



# News Release

## Human Services

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **WAKE AMONG HEALTHIEST NORTH CAROLINA COUNTIES SAYS NEW REPORT**

For the third year in a row, Wake County has been named Healthiest County in North Carolina, according to a report released today, **Wednesday, April 3, 2012**, by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The report ranks the overall health of counties in all 50 states – more than 3,000 total – by using a standard formula to measure how healthy people are and how long they live.

Compared to other North Carolina counties, the findings ranked Wake first in overall health and second (behind Orange County) in factors that affect people's health.

“I’m proud of our staff and citizens who make their health and the health of our county a priority,” said Wake County Board Chair Paul Coble. “This is a testament to what a fantastic quality of life people can have in Wake County.”

“We’re so excited to receive this honor for the third year. This report is really a valuable resource not only to show us that our County is in good shape and our network of healthcare providers in the area is doing their job, but it helps us to identify areas where we need to improve,” said Sue Lynn Ledford, Wake County Community Health director. “We will work together as a community to find solutions that address barriers to good health so we can help all our citizens lead healthier lives.”

The report can be viewed online at [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org), and it includes the research methodology and color-coded maps comparing overall health rankings. Researchers used four measures to assess the level of overall health for North Carolina by county:

1. The rate of people dying before age 75
2. The percent of people who report being in fair or poor health
3. The numbers of days people report being in poor physical and poor mental health
4. The rate of low-birth-weight infants

The report looked at factors that affect people's health within four categories:

1. Health behavior
2. Clinical care

3. Social and economic factors
4. Physical environment

Among the many health factors they looked at were:

- Rates of adult smoking, adult obesity, binge drinking and teenage pregnancy
- The number of uninsured adults, availability of primary care providers and preventable hospital stays
- Rates of high school graduation, number of children in poverty, rates of violent crime, access to healthy foods, air pollution levels and liquor store density.

For more information about this research and the findings please visit [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org).

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