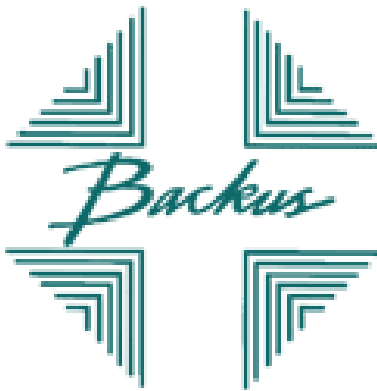


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# HOLLERAN

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## *William W. Backus Hospital*



2010 Community Health Needs  
Assessment  
Final Report

*Prepared by  
Holleran  
September 3, 2010*

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## A. BACKGROUND

William W. Backus Hospital undertook a comprehensive community health needs assessment, beginning in early 2010. The purpose of the study was to gather current statistics and qualitative feedback on the key health issues facing service area residents. William W. Backus Hospital contracted with Holleran, a Lancaster, Pennsylvania-based research firm, to execute the various research components.

The community health needs assessment was comprised of three research components:

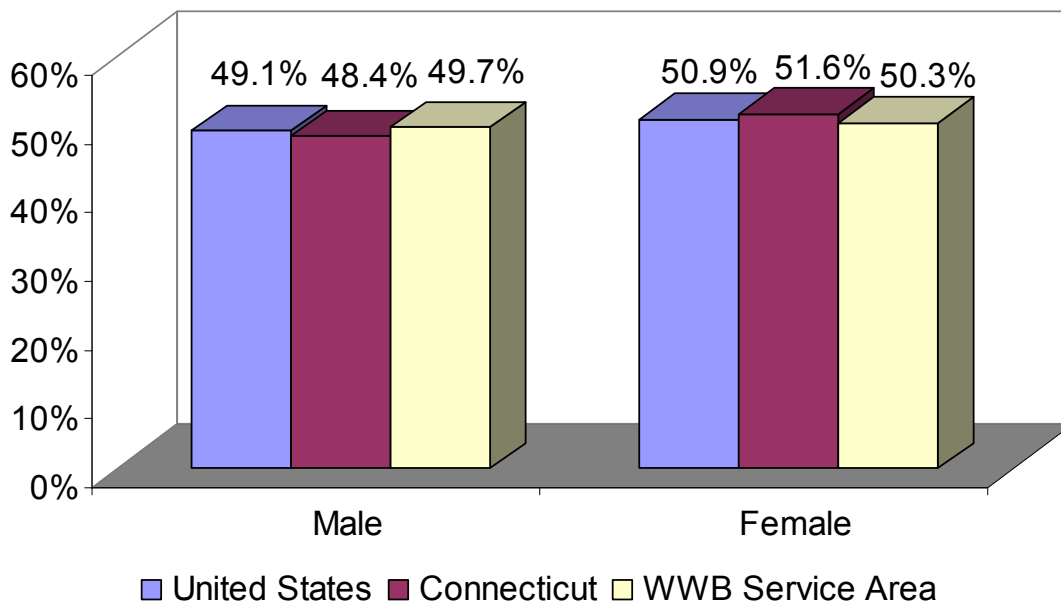
- Secondary Data Profile (report completed March 5, 2010)
- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Study (report completed May 25, 2010)
- Focus Groups (held August 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010)

This final report document outlines the summary of findings from the various research components, noting historical trends and comparisons, and elaborating upon the qualitative feedback provided during the focus groups. The report is broken down into theme-related sections, such as general health status, chronic disease, etc. Each section ends with a “takeaways” section that highlights the key trends and noteworthy findings that warrant further attention. If there is a difference between the household survey results and either the national or state comparison figure and the word “significant” is not explicitly used to describe the difference, assume the figures are not statistically significant and, therefore, essentially similar. Lastly, if not otherwise stated, “respondents” will refer to those answering the 2010 BRFSS study conducted in the William W. Backus Hospital service area.

## B. DEMOGRAPHICS

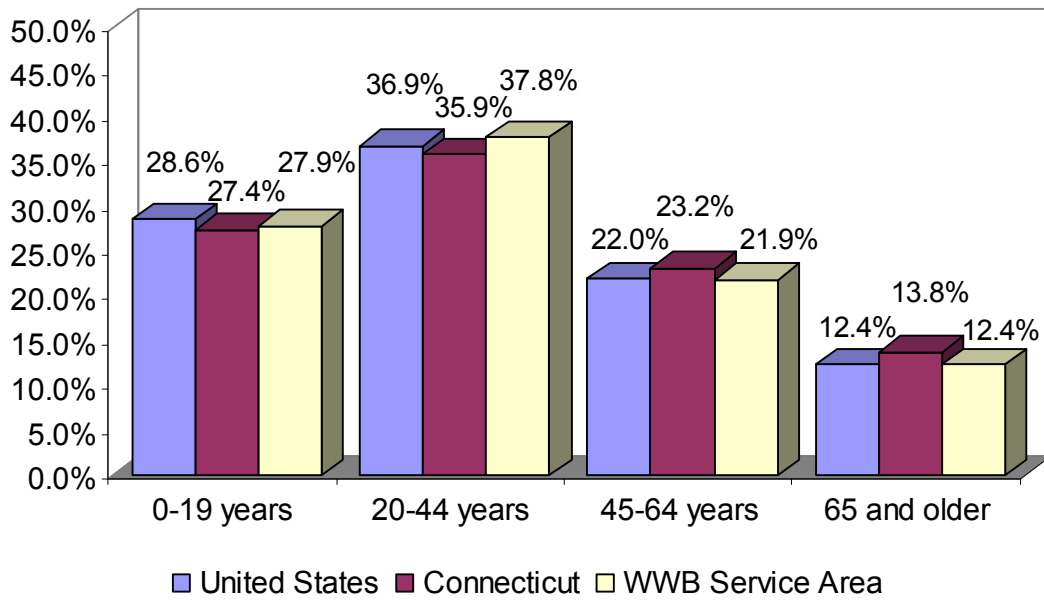
The **population** in William W. Backus Hospital's service area is over 250,000 with the male to female ratio (49.7% to 50.3%) being very close to the state and national ratios as seen in the chart below.

### Gender Comparisons



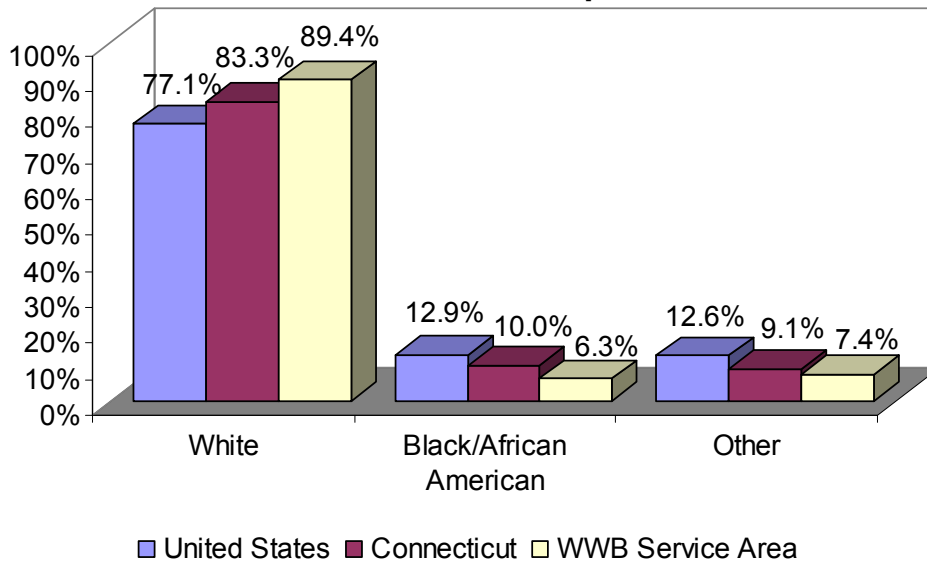
The **age breakdown** in William W. Backus Hospital's service area is very similar to the associated breakdowns in the United States and Connecticut. There are no large differences when looking at national and state comparisons across various age range category breakouts. The chart below shows comparisons across four age range category breakouts – i.e. 0-19 years, 20-44 years, 45-64 years, and 65 and older.

## Age Breakout Comparisons



The **racial breakdown** of William W. Backus Hospital’s service area residents is primarily White (89.4%). The next largest population is the Black/ African American race, at 6.3% of the population. According to the chart below, William W. Backus Hospital’s service area’s White population is higher than the national and state comparisons, and the Black/ African American percentage there is less than the figures from the national and state comparisons.

## Racial Breakout Comparison

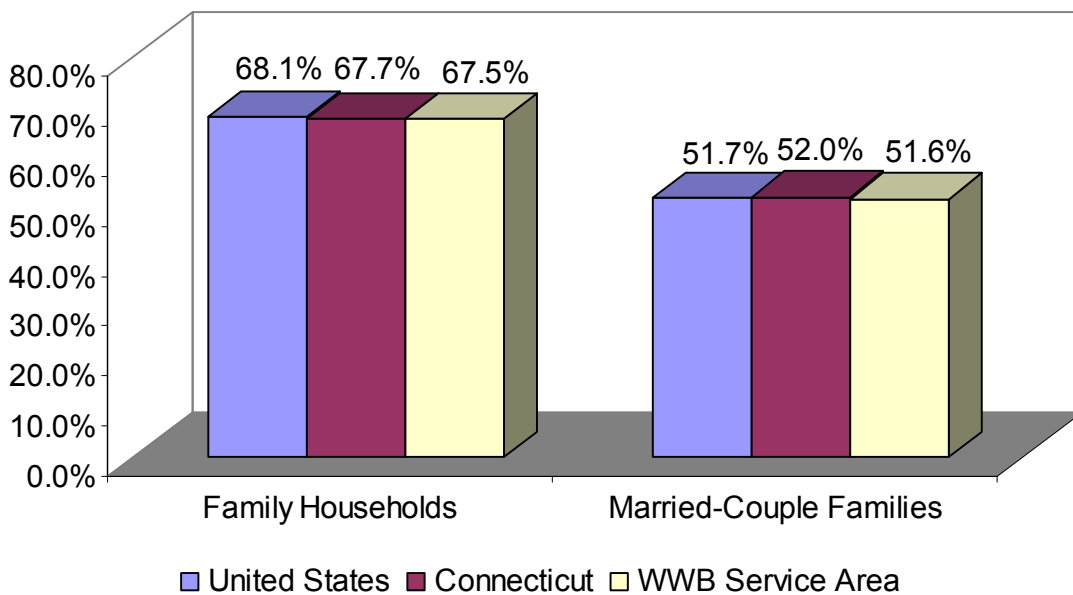


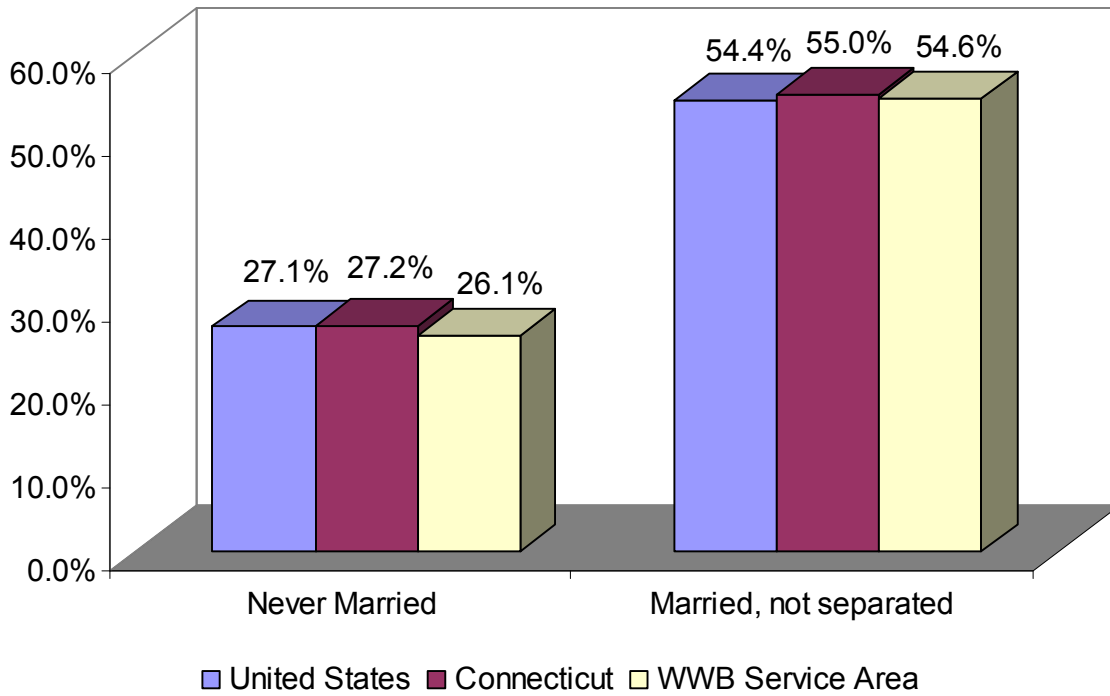
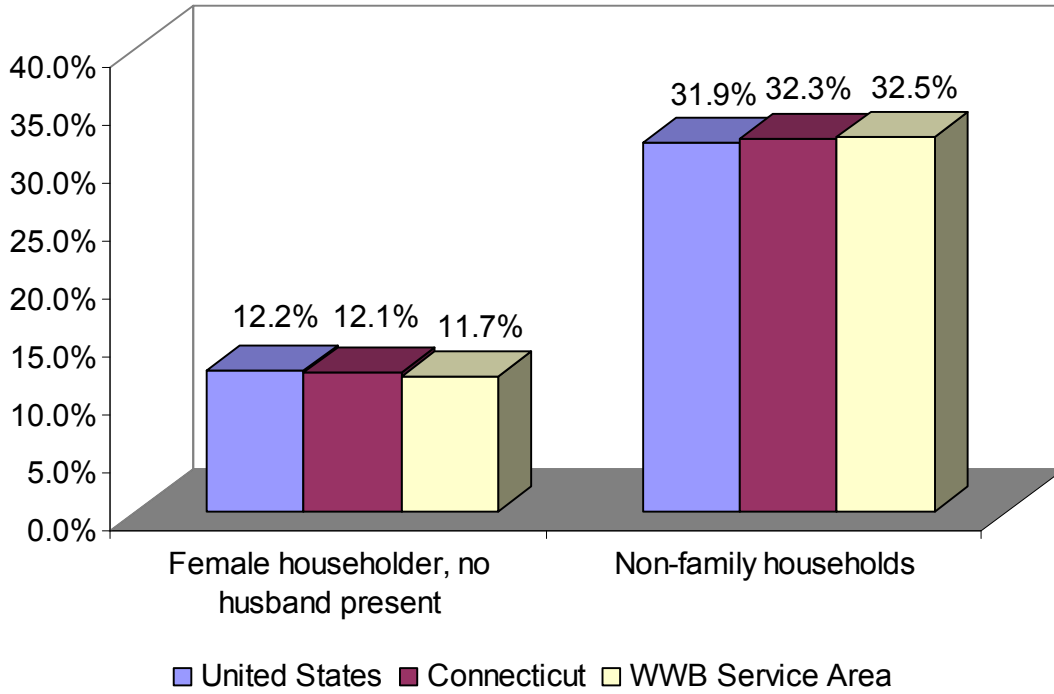
The percentage of the William W. Backus Hospital service area population that is qualified as **Hispanic or Latino** (5.1%) is lower than both the national and state percentages, which are 12.5% and 9.4% respectively.

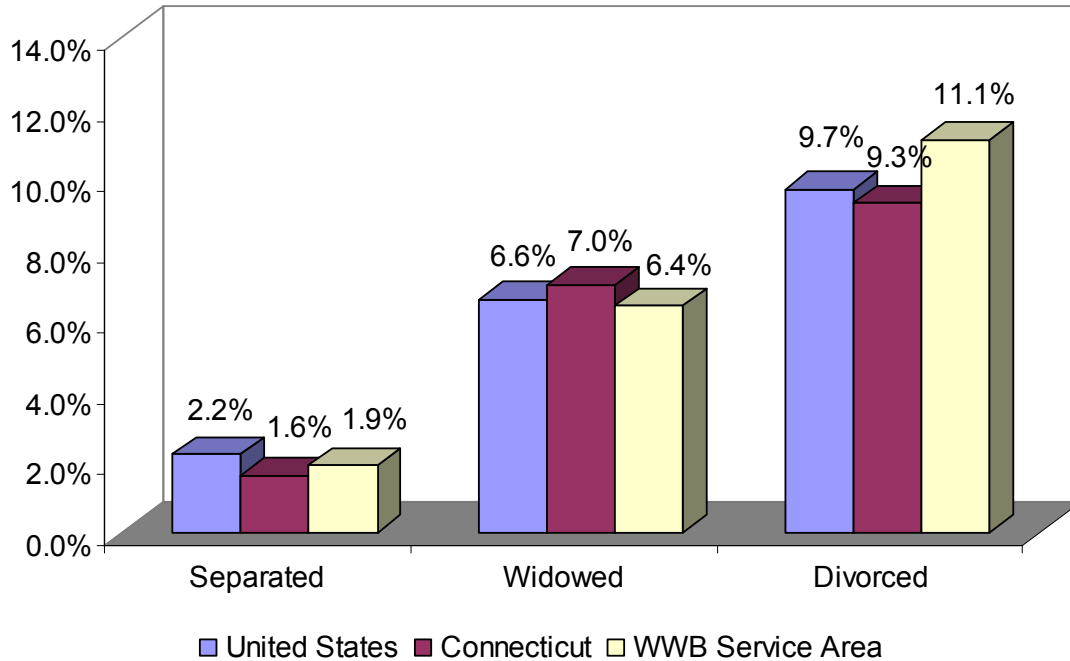
Regarding the **place of birth breakdown**, it is interesting to note that 35% of the William W. Backus Hospital service area population was born in another state. This is above 27.7% across the nation and 28.8% across Connecticut. However, 92.6% of William W. Backus Hospital’s service area residents were born in the United States, which is a higher rate than that of the nation (87.7%) and Connecticut (85.8%). Additionally, the percentage of William Backus Hospital service area residents that were foreign born is 5.1% compared to national and state percentages, 11.1% and 10.9% respectively.

The **household statistics** paint a picture of a service area comprised primarily of family households (67.5%) and married-couple families (51.6%); these figures are very comparable to the national and state percentages. Also comparable to national and state figures are the percentage of households with a female householder and no husband present (11.7%) and the percentage of non-family households (32.5%). The marital status figures for William Backus Hospital’s service area are also very similar to associated national and state percentages. Below are several charts showing household statistical comparisons.

### Household Statistical Comparisons

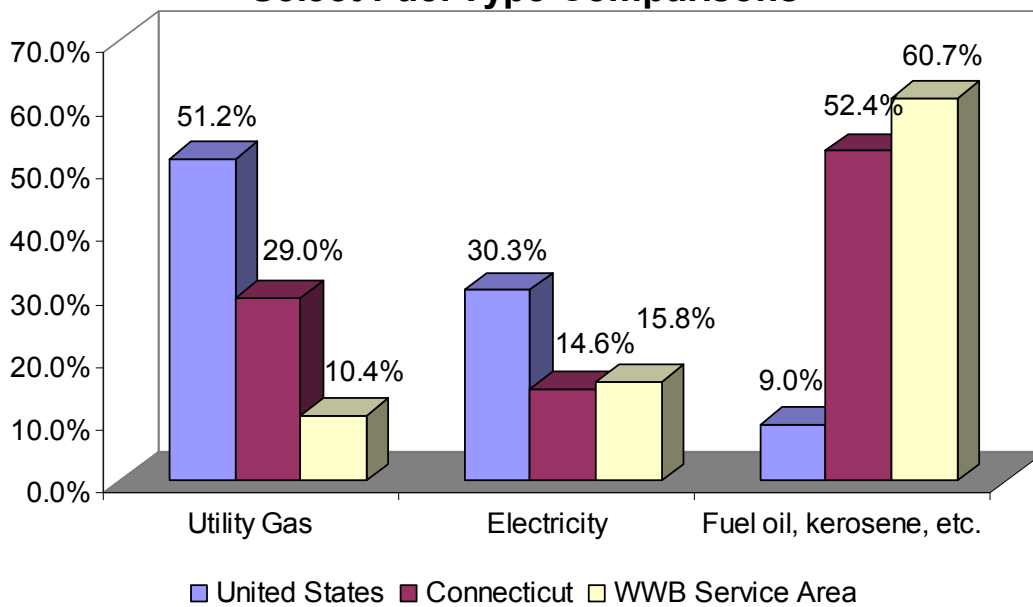






When looking at **housing occupancy and selected characteristics**, William W. Backus Hospital service area statistics are close to those of national and statewide figures. The one exception is the house heating fuel category. A large majority (60.7%) of service area households are heated using fuel oil, kerosene, etc., compared to nationally (9%) and statewide (52.4%). A much smaller percentage (10.4%) of service area households are heated using utility gas, compared to nationally (51.2%) and statewide (29%).

### Select Fuel Type Comparisons





The **income statistics** for the William W. Backus Hospital service area are very comparable to the national and state median values. The median household income for the service area is \$52,637, and the national and state figures are \$41,994 and \$53,935 respectively. However, when looking at male and female earnings (for year-round workers), the gap is greater than the gender gap in the nation and similar to that of the state. This service area difference in income is \$12,149. The difference in median income between males and females for the United States is \$9,863, and for Connecticut it is \$12,469.

William W. Backus Hospital service area <u>MALE</u> median earnings	William W. Backus Hospital service area <u>FEMALE</u> median earnings
<b>\$41,294</b>	<b>\$29,145</b>

When looking at general aggregate **poverty** statistics, William W. Backus Hospital’s service area is lower than the United States and Connecticut in terms of percentage of families and people whose income is below the poverty level. However, more recently, the bad economy has affected the local “climate” as evidenced by a comment made by a physician in the August 4, 2010 focus group. The physician mentioned that issues such as unemployment, home foreclosures, etc. are moving conversations in the direction of treating depression.

***Takeaways: Demographics***

- ❖ Service area gender and age group percentages are very similar to national and state figures.
- ❖ Most households in the William W. Backus Hospital service area are reflective of family households and moreover married-couple families.
- ❖ There are large differences between the service area and associated national and state comparisons when it comes to methods used to heat the household.
- ❖ The gap in median income between males and females in William W. Backus Hospital service area is \$12,149.

## C. GENERAL HEALTH STATUS

The household survey asked respondents to rate their **general health**, and 85.6% of those surveyed responded that their general health is good, very good or excellent. The figures from the Connecticut and United States BRFSS studies are 86.2% and 84.0% respectively. The percentage of William W. Backus Hospital service area residents reporting their general health is poor (4.8%) is significantly higher than the percentage in Connecticut (3.2%). One demographic result is that respondents identifying themselves as “Other” are significantly more likely to state their health is excellent compared to those identifying themselves as Black or African American.

Regarding **physical health**, 61.3% of William W. Backus Hospital service area respondents stated that there were no days during the past 30 days in which their physical health was not good, which is significantly lower than Connecticut (65.5%). A similar question was asked regarding **mental health**, and 65.9% of service area respondents said they had no days in the past month where their mental health was not good. That was above the 64.7% statewide and 65.3% nationally; neither comparison was significantly different. Additionally, William W. Backus Hospital service area respondents were asked how many days out of the past 30 did poor physical or mental health keep them from doing usual activities. Those responding “no such days” comprised 58.3%, which is similar to Connecticut (60.8%) and the nation (59.4%).

Respondents were also asked several specific questions regarding symptomatic constraints on life activities. For example, respondents were asked for how many days in the past 30 pain made it hard to perform usual activities. The percentage of respondents answering “no such days” (66.3%) is significantly lower than the national comparison (72.9%). Respondents were also asked during the past 30 days for how many days have they felt:

- a. sad, blue, or depressed (no days, 63.9% - not significantly different than national figure)
- b. worried, tense, or anxious (no days, 44.3% - not significantly different than national figure)
- c. very healthy and full of energy (no days, 11.7% - not significantly different than national figure)

Male respondents are significantly more likely to have had none of the past 30 days in which their physical health was not good compared to females according to the household survey. Also, female respondents are significantly more likely to have had 15-30 of the 30 days in which their mental was not good compared to males. Female

respondents are significantly more likely to have felt anxious 15-30 days out of the past 30 compared to males. Lastly, male respondents are significantly more likely to have felt depressed or anxious zero days out of the past 30 days compared to female respondents.

### **Takeaways: General Health Status**

- ❖ In general, the health status of William W. Backus Hospital service area residents is similar to that of Connecticut residents and the US as a whole. However, on the rating of poor health, there were a significantly higher percentage of service area residents compared to the Connecticut comparison.
- ❖ Respondents identifying themselves as “Other” are significantly more likely to state their health is excellent compared to those identifying themselves as Black or African American.
- ❖ The proportion of William W. Backus Hospital service area respondents stating that there were no days during the past 30 days in which their physical health was not good is significantly lower than Connecticut. However, there were no significant comparative differences in the area of general mental health.
- ❖ The percentage of respondents stating there were no days in which pain made it hard to perform usual activities was significantly lower than the national comparison.
- ❖ Females were significantly more likely compared to males to report having several issues such as at least one out of 30 days where physical health was not good, 15-30 out of 30 days where mental health was not good, and 15-30 out of 30 days where anxiousness was felt.

## D. ACCESS TO CARE

A large portion, 90.7%, of William W. Backus Hospital service area respondents report having some kind of health care coverage, compared to 91.4% in Connecticut and 85.6% nationally. The comparison to the national figure is statistically significant. On the question of whether there is one person considered to be a personal doctor or health care provider, 72.1% of household survey respondents answered, “yes, only one”, compared to Connecticut (81.2% - significantly higher) and the national figure (73.8%). For this same question, a response of “more than one” was captured, and 10.3% of service area respondents gave this response, which was a significantly higher percentage compared to Connecticut (5.5%) and the US (7.4%). There were 11.2% of William W. Backus Hospital service area respondents that stated that they needed to see a doctor in the past 12 months but could not because of cost, which is a similar statistic to the state (9.6%) and national (13.7%) figures.

William W. Backus Hospital service area respondents appear to be diligent with medical checkups, as 73.1% of them report seeing one for a checkup within the past year, which is a significantly higher proportion than reported state-wide (68.5%) and nationally (68.1%).

There were relevant comments provided by the two focus groups regarding health care access. The focus group comprising parents stated that even though they have health insurance, the high deductible plans, which are becoming more common, made it so that they needed to spend out-of-pocket for most of the year before the co-pay amounts “kicked in.” For those parents who have state insurance plans, community clinics can present very long wait times; however, they were usually pleased with the service. Several other issues raised by the parental focus group were need for more bi-lingual physicians, need for more specialists, and a need for a better understanding of which children qualify for transportation under state insurance programs.

The physician focus group tended to discount access to health care as an issue, although they did state that receiving care from specialists can be a challenge as many have to wait six months for an appointment. One physician suggested using his method of personally placing patients on specialists’ waiting lists, which expedites the timelines to two weeks. Also, this group discussed the difficulties of the “working poor” in that they make just enough to put them over the state program eligibility requirements. Hence this sub-population has difficulty affording insurance independently and arranging for transportation to appointments. This focus group also discussed the over-reliance on the Emergency Department (ED) for routine health

care needs. The physicians felt that there should not be a need for people to be using the ED unless it really is an emergency. The physicians felt that patients using the ED for routine care feel as though they are entitled and do not care to take responsibility. Additionally, the group felt that if the ED refrained from giving out medications for pain management, most of those using the ED improperly would not return. Lastly, it was mentioned that better communication should occur among primary care physicians, clinics, pharmacies, and hospitals to prevent multiple dispensing of the same medication.

Further analysis of the access to care issue reveals some significant discrepancies across certain demographic groups. Female respondents are significantly more likely to have health coverage compared to males. Female respondents are significantly more likely to have difficulty obtaining health care because a provider refused to accept insurance, a co-pay, or could not get an appointment compared to male respondents. Also, male respondents are significantly less likely to have one person they think of as their personal doctor compared to female respondents. Lastly, female respondents are significantly more likely to have visited a doctor for a routine checkup within the past year compared to male respondents.

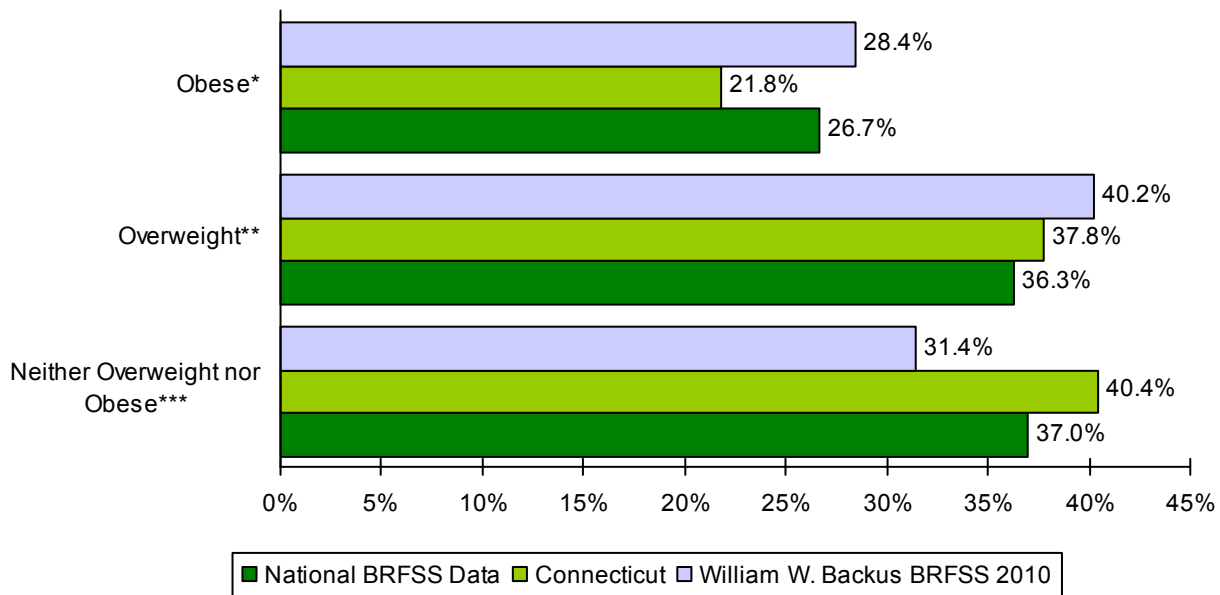
### *Takeaways: Access to Care*

- ❖ The overall proportion insured in the William W. Backus Hospital service area is significantly above the national figure.
- ❖ The percentage of those in the William W. Backus Hospital service area claiming to have one person they consider as a personal doctor or health care provider is significantly lower than the percentage statewide.
- ❖ The percentage of those in the William W. Backus Hospital service area claiming to have more than one person they consider as a personal doctor or health care provider is significantly higher than the percentage statewide and nationally.
- ❖ A large portion of service area respondents (73.1%) has had a routine doctor's check up within the past year, which is significantly higher than the state and national proportions.
- ❖ The focus group consisting of parents raised a point that even though patients may have insurance, high deductibles are hard to meet and make it fiscally difficult to continue routine visits, etc.
- ❖ Female respondents are significantly more likely to have health care coverage and to have visited a doctor for routine checkup in the previous 12 months compared to males.
- ❖ Male respondents are significantly more likely to not have one person they consider their personal doctor or health care provider compared to female respondents.

# E. WEIGHT AND EXERCISE

## Weight

Regarding the weight of household survey respondents, a Body Mass Index (BMI) was calculated and compared to the state and national BMI numbers. The graph below shows the comparisons.



\*William W. Backus Hospital 2010 is significantly higher than the Connecticut comparison.

\*\*William W. Backus Hospital 2010 is significantly different from the National comparison.

\*\*\*William W. Backus Hospital 2010 is significantly lower than National and Connecticut comparisons.

Overall, the evidence shows that weight is a challenge for the service area as a whole. A closer inspection of the data by service area breakout shows that while the primary and secondary areas are similarly high for the obese category, the primary service area is driving the high overweight category percentage for the overall William W. Backus Hospital service area.

## Exercise

A large portion, 83.4%, of William W. Backus Hospital service area respondents participate in physical activities or exercises such as running, calisthenics, golf, gardening, or walking during the past month, which is significantly higher than Connecticut (75.6%) and the US (74.3%). Demographically, White respondents are significantly more likely to participate in physical activities or exercises compared to respondents identifying themselves as “other” race.

The topic of exercise was covered extensively in the focus group discussions. The parental focus group was asked about childhood obesity, and the group felt that children are simply not getting enough exercise. There were several issues surrounding the lack of exercise such as insufficient safe play areas and lack of community centers. Specifically, there was mention of a local YMCA that closed recently, which included many amenities: basketball courts, fitness programs, day camps, and swimming pools. Participants also mentioned that their children are getting some exercise, but there are no organized groups to emphasize proper exercise along with the correct amount of time to be spent exercising. Economic concerns were also raised as they relate to kids’ exercise. Specifically, the focus group mentioned that as more parents need to work longer hours or second jobs, the children are not getting the after-school encouragement to engage in physical activity. Overuse of technology (i.e. smart phones, video games, etc.) by children was also cited as a strong example of deterrence from exercise.

### *Takeaways: Weight and Exercise*

- ❖ Weight, as evidenced by BMI figures, is a challenge for the service area as a whole, and the primary service area is driving the high percentage categorized as overweight.
- ❖ The overall proportion who participate in physical activities apart from work in the William W. Backus Hospital service area is significantly above the state and national figures.
- ❖ White respondents are significantly more likely to participate in physical activities or exercises compared to respondents identifying themselves as “other” race.
- ❖ The focus group of parents raised important points that the economy (closing of the YMCA, cutting back of school programs, and more time needed for work) and technology overuse has contributed greatly to the lack of proper exercise of the children.



## F. DIABETES

A number of questions were asked of household survey respondents addressing the issue of diabetes. First, respondents were asked whether they've been told they have diabetes. Less than one in ten (8.8%) stated that they had been told this by a doctor; this proportion is not significantly different than the proportion at the state (7.1%) and national (8.4%) levels. Of those survey respondents that had not been told they have diabetes, 6.2% said they had been told they have pre-diabetes or borderline diabetes at some point by a doctor or other health professional. Again that proportion is not significantly different than the proportion at the state (5.1%) and national (5.9%) levels. The age of onset amount those with diabetes was not significantly different than statewide or nationally.

For those respondents who have diabetes, a question was asked whether they are currently taking insulin, and 26.3% said they were, which again does not differ from the state (26.5%) and national (27.3%) percentages. These respondents were also asked how often they check their blood sugar, and 74.3% said they check it daily or more compared to Connecticut (62.6%) and the US (64.3%), albeit not significantly different. Of special note is the fact that all respondents check their blood sugar at some point. Respondents with diabetes were then asked how often they check themselves for foot sores or irritations. A high percentage, 82.7% stated that they check daily or more often, which is significantly higher than the Connecticut percentage (59.2%) and simply higher than the national percentage (67.7%). Again, no survey respondents stated that they never check for such sores or irritations. A troubling statistic is that 18.9% of survey respondents claimed they had not seen a doctor, nurse, or other health professional for their diabetes in the past year, which is significantly higher than the Connecticut proportion (9.7%) and higher than the national proportion (11.9%).

Additionally, respondents with diabetes were asked whether a doctor has ever told them that diabetes has affected their eyes or that they had retinopathy. There were 18.1% of respondents answering yes to this question, which is similar to Connecticut and national figures, 21% and 20.1% respectively. Finally, respondents were asked whether they had ever taken a course or class in how to manage their diabetes themselves, and 52.2% stated that they have, compared to 41.9% statewide and 55.2% nationally. Interestingly, female respondents identifying themselves as "other" race are significantly more likely to have been told they have diabetes during pregnancy compared to White female respondents.



The parental focus group briefly addressed the diabetes issue in children, and they admitted that they have seen an increase in children with many issues including diabetes. They did not have a concrete solution, but specifically some of the Latino parents said that their culture has poor nutritional habits that may contribute to this problem.

### *Takeaways: Diabetes*

- ❖ Less than 1 in 10 survey respondents claimed to have been told they have diabetes by a doctor.
- ❖ All survey respondents stated that they check their blood sugar.
- ❖ The percentage of survey respondents who check for foot sores or irritations on a daily or more frequency is significantly higher than the percentage statewide.
- ❖ All survey respondents stated that they check for foot sores or irritations.
- ❖ A troubling statistic is that the percentage of survey respondents that claimed they had not seen a doctor, nurse, or other health professional for their diabetes in the past year is significantly higher than the Connecticut proportion.
- ❖ Female respondents identifying themselves as “other” race are significantly more likely to have been told they have diabetes during pregnancy compared to White female respondents.
- ❖ Latino parents in the focus group session said that their culture has poor nutritional habits that may be contributing to the problem of childhood obesity.

## G. ORAL HEALTH

Household survey respondents were asked questions about oral health. The first question asked was how long it had been since a dentist or dental clinic was visited for any reason, and 74.2% of respondents stated that they had done so within the past year, which is significantly higher than the national percentage (68.8%) but significantly lower than the Connecticut percentage (79.4%). Second, respondents were asked how many of their permanent teeth had been removed due to tooth decay or gum disease, and 59% answered no teeth had been removed, which is similar to the statewide figure (58.2%) but significantly higher than the national figure (54.8%). Last, 77.1% of respondents stated they had been to a dentist or dental hygienist for a teeth cleaning within the past year, which is similar to the Connecticut figure (79.6%) and significantly higher than the national figure (69%). Of note demographically, respondents identifying themselves as “other” race are significantly more likely to have never had their teeth cleaned by a dentist or dental hygienist compared to White respondents.

### *Takeaways: Oral Health*

- ❖ The proportion of respondents stating that they had visited a dentist for any reason within the past year is significantly higher than the national proportion but significantly lower than the Connecticut proportion.
- ❖ The percentage of survey respondents that have had no permanent teeth removed due to decay or disease is significantly higher than the national figure.
- ❖ Also, percentage of survey respondents that have been to a dentist or hygienist in the past year for a teeth cleaning is significantly higher than the national figure.
- ❖ Respondents identifying themselves as “other” race are significantly more likely to have never had their teeth cleaned by a dentist or dental hygienist compared to White respondents.

## H. CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

From 2005 to 2007, the leading cause of death in the William W. Backus service area was heart disease; a quarter of all deaths were attributable to heart disease, which is very similar to state and national rates.

There were three questions asked of survey respondents addressing cardiovascular disease prevalence. The first question that was asked was simply whether the respondent had ever been told by a health professional they have had a heart attack, and 4.6% answered that they had been told they had a heart attack, similar to figures statewide (3.2%) and nationally (4.2%). The respondents were asked whether a health professional had ever told them they had angina or coronary heart disease, and 4% of survey respondents answered that they had been told they had at least one of these two conditions, which again is similar to the statewide (3.9%) and national (4.3%) figures. Last, respondents were asked whether a health professional had ever told them they had a stroke, and 2.5% stated they had, similarly compared to 2.6% statewide and 2.7% nationally. There were no statistically significant differences among gender and race breakouts for these three questions.

### *Takeaways: Cardiovascular Disease*

- ❖ From 2005 to 2007, the leading cause of death in the William W. Backus service area was heart disease
- ❖ All statistics in this section were statistically similar to the comparative figures and across demographics.

# I. ASTHMA

## Adult Asthma

Close to one fifth (18.1%) of respondents stated that they had been told by a health professional that they have asthma, which is significantly higher than the statewide (14.4%) and national (13.7%) proportions. Of the respondents who had been told they have asthma, 69.7% said they still have asthma, which is similar to the statewide (69.7%) and national (67%) percentages.

Respondents with asthma were then asked how old they were when they were first told by a health professional that they had asthma, and 31.8% were age 10 or younger which is lower than the national figure of 39.2% although not significantly. These respondents were also asked whether they had an asthma episode or attack in the past year, and 47.2% stated that they had compared to 52.9% nationally. Also, respondents with asthma were asked how many times they had to visit an emergency room or urgent care center in the past year due to asthma. For the following two questions, there were no significant differences between survey respondents and state/national comparisons among the associated response categories: “How many times did you see a health professional for a routine checkup for asthma in the past year” and “How often did you use a prescription asthma inhaler during an asthma attack to stop it in the past month.” However, 47.5% of household survey respondents report having taken prescription asthma medication to prevent an asthma attack 25 or more days during the past month, which is significantly higher than the national comparison (32.9%).

Demographically, female respondents are significantly more likely to have been told they have asthma compared to male respondents. Also, female respondents are significantly more likely to have had an episode of asthma or an asthma attack within the past year compared to male respondents.

## Childhood Asthma

Of those respondents with children, 17.1% stated that a health professional diagnosed the child(ren) with asthma, compared to the Connecticut comparison (14.2%) and significantly higher than the national comparison (12.7%). Of those respondents whose child(ren) has(have) been diagnosed with asthma, 73.8% said the child(ren) still have asthma, which is statistically similar to the Connecticut (68.4%) and national (67.7%) figures. Interestingly, female respondents are significantly more likely to have

children who have been diagnosed with asthma compared to male respondents according to the survey results.

### *Takeaways: Asthma*

- ❖ Close to one fifth of respondents stated that they had been told by a health professional that they have asthma, which is significantly higher than the statewide and national proportions.
- ❖ Close to half of household survey respondents with asthma report having taken prescription asthma medication to prevent an asthma attack 25 to 30 days during the past month, which is significantly higher than the national comparison.
- ❖ Female respondents are significantly more likely to have been told they have asthma compared to male respondents.
- ❖ Female respondents are significantly more likely to have had an episode of asthma or an asthma attack within the past year compared to male respondents.
- ❖ Of those respondents with children, approximately 1 in 6 stated that a health professional diagnosed the child(ren) with asthma, which is similar to the Connecticut comparison and significantly higher than the national comparison.
- ❖ According to survey results, female respondents are significantly more likely to have children who have been diagnosed with asthma compared to male respondents.

## J. TOBACCO

Over half (50.8%) of survey respondents said they had smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their entire life, which is a significantly higher proportion than at the state (45.9%) and national (43.7%) levels. Of those respondents who have smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their life, 60% said they do not currently smoke at all, which is significantly lower than the state comparison (65.2%) and statistically similar to the national comparison (56.7%). Of those respondents who currently smoke, 64.5% have stopped smoking for one day or longer in the past year in an attempt to quit smoking altogether. This proportion is similar to the state and national proportions, 59% and 58% respectively.

Regarding tobacco products other than cigarettes, several questions were asked. Among all respondents, 14.9% have used or tried a smokeless tobacco product such as chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus, which is a significantly lower than the percentage nation-wide (18.6%). Of those respondents who have tried such smokeless products, 92.4% stated that they do not currently use them at all, which is significantly higher than the national percentage (77.9%). Of all respondents, 5.4% currently use cigars, pipes, bidis, kreteks, or other tobacco products, which is a similar percentage nationally (4%).

There were three questions asked of respondents regarding secondhand smoke. The first of the three addresses the number of days in the past week that someone smoked in the indoor workplace while the respondent was present. There were 6.6% of survey respondents indicating that this occurred five or more days out of the previous week, which is similar to the national statistic (8%) and significantly higher than the statewide statistic (4.1%). Also, 8.5% of respondents indicated that someone smoked in their home while they were there five or more days out of the past week, which is significantly below the national figure (11.3%) and similar to the Connecticut figure (6.7%). Regarding household smoking rules, 79.8% of respondents reside in a home where smoking is not allowed anywhere inside, which is a similar result for Connecticut (78.9%) and significantly higher than the national statistic (76.4%).

Comparing demographic groups, White respondents are significantly more likely to have smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their life compared to respondents categorizing themselves as “other” race. Male respondents are significantly more likely to have tried smokeless tobacco products, or cigars, pipes, bidis, kreteks, or other tobacco products compared to female respondents. American Indian or Alaskan Native respondents are significantly more likely to have tried smokeless tobacco products compared to White or “other” race respondents. White respondents are significantly

more likely to have a smoke-free workplace compared to “other” race respondents. White and “other” race respondents are significantly more likely to have had no one smoke in their home in the past week compared to Black or African American respondents.

Regarding helping those who are addicted to nicotine, the focus group comprised of physicians discussed the new program initiated by William W. Backus Hospital to provide specialty programs to uninsured or underinsured patients. The doctors felt that this program may be a good mechanism to delivery smoking cessation programs.

### *Takeaways: Tobacco*

- ❖ Over half of survey respondents said they had smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their entire life, which is a significantly higher proportion than at the state and national levels.
- ❖ Of those respondents who have smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their life, 6 out of 10 said they do not currently smoke at all, which is significantly lower than the state comparison and statistically similar to the national comparison.
- ❖ The proportion of those survey respondents that have used or tried a smokeless tobacco product such as chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus is significantly lower than the proportion nation-wide.
- ❖ Of those respondents who have tried such smokeless products, more than 9 out of 10 stated that they do not currently use them at all, which is significantly higher than the national percentage.
- ❖ More than 6 out of 10 survey respondents indicated that someone had smoked in the workplace when they were present 5 or more days out of the previous week, which is similar to the national statistic and significantly higher than the statewide statistic.
- ❖ Also, over 8 out of ten survey respondents indicated that someone smoked in their home while they were there 5 or more days out of the past week, which is significantly below the national figure and statistically similar to the Connecticut figure.
- ❖ 8 out of 10 survey respondents reside in a home where smoking is not allowed anywhere inside, which is a similar result for Connecticut and significantly higher than the national statistic.
- ❖ White respondents are significantly more likely to have smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their life compared to respondents categorizing themselves as “other” race.
- ❖ Male respondents are significantly more likely to have tried smokeless tobacco products, or cigars, pipes, bidis, kreteks, or other tobacco products compared to female respondents.

- ❖ American Indian or Alaskan Native respondents are significantly more likely to have tried smokeless tobacco products compared to White or “other” race respondents.
- ❖ White respondents are significantly more likely to have had no one smoke in their workplace in the past week compared to “other” race respondents.
- ❖ White and “other” race respondents are significantly more likely to have had no one smoke in their home in the past week compared to Black or African American respondents.



## K. ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Of all survey respondents, 61.2% have had at least one drink of an alcoholic beverage during the past 30 days, which is significantly higher than the national figure (51.6%) and similar to the Connecticut figure (64.6%). Respondents who had at least one drink in the past month were then asked how many times during the past month that they engaged in binge drinking. Roughly 10% of William W. Backus Hospital service area respondents indicated binge drinking occurred 5 or more times, which is higher than the state and national comparisons, 5.9% and 7.1% respectively. When binge drinking occurs, almost half (49.6%) of it occurs in the home for survey respondents, which is similar to the national figure (41.7%).

Male respondents are significantly more likely to have had an alcoholic drink in the past 30 days compared to females. Black or African American respondents are significantly more likely to have binge drank 5 or more times in the past 30 days compared to White respondents. Black or African American respondents are significantly more likely to have binge drank at a bar or club compared to White respondents. Lastly, “other” race respondents are significantly more likely to have binge drank in the home compared to Black or African American respondents.

### *Takeaways: Alcohol Consumption*

- ❖ Of all survey respondents, 6 out of 10 have had at least one drink of an alcoholic beverage during the past 30 days, which is significantly higher than the national figure and similar to the Connecticut figure.
- ❖ One out of every 10 William W. Backus Hospital service area respondents who indicated binge drinking occurred 5 or more times, which is higher than both the state and national comparisons.
- ❖ Male respondents are significantly more likely to have had at least one alcoholic drink in the past 30 days compared to females.
- ❖ Black or African American respondents are significantly more likely to have binge drank 5 or more times in the past 30 days compared to White respondents.
- ❖ Black or African American respondents are significantly more likely to have binge drank at a bar or club compared to White respondents.

## L. IMMUNIZATION

Disease prevention in the form of immunization was determined using two questions. Of all respondents, 43.7% have had a flu shot during the past year, which is similar to the statewide figure (43.3%) and significantly higher than the national comparison (37.8%). Also, 29.3% of respondents have had a pneumonia shot, which is a significantly higher percentage than what is seen statewide or nationally, 24.7% and 24.4% respectively. In terms of demographic comparisons, female respondents are more likely to have had a flu shot compared to male respondents.

### *Takeaways: Immunization*

- ❖ William W. Backus Hospital service area respondents do quite well in both flu shot and pneumonia immunization rates, the former being significantly higher than the national rate and the latter being significantly higher than both state and national comparisons.
- ❖ Female respondents are more likely to have had a flu shot compared to male respondents.

# M. WOMEN'S HEALTH

Six questions were asked of women regarding women's health preventative measures. Close to 6 out of 10 (59.2%) survey respondents stated they had a mammogram at some point in their lives. This figure is significantly lower than the Connecticut percentage (71.7%) and statistically similar to the national figure (64.4%). Of all female respondents, only 3.3% stated that the last mammogram occurred 5 or more years ago, which is similar to the state comparison (5.2%) and significantly less than the national figure (7.1%).

According to survey respondents, 93.5% have had a clinical breast exam at some point, which is similar to the statewide percentage (92.2%) and significantly higher than the national percentage (89.6%). Of the respondents who had had a breast exam, 77.1% had the exam within the past year, which is a similar proportion to the statewide figure (75.7%) and significantly higher than the national proportion (71%).

Regarding a Pap test, a test for cancer of the cervix, 97.4% of female survey respondents had a Pap test, which is a proportion that is significantly higher than what is seen at both the state and national levels, 94% and 93.7% respectively. When asked how long it has been since the last Pap test, 66.8%, which is similar to the state and national percentages, 65.8% and 61.9% respectively.

White respondents are significantly more likely to have had a clinical breast exam compared to "other" race respondents. Black or African American respondents are significantly more likely to have ever had a mammogram compared to "other" race respondents.

According to the data, the female respondents age 50 and older are similar to the state and national statistics regarding mammograms, clinical breast exams, and Pap tests.

## *Takeaways: Women's Health*

- ❖ The percentage of respondents that have had a mammogram is significantly lower than what is seen in Connecticut.
- ❖ The percentage of respondents that have had a clinical breast exam is significantly higher than what is seen nationally. Also, those stating that they've had it within the past year is statistically higher than the national rate.
- ❖ Regarding Pap tests, the service area respondents rate is significantly higher than the state and national rates.

- ❖ White respondents are significantly more likely to have had a clinical breast exam compared to “other” race respondents.
- ❖ Black or African American respondents are significantly more likely to have ever had a mammogram compared to “other” race respondents.

# N. CANCER SCREENING

Cancer screening is obviously important as cancer is the second leading cause of death, closely behind heart disease, in the service area as it is statewide and nationally. The chart below shows cancer incident rates by type of cancer for the service area compared to state and national rates.

**Cancer Incidence (2003)**

<b>Rates per 100,000</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>WWB Total Service Area</b>
All Sites	474.1	529.0	445.0
Lung	69.8	72.3	72.2
Melanoma of the Skin	17.1	23.2	20.4
Prostate	139.3	75.7	55.8
Breast, Female	129.6	75.2	62.7
Colon/Rectum	52.3	59.0	44.9

Data Source: Connecticut Department of Public Health, CDC Wonder, United States Cancer Statistics, 1999-2004 Incidence Archive Results

## Prostate Cancer

Respondents in this section were all males, 40 years of age and older. Close to 6 out of 10 (59.3%) respondents have had a Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test at some point in their lives, which is statistically similar to the state (65.3%) and national comparisons (64.8%). Of those who have had a PSA test, 65.8% had it within the past year, which is a similar statistic compared to Connecticut (71.6%) and the US (69.9%).

The proportion of respondents (78.5%) that have ever had a digital rectal exam is significantly lower than the proportion in Connecticut (85.8%) and similar to the national proportion (74.8%). Of those who have had a digital rectal exam, 51.8% had it within the past year, which is significantly lower than the Connecticut proportion (62.2%) and similar to the national proportion (53.5%).

To conclude this section, respondents were asked if a health professional had ever told them they had prostate cancer. There were 5.3% of respondents that answered “yes” to this question, which is similar to the percentages seen at the state (4.2%) and national (4.1%) levels.

White respondents are significantly more likely to have had a digital rectal exam than American Indian or Native Alaskan respondents.

## Colorectal Cancer

Respondents in this section were all 50 years of age and older. Close to three quarters (73.5%) of respondents have had either a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy at some point in their lives. This proportion is similar to the Connecticut comparison (68.8%) and significantly higher than the national comparison (61.9%). Of those who have had a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy, 24.6% did so within the past year, which is a statistically similar to the Connecticut (31.4%) and national (28.7%) figures.

### *Takeaways: Cancer Screening*

- ❖ Over three quarters of respondents have had a digital rectal exam at some point in their lives, which is a proportion significantly lower than the proportion in Connecticut and similar to the national proportion.
- ❖ Of those who have had a digital rectal exam, over half had it within the past year, which is significantly lower than the Connecticut proportion and similar to the national proportion.
- ❖ White respondents are significantly more likely to have had a digital rectal exam than American Indian or Native Alaskan respondents.
- ❖ Close to three quarters of respondents have had either a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy at some point in their lives, which is similar to the Connecticut comparison and significantly higher than the national comparison.

## O. ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

A little over two thirds (67.6%) of respondents reported no days in the last two weeks in which there was little interest or pleasure in doing things, which is a similar statistic nationally (64.7%). There were 72.3% of respondents reporting no days in the last two weeks in which they felt down, depressed or hopeless, which is similar to the national figure (71.1%).

Just over one half (51.1%) of respondents stated there were no days over the last two weeks in which they had trouble falling asleep or staying asleep or sleeping too much, which again is similar to the national comparison (50.9%). However, for this question there is a significant difference when looking at the 11 or more days category, as the survey respondents proportion (15.1%) is significantly higher than the national proportion (11.4%). Respondents were then asked how many days they felt tired or had little energy over the last two weeks; and 38.7% of respondents said there were no such days, which was a result significantly above the national proportion (33.8%).

There were 68.8% of respondents that reported no days with poor appetite or days when they ate too much over the last two weeks, which is significantly higher than the national proportion (62.5%). Respondents were asked how many days they felt bad about themselves, that they were a failure, or had let themselves or their family down. There were 85.4% of respondents that stated there were no such days, which is significantly higher than the national response (81.5%). On the issue of concentration, 84.2% of respondents had trouble concentrating over the last two weeks on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching TV, which is similar to the percentage of responses nationally (81.2%). Respondents were then asked how many days over the last two weeks they moved or spoke so slowly that other people had noticed, or the opposite - been so fidgety or restless that they were moving around a lot more than usual. Just over 9 in 10 (91.2%) of respondents stated that they had not experienced any such days over the last two weeks, which compares similarly to the national percentage (89.1%).

The last two questions in this section address whether a healthcare provider diagnosed certain disorders. First, respondents were asked whether a healthcare provider had ever told them that they had an anxiety disorder, and 17.4% said they were told this by a healthcare provider, which is significantly higher than the national proportion (12%). Next, respondents were asked whether a healthcare provider had ever told them that they have a depressive disorder, and 20.7% said they were told this by a healthcare provider, which is also significantly higher than the national proportion (16.5%).

The following are statements concerning significant differences among demographic categories. Male respondents are significantly more likely not to have felt down, depressed or hopeless in the last 2 weeks than female respondents. Female respondents are significantly more likely to have had trouble sleeping 11-14 days in the last 2 weeks than male respondents. Female respondents are more likely to have felt tired or had little energy 11-14 days in the last 2 weeks than male respondents. Male respondents are more likely not to have eaten too little or too much in the last 2 weeks than female respondents. Female respondents are more likely to have felt like a failure 11-14 days in the last 2 weeks than male respondents. Also, female respondents are more likely to have been told they have an anxiety or depressive disorder than male respondents. White or American Indian or Alaska Native respondents are more likely to have been told they have a depressive disorder than respondents who identify themselves as “other” race.

### ***Takeaways: Anxiety and Depression***

- ❖ Three out of 20 respondents stated there were 11 or more days out of the last two weeks in which they had trouble falling asleep or staying asleep or sleeping too much, which is significantly higher than the national proportion.
- ❖ Respondents were asked how many days they felt tired or had little energy over the last two weeks; and close to 4 out of 10 of respondents said there were no such days, which was a result significantly above the national proportion.
- ❖ Close to 7 out of 10 respondents that said there were no days in which they had a poor appetite or had eaten too much over the last two weeks, which is significantly higher than the national proportion.
- ❖ Respondents were asked how many days they felt bad about themselves, that they were a failure, or had let themselves or their family down. There were 17 out of 20 respondents that stated there were no such days, which is significantly higher than the national response.
- ❖ Respondents were asked whether a healthcare provider had ever told them that they had an anxiety disorder, and 1 out of 6 said they were told this by a healthcare provider, which is significantly higher than the national proportion.
- ❖ Respondents were asked whether a healthcare provider had ever told them that they have a depressive disorder, and 1 out of 5 said they were told this by a healthcare provider, which is significantly higher than the national proportion.



# P. COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

## HIV/AIDS

According to data from the Connecticut Department of Public Health, in 2009 there were 24 HIV/AIDS cases in the William W. Backus service area compared to 538 cases statewide. In terms of percentage, the service area accounted for 4.5% of all cases reported on Connecticut in 2009.

Respondents in this section are adults under 65 years of age. The proportion of respondents, 54.9%, that said they have been tested for HIV is significantly higher than both the Connecticut (43.7%) and national (39.4%) comparisons. Of those that had been tested for HIV, 46.5% said their last HIV test, not including blood donations, occurred less than one year ago, compared to 22.6% statewide and 26.2% nationally, which may, in part, be due to the higher prevalence of testing shown above.

Respondents were read a list of several high risk situations:

- You have used intravenous drugs in the past year.
- You have been treated for a sexually transmitted or venereal disease in the past year.
- You have given or received money or drugs in exchange for sex in the past year.
- You had anal sex without a condom in the past year.

When asked whether any of these situations apply to them, 3.2% said that they do, which is similar to the Connecticut (3.5%) and national (3.4%) comparisons.

Female respondents are significantly more likely to have been tested for HIV compared to male respondents. Female respondents are significantly more likely to have taken part in high risk situations compared to male respondents. Black or African American and “other” race respondents are significantly more likely to have been tested for HIV compared to Asian respondents.

## Adult Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)

Respondents in this section are adult females under 50 years of age. Roughly 6% stated they had the HPV vaccination, the same as the national figure. Of those respondents who have received the HPV vaccine, 67.6% had all the shots, well above the national figure of 43.2%.

## Child Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)

Respondents in this section are parents of female children between the ages of 9 and 17 years of age. There were 46.4% of respondents who said their young female children received the HPV vaccination, which is significantly higher than the 26.7% nationally. Of those who had stated that their children received the HPV vaccination, 70.5% said they received all of the shots, compared to 55.7% nationally.

### *Takeaways: Communicable Disease*

- ❖ The proportion of respondents, just over half, that said they have been tested for HIV is significantly higher than both the Connecticut and national comparisons.
- ❖ Female respondents are significantly more likely to have been tested for HIV compared to male respondents.
- ❖ Female respondents are significantly more likely to have taken part in high risk situations compared to male respondents.
- ❖ Black or African American and “other” race respondents are significantly more likely to have been tested for HIV compared to Asian respondents.
- ❖ There were a little less than half of respondents who said their young female children received the HPV vaccination, which is significantly higher than the national figure.

## Q. ADDITIONAL WELLNESS TOPICS

### Reactions to Race

Respondents were asked whether their health care seeking experiences within the past 12 months have been worse than, the same as, or better than what they are for other races; and 16.2% of survey respondents stated that such experiences were better for them than people of other races. This percentage of respondents is significantly higher than the national comparison (10.8%).

### Safe Driving Practices

Close to 9 out of 10 (89%) respondents claim to always wear a seatbelt while they drive or ride in a car, which is significantly higher than the national figure (82%) but similar to the statewide figure (86.4%). Of the respondents who said they had at least one drink in the past 30 days, 95.9% said there were no recent occasions of driving after having too much to drink, which is very similar to the state and national comparative figures, 95.7% and 96% respectively.

“Other” race respondents are significantly more likely to say they use seatbelts sometimes compared to White respondents. Female respondents are significantly less likely to have driven after having too much to drink in the past 30 days compared to male respondents.

### Falls

There were 82.3% of respondents reporting no days in the past three months in which they fell, which is significantly lower than the Connecticut percentage (86.4%) and similar to the national (82.9%). Of the respondents who had fallen, 7.8% stated that the falls had caused an injury twice, which is significantly higher than the Connecticut comparison (2.7%) and similar to the national (4.5%).

### Children with Special Needs

A large portion of the time during the parental focus group was spent discussing special needs children. The discussion moved into other areas and included topics on behavioral health needs and support for children with autism. Several parents in the group had children with special needs and two parents had children with autism. The group was quite outspoken regarding these issues and their list included the lack of state and federal funding for programs, shortage of specialists in the area, absence of

services in the local schools, inadequate teacher education regarding special needs children and a lack of advocacy for children and parents.

Also, parents stated there is an absence of school services and teachers trained in dealing with special needs children in the area. It was perceived that most teachers do not understand the challenges that these children and their parents face on a daily basis.

Parents elaborated on the perceived lack of advocacy for special needs children and parents. The need for primary care physicians to speak out in support of services and assist with recruiting specialists to the area was emphasized. Most parents are researching the internet to get answers. That is where they learn what questions to ask and where to go to seek answers.

### ***Takeaways: Additional Wellness Topics***

- ❖ Respondents were asked whether their health care seeking experiences within the past 12 months have been worse than, the same as, or better than what they are for other races; and 1 in 6 survey respondents stated that such experiences were better for them than people of other races. This percentage of respondents is significantly higher than the national comparison.
- ❖ Close to 9 out of 10 respondents claim to always wear a seatbelt while they drive or ride in a car, which is significantly higher than the national figure and similar to the statewide figure.
- ❖ More than 8 out of 10 respondents that stated there were no days in the past three months in which they fell, which is significantly lower than the Connecticut percentage and similar to the national rate.
- ❖ Of the respondents who had fallen, approximately 8 out of 10 stated that the falls had caused an injury twice, which is significantly higher than the Connecticut comparison and similar to the national figure.
- ❖ According to the parental focus group, there are many opportunities for improvement for treating children with autism. More specialists are needed in addition to improved teacher training and dissemination of pertinent information to parents.