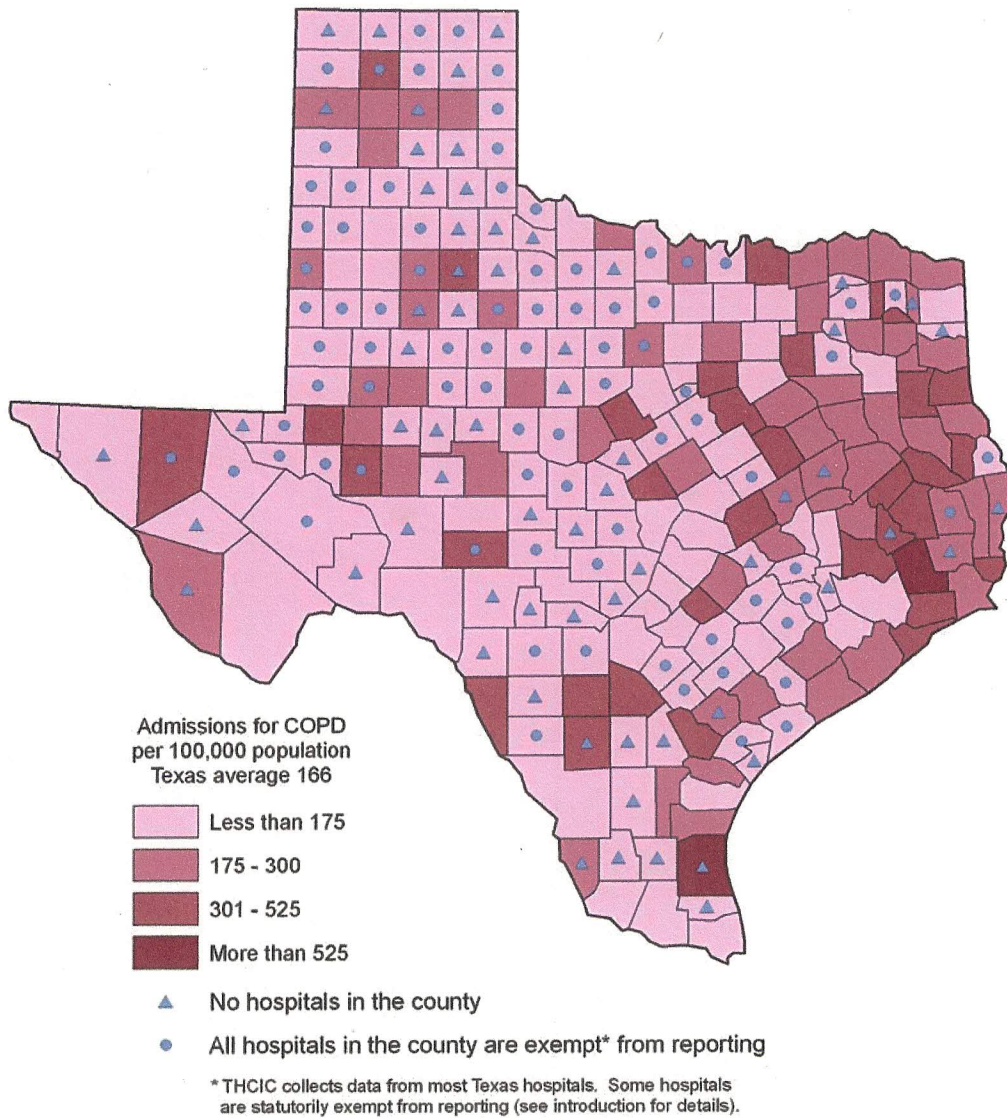


## 10. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

As defined by the American Thoracic Society and the European Respiratory Society, COPD is a disorder that is characterized by decreased expiratory flow in the airways of the lungs. It consists of three related diseases: asthma, chronic bronchitis and emphysema. COPD is one of the leading causes of illness and death in the U.S. causing substantial economic burden on individuals and society. Because existing medications cannot modify the progressive decline in lung function, the goal of drug therapy is to lessen symptoms and/or decrease complications. Patient education on smoking cessation, minimizing shortness of breath, and seeking medical attention can improve quality of life.



Source: Department of State Health Services, Center for Health Statistics. *Texas Hospital Inpatient Discharge Public Use Data File, 2005.*