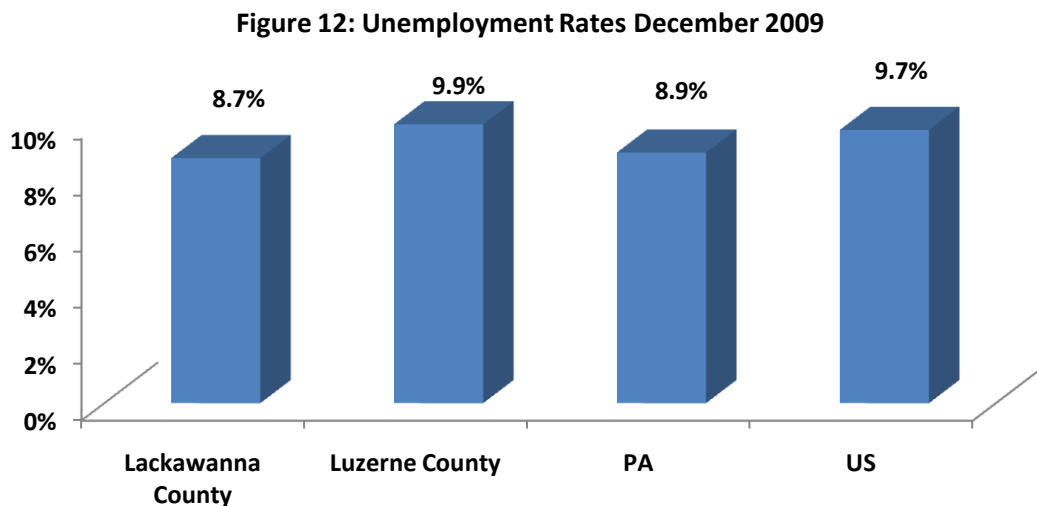
¹⁴ Selected Economic Characteristics, 2006-2008 American Community Survey; www.census.gov

Workforce Occupation	Lackawanna County	Luzerne County	PA	US
Construction, extraction, maintenance and repair occupations	8.2%	8.9%	8.7%	9.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	14.5%	16.6%	14.1%	12.7%

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

Unemployment rates continue to grow within the study area, limiting the number of jobs available and compounding the lack of quality employment opportunities. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate in Lackawanna County increased by almost 2% from December of 2008 (6.9%) to December of 2009 (8.7%). A similar trend occurred in Luzerne County, where unemployment rates grew from 7.7% in December of 2008 to 9.9% by December of 2009.

Figure 12 illustrates the unemployment rates for Lackawanna County (8.7%) and Luzerne County (9.9%) as of December 2009. By comparison, the Pennsylvania unemployment rate is 8.9% and the national unemployment rate is 9.7% (both as of December 2009).¹⁵



¹⁵ Figure 12 county, state, and national data comparisons are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, www.bls.gov.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Educational attainment is another indicator which demonstrates the trouble an economy has when it is unable to provide quality job opportunities and retain a talented workforce. Only 19.5% of residents age twenty-five and older within Lackawanna County and 16.6% of residents age twenty-five and older within Luzerne County have a Bachelor's degree or higher.¹⁶ By comparison, 25.6% of the Pennsylvania population age twenty-five and older has a Bachelor's degree or higher and 27% of this age group in the U.S. has a Bachelor's degree or higher.¹⁷ This statistic, coupled with median household income figures, indicate that qualified individuals are going elsewhere to find quality job opportunities.

¹⁶ 2009 Claritas Census estimates

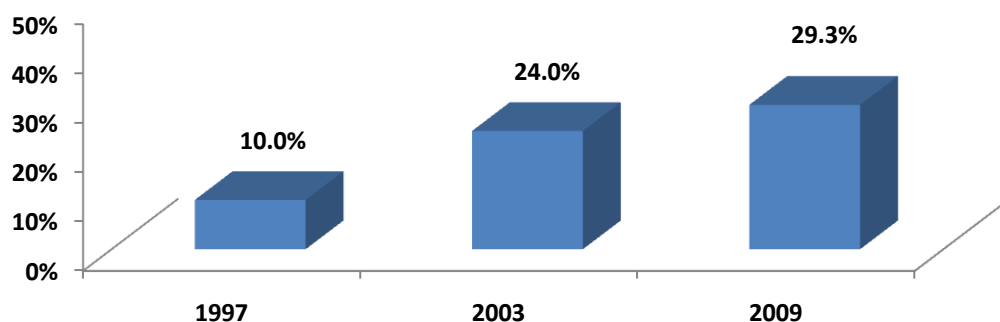
¹⁷ 2005-2007 American Community Survey, Bureau of the Census

MENTAL HEALTH

EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH STATUS

Since 1997, the percentage of household survey respondents reporting emotional and mental health concerns has increased significantly.¹⁸ Figure 13 illustrates this trend.

Figure 13: Emotional and Mental Health Prevalence



Emotional and mental health problems in Lackawanna County are most prevalent amongst households located in the Central and Eastern regions in Luzerne County, the region below interstate 80. The data in Table 12 supports this trend.

Table 12: Regional Emotional and Mental Health Prevalence

Lackawanna County					Luzerne County	
North	South	East	West	Central	North (Above I-80)	South (Below I-80)
15.1%	19.3%	31.1%	19.1%	38.7%	28.4%	33.6%

¹⁸ Household survey participants were asked, “In the past 5 years, has someone in your household had an emotional or mental health problem?”

Table 13 shows the percentage of hand distributed survey respondents, by subpopulation, reporting an emotional or mental health problem in their household within the past five years.

Table 13: Emotional and Mental Health Prevalence in Hand Distributed Survey Respondents

Lackawanna County		Luzerne County	
African American	Hispanic/Latino	African American	Hispanic/Latino
26.0%	23.9%	20.0%	21.3%

SUICIDE RATES

Another indicator of emotional and mental health concerns is suicide rate. Both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties have higher prevalence rates for suicide than Pennsylvania State averages, according to the Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development Indicators Report for 2009. Luzerne County specifically has shown consistently increasing suicide rates between 2000 and 2006, while Lackawanna County suicide rates decreased by 2.8 points between 2005 and 2006. Table 14 below presents these trends.

Table 14: Suicide Rates

Suicide Rate (per 100,000 population)	2000	2005	2006
Lackawanna	9.0	18.1	15.3
Luzerne	12.7	15.2	16.3
Pennsylvania	10.7	11.0	10.7

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

ILLEGAL DRUG USE

Illegal drug use is a concern for survey respondents within the study area. Figure 15 below shows that more than one-third (37.0%) of the survey respondents in Lackawanna County and almost half (47.1%) of the survey respondents in Luzerne County think the use of illegal drugs is a problem in their neighborhood.

Figure 15: Respondents Who Think the Use of Illegal Drugs is a Problem in their Neighborhood

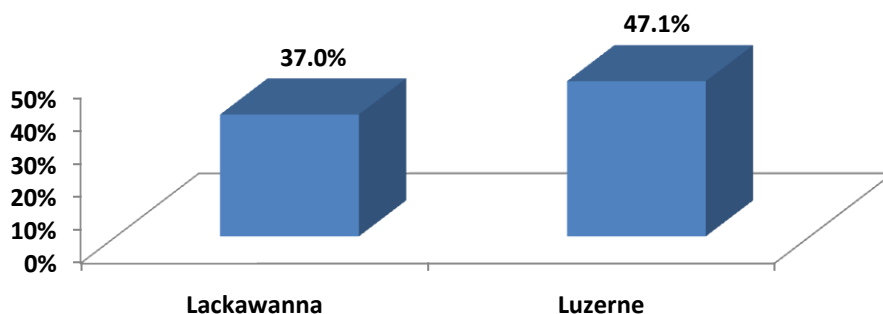


Table 15 shows the percentage of hand distributed survey respondents, by subpopulation, who think the use of illegal drugs is a problem in their neighborhood.

Table 15: Hand Distributed Survey Respondents Who Think the Use of Illegal Drugs is a Problem in Their Neighborhood

Lackawanna County		Luzerne County	
African American	Hispanic/Latino	African American	Hispanic/Latino
53.2%	43.9%	80.4%	70.8%

Survey respondents who think the use of illegal drugs is a problem identified the drugs listed below as the most prominent being abused in their communities. Drug abuse, especially marijuana use, is also a concern reported by participants in the Young Adults focus group.

- 1.) Marijuana (66.2%)
- 2.) Alcohol (54.4%)
- 3.) Cocaine (49.9%)
- 4.) Heroin (49.4%)
- 5.) Prescription Drugs (48.8%)

In addition to data collected through the household survey, secondary data collected from the Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development Indicators Report for 2009 shows increasing drug possession and drug sale/manufacturing offenses within the study area. Table 16 demonstrates this trend.

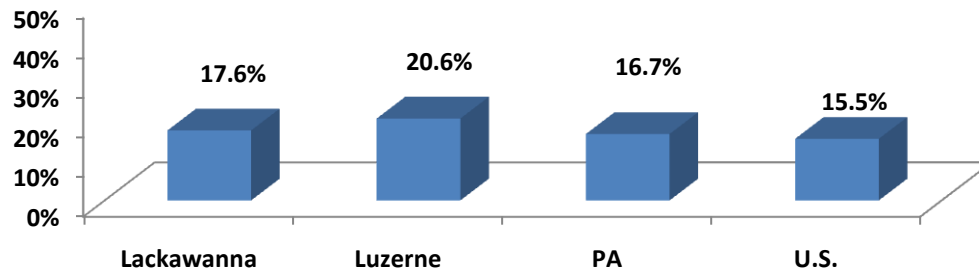
Table 16: Drug Offenses

Lackawanna County	2000	2006	2007
Drug Possession Offenses	286	689	691
Drug Sale/Manufacturing Offenses	334	259	289
Luzerne County	2000	2006	2007
Drug Possession Offenses	302	920	851
Drug Sale/Manufacturing Offenses	183	467	564

ALCOHOL

Alcohol was identified by survey participants as the second most prominent drug being abused within their neighborhoods. Additional questions were asked of survey participants to identify whether they drink alcohol or not and how much they drink in one sitting when they do drink. Almost two-thirds (60%) of survey respondents reported they drink alcohol. Almost one-third (27.6%) of survey respondents who reported they drink alcohol do so “a few days each week” or “every day.” Figure 16 below shows the combined percentages of male and female survey respondents who are considered to be binge drinkers, based on the number of drinks they reported to have at each sitting, compared to 2008 BRFSS state and national averages for binge drinking.

**Figure 16: Binge Drinking
(5 + drinks for men, 4+ drinks for women in one sitting)**



More secondary data collected from the Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development Indicators Report for 2009 reveals growing numbers of alcohol-related offenses, shown in Tables 17 and 18. Between 2000 and 2008, the number of DUI offenses within Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties combined increased by 44.1%.

Table 17: DUI Offenses

Lackawanna County	2000	2007	2008
DUI Offenses	522	953	935
Luzerne County	2000	2007	2008
DUI Offenses	1,073	1,355	1,363

During the years of 2003 through 2007, the number of alcohol-related automobile crash deaths within Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties increased by 36%.

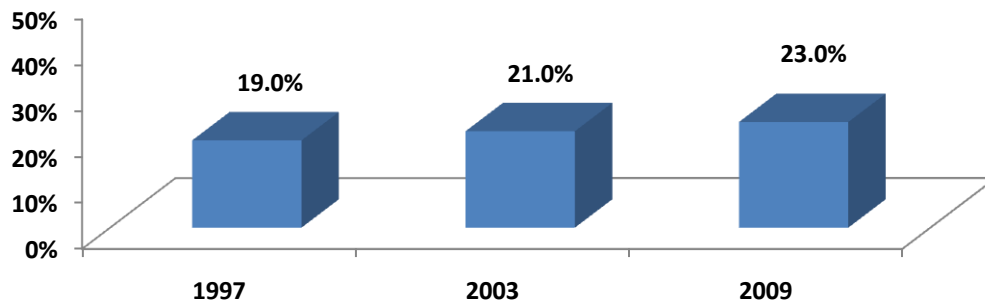
Table 18: Alcohol-Related Automobile Crash Deaths

Lackawanna County	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Alcohol-Related Crash Deaths	4	7	7	9	9
Luzerne County	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Alcohol-Related Crash Deaths	21	20	17	24	25

CIGARETTE USE

Primary household survey data also reveals that the percentage of survey respondents who smoke cigarettes has steadily increased since 1997. Figure 17 illustrates this trend. Compared to 2008 BRFSS state (21.3%) and national (18.3%) averages, a higher percentage of survey respondents smoke cigarettes in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties (23.0%). While more 2009 survey respondents smoke cigarettes than 2003 survey respondents, the average number of cigarettes smoked per day has decreased from sixteen cigarettes per day in 2003 to fifteen cigarettes per day in 2009.

Figure 17: Percentage of Respondents who Smoke Cigarettes



TRIPP UMBACH RECOMMENDATIONS

The following consultant recommendations are designed to help HNPI and community partners communicate and plan to effectively address each of the top five community health priority areas identified through this study.

- 1.) **Maintain Momentum:** It is vital to build on the momentum gained by the reassessment process by continuing to raise awareness of the community health assessment and collaborative planning throughout Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties.

- 2.) **Form Task Groups and Committees:** Task groups and committees must be formed to address and act upon each of the top five community health priority areas. Each group should include representatives of the HNPI 2009-2010 Community Health Needs Assessment project sponsors, as well as other organizations and interested members of the community.

- 3.) **Measure Progress:** The Partnership should identify key indicators that can be measured quantitatively within each of the five priority areas, in order to track progress over time.

- 4.) **Act as Community Resource and Catalyst:** HNPI should serve as a clearinghouse for information, services, community resources and collaborative grant opportunities, as well as supply the driving force behind community initiatives.

- 5.) **Reassess:** The Partnership should consider conducting another community health needs assessment process in three to five years.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
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