



Cape Fear Collective

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Cape Fear Collective Launches Data Tool Measuring Health of Region with Plans to Expand It Statewide

WILMINGTON, N.C., February 22, 2022 – The Cape Fear Collective (CFC) is launching [Healthy Communities](#), a free data tool that uses local metrics to measure the health of the Cape Fear region. The dashboard is a first step in CFC’s mission to provide data insight and access across North Carolina.

“The launch of the Healthy Communities dashboard is a big milestone for Cape Fear Collective,” said Meaghan Dennison, interim CEO. “When we launched CFC in 2019, we heard repeated calls for data - more access to data, more understanding of the metrics and their relation to one another, and the desire for localized context. We built this dashboard with those needs in mind.”

Sponsored by [Novant](#) and built by [Data Wheel](#), the Healthy Communities dashboard uses 21 metrics as an anchor towards true democratization of data, both by localizing these insights at a neighborhood level but also as a ramp into the Community Data Platform (free and public relational database containing 1,300+ community metrics).

“Novant Health is grateful for our partnership with Cape Fear Collective,” said Dr. Philip Brown, Chief Community Impact Officer at Novant Health. “By collaborating to create the Healthy Communities dashboard, we are better able to fulfill our commitment to achieve measurably accelerated progress in health equity across Southeastern North Carolina.”



Healthy Communities uses the same metrics as the Healthy NC 2030 taskforce report, led by the [North Carolina Institute of Medicine](#) and the [North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services](#). The taskforce brought together experts and leaders from multiple fields to develop a common set of public health indicators and targets for the state over the next decade. The [full report](#), released in January of 2020, established a north star for localities and organizations to mobilize to accomplish North Carolina's most pressing goals across housing, education, public health, and economic opportunity.

“Healthy Communities can serve as a flashlight on how our community is doing and moving the needle on the social determinants of health in our region,” Dennison said. “We are appreciative of Novant Health for sponsoring the Healthy Communities Dashboard for the Cape Fear and sharing our vision for democratizing data.”

[Healthy Communities](#) is CFC's first step toward providing nonprofit practitioners, policymakers, and community leaders a tool they can use to inform programing and measure progress. The data comes from public entities like the Census Bureau, North Carolina's State Center for Health Statistics, the Department of Public Instruction, and the Department of Public Safety. For one indicator, the dashboard uses proprietary data from Novant Health to give the community access to insights they can't get elsewhere.

“I think there's been this widening gulf between, on the one hand, funders and policymakers who are increasingly asking what the evidence is when they make their decisions, and, on the other, organizations and people who care deeply and know this work so well, but don't necessarily have the bandwidth and expertise to access the data,” said CFC Data Scientist Anna Casey. “It took us over a year, working with multiple teams of data experts, to source this data, pull it into a dashboard, and distill it into clear insights. That's just not doable for most local nonprofits. But it can make such a difference to their ability to advocate and get funding. If just one organization uses a chart from our dashboard to convince a funder, it will have been worth it.”

The plan is to update the dashboard annually and expand it statewide. CFC is developing this neighborhood level insight for every county in North Carolina and is in discussions with sponsors to fund a statewide rollout by May.

“We are even more inspired by the upcoming expansion into all our markets and to the entire state,” Brown said. “We will truly be able to measure progress on our mission to improve the health of communities, one person at a time, in all the communities we serve. For improving the health of North Carolinians, this is the best alignment tool in state history.”

For more information about sponsorship or data sharing, email data@capefearcollective.org.

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About Cape Fear Collective

Cape Fear Collective is a nonprofit using data science techniques to gain insights, mobilizing private sector capital through impact investing programs, and supporting cross-sector



collaboration towards equitable systemic change in Southeastern North Carolina. Our work is centered on collaborating with community partners to leverage local assets, illuminate actionable insights, and catalyze innovative programming.

To learn more, visit www.capefearcollective.org.

