

ALABAMA RURAL HEALTH TALKING POINTS - 2017

Life expectancy at birth for rural Alabamians is one-half of a year lower than that for urban Alabama residents and 3 ½ years lower than that for the nation. Life expectancy for residents of Wilcox County is 9 years lower than that for the nation.

More than one in every five rural residents is eligible for Medicaid.

Nearly one half (47%) of all rural children are eligible for Medicaid.

14 rural counties have between 10 and 16 percent of all households with no vehicle.

Only two of Alabama's 54 rural counties (Coffee and Pike) are not entirely or partially classified as primary care shortage areas. There are 4.1 primary care physicians per 10,000 population in Alabama's rural counties compared to 7.9 for urban residents.

All of Alabama's 54 rural counties are classified as dental shortage areas for the delivery of service to the low-income population. Only Shelby County and a portion of Madison County are not currently classified as dental care shortage areas. There are 2.7 dentists per 10,000 population in Alabama's rural counties compared to 5.5 for urban residents.

Alabama currently has three counties (Coosa, Greene, and Lowndes) with no full-time dentists in the entire county. Coosa does not have a physician in the entire county.

All of Alabama's 54 rural counties are classified as mental health care shortage areas for providing mental health care to the entire or low-income populations. Only Madison County is not currently classified as mental health care shortage areas.

In 1980, 45 of Alabama's 54 rural counties had hospitals providing obstetrical service. Today only 16 of the 54 counties offer this basic service. In 1980, 10 of the 12 Black Belt Region counties had hospitals providing obstetrical service. Today only one still offers this service.

More than ¼ of all births to rural Alabama women involve mothers who received less than adequate prenatal care during their pregnancy.

13 rural Alabama counties do not have a dialysis clinic.

7 rural counties (Cleburne, Coosa, Henry, Lamar, Lowndes, Macon, and Perry) do not have a hospital.

Having healthy population growth is a basic requirement for attracting and keeping adequate health care services. Between 1910 and 2010, 24 of Alabama's 54 rural counties actually lost population. 39 of the 54 rural counties and 2 of the 13 urban counties are projected to lose population between 2010 and 2040.

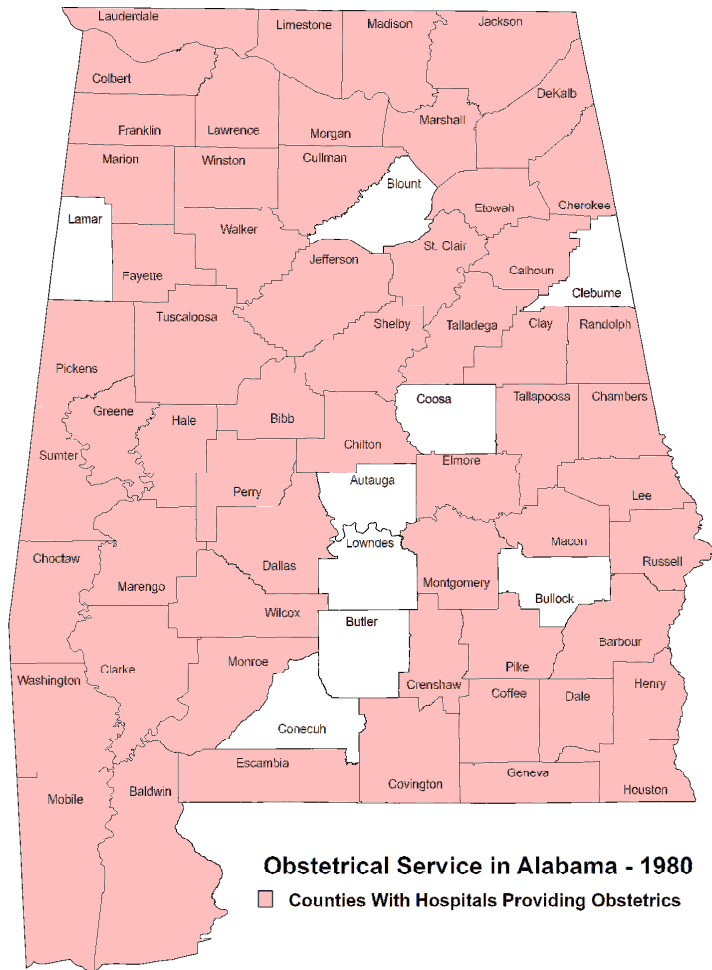
Obesity is a major risk factor for numerous serious health conditions. There are 10 rural Alabama counties with between 40 and 49% of the adult population being obese.

The mortality rate for rural Alabama residents is over 10% higher than that for urban residents.

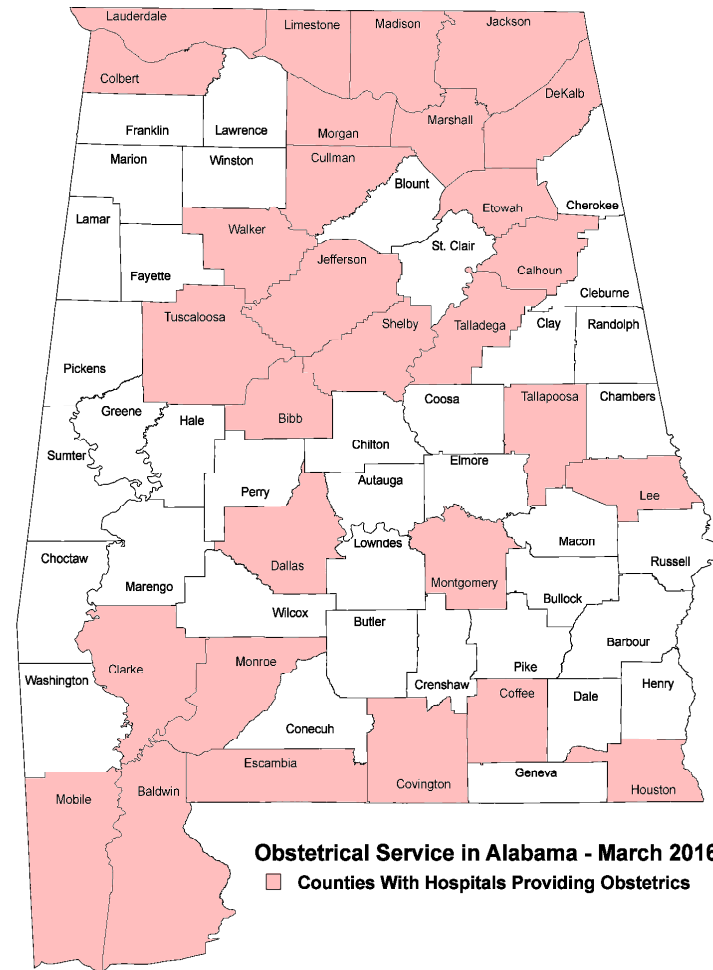
The chronic lower respiratory diseases mortality rate for rural Alabama residents is nearly 38% higher than that for urban residents and nearly 57% higher than that for the nation.

The motor vehicle accident mortality rate for rural Alabama residents is nearly 67% higher than that for urban residents and more than 120% higher than the national rate.

A PICTURE OF THE LOSS OF RURAL OBSTETRICAL SERVICE IN ALABAMA SINCE 1980



Obstetrical Service in Alabama - 1980
 ■ Counties With Hospitals Providing Obstetrics



Obstetrical Service in Alabama - March 2016
 ■ Counties With Hospitals Providing Obstetrics

45 of the 54 counties currently considered **RURAL** had hospitals providing obstetrical service in **1980**

16 of the 54 counties currently considered **RURAL** have hospitals providing obstetrical service **TODAY**

Produced by the Alabama Department of Public Health, Office of Primary Care and Rural Health and the Alabama Rural Health Association, March 15, 2016. The defining of counties as being rural or urban is based upon a definition that is used for study purposes by these agencies.