

Mortality Rates Continue to Improve

Description of Indicator

This indicator reports mortality rates (age-adjusted deaths per 100,000 people) for common health status indicators and progress toward Healthy People 2020 objectives.¹

Why is it Important?

Viewing the county in relation to statewide averages and national health objectives identifies public health issues that are comparatively more or less pronounced in San Bernardino County. This information helps the development and prioritization of public health initiatives.

How is San Bernardino County Doing?

The county achieved the national objectives for seven out of 14 commonly measured causes of death:

- In 2010, San Bernardino County met the Healthy People 2020 national objectives for the category “all cancers,” colon cancer, unintentional injuries, lung cancer, drug-induced deaths, firearms injury, and motor vehicle accidents.
- Death rates for all major causes have improved over the past five years, except for suicide.
- The rates that improved most over the past five years are influenza/pneumonia and motor vehicle deaths.
- The county’s death rates are higher than the state average for all causes compared except for unintentional injuries, influenza/pneumonia, and Alzheimer’s disease.

Overall Health Outcomes Improving

The *County Health Rankings and Roadmaps*, published by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, helps counties understand what influences how healthy residents are and how long they will live. San Bernardino County ranked 41 out of 56 counties in the 2012 report for overall Health Outcomes – a combination of death and disease indicators – and was recognized as the most improved in the state, up from 44 in 2011 and 45 in 2010.

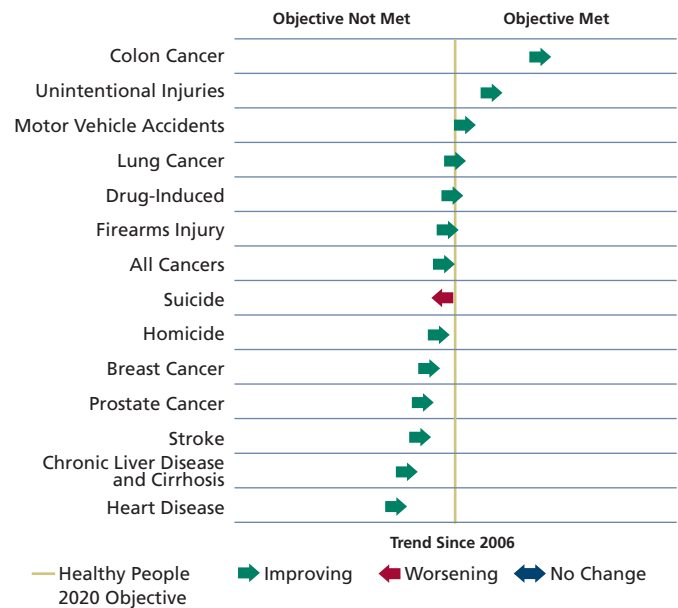
Source: *County Health Rankings and Roadmaps* (www.countyhealthrankings.org)

Increasing Rural Access to Health Care

In 2011, the Department of Public Health (DPH) developed a plan to expand access to health care in areas of the County that are medically underserved. In September, the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) designated the Hesperia Health Center as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) with a service area of 250 square miles. FQHCs provide a safety net for residents to access medical services without impacting emergency rooms and other local resources. In May 2012, HRSA awarded DPH \$4,897,415 to expand the Hesperia Health Center by 5,800 square feet to provide additional special procedures, radiology, dental services, health education and mental health consultation.

Another resource improving rural access to care is the Arrowhead Regional Medical Center’s Mobile Clinic operating since 2009. The mobile medical clinic is a custom-built, 40-foot vehicle that features two exam rooms and a patient education area. This specialized clinic allows hospital personnel to serve remote areas of the county that have limited access to medical services.

Age-Adjusted Death Rates: Progress Towards 2020 Objectives San Bernardino County, 2010



Note: Deaths due to Diabetes, Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease, Alzheimer’s, and Influenza or Pneumonia do not have a Healthy People 2020 objective and are not included in this chart. Counties with varying age compositions can have widely disparate death rates because the risk of dying is mostly a function of age. To enable county comparisons, age-adjusted death rates, which control for this variability, are used rather than crude death rates.

Source: California Department of Public Health, *County Health Status Profiles* (www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/obir/Pages/CHSP.aspx)

San Bernardino County Age-Adjusted Death Rate Ranking and Comparison to California Average, 2010

Rank Among California Counties	Cause of Death	Comparison to California Average
10	Unintentional Injuries	Better than California Average
14	Influenza or Pneumonia	Better than California Average
20	Drug-Induced	Same as California Average
25	Suicide	Worse than California Average
27	Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis	Worse than California Average
27	Firearms Injury	Worse than California Average
28	Lung Cancer	Worse than California Average
29	Motor Vehicle Accidents	Worse than California Average
36	Alzheimer’s Disease	Worse than California Average
38	All Cancers	Worse than California Average
41	Homicide	Worse than California Average
41	Stroke	Worse than California Average
44	Prostate Cancer	Worse than California Average
45	Breast Cancer	Worse than California Average
46	Colon Cancer	Worse than California Average
53	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	Worse than California Average
55	Diabetes	Worse than California Average
56	Heart Disease	Worse than California Average

Note: Ordered by San Bernardino County’s rank among California counties (one is best, 58 is worst).

Source: California Department of Health Services, *County Health Status Profiles*

¹ See Prenatal Care for an explanation of Healthy People 2020. Data for causes of death reflect three-year averages (e.g. 2010 data is the average of 2008, 2009, and 2010).

Connecting the Dots
 Health Status is improved through addressing Chronic Disease.