

NC MATTERS is the state’s perinatal psychiatry access program, offering training and clinical consultation to support health care professionals who address maternal mental health and substance use disorders. This needs assessment was conducted with North Carolina (NC) local health departments (LHDs) to identify strengths and challenges related to integrating behavioral health into perinatal care clinics.

1 in 5 women experience a mental health condition during pregnancy or the year following birth ⁽⁵⁾

The **85** LHDs in NC are safety net health care providers for patients with Medicaid and those who are underinsured or uninsured

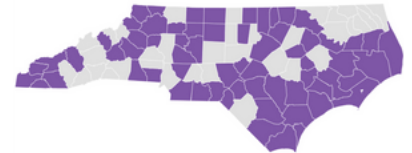
93 counties are mental health professional shortage areas ⁽¹⁾

27% of North Carolinians with mental illness report that they are unable to access the care they need ⁽²⁾

Comprehensive mental health care consists of screening, assessment, treatment, and referral services. While NC LHDs excel at some aspects of mental health care, they could benefit from additional support.

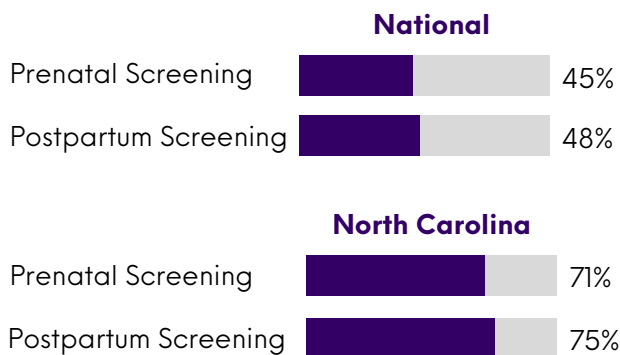
METHODS

In 2022, NC MATTERS sent web-based surveys to all NC local health departments. **78% of LHDs responded**, representing the views of **59** nurses, maternal health/family planning coordinators, and social workers.

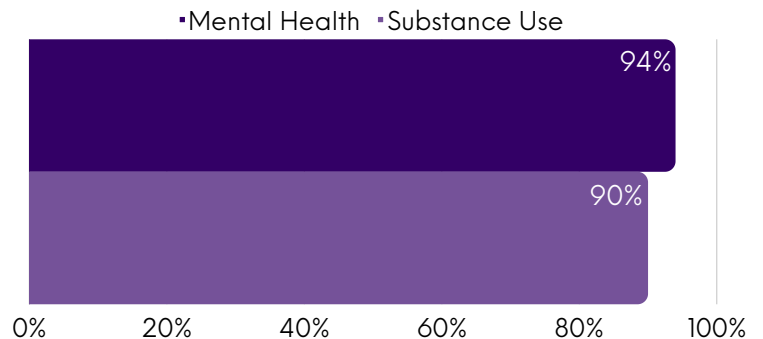


RESULTS

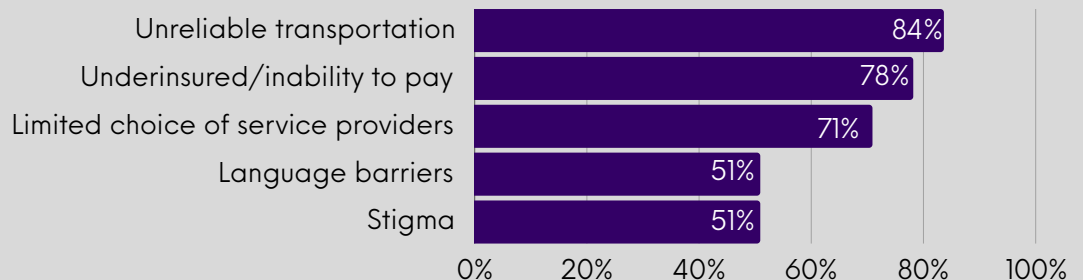
LHD STAFF REPORTED DEPRESSION SCREENING RATES THAT ARE 30% HIGHER ⁽³⁾ THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE



LHD STAFF REPORTED CONFIDENCE WITH BOTH SCREENING AND REFERRING THEIR PATIENTS FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT SERVICES



LHD STAFF NOTED THAT PATIENTS EXPERIENCE SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO ACCESSING CARE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES



HEALTH DEPARTMENT STAFF WOULD LIKE ADDITIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT TO HELP BRIDGE THE GAPS:

- 72%** Aid in connecting to resources
- 68%** Additional staff training
- 28%** Technical assistance with screening, monitoring, & brief treatment
- 17%** Case consultation
- 15%** Site visits to support training

"In our county, we have limited access to mental health resources for referrals. It is frustrating when you are required to do these screenings and feel like you can't actually help the client." - Nurse Supervisor

NC MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS HELPS HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS ADDRESS TREATMENT BARRIERS

- A real-time perinatal psychiatry consultation line and resource/referral service for health care professionals serving pregnant and postpartum patients
- Offers accessible, tailored resources including care in languages other than English, telehealth appointments, and access to sliding fee scale and free support services
- Helps providers increase their skills and confidence in treating mental health conditions so that more patients can stay in their home clinics



Available Services

To date, NC MATTERS has provided consultation to **592** unique providers caring for **1,871 patients** across **67 counties**. We've trained **1,848 providers** since our program launch in 2019.

NC MATTERS is developed and sustained through a partnership between NC DHHS (Division of Public Health, Women, Infant, and Community Wellness Section), UNC School of Medicine, and Duke School of Medicine.

Contact us at:



(919)681-2909 (option 2)

Mon-Fri 8am-5pm



ncmatters.org

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