

MEETING NOTES

Local Health Improvement Coalition TOBACCO TASK FORCE

Monday, August 20, 2012, 8:30 am
Havre de Grace Municipal Building, 711 Pennington Avenue, Havre de Grace, 21078

Attendees: Vickie Bands, Chair (Upper Chesapeake Health System)
Karen Goodison (Upper Chesapeake Health System)
Mark Lewis (Upper Chesapeake Health System)
Laura McIntosh (HCHD, Health Policy Analyst)
Marlena McKenna (Harford County Government)
Linda Pegram (HCHD, Public Health Education)
Dottie Ruff (HCHD, Public Health Education)
Bill Wiseman (HCHD, Public Health Education)

1. General Business:

- Ms. Bands began by reiterating Tobacco Task Force goals of (1) raising public awareness pertaining to tobacco use and (2) promoting and creating policies designed to restrict tobacco use and exposures to second-hand and third-hands smoke.
- Ms. Bands also spoke about her meeting with Mary Kate Herbig (Harford County Government) in which the two discussed issues regarding existing County tobacco policy and certain conflicts with less restrictive County statute. She also clarified that County policy does not impact local municipalities; that is, local municipal policies supercede and are not within the County's jurisdiction.
- It was noted that correspondence with the City of Aberdeen has proven difficult. A decision was made to use the ACS CPS-3 as a basis for re-connecting with Aberdeen administrative representatives regarding the work of the Task Force and to encourage their participation.
- As a follow-up to our Action Item #1 relative to the identification of community partners, Dottie Ruff will organize a list of businesses with whom the HCHD CRF Tobacco Program collaborates (on outreach initiatives), and we will likewise obtain the list of Harford's largest employers, which Task Force members can use to explore opportunities to promote internal change as well as the potential for representation on the Task Force.
- A summary of youth and adult tobacco use data (see attachment) was distributed comparing Harford to other MD counties of similar size (including, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, Howard and Washington counties), reflecting generally higher rates of use in Harford than in other jurisdictions (except for adult rates in Carroll that were higher, and youth rates in Washington County that were higher). Bill Wiseman reported on CRF Tobacco Program activities conducted by these other jurisdictions that might account for lower rates of tobacco use. His conclusions are that significantly more currently is being done by our CRF Tobacco Program than in any of the other jurisdictions, many of which are no longer funding as many CRF program components (among the community-based, school-based, enforcement, and cessation options) as Harford.
- Afterward, consistent with the Task Force priority to "put tobacco use back on the radar" in Harford County, Ms. Bands led the group in a discussion of tobacco awareness campaign ideas.
 - Linda Pegram will coordinate with and assist Mark Lewis and his staff to prepare a cover letter from the Task Force and to disseminate appropriate "Best Practices" materials and outreach through UCHS to affiliated primary care and family physicians, while also making tobacco awareness informational materials more readily accessible to clients in their waiting rooms.

- It was also suggested that we outreach more effectively to area Urgent Care Centers, as well as to dentists' offices.
- Dottie Ruff shared that Harford Community College has discontinued proactive campus initiatives designed to raise tobacco awareness and restrict smoking. This apparently stems from their belief that tobacco use on campus no longer is an issue as a result of the prohibitions put in place several years ago. The group favored the continuation of initiative at HCC to promote tobacco awareness.
- Linda Pegram reminded the group of the availability of the recently released CDC media messaging featuring persons horribly affected by tobacco use, for use as links off websites. The Task Force endorses use of these anti-tobacco campaign ads by private sector businesses and health service providers, as well as by public sector agencies.
- Ms. Bands reported on progress being made in subcommittee to develop a variety of messages intended for widespread distribution and that would target the widest variety of youth and adult consumers. Current themes include:
 - *It's not a matter of "if"; it's a matter of when. Tobacco kills and maims.*
 - *It's not always about you.* (Second-hand smoke theme, featuring images of grandparent, child and pet)
 - *Quit. If not for you, then for them.* (featuring images of grandparent, child and pet)
 - *Is there really any good enough reason to use tobacco* (featuring a "checklist" including, "dirty", "expensive", "deadly", "harmful to others", etc.)
 - *Yes. Tobacco is an addiction. You don't have to fight it alone. There's help.*
 - Other suggestions from the group included:
 - *Is it your time to quit?*
 - *It's not your grandfather's Harford County. Tobacco is not a part of our culture anymore!*
- Ms. Bands encouraged the group to continue crafting new and different themes, including those directed specifically at youth.

2. Project Scope:

- To facilitate community change through the development of more restrictive County, municipal and workplace tobacco policies
- To raise awareness of tobacco issues as related to personal and community health status
- To "light a fire" and ignite interest among Harford County residents, who despite educational and income levels higher than most counties, have higher rates of adult and youth tobacco use.

3. Action Items:

- In consideration of the discussion points (above), members are charged with the task of identifying mechanisms by which community partners can support Task Force agenda, both internally and with regard to public initiatives.
- Members were asked to continue constructing and further refining public information and awareness campaign ideas.
- Strategies will be developed for partnership with general and family medical practices, urgent care centers and dentists.

4. Next Meeting:

- Monday September 17, 2012, 8:30 – 10:00am, Historic Black High School Building, 205 S. Hays Street, Bel Air, MD, 21014

5. Adjournment

- 10:00am