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AUTHOR Listokin, Monica; Relos, Ruth  
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ABSTRACT

The Community Services Branch of the Family Services Section of the North Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) surveyed all 100 DSS county directors to determine if directors saw HIV/AIDS as a problem now and/or as a potential problem in 5 years. Forty-one percent of the directors indicated an immediate need for difficult-to-provide services such as residential placement for both children and adults diagnosed with AIDS and the reluctance of social workers, daycare, and homecare providers to work with these clients. Ninety-three percent of the county directors believe that by 1997 clients with HIV/AIDS will place large demands on their services. Some of the specific areas to be affected include children and adult services, Medicaid, and transportation. Most directors said that their staff had received basic training on the transmission and prevention of AIDS, but many of the directors expressed a need for training assistance for new employees. The survey lists the types of training desired by directors along with a list of recommendations and contains an appendix which lists the names, addresses and phone numbers of HIV/AIDS contact people for all of North Carolina's County DSS. (RJM)

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# **RESULTS OF THE SURVEY OF NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Concerning Future Service and Training Needs  
Related to HIV/AIDS**

**By:**

**Monica Listokin, M.S.W.**

**and**

**Ruth Relos, Ph.D.**

**Marguerite Davis, Editor**

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**June, 1992**

**Community Services Branch**

**Family Services Branch**

**North Carolina Division of Social Services**

## HIV/AIDS Survey Results

There have been 2,478 cases of AIDS reported in North Carolina through May 29, 1992. Sixty-four percent - 1,644 - have already died. The Center for Disease Control estimates that for every known case of AIDS, there are between eight and thirty times that number of people infected with HIV. For North Carolina, that translates to 19,824 to 74,340 people who are infected. HIV has been reported in all 100 counties of North Carolina.

### Executive Summary, "America Living with AIDS"

This report, "America Living with AIDS," was conducted by the National Commission on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. It points out in the summary that, "Disproportionately and increasingly, the epidemic has attacked segments of society already at a disadvantage -- communities of color, women and men grappling with poverty and drug use, and adolescents who have not been effectively warned of this new risk to their futures..." These are also the members of our society most frequently needing services provided by the Division of Social Services (DSS).

Faced with a future possibility of a vast increase in the number of persons in North Carolina with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), the causative agent of AIDS, a telephone survey of the 100 county DSS directors was conducted. This survey was undertaken by staff of the Community Services Branch of the Family Services Section of the North Carolina Department of Social Services to determine if directors saw HIV/AIDS as a problem now and/or thought it would be a problem five years from now. If they believed that AIDS would be a problem, they were asked which of the services their agencies provide they thought would be in greatest demand and what kinds of training would be needed by staff responsible for oversight or delivery of those services.

#### A CURRENT PROBLEM?

All 100 county Directors of Social Services responded to the survey, and 41 percent of them said that persons with HIV/AIDS were needing services now which are difficult to provide. Problems encountered are difficulties in providing residential placement for both children and adults diagnosed as having AIDS, and the reluctance (or refusal) of social workers and daycare and homecare providers to work with these clients. Ethical and legal

questions were raised about the need to inform those who provide needed services of the clients' status as having HIV/AIDS.

The Centers for Disease Control predict that by 1993, the third leading cause of death among young adults will be AIDS. It is time to begin planning for services for the expected increase in the number of persons with AIDS.

All of the county directors earlier had received information compiled by the Ryan White HIV/AIDS program in the Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources (DEHNR). The directors also received information about consortia being formed across the state. These consortia involve primary care physicians, local public health departments and other community-based health/service providers and advocacy groups who will address the needs of children and adults affected by HIV/AIDS.

North Carolina is divided into eleven multi-county HIV CARE consortia. Services, to be provided by a consortium of service providers, are comprehensive health and support services for individuals with HIV disease. Health services may include, but are not limited to case management, diagnostics, medical, nursing and dental care, monitoring and follow-up, home health and hospice care. Essential support services may include transportation, homemaker, advocacy, nutrition, housing, referral, and family services, such as daycare or respite care.

Funding is based on the reported number of AIDS cases within each consortium catchment area and ranges from \$33,000 to \$146,000 for one year through March 31, 1992. The numbers of cases ranged from 31 within the Foothills catchment area to 87 in the Eastern North Carolina catchment area.

Many of the county directors said that the number of HIV/AIDS cases in their counties were higher than the figure reported by DEHNR. Cases are counted in localities where diagnosis is made, thus, the people with HIV/AIDS, who move back to their home in North Carolina, may have been diagnosed and counted in another state.

Other information sent to county directors by the North Carolina Division of Social Services included regulations from the federal Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and a Schedule of Implementation to be met by employers whose workers have occupational exposure to potentially infectious materials, such as the Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

These OSHA regulations specify that such employers must establish a written exposure control plan, take universal precautions, provide personal protective equipment and vaccination for Hepatitis B for their workers. The regulations also require employers to provide training for all employees with occupational exposure to HBV and HIV. Free medical evaluation and treatment is to be given to employees with accidental exposure.

#### A PROBLEM IN FIVE YEARS?

In responding to this survey question, all but seven of the 100 county directors said yes, there will be an HIV/AIDS-related problem within their agencies five years from now. Five directors did not foresee a problem, while two did not know if there would be. Some directors said that projected problems would be related only to Medicaid funds and/or Child Protective Services.

A study of 100,000 babies by the Duke University Pediatric AIDS Unit in March, 1992 revealed that 91 percent of children with AIDS were perinatally infected. The data revealed that in Durham County, with the highest HIV incidence, of HIV-infected mothers among the 100 counties, one out of every 316 babies delivered will be to an HIV-infected mother. One-third of these infants will eventually develop HIV.

The responses to the question, "Which services do you feel will be most heavily requested?" indicate that children's services will be the most in demand. The problems of providing services for children with HIV/AIDS is complicated by the reluctance of foster parents and day care operators to accept these clients. Many of the social services directors felt that confidentiality requirements kept them from informing caregivers of the fact that they were being referred children with diagnoses of HIV or AIDS\*. Duty to warn and the rights of the public and the individual are sources of conflict for the directors.

Other issues involve physicians and nursing homes which will not serve clients with HIV/AIDS. In some cases, this makes it necessary for clients to go out of the county for services, placing more demand on transportation services.

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\*It should be noted that county directors were sent a letter on November 20, 1987, giving guidance for the placement of HIV-Infected children. In that letter, basic principles were given for making decisions about disclosure of HIV infection.

Directors saw the following services as being the most heavily requested:

SERVICE	NUMBER OF DIRECTORS AGREEING
Children's Services (includes protective, placement, child care and adoption services)	86
Adult Services (includes protective, placement, in-home care services, & counseling)	79
Medicaid	75
Transportation	70

A related issue is that prisons are currently releasing HIV/AIDS-positive persons from the prison system without a plan for providing needed services. These individuals most often go directly to the county social services offices for assistance.

#### TRAINING NEEDS

In responding to the question, "What kinds of training is of interest to you and your colleagues?" 98 of the county directors said that there were training needs within their agency. Most of them said that their staff had received basic training on transmission and prevention of AIDS, but that such training would be needed by newly employed workers. They would like to have a basic AIDS training video program to assist in training new workers.

Some of the county directors stated a need for a resource handbook to be used in training all workers and for listing available sources of help. DEHNR has a handbook with many of the elements wanted.

DEHNR has, or can obtain, training programs for each of the topics cited as needed by the directors. Some modifications of these packages would need to be made.

<u>TYPE OF TRAINING PROPOSED</u>	<u>NUMBER OF DIRECTORS AGREEING</u>
HIV/AIDS infection vis-a-vis children in foster care (how to provide physical and other care)	78
Case management, resources, and legal issues (especially legal issues regarding children with HIV/AIDS in foster care)	73
Parents and children with HIV/AIDS (how to provide physical and other care)	70
Basic AIDS information on transmission and prevention	66
Current medical and psychosocial treatment of HIV/AIDS	61

A substantial number of directors mentioned the need to increase the sensitivity of social services staff on how best to work with AIDS clients and their families through training on appropriate behaviors, along with needed information on stages of death and dying and how to advocate for persons with AIDS in the community.

OSHA requires training for persons who provide essential health and support services. The county directors also saw the need for training such other groups as:

- day care operators
- foster care parents and other household members
- in-home services workers
- family care givers and other household members
- nursing home personnel\*
- volunteers
- physicians and other health care workers
- mental health personnel
- school personnel
- school children, especially about sexuality and use of drugs. Subgroups of school-aged youth would be:
  - teens with AIDS
  - pregnant teens with AIDS
- the general public

\*With the exception of a few rest homes developed solely for the care of people with HIV, rest homes are currently prevented, by rules, from admitting people with communicable diseases, including HIV.

Other training topics suggested by the directors included:

- what to do, how to behave when a colleague/staff member is diagnosed with HIV/AIDS
- working with AIDS-disabled adults
- stages of death and dying
- how to advocate for the needs of persons with AIDS in the community
- reimbursement for medical services for persons with AIDS, especially those who are not Medicaid-eligible.

#### HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE

The appendix contains a listing of all DSS HIV/AIDS contact people in county departments of social services. Plans are to funnel all information with regard to training and resources through these individuals.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

The county directors of social services made the following suggestions/ recommendations when contacted during the survey:

1. That a coordinator position be established within the North Carolina Division of Social Services with responsibilities for accessing funds and providing linkages with other agencies to improve accessibility and availability of services for persons with HIV/AIDS.
2. That the Attorney General's office be asked to rule on applicability of confidentiality regulations for case managers and providers of services to HIV/AIDS clients.
3. That the Division of Medical Assistance be requested to waive its cap on the number of monthly prescription refills for AIDS patients.
4. That the Department of Corrections be asked to develop a service plan for each HIV/AIDS prisoner released, in cooperation with appropriate county agencies.
5. That videos on basic AIDS training be provided in cooperation with the Division of Facility Services for use as part of the orientation of new service providers in day care centers and nursing homes.
6. That State Division of Social Services Policy be revised to require that all workers be trained annually on HIV/AIDS prevention and risk reduction.



7. That a follow-up study be conducted to determine the projected costs of providing care and services for the future HIV/AIDS caseload.
8. That the existing AIDS Handbook be brought up to date and include suggestions made by county DSS directors.

#### SUMMARY

The vast majority of social services directors believe clients with HIV/AIDS will place great demand on certain services by 1997. Services most likely to be requested will be child and adult services, Medicaid and transportation. Legal, ethical and systems issues were raised, and training needs were specified.

#### CONCLUSION

It is clear that clients diagnosed with HIV/AIDS will place substantial demands on the social services system in North Carolina in the near future. There is time now to plan with other agencies and groups to conduct training and to make plans for a systems approach to the problems faced by clients, clients' families, the health care system and the human services system in North Carolina.

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(1)

Mr. E. Inman  
Alamance County DSS  
P.O. Box 3406  
Burlington, NC 27215

(919) 228-6441  
FAX# (919) 227-7137

(3)

Ms. Jane Wyatt  
Alleghany County DSS  
P.O. Box 247  
Sparta, NC 28675

(919) 322-2411  
FAX# (919) 372-2061

(5)

Ms. Jo Norris  
Ashe County DSS  
P.O. Box 298  
Jefferson, NC 28640

(919) 246-7125

(7)

Ms. Pat Capehart  
Beaufort County DSS  
P.O. Box 1358  
Washington, NC 27889

(919) 975-5500  
FAX# (919) 946-7722

(2)

Ms. Kay Greene  
Alexander County DSS  
P.O. Box 246  
Taylorsville, NC 28681

(704) 632-1080  
FAX# (704) 632-1092

(4)

Ms. Carol Richtarsic  
Anson County DSS  
118 N. Washington St.  
Wadesboro, NC 28170

(704) 694-9351  
FAX# (704) 694-5178

(6)

Ms. Brandy Ezzell  
Avery County DSS  
P.O. Box 309  
Newland, NC 28657

(704) 733-8253

(8)

Mr. Wayne Jenkins  
Bertie County DSS  
P.O. Box 627  
Windsor, NC 27983

(919) 794-5320  
FAX# (919) 794-5327

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(9)

Mr. Charles Prince  
Bladen County DSS  
P.O. Box 365  
Elizabethtown, NC 28337

(919) 862-6800  
FAX# (919) 862-6767

(11)

Ms. Betsy Candler  
Buncombe County DSS  
P.O. Box 7408  
Asheville, NC 28802

(704) 255-5575  
FAX# (704) 255-5845

(13)

Mr. Rod Duncan  
Cabarrus County DSS  
P.O. Box 668  
Concord, NC 28026

(704) 786-7141  
FAX# (704) 788-8420

(15)

Ms. Cynthia Jarvis  
Camden County DSS  
P.O. Box 70  
Camden, NC 27921

(919) 335-4702  
FAX# (919) 335-1009

(10)

Ms. Catherine Reams  
Brunswick County DSS  
P.O. Box 219  
Bolivia, NC 28422

(919) 253-4391  
FAX# (919) 253-7022

(12)

Ms. Susan McCracken  
Burke County DSS  
P.O. Drawer 549  
Morganton, NC 28655

(704) 433-4100  
FAX# (704) 438-1841

(14)

Ms. Karen Hodges  
Caldwell County DSS  
P.O. Box 930  
Lenoir, NC 28645

(704) 757-1165  
FAX# (704) 757-1189

(16)

Ms. Jamie Everhart  
Carteret County DSS  
P.O. Box 329  
Beaufort, NC 28516

(919) 728-3181  
FAX# (919) 728-3631

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(17)

Mr. Robert Gribble  
Caswell County DSS  
Drawer S  
Yanceyville, NC 27329

(919) 694-4141  
FAX# (704) 322-2497

(19)

Ms. Elizabeth Cassidy  
Chatham County DSS  
P.O. Box 488  
Pittsboro, NC 27312

(919) 542-2759  
FAX# (919) 542-6355

(21)

Mr. Ben Rose  
Chowan County DSS  
P.O. Box 296  
Edenton, NC 27932

(919) 482-7441  
FAX# (919) 482-4925

(23)

Ms. Freida Pauley  
Cleveland County DSS  
Drawer 9006  
Shelby, NC 28105

(704) 487-0661  
FAX# (919) 642-9136

(18)

Mr. Bobby Boyd  
Catawba County DSS  
P.O. Box 669  
Newton, NC 28658

(704) 324-9940

(20)

Mr. Ronny Clontz  
Cherokee County DSS  
116 Peachtree St, Suite 200  
Murphy, NC 28906

(704) 837-7455

(22)

Mr. Donald Hunter  
Clay County DSS  
P.O. Box 147  
Hayesville, NC 28904

(704) 389-6301

(24)

Mrs. Bondrena Bore  
Columbus County DSS  
P.O. Box 397  
Whiteville, NC 28472

(919) 642-5700 Ext. 342

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(25)

Ms. Shannon Wilson  
Craven County DSS  
P.O. Box 12039  
New Bern, NC 28551-2039

(919) 633-0131  
FAX# (919) 633-0131 Ext. 3174

(27)

Ms. Vikkie Moore  
Currituck County DSS  
P.O. Box 99  
Currituck, NC 27929

(919) 232-3083  
FAX# (919) 232-3026

(29)

Ms. Pam Horton  
Davidson County DSS  
P.O. Box 788  
Lexington, NC 27292

(704) 242-2500  
FAX# (704) 246-4122

(31)

Ms. Linda Roten  
Duplin County DSS  
P.O. Box 439  
Kenansville, NC 28349

(919) 296-2200  
FAX# (919) 296-2107

(26)

Mr. Marvin Rouse  
Cumberland County DSS  
P.O. Box 2429  
Fayetteville, NC 28302

(919) 323-1540  
FAX# (919) 678-7717

(28)

Ms. Sandra Brookshire  
Dare County DSS  
P.O. Box 669  
Manteo, NC 27954

(919) 473-1471  
FAX# (919) 473-9824

(30)

Mr. James Clark  
Davie County DSS  
P.O. Box 446  
Mocksville, NC 27028

(704) 634-5926  
FAX# (704) 634-1370

(32)

Ms. Gael Hallenbeck  
Durham County DSS  
P.O. Box 810  
Durham, NC 27707

(919) 683-3500  
FAX# (919) 683-3944

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(33)

Ms. Edna Proctor  
Edgecombe County DSS  
P.O. Box 38  
Tarboro, NC 27886

(919) 641-7651  
FAX# Tarboro (

Rocky Mt. (919) 985-1615

(35)

Mr. Hank Bowers  
Franklin County DSS  
P.O. Box 669  
Louisburg, NC 27549

(919) 496-5721  
FAX# (919) 496-8137

(37)

Mr. Robert Hewitt  
Gates County DSS  
P.O. Box 185  
Gatesville, NC 27938

(919) 357-1748

(39)

Ms. Jean Morgan  
Granville County DSS  
P.O. Box 966  
Oxford, NC 27565

(919) 693-1511

(34)

Mr. Dan Beerman  
Forsyth County DSS  
P.O. Box 999  
Winston-Salem, NC 27102

(919) 727-8311  
919) 641-7980

(36)

M. Tee Wilkins  
Gaston County DSS  
P.O. Box 10  
Gastonia, NC 28053

(704) 866-3500  
FAX# (704) 866-3787

(38)

Ms. Faye Adams  
Graham County DSS  
P.O. Box 1150  
Robbinsville, NC 28771

(704) 479-3361

(40)

Mr. Fred Cullipher  
Greene County DSS  
229 Kingold Blvd., Suite D.  
Snow Hill, NC 28580

(919) 747-5932  
FAX# (919) 747-3437

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(41)

Mr. Mitchell Matthew  
Guilford County DSS  
P.O. Box 3388  
Greensboro, NC 27402

(919) 373-3019  
FAX# (919) 333-6868

(43)

Ms. Joyce Pulliam  
Harnett County DSS  
P.O. Box 669  
Lillington, NC 27546

(919) 893-7559  
FAX# (919) 893-4992

(45)

Ms. Karen Couch  
Henderson County DSS  
246 Second Ave., East  
Hendersonville, NC 28792-5095

(704) 697-5533  
FAX# (704) 692-9855

(47)

Ms. Susan Moss  
Hoke County DSS  
P.O. Box 340  
Raeford, NC 28376

(919) 875-8725  
FAX# (919) 875-2207

(42)

Ms. Frances Butler  
Halifax County DSS  
P.O. Box 158  
Halifax, NC 27839

(919) 536-2511  
FAX# (919) 583-8661

(44)

Ms. Debbie Kovacs  
Haywood County DSS  
514 E. Marshall St.  
Waynesville, NC 28786

(704) 452-6617  
FAX# (704) 452-6673

(46)

Mr. Tony Beaman  
Hertford County DSS  
P.O. Box 218  
Winton, NC 27986

(919) 358-7830  
FAX# (919) 358-7806

(48)

Mr. Phil Emmertt  
Hyde County DSS  
P.O. Box 22  
Swan Quarter, NC 27885

(919) 926-3081  
FAX# (919) 926-1733

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(49)

Ms. Mary Deaton  
Iredell County DSS  
P.O. Box 1146  
Statesville, NC 28677

(704) 873-5631  
FAX# (704) 878-5419

(51)

Ms. Carolyn Jones  
Johnston County DSS  
P.O. Box 911  
Smithfield, NC 27577

(919) 989-5300  
FAX# (919) 989-5178

(53)

Ms. Carolyn Paige  
Lee County DSS  
P.O. Box 1066  
Sanford, NC 27330

(919) 774-4955  
FAX# (919) 774-8407

(55)

M. Pat Horis  
Lincoln County DSS  
P.O. Box 130  
Lincolnton, NC 28093-0130

(704) 732-0738

(50)

Mr. David Nolan  
Jackson County DSS  
102 Scotts Creek Rd.  
Jackson Co. Community Bldg.  
Sylva, NC 28779

(704) 586-5546  
FAX# (704) 586-6879

(52)

Ms. Louise Mills  
Jones County DSS  
P.O. Box 250  
Trenton, NC 28585

(919) 448-2581  
FAX# (919) 448-1072

(54)

Susan Gale  
Lenoir County DSS  
P.O. Box 6  
Kinston, NC 28501

(919) 559-6203  
FAX# 527-3854

(56)

Ms. Lisa Davis  
Macon County DSS  
5 West Main St.  
Franklin, NC 28734

(704) 524-6421  
FAX# (704) 524-9522



HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(57)

Ms. Judy Hough  
Madison County DSS  
P.O. Box 219  
Marshall, NC 28753

(704) 649-2711

(59)

Mr. Michael Gibson  
McDowell County DSS  
P.O. Box 338  
Marion, NC 28752

(704) 652-3355

(61)

Mr. Larry Denton  
Mitchell County DSS  
P.O. Box 365  
Bakersville, NC 28705-0365

(704) 688-2175

(63)

Mr. Raymond Mims  
Moore County DSS  
P.O. Box 938  
Carthage, NC 28327

(919) 947-2436  
FAX# (919) 947-3660

(58)

Ms. Nell Peel  
Martin County DSS  
P.O. Box 809  
Williamston, NC 27892

(919) 792-1679  
FAX# 919 792-7477

(60)

Mr. Charles Butler  
Mecklenburg County DSS  
P.O. Box 220999  
Charlotte, NC 28222

(704) 336-3150  
FAX# (704) 336-4372

(62)

Ms. Lois Ray  
Montgomery County DSS  
Drawer N  
Troy, NC 27371

(919) 576-6531  
FAX# (919) 576-2209

(64)

Ms. Kay Radford  
Nash County DSS  
P.O. Drawer 819  
Nashville, NC 27856

(919) 459-9818  
FAX# (919) 459-9817

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(65)

Ms. Ann Barkley  
New Hanover County DSS  
P.O. Drawer 1559  
Wilmington, NC 28402

(919) 341-4700 Ext. 4981  
FAX# (919) 341-4747

(67)

Mr. Jerry Evans  
Onslow County DSS  
1915 Onslow Drive Extension  
P.O. Box 1379  
Jacksonville, NC 28541-1379

(919) 455-4145  
FAX# (919) 455-2901

(69)

Ms. Carolyn Kennedy  
Pamlico County DSS  
P.O. Box 395  
Bayboro, NC 28515

(919) 745-4086  
FAX# (919) 745-5514

(71)

Mr. Bert Wilson  
Pender County DSS  
P.O. Drawer 1207  
Burgaw, NC 28425

(919) 259-1240  
FAX# (919) 259-1248

(66)

Ms. Hazel Collier  
Northampton County DSS  
P.O. Box 157  
Jackson, NC 27845

(919) 534-5811  
FAX# (919) 534-1166

(68)

Ms. Denise Schaffer  
Orange County DSS  
300 W. Tryon St.  
Hillsborough, NC 27278

(919) 732-2845  
FAX# (919) 732-4743

(70)

Ms. Gwen Coleman  
Pasquotank County DSS  
P.O. Box 159  
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

(919) 338-2126  
FAX# (919) 335-0866

(72)

Ms. Chrystal Towe  
Perquimans County DSS  
P.O. Box 107  
Hertford, NC 27944

(919) 426-7373

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(73)

Ms. Thelma Lee  
Person County DSS  
P.O. Box 770  
Roxboro, NC 27573

(919) 599-8361

(75)

M. Lou Parton  
Polk County DSS  
500 Carolina Dr.  
Tryon, NC 28782

(704) 859-5825

(77)

Mr. Mikell Todd  
Richmond County DSS  
P.O. Box 518  
Rockingham, NC 28379

(919) 997-8400

(79)

Ms. Diane Preddy  
Rockingham County DSS  
P.O. Drawer 1555  
Reidsville, NC 27320

(919) 342-1394  
FAX# (919) 634-1847

(74)

Mr. Edward Garrison  
Pitt County DSS  
1717 W. 5th St.  
Greenville, NC 27834

(919) 758-5394  
FAX# (919) 830-8439

(76)

Ms. Martha Sherriff  
Randolph County DSS  
P.O. Box 3239  
Asheboro, NC 27204-3239

(919) 629-2131  
FAX# (919) 629-5853

(78)

Mr. Kenneth Bethay  
Robeson County DSS  
P.O. Box 987  
Lumberton, NC 28359

(919) 671-3778  
FAX# (919) 671-3010

(80)

Ms. Winefred Queen  
Rowan County DSS  
1236 W. Innes St.  
Salisbury, NC 28144

(704) 633-4921 Ext. 411  
FAX# (704) 638-3092

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(81)

Ms. Martha Crawford  
Rutherford County DSS  
P.O. Box 237  
315 Fairground Rd.  
Spindale, NC 28160

(704) 287-6272  
FAX# (704) 287-6350

(83)

Ms. Sue Schulz  
Scotland County DSS  
P.O. Box 1647  
Laurinburg, NC 28352

(919) 277-2500  
FAX# (919) 277-2450

(85)

Ms. Sharon Scott  
Stokes County DSS  
P.O. Box 30  
Danbury, NC 27016

(919) 593-2861  
FAX# (919) 593-2346

(87)

Mr. Jake Hyatt  
Swain County DSS  
P.O. Box 610  
Bryson City, NC 28713

(704) 488-9273  
FAX# (704) 488-2754

(82)

Mr. Paul Daughthery  
Sampson County DSS  
P.O. Box 1105  
Clinton, NC 28328

(919) 592-7131  
FAX# (919) 592-1945

(84)

M. Janis Whitley  
Stanly County DSS  
2nd Floor, County Courthouse  
201 S. Second St.  
Albemarle, NC 28001

(704) 983-7300

(86)

Mr. David Adkisson  
Surry County DSS  
P.O. Box 38  
Dobson, NC 27017

(919) 386-9244  
FAX# (919) 386-8172

(88)

Mr. Carson Griffin  
and  
Mr. Larry Johnson  
Transylvania County DSS  
Community Services Bldg.  
207 S. Broad St.  
Brevard, NC 28712

(704) 884-3174  
FAX# (704) 884-6890

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(89)

Ms. Dorothy Spencer  
Tyrrell County DSS  
P.O. Box 449  
Columbia, NC 27925

(919) 796-3421  
FAX# (919) 796-0008

(91)

Ms. Angela Arnold  
Vance County DSS  
2035 Ruin Creek Rd.  
Henderson, NC 27536

(919) 492-5001

(93)

Mr. Charles Walton  
Warren County DSS  
538 W. Ridgeway St.  
Warrenton, NC 27589

(919) 257-1283

(95)

M. Curlee Joyce  
and  
Mr. Jim Atkinson  
Watauga County DSS  
304 W. King St.  
Boone, NC 28607

(704) 264-6117

(90)

Mr. Drake McCain  
Union County DSS  
P.O. Box 489  
Monroe, NC 28111-0489

(704) 282-0210  
FAX# (704) 283-9821

(92)

Ms. Delores Wilson  
Wake County DSS  
P.O. Box 1247  
Raleigh, NC 27602

(919) 856-7000  
FAX# (919) 856-5815

(94)

Mr. Jerry Rhodes  
Washington County DSS  
P.O. Box 10  
Plymouth, NC 27962

(919) 793-4041  
FAX# (919) 793-3195

(96)

Ms. Judy Pett  
Wayne County DSS  
P.O. Box HH  
Goldsboro, NC 27530

(919) 731-1048  
FAX# (919) 731-1350

HIV/AIDS CONTACT PEOPLE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S COUNTY  
DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(97)

Ms. Patricia Minton  
Wilkes County DSS  
P.O. Box 119  
Wilkesboro, NC 28697

(919) 651-7400

(99)

Mr. Wayne Black  
Yadkin County DSS  
P.O. Box 548  
Yadkinville, NC 27055

(919) 679-4210  
FAX# (919) 679-7982

(98)

Ms. Susan Bissette  
Wilson County DSS  
P.O. Box 459  
Wilson, NC 27893

(919) 237-6600 Ext. 239  
FAX# (919) 237-1544

(100)

Mr. Louie Hughes  
Yancey County DSS  
P.O. Box 67  
Burnsville, NC 28714

(704) 682-6148