



# “Rural Health Collaborative for Huntingdon County”

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Rural Health Network Planning Grant (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026)



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Who?

What?

Why?

How?

# Founding Network Partners



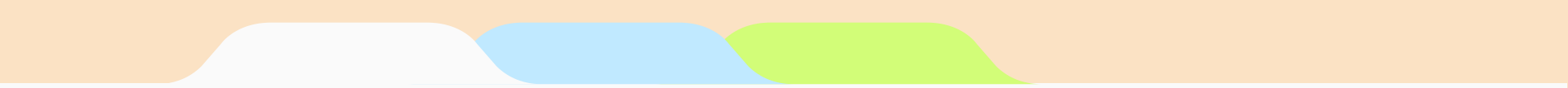
# The Rural Health Collaborative: Stewards of the County's Health and Well-Being

A coordinated and systemic approach to improving healthcare access, quality, and outcomes across Huntingdon County with the following objectives:

- Develop Cross-Sector Network & Communication
- Develop Shared Understanding of Regional Assets & Challenges
- Improve system efficiencies
- Build Capacity (knowledge/skills/resources) within the Rural Health Collaborative
- Focus on Workforce & Economic Stability as a Factor

# Social Determinants of Health





*“Engagement across change agents from multiple sectors is critical in order to overcome challenges in implementing programs, policies, and practices that advance health in rural communities, since not one sector can succeed alone.”*

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University of Chicago’s Walsh Center for Rural Health Analysis - 2018 Rural Practice Brief

Who?

What?

Why?

How?

## Our Aim:

“The Huntingdon Rural Health Network will be established to improve health-outcomes by creating a sustainable cross-sector network focused on coordinated place-based solutions across the county that include addressing SDOH barriers and workforce factors that impact access.”

# Regional Health Info

## **Common chronic conditions:**

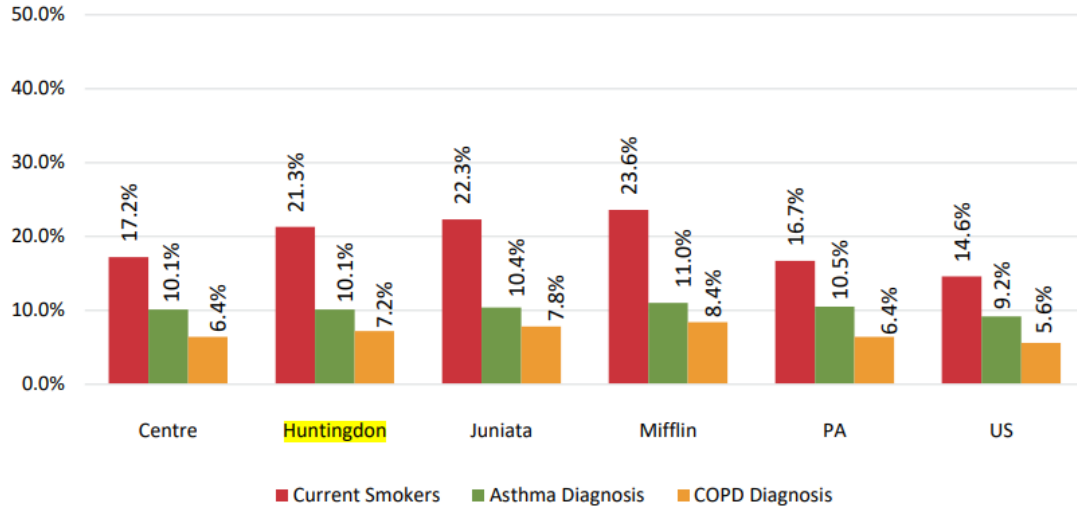
- Rate of diabetes in Huntingdon is similar to PA but diabetes-related death rates are significantly higher in Huntingdon, Juniata, and Mifflin counties.
- Common chronic conditions in Huntingdon County:
  - Heart disease
  - Diabetes
  - Lung disease

# Regional Health Info

## **Life-Expectancy:**

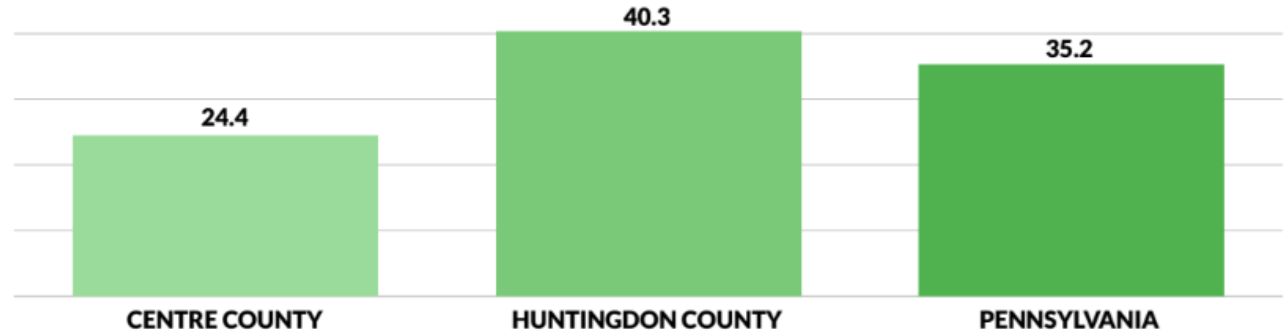
- Residents in Lewistown (Mifflin County) and Mount Union (Huntingdon County) experience higher social vulnerability. These communities have lower average life expectancy ( $\leq 75$  years).
  - Neighboring communities report life expectancy as high as 81–84 years.
- Huntingdon, Juniata, and Mifflin counties have an older age profile than state and national averages. Approximately 20% of residents are aged 65 or older.

## 2020 Adult Respiratory Disease Indicators



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Figure 32: Lung Disease Mortality (Per 100,000 Population)



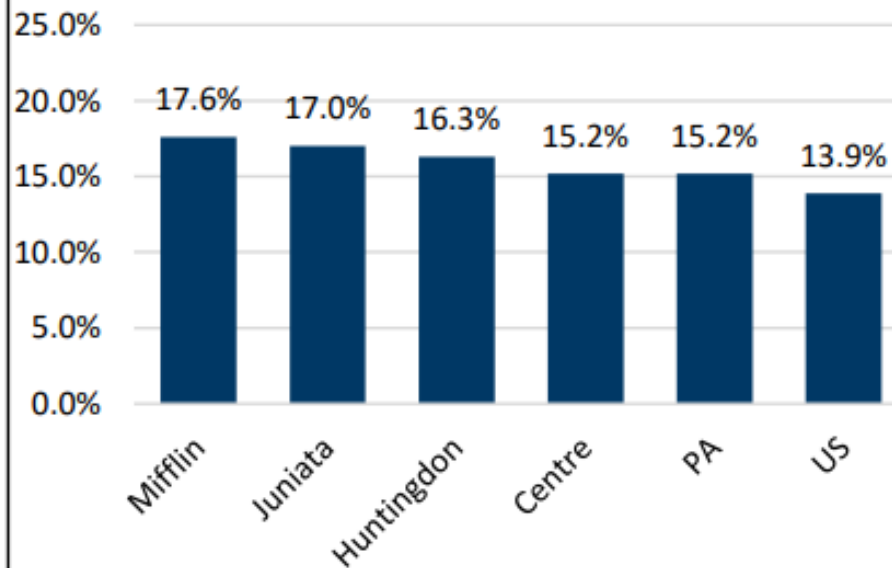
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016-2020

# Regional Health Info

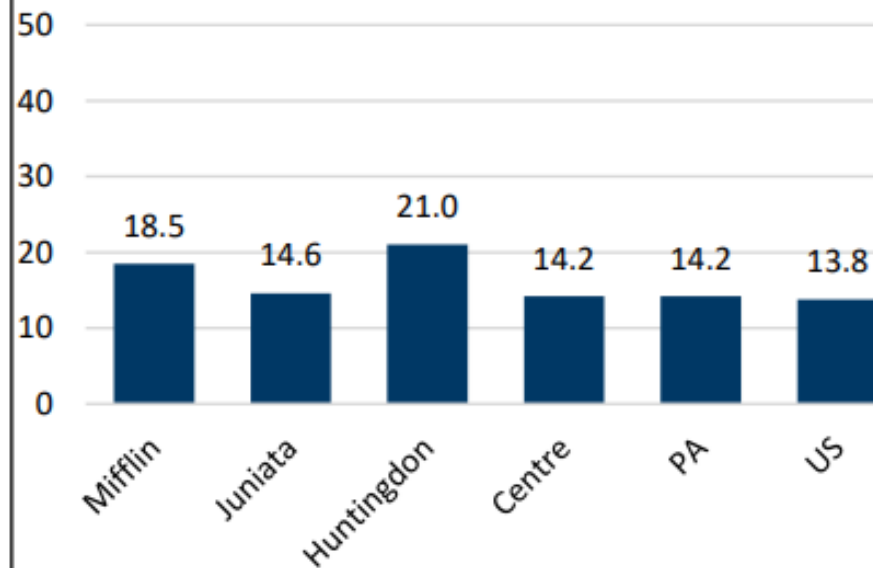
## **Behavioral and Mental Health:**

- Mifflin and Huntingdon counties exceed state and national suicide death rates.
- Huntingdon County (2021):
  - 2 in 5 students reported feeling constantly sad or depressed.

### 2020 Adults with Chronic Poor Mental Health (14+ days per month)



### 2016-2020 Age-Adjusted Suicide Death Rate per 100,000 Residents



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Note: Sullivan County suicide death data are not reported due to low counts.

# Regional Health Info

## Maternal health:

- About 60% or fewer birthing people received first trimester prenatal care in Juniata and Mifflin Counties.
- Smoking prevalence among pregnant adults in Huntingdon, Juniata, and Mifflin counties is higher than across the rest of the state and the nation.
  - According to the Geisinger Lewistown 2024 CHNA, “*between 13% and 16% of people reportedly continued to smoke during pregnancy, compared to 9% across the state, and only 5% nationwide.*”

## 2020 Maternal and Infant Health Indicators

Opportunities for improvement based on HP2030 goals are highlighted

	Teen (15-19) Births	First Trimester Prenatal Care	Premature Births	Low Birth Weight Births	Non-Smoking during Pregnancy
Centre	1.0%	76.4%	6.5%	3.9%	93.9%
Huntingdon	7.9%	76.5%	8.7%	7.9%	84.0%
Juniata	4.2%	60.9%	8.4%	6.5%	87.2%
Mifflin	3.0%	56.3%	6.3%	6.7%	85.6%
Pennsylvania	3.7%	73.7%	9.6%	8.3%	91.3%
Black/African American	6.8%	64.8%	14.0%	14.5%	93.1%
White	2.6%	77.2%	8.6%	6.8%	90.1%
Latinx (any race)	8.5%	65.3%	10.2%	8.5%	95.5%
United States	4.4%	77.7%	10.0%	8.2%	94.5%
Black/African American	6.4%	68.4%	14.3%	14.1%	95.5%
White	3.0%	82.8%	9.1%	6.8%	91.9%
Latinx (any race)	6.8%	72.3%	9.8%	7.4%	98.6%
HP2030 Goal	NA	80.5%	9.4%	NA	95.7%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Health & Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

# Regional Health Info

## **ALICE and Poverty:**

- By 2023, 7,157 households (45%) were below the ALICE threshold in Huntingdon County.
- 20% of children in Huntingdon County live in poverty.
- Huntingdon County has a significantly lower household income compared to the state average.

## **Housing:**

- Huntingdon, Juniata, and Mifflin counties have the highest homeownership rates and the lowest percentage of cost-burdened homeowners in the region.
- Significant portion of residents struggle with:
  - More than 20% of homeowners and approximately 40% of renters are considered cost-burdened.
  - 2024 Geisinger Lewistown Hospital CHNA, *“the average cost of childcare for two children was 30% of median household income compared to state and national averages of 27%.”*

## 2022 Point-in-Time Data

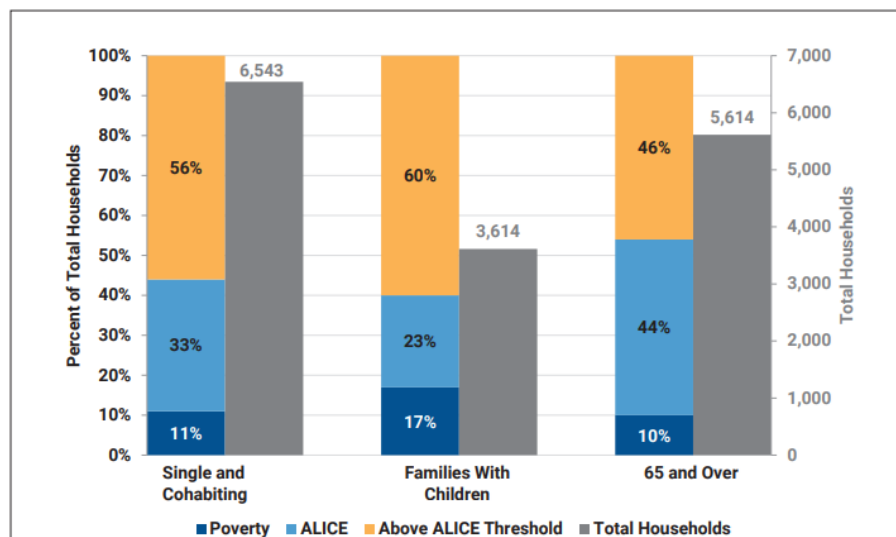
**Population:** 44,123 • **Number of Households:** 15,771

**Median Household Income:** \$61,300 (state average: \$71,798)

**Labor Force Participation Rate:** 51.9% (state average: 62.8%)

**ALICE Households:** 35% (state average: 28%) • **Households in Poverty:** 12% (state average: 12%)

### Household Financial Status by Household Type, Huntingdon County, 2022



Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2022; American Community Survey, 2022

# Regional Health Info

## **Workforce and economic stability:**

Labor Force Participation Rate of Huntingdon, PA in 2023: 51.3%

Labor Force Participation Rate of Pennsylvania in 2023: 62.8%

## Top 5 employers in Huntingdon County:

1. State Government (SCI Huntingdon and Smithfield)
2. Penn Highlands Huntingdon Hospital
3. Juniata College
4. Wal-Mart Associates, Inc.
5. Huntingdon Area School District

According to projections from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, through 2032 the commonwealth will require an additional **8,890 registered nurses** and **11,232 nursing assistants** each year to replace workers exiting the field and to keep pace with growing care needs.

# Huntingdon County is a designated dental and mental Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA).

1 PCP for every 3,090 people, as opposed to the PA state ratio of 1,240 people per 1 PCP, and the US ratio of 1,310 people per 1 PCP

1 dentist for every 3,110 people, as opposed to the PA state ratio of 1,380 people per 1 dentist, and the US ratio of 1,340 people per 1 dentist

### Primary Care Physicians

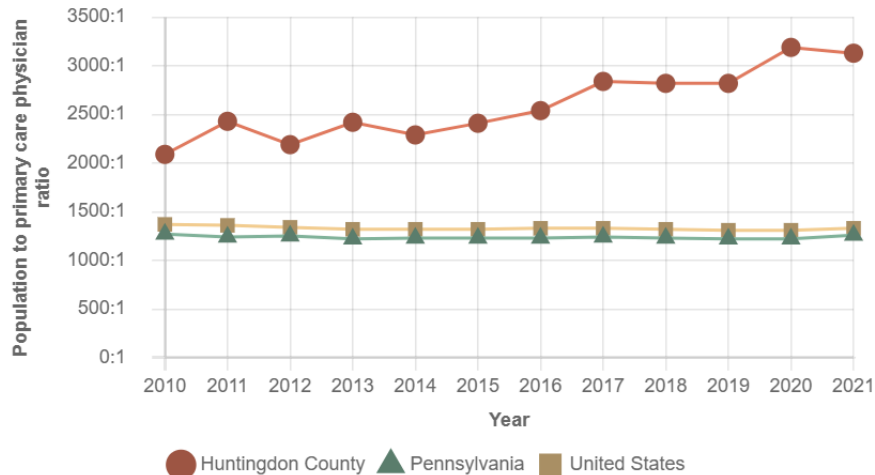


Figure 1. County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, 2025

### Dentists

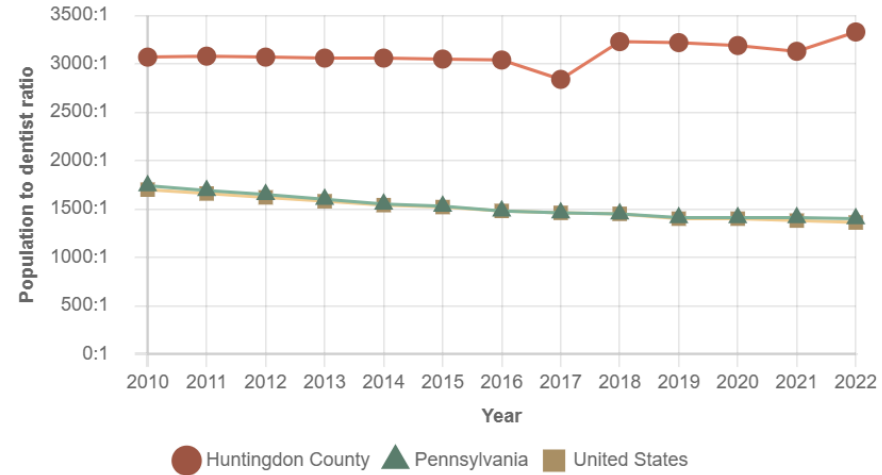


Figure 2. County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, 2025

# Regional Health Info

## **Food insecurity:**

- About 20% of respondents in the 2025 Huntingdon County Food Survey reported eating less out of fear of running out of food, and 16% experienced hunger due to unaffordable food.
- Factors impacting food insecurity include:
  - Lack of Personal Transportation and Transportation Instability
  - Financial Barriers
  - Distance & Rural Geography
  - Health, Disability & Aging
  - Time Constraints
  - Weather & Terrain Challenges

## Food Insecurity

	Centre	Huntingdon	Juniata	Mifflin	PA	US
<b>Food Insecure Residents</b>						
2021	7.9%	10.4%	8.7%	11.5%	9.4%	10.4%
2020	8.4%	11.6%	9.5%	12.1%	8.9%	11.8%
2019	9.3%	12.2%	10.7%	12.4%	10.6%	10.9%
<b>Food Insecure Children</b>						
2021	5.7%	14.0%	9.5%	14.1%	12.2%	12.8%
2020	7.5%	16.8%	12.8%	16.8%	13.1%	16.1%
2019	9.6%	18.2%	14.5%	17.7%	14.7%	14.6%

Source: Feeding America & USDA Food Environment Atlas

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# HRSA Deliverables and Timeline

Deliverable 1

- External Environmental Scan
  - Aim and Drivers diagram

Deliverable 2

- Network Statement

Deliverable 3

- Network Organizational Road Map

Deliverable 4

- Strategic Plan

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# Stakeholder Survey and Invitation

*“What do you appreciate about living and/or working in Huntingdon County?”*

## **Perceived strengths/assets of Huntingdon County organized by SDOH:**

Social and Community Context: 82%

Neighborhood and Built Environment: 64%

Economic Stability: 15%

Healthcare Access and Quality: 6%

Education Access and Quality: 3%

\*Please note that recipient responses may fall under multiple categories.

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# Stakeholder Survey and Invitation

*“What do you think should be the primary goal/objective of a cross-sector rural health network in Huntingdon County?”*

## **Perceived need(s) for Huntingdon County:**

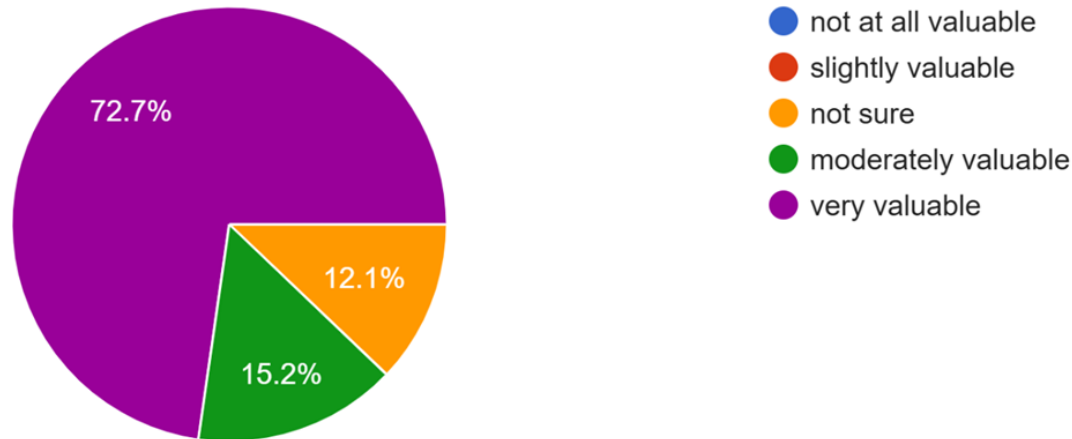
- 64% improved accessibility to healthcare services
- 27% coordinated efforts to deliver effective healthcare
- 24% greater communal support
- 15% more holistic care.
- 6% greater promotion of readily available resources
- 6% unsure
- 3% educational reform

\*Please note that recipient responses may fall under multiple categories.

# Stakeholder Survey and Invitation

What is the extent to which you would find a cross-sector rural health network in Huntingdon County valuable?

33 responses



# Next Steps

- Hold Visioning Meeting/Focus Group of Stakeholders to gather qualitative data
- Attend the “Networking2: Connecting for Better Health” a gathering of rural health networks funded by HRSA’s Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
- Distribute a comprehensive online survey broadly across county
- Create network statement that describes the aspirations of the network
- Formalize the network and engage in sense-making
- Gain consensus on goals & objectives and finalize a strategic plan due in June

Thank you!

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