

Parkersburg, in Wood County, had a 1990 population of 38,862. The local industries are agriculture, coal mining, petroleum, metals, plastics, and chemicals. Ohio Valley College and several junior colleges are located here.

Huntington is located in two counties. It is the seat of Cabell County, and portions are in Wayne County. The 1990 census was placed at 54,844 people. As elsewhere in WV, coal is mined here. Manufacturing concerns located here are nickel alloy, glassware, railroad and mining equipment, chemicals, and auto parts. Marshall University was established here in 1837.

Wheeling is the seat of Ohio County, and also has portions in Marshall County. At a population of 34,882 (1990), Wheeling is one of the largest cities in WV. It is a prominent manufacturer of iron and steel, chemicals, and tobacco. As elsewhere, coal is mined in the area. In 1954, Wheeling College was founded.

Hospitals, Health Systems, and Networks

Cabell County

The major city is Huntington, with a population of 54,844. There are 369 active physicians, or 381 physicians/100,000 residents. These are non-governmental physicians. There is one Veterans Administration Medical Center located in Huntington. The for-profit hospital chain, HCA, has moved into the market, purchasing one of the hospitals. No formal networks have developed in the region. Managed care has shown some penetration. The competition of a for-profit hospital in this excess bed region will create further contraction.

There are 23,772 beneficiaries of the Social Security system in the county. This is 217 beneficiaries/1,000 residents. Those over age 65 years comprise 16.4% of the county population. The 5-17 years olds, at 16.4%, equal the elderly. This mimics the states' dumbbell shaped demographics. Cabell County is a mirror of the state in terms of income, education and employment.

Kanawha County

The capital of WV, Charleston, is located here. Of the 207,769 county residents, 57,287 reside in Charleston. The demographics change due to the capital's presence. While those over 65 years comprise 15.7%, the 25-34 and 35-44 years olds comprise 15.3% and 15.7% respectively. As expected, the income distribution and education are skewed above the state norm.

The county has 569 physicians, or 274 physicians/100,000 residents. There are 50,038 Social Security recipients in the county. The entire Charleston area falls under the Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC), except for St. Francis Hospital, which is a member of the Columbia/HCA corporation. Columbia/HCA is a publicly traded, for-profit hospital chain. They are the largest chain