

# Franklin County

## Summary of Findings

Prepared by the Center for Health Workforce Studies – June 2013

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### Demographics:

Franklin County's population is 51,500, making it the sixth most populous county in the Adirondack Rural Health Network (ARHN) region and the 46<sup>th</sup> most populous in the state. Franklin County is much more diverse than other counties in the ARHN region; approximately 83% of the population is White, Non-Hispanic, 6.0% is Black/African American, Non-Hispanic, 5.4% is American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 3.2% is Hispanic/Latino. Thirteen percent of the population is 65 years of age and older, a lower percentage than in either the ARHN region (14.6%) or Upstate New York (14.3%) as a whole.

Mean household income in the County is \$55,311 and per capita income is \$20,831, both substantially lower than the state-wide figures of \$82,699 and \$31,796 respectively.<sup>1</sup> A substantially higher percentage of individuals in Franklin County live below the Federal Poverty Level (16.9%) than in the ARHN region or Upstate New York as a whole (both 10.9%). The percentage of individuals receiving Medicaid in the County (19.3%) is also higher than in the ARHN region (15.9%) or Upstate New York (16.3%).

The highest level of education completed by 56% of the population ages 25 and older is a high school diploma or GED, and an additional 28% have an Associate's, Bachelor's, or Graduate/Professional Degree. Slightly more than 53% of the population ages 16 and older is in the workforce. In 2011, Franklin County's unemployment rate was 9.2%, higher than the rates in both the ARHN region (8.1%) and Upstate New York (7.7%).

The largest employment sector in Franklin County is health care and social assistance (20.7%), followed by government (13.6%), education (12.6%) and retail (9.8%).

### Health System Profile

Franklin County has two hospitals, Alice Hyde Medical Center and Adirondack Medical Center – Saranac Lake. Combined, the hospitals have 171 beds for a rate of 331.7 per 100,000 population, higher than the rate of the ARHN region (204.5) or Upstate New York (276.3). The County has 2 nursing homes and 2 adult care facilities with a total of 215 and 54 beds respectively.

There are nearly 55 full time equivalent (FTE) primary care physicians practicing in Franklin County, or 106.1 per 100,000 population, higher than the rate in the ARHN region (99.9) but lower than in Upstate New York (108.5). There are 675 registered nurses, 341 licensed practical nurses, and 101 licensed physicians in the County. Franklin County has four primary care, one mental health, and one dental care health professional shortage area designations.

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<sup>1</sup> Mean household income was determined by averaging the yearly income as reported by the American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

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### Educational Profile

There are seven (7) school districts in Franklin County, with a total enrollment of nearly 8,000. More than 46% of enrolled students receive free or reduced lunches, and the high school dropout rate is 2.2%; both numbers are substantially higher than their respective rates in the ARHN region (29.3% free and reduced lunch and 1.7% dropout rate) and Upstate New York (31.6% free and reduced lunch and 1.7% dropout rate). There are 11.0 students per teacher, lower than the ARHN regional rate of 11.6 and the Upstate New York rate of 12.2.

### Health Disparities:

While there are not significant health disparities based on race and ethnicity in Franklin County, there are significant access to care issues. The rate of age-adjusted preventable hospitalizations<sup>2</sup> per 100,000 population (212.5) was significantly higher than the ARHN region (147.3) and Upstate New York (138.9) rates and higher than the Prevention Agenda benchmark (133.3). The rate of ED visits per 100,000 population in Franklin County (4,763.9) was also significantly higher than the ARHN region (3,673.1) and Upstate New York (3,534.4) rates. The percentage of adults<sup>3</sup> with a regular health care provider was lower than in the ARHN region and lower than the Prevention Agenda benchmark. Both the percentages of adults with poor physical health and physical limitations were worse than their respective ARHN region and Upstate New York percentages.

### Healthy and Safe Environment:

The built environment poses challenges for Franklin County residents. No community within the County has adopted the “Climate Smart Community” pledge, and nearly 7% of low-income residents have low access to a supermarket or a large grocery store.

The rates of speed-related accidents (414.7) and motor vehicle deaths (17.7) per 100,000 population in Franklin County were significantly worse than their respective rates in the ARHN region and Upstate New York. The rate of alcohol-related accidents in Franklin County (92.5) per 100,000 population was also significantly worse than the Upstate New York rate of 67.4 and slightly worse than the ARHN rate of 92.1.

### Chronic Disease:

Obesity and smoking rates are high in Franklin County. Nearly 37% of adults are obese, higher than the Prevention Agenda benchmark of 23%. Additionally, more than 22% of public school children are obese, also higher than the Prevention Agenda benchmark of 16.7%. More than 37% of age-adjusted adults have ever been diagnosed with high blood pressure, far higher than

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<sup>2</sup> Hospitalizations for such things as asthma, diabetes, otitis media, etc. that occurred as a result of inadequate access to primary care services.

<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise specified, adult is defined as age 18 or older.

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the New York State rate of nearly 26%. Almost 10% of age-adjusted adults have had a physician diagnosis of angina, heart attack, or stroke compared to 7.6% statewide.

Nearly 31% of adults smoke, significantly more than in the ARHN region (21.4%) or Upstate New York (18.5%) and more than two times higher than the Prevention Agenda benchmark (15.0%). Overall asthma hospitalizations per 10,000 population and for all individual age groups in Franklin County were higher than their respective ARHN and Upstate New York rates. The rates of lung and bronchus deaths and cases as well as the rates of lower chronic respiratory disease deaths and cases were higher than their respective Upstate New York benchmarks.

#### Women, Infants, and Children:

The rates of birth per 1,000 females to teenagers ages 15 to 17 and 18 to 19 in Franklin County were higher than those in the ARHN region and Upstate New York. Pregnant women receiving WIC had higher rates of pre-pregnancy obesity, gestational weight gain greater than the ideal, gestational diabetes, and gestational hypertension than comparable populations in New York.

Children's health issues are also a concern. Overall, the mortality rate for children ages 1 to 19 per 100,000 population in Franklin County was higher (33.9) than both the rate for the ARHN region (25.6) and the rate for Upstate New York (21.8). Finally, the percentages of children screened for lead by age 9 months, by age 18 months, and with two screenings by age 36 months were lower in Franklin County than in the ARHN region or Upstate New York.

#### HIV/STDs, Vaccine-Preventable Disease, and Health Care-Associated Infections:

Rates of vaccine preventable diseases are a challenge in Franklin County. The percentage of children ages 19 to 35 months with the appropriate immunization series<sup>4</sup> was lower (33.7%) than the Prevention Agenda benchmark of 80%. Additionally, the percentage of females ages 13 to 17 with the 3 dose HPV vaccine (15.4%) was also lower than the Prevention Agenda benchmark of 50%. The rate of adults ages 65 and above with a flu shot within the last year in Franklin County (64.6%) was lower than the Prevention Agenda Benchmark (75.1%). Finally, the rate of pneumonia/flu hospitalizations for adults ages 65 and above per 10,000 population was higher than the rates for the ARHN region and for Upstate New York.

#### Substance Abuse and Behavioral Health

The rate of age-adjusted suicides per 100,000 population as well as the overall rate of self-inflicted hospitalizations per 10,000 population in Franklin County were significantly worse than their respective rates in the ARHN region or in Upstate New York. Additionally, the rate of self-

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<sup>4</sup> The number of children (ages 19-35 months) per 100 population who received their 4:3:1:3:3:1:4 immunization series (4 DTaP, 3 polio, 1 MMR, 3 hep B, 3 Hib, 1 varicella, 4 PCV13).

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inflicted hospitalizations for ages 15 to 19 per 10,000 population was higher than the Upstate New York rate but lower than the ARHN region rate. Finally, the rate of alcohol-related injuries and deaths per 100,000 population for Franklin County was worse than their respective ARHN region and Upstate New York rates.