

**Catawba County Board of Health
Minutes
December 08, 2025**

The Catawba County Board of Health met on Monday, December 08, 2025, at 7:00 pm at Catawba County Public Health, 3070 11th Ave Dr. SE, Hickory, NC 28602.

Members Present: Dr. Bruce Carlton, Chair
Ms. Rebecca McLeod, Vice-Chair
Dr. Hannah Glenn
Dr. Eugene Modlin
Ms. Gina Powers
Mr. Vidal Sipe
Ms. Janice Tice

Members Absent: Mr. Austin Allran, County Commissioner
Ms. Susan Knowles
Dr. Steven Sanderson
Mr. Shad Walters

Staff present: Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director
Ms. Julie Byrd, Assistant Health Director
Ms. Tammy Fickling, Case Manager – CMHRP/CMARC
Ms. Emily Killian, Community Engagement Specialist/PIO
Ms. Chantae Lail, Medical Lab Manager/Preparedness Coordinator*
Ms. Jennifer Lindsay, Health Services Manager
Mr. Jeremy Stockton, WIC Director
Ms. Megan Thomas, Environmental Health Administrator*
Ms. Marianne Vogel, School Health Nursing Supervisor
Ms. Elaine Yancey, Clinical Services Nurse Supervisor*
Ms. Debra A. Young, Administrative Assistant II

Guest: Mr. Jamie Todd, Opioid Substance Use Disorder Program Coordinator

*Attended via Zoom meeting

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Dr. Bruce Carlton, Chair, called the Catawba County Public Health Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed Board members, Public Health managers, and staff.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND MINUTES

Dr. Bruce Carlton, Chair, stated that Board members received the meeting agenda and the Board minutes for October 13, 2025, in the Board packet sent via email. Dr. Carlton asked if there were any changes to the agenda or corrections to the prior meeting Minutes. There being none, Dr. Carlton motioned to accept the agenda and previous meeting minutes as presented, and Mr. Vidal Sipe seconded the motion. The agenda and minutes were unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr. Carlton asked if anyone had presented to speak before the Board. Ms. Debra Young, Administrative Assistant II, stated that no one had presented to speak to the board this evening.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Austin Allran, County Commissioner, was unable to attend this evening.

OPIOID UPDATE

Mr. Jamie Todd, Opioid Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Program Coordinator, provided the Board with an update on the status of the Opioid Program in Catawba County, highlighting current NC Overdose Surveillance Data, emergency overdose response data, strategies used, and what's happening in Catawba County.

Mr. Todd continued with an in-depth overview of the REACH Jail Peer Support program and highlighted key points from the recent Addiction Medicine Summit held in October. He finished out his presentation with an overview of current substance use trends, several House Bills, and information on the 2018 Farm Bill.

The presentation slides are attached to the minutes.

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CHIP) PROGRESS

Ms. Jennifer Lindsay, Health Services Manager, presented the Board of Health Members with an update on the 2024-2027 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) priorities, noting that the process is collaborative and involves many community members and partners.

Ms. Lindsay explained what the CHIP is and why it must be completed. She further stated that the three 2024-2027 health priorities that were identified are (1) access to healthy food, (2) brain health, and (3) safe, engaging, and active spaces. Ms. Lindsay provided additional information on the status of these priorities, updates on recent social media and promotional materials, and data on the most recent usage of the CredibleMind platform.

The PowerPoint presentation is attached to the minutes.

SCHOOL HEALTH ANNUAL UPDATE

Ms. Marianne Vogel, School Health Supervisor, provided the Board with the annual School Health update.

Ms. Vogel stated that there is school nurse coverage for at least a few days a week in each school in all three school systems in Catawba County and that there is one vacancy pending a start date.

Public Health continues to advocate for additional school nursing positions to reduce the school nurse-to-student ratio. The current nurse-to-student ratio is 1 nurse for every 783 students.

What’s new in the 2025-2026 school year? Effective August 2025, the NC General Statute allows epinephrine delivery systems on school property to include nasal sprays. *Neffy* is currently available in two of the three school districts in Catawba County. The advantages of this are a longer shelf life, no needle, and temperature stability.

In the 2024-2025 school year, 312 Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT) members were trained, the school nurses held 317 health education sessions, and provided case management support for 348 students.

Students up to date on routine vaccinations at required grade levels by the 30th day of school deadline:

2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

Kindergartners – 95%

7th graders – 92%

12th graders – 85%

The PowerPoint presentation is attached to the minutes.

ANNUAL BOARD OF HEALTH NOTEBOOK UPDATES

Ms. Debra Young, Administrative Assistant II, informed the Board members of an updated Board of Health Member packet located at their seats for their Board notebooks. Dr. Carlton thanked Ms. Young for keeping their members' notebooks up to date.

HEALTH DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Jennifer McCracken, Health Director, stated she had a few updates to report for the Health Director's report.

- North Carolina is starting to see the patterns of what is traditionally called “respiratory virus season,” and NC has reported one flu death.
- The measles outbreak in Upstate South Carolina has continued, with around 80 cases identified. Nearly all the reported cases are in unvaccinated children. So far, this has not spread to NC, though Public Health continues to monitor the situation closely.
- The Federal government shutdown began on October 1 and lasted more than 40 days. During the shutdown, WIC remained fully operational thanks to temporary funding, state-level flexibility, and federal reimbursement. With broad support in Congress, WIC is fully funded through September 30, 2026, ensuring its continued operation and protecting all aspects of the program.
- NC DHHS's Public Health Veterinarian, Emily Herring, DVM, spoke to our county's animal services providers during our annual rabies update. This annual update is considered a best practice and is one way we ensure seamless rabies prevention efforts in Catawba County.

- The CredibleMind platform has shown increased traffic, and 85 percent of the users are teens and young adults (age 13-24). This is promising as it means people are working on their brain health early, before it affects their whole adult life.
- Catawba County's Community Health Assessment (CHA) was recognized for its best-practice use of a framework and is cited as an example in NCDHHS' 2025 CHA Guidebook. This was announced at the 2025 CHA/CHIP Institute this fall.
- The North Carolina Institute of Public Health (NCIPH) hosted a professional photographer who visited Catawba County Public Health to take photos of staff working in clinical areas and of the Community Health Workers (CHWs). This photo library provides all NC health departments with high-quality stock photos to promote their services and public health.

The Health Director's presentation slides are attached to the Minutes.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Dr. Bruce Carlton motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Shad Walters seconded the motion. Dr. Carlton adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

The next Board of Health meeting will be on February 09, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer F. McCracken
Secretary to the Board of Health
Health Director

JFM: day

Approved by the Board of Health: Approved February 09, 2026