COVID-19 was the 3rd leading cause of death in eastern North Carolina (ENC29) in 2020, despite only emerging in March.

- There were 1,426 COVID-19 deaths in the region, accounting for 8% of all deaths for the year.
- COVID-19 mortality rates were higher for the ENC29 region than for the rest of the state.
- ENC29 is poorer and has more non-Whites than the rest of the state and has historically had poorer health outcomes.
- 13 ENC29 counties had COVID-19 rates in the top quartile for the state.

ENC29’s COVID-19 mortality rate was higher than NC across all race and sex groups.

- The ENC total rate was 25% higher than NC.
- Non-White males had the highest rate of any group.
- ENC29’s non-White male rate was 157.4, compared to 129.5 for NC.
- In ENC29 non-White males make up 17% of the population, but were 25% of COVID-19 deaths.
- Non-White females make up 18% of the population but 21% of the COVID-19 deaths.
The CDC has identified chronic conditions that are risk factors for serious COVID-19. The prevalence of these conditions is higher in ENC29 than the rest of NC and higher for non-Whites than for Whites (except for COPD).

- Diabetes
- Kidney Disease
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Obesity
- COPD

The CDC has estimated county-level prevalence for the COVID-19 risk factor conditions.

We grouped the counties into quartiles (low, medium, med-high, and high) for each condition based on prevalence. In the map below, counties were shaded based on the number of risk factor chronic conditions they had in the highest quartile. Eight counties in ENC29 were in the highest quartile for all 5 conditions, and another 4 were in the highest quartile for 4 of the 5 conditions.