New Jersey Health Assessment Data System (NJSHAD)

Helping to Develop the Future Public Health Workforce

200+ health topics **90,000+** users in 2025 **800+** students introduced

The tool

The New Jersey Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, introduced the New Jersey State Health Assessment Data (NJSHAD) system in 2008. NJSHAD is an online tool that allows users to access health data on births, deaths, hospitalizations, communicable and chronic diseases, maternal health, health behaviors, environmental public health, and more, as well as reports on over 200 health topics (NJSHAD). The system continues to grow in both content and use by the public; in 2025, more than 90,000 users accessed the system.

At The College of New Jersey

Nowhere has NJSHAD made more of an impression than at The College of New Jersey. Over the past 10 years, Dr. Carolina Marques-Borges, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health, has incorporated NJSHAD into her undergraduate and graduate epidemiology courses. Throughout her career at The College of New Jersey, Dr. Marques-Borges has introduced more than 800 students to NJSHAD. "NJSHAD is an excellent tool to introduce students to real-world data, especially at the local level," Dr. Marques-Borges has stated.

> **"NJSHAD is an excellent tool to introduce students to real-world data, especially at the local level."**
> Dr. Carolina Marques-Borges, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health

Students are required to use the system to explore various health topics ranging from vital events such as birth and death to cancer, maternal health, and chronic disease*. At the undergraduate level, class assignments require students to obtain prevalence statistics using the system and at the graduate level, students design and conduct novel epidemiologic studies using NJ data. NJSHAD enables students to compare local data and trends to national rates through tables, charts, and graphs. An additional benefit of NJSHAD is that it provides confidence intervals, age-adjusted rates, documentation on how the data were collected and limitations of the data.

From classroom to national stage

A number of student projects that initially started as classroom assignments have evolved into presentations at national meetings and even published articles. In the past several years alone, papers have been presented at APHA on the following topics:

- **The Incidence of Chlamydia and Gonorrhea in New Jersey, 2021–2024: Findings from an Ecological Study.** A. Exposito**, K. Sibilia**, Borges CM
- **Air pollution or smoking: Do either have an impact on breast cancer in NJ women?** K. Geary**, Borges CM
- **Social vulnerability and adult asthma prevalence in 21 New Jersey counties: An ecological study** B. Lobello**, J. Munyan**, D. Roughan**, Borges CM

It is quite evident that Dr. Marques-Borges is helping to ensure that New Jersey and the country will have a well-prepared public health workforce with a thorough understanding of the importance of accurate, reliable public health data, thanks in part to NJSHAD.

* Chronic disease data are derived from the New Jersey Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (NJBRFS), an initiative jointly funded by the CDC, the PHHS Block Grant, and the State of New Jersey.

**Student Co-authorship