



HARFORD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2006
July 1, 2005—June 30, 2006



October 2006

Message from the Health Officer

The Harford County Health Department promotes and protects the health of all residents through the provision of care and service programs at our 12 locations throughout the county. In this, our second Annual Report, we try to provide an overview of the many ways in which these programs touch the lives of Harford County citizens every day. The report provides a brief description of each program, a breakdown of the number of services provided, and highlights from the 2006 fiscal year.

As the Health Officer, I am often asked to define local public health. Why do we offer some programs but not others? How is “public health” different from other types of health care? This Annual Report is designed to help address some of these questions. It is part of a larger effort to bridge the gap between the Health Department and the citizens of Harford County and also includes a cable television program (Public Health Matters), a semi-annual County Health Profile, and in the near future, frequent news articles on public health concerns and an updated website, from which important information can be gleaned and access can be gained to other appropriate internet resources and sites.

As a foundation, the roles and responsibilities of local public health departments in Maryland are based on the core essential functions of public health. They are:

1. Diagnose and investigate health problems and hazards
2. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety
3. Respond to disasters (natural and man-made) and assist in recovery
4. Promote healthy lifestyles by informing and educating people on health issues
5. Link people to needed personal health services and offer health care when otherwise unavailable.
6. Monitor the health status of the community
7. Participate in the development of state and local policies that support individual and community health*
8. Form community partnerships to identify and address health problems*

The Health Department works with its partners, at all levels, to help address these core essential functions of public health. This is only our second annual report but already we are seeing significant changes in productivity. Despite substantial reduction in state and federal funding, our productivity has stayed stable or increased in almost every one of our programs. We are committed to achieving excellence and continue to work with our partners to refine our services, always looking for ways to grow. Please feel free to contact us through our website (www.harfordcountymd.gov/health) or by telephone (410-638-8400) to comment or become more involved with our work.



Andrew Bernstein, M.D., M.P.H.

* Functions 7 and 8 are not covered in this document but are addressed through other Health Department initiatives.

Diagnose and Investigate Health Problems and Hazards

Communicable Disease Surveillance and Outbreak Control: Collects, investigates, and analyzes reports of communicable diseases. Alerts physicians and the public of disease trends and unusual occurrences. Takes appropriate actions to stop or control disease outbreaks.

Immunization Program: Provides required childhood immunizations free of charge to children with no health insurance as well as flu and pneumonia immunizations to adults.

- ◆ 554 children received 1,225 immunizations
- ◆ 454 adults received immunizations (non-influenza/pneumonia)
- ◆ 5,275 flu and 43 pneumonia immunizations given

Rabies Control: Investigates rabies and animal bite cases. Provides low cost rabies vaccination clinics for dogs, cats, and ferrets. Provides counseling and post exposure prophylaxis to animal bite victims.

- ◆ 263 animals tested and 20 tested positive for rabies
- ◆ 2,026 animals vaccinated in health department clinics
- ◆ 527 animal attacks investigated
- ◆ 67 people given pre-rabies vaccine and 57 people given post-rabies vaccine

Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Program: Provides education, screening, diagnosis, and treatment of STD.

- ◆ 1,807 clients seen in clinic and counseled

HIV/AIDS Services: Provides free anonymous or confidential HIV antibody testing, educational counseling, and case management.

- ◆ 1,257 people tested and 76 seen in clinic
- ◆ 217 educational programs attended by 221 participants
- ◆ 138 clients received case management services

Enforce Laws and Regulations That Protect Health and Ensure Safety

Safety of Water and Sewage Systems: Reviews preliminary plans, final plats, and site plans for construction; conducts water quality sampling and soil evaluation/percolation tests to ensure proper septic/sewage disposal; and issues permits and conducts inspections.

- ◆ 2,110 building permits reviewed/approved
- ◆ 810 sanitary construction permits issued and 642 well permits issued
- ◆ 2,912 perc tests/soil evaluations performed

Public Protection from Foodborne Illness: Protects the community through plan review for food service facilities, inspection of food facilities, and investigations of foodborne diseases.

- ◆ 969 permanent licensed food service facilities (739 retail food service facilities, 61 schools, and 169 non-profit facilities)
- ◆ 1,433 food service facility permits issued (711 food facilities and 722 temporary food service permits)
- ◆ 221 food service complaints investigated

Recreational Sanitation: Licenses and inspects public and semi-public swimming pools and inspects camps.

- ◆ 154 pool inspections and 98 permits issued
- ◆ 34 camp inspections and 13 permits issued

Air Quality/Solid Waste Control: Issues open burning permits, responds to a variety of air pollution complaints, provides guidance, direction and resource information.

- ◆ 384 air/waste complaints investigated
- ◆ 109 burning permits issued
- ◆ 27 mobile home park permits issued



Respond to Disasters (Natural and Man-Made) and Assist in Recovery

Emergency Preparedness and Response: Works with other county agencies and regional health departments in responding to natural or man-made emergencies. The Health Department is available 24 hours a day for public health emergencies

- ◆ Sent 3 staff to New Orleans and 1 to Mississippi to assist in the response to Hurricane Katrina
- ◆ Conducted a drive thru flu clinic to test mass prophylaxis plans for those with limited mobility
- ◆ Participated in a variety of county and state wide disaster drills and tabletop exercises
 - ◆ Abbottsville Incident Command Simulator
 - ◆ 6 Flu clinics used as mass prophylaxis points of distribution (PODS) exercises
 - ◆ Harbor Biological Attack Simulated Event (Harbor BASE) III drill, Peach Bottom Radiological Exercise
 - ◆ 3 Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Tabletop Exercises
- ◆ Trained essential staff in preparing for and responding to a public health emergency
- ◆ Distributed 2,500 emergency preparedness first aid kits at the Harford County Farm Fair
- ◆ Created the Harford County Medical Reserve Corps to enlist resident emergency volunteers

Promote Healthy Lifestyles By Informing and Educating People

Tobacco Control Program: Provides free smoking cessation classes and counseling to all Harford County residents as well as free nicotine replacement therapy to those residents that meet income requirements. Also conducts tobacco vendor compliance checks to ensure compliance with tobacco sales laws.

- ◆ 174 attended 16 stop smoking classes
- ◆ 114 tobacco vendors checked with a compliance rate of 77.8%
- ◆ 201 tobacco education presentations were offered in public and non-public schools

Cardiovascular Risk Reduction:

- ◆ 129 people screened for high blood pressure

Link People to Needed Personal Health Services

Children and Adolescent Services

Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP): Provides access to full health benefits through private Managed Care Organizations for children up to 19 years old and pregnant women of any age who meet income criteria.

- ◆ 2,873 MCHP applications processed covering 7,978 applicants
- ◆ 6,551 eligible to receive services

Home Visiting Services: Provides maternal and child health education and nursing case management services to eligible mothers, infants, and children. Provides a family-focused, educational and problem solving approach to assist women and children in accessing medical and social services.

- ◆ 1,167 prenatal and child referrals
- ◆ 562 prenatal and 258 child cases managed
- ◆ 2,542 prenatal and child nurse home visits and 757 associate home visits

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): Offers nutrition education, health screening, breastfeeding support and supplemental nutritious foods to eligible pregnant and postpartum women, infants and children.

- ◆ 1,237 prenatal and 629 postpartum women received services
- ◆ 1,929 infants and 2,330 children received services
- ◆ 1,325 receiving breastfeeding services
- ◆ 506 pregnant women receiving Healthy Start nutrition services
- ◆ 2,300 participants received Farmer's Market checks for fresh produce

Infants and Toddlers Program: Provides no cost early intervention services to developmentally delayed children (0-3 years old) and their families in the child's home or day care setting. Services include evaluation and assessment, occupational/physical/speech therapy, audiology, vision services, and family training/education.

- ◆ 514 children referred to the program
- ◆ 582 active eligible children served

Lead Program: Provides case management of children with blood lead levels of ≥ 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ and referrals for appropriate follow up. Provides targeted community outreach in at-risk areas for the prevention of childhood lead poisoning. These outreach activities include outreach to parents and providers for lead awareness and preventive control measures.

- ◆ 24 children case managed

Child Fatality Review/ Improved Pregnancy Outcome: Provides an ongoing community based and culturally sensitive process for assessing, planning, and monitoring service delivery systems and broad community resources that promote and enhance the health and well being of women, children, and their families.

- ◆ 29 fetal and 16 infant deaths reviewed
- ◆ 10 child fatalities reviewed
- ◆ Reviews resulted in 10 community and 6 provider interventions

Teen Diversion Program: Provides a twelve-week intensive mental health outpatient program for adolescents between the ages of 13 and 18 who have an emotional or psychiatric disorder and who are at risk of psychiatric hospitalization, a more restrictive educational placement or a placement in a residential treatment center. The goal is to divert teens from more restrictive placement and to transition them back to the least restrictive therapeutic and educational setting.

- ◆ 25 clients served



Women Wellness Services

Family Planning Services: Provides comprehensive gynecological services, contraceptive education, and birth control to women of childbearing age at the Health Department's Bel Air and Havre de Grace locations.

- ◆ 3,016 people received services in 4,178 visits
- ◆ 1,671 pregnancy tests and 1,150 emergency contraceptions provided

Colposcopy Clinic Services: Provides diagnostic examination and treatment for income eligible women who have an abnormal Pap test.

- ◆ 127 clients served in 138 visits



Addiction Services

Adult Addiction Services: Provides methadone maintenance, methadone and suboxone detoxification services, intensive outpatient (medically assisted and drug-free), outpatient services, and Addiction Drug and Alcohol Evaluation Services. In addition, treatment services and evaluations are provided to the Harford County Detention Center.

- ◆ 802 adults received services (405 received alcohol services and 397 received drug abuse services)

Adolescent Addictions Services: Provides substance abuse education and treatment to adolescents and their families. Additionally, substance abuse assessments are conducted in various schools through the Maryland Student Assistance Program (MSAP) by adolescent counselors.

- ◆ 173 adolescents received services

Drug Court Addiction Services: Provide substance abuse education and treatment for first time non-violent offenders.

- ◆ 66 adolescents and 73 adults in drug court received services

Other Services

Medical Assistance Personal Care Program: Assists eligible individuals with chronic medical disabilities who are in need of help performing daily activities of living (i.e. bathing, dressing, meals, toileting, errands, light household chores) by finding self employed providers to aid them.

- ◆ 160 clients assisted
- ◆ 89 active care providers enlisted

Maryland Primary Care Program : Provides a health care program for adults who are in the Maryland Pharmacy Assistance Program, who have no Medical Assistance (MA) or Medicare or any other health care coverage.

- ◆ 200 clients enrolled

Medical Assistance Transportation Services: Arranges transportation to medical appointments for eligible persons.

- ◆ 2,593 wheel chair van rides provided
- ◆ 660 ambulance rides provided
- ◆ 35,916 taxicab rides provided



Administrative Care Coordination Unit (ACCU): Provides short term case management, outreach and education to potential and enrolled MA/MCHP clients about MA/MCHP and the health care process, addresses barriers to care, and works to increase access to care.

- ◆ 4,078 individuals received outreach and education
- ◆ 1,386 pregnant and post-partum women received services
- ◆ 811 children less than 2 years old were introduced to Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services
- ◆ 263 clients required intervention for non-compliance/care coordination and education

Walk-In Services: Educates clients about obtaining community resources.

- ◆ 1,479 clients educated

Breast and Cervical Cancer Program: Provides breast and cervical cancer screening services to women 40-64 years old who are low income ($\leq 250\%$ of the Federal Poverty Level), uninsured, or underinsured.

- ◆ 274 women received services (i.e. clinical breast exam, mammogram, and GYN exam)

Colorectal Cancer Program: Provides colon/rectal cancer screening and treatment for men and women 50-64 years old who are low income ($\leq 250\%$ of the Federal Poverty Level), uninsured, or underinsured.

- ◆ 56 individuals received a 60-90 minute eligibility/education session and a screening colonoscopy

School Health Readiness: Provides health care, mental health care, and preventive services to students who may lack the access to health care. These services are provided at five elementary schools in Harford County.

- ◆ 1,022 health room visits
- ◆ 321 mental health visits

Major Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2006

Pandemic Influenza Planning

Pandemic influenza presents a unique challenge for our nation and for our county. The Health Department is co-chairing an executive committee charged with the development of a county-wide plan for pandemic influenza. As of this printing, work has been completed but not yet compiled into the county's first draft of a comprehensive plan to address the anticipated increases in illnesses and deaths related to any pandemic. It is the only comprehensive, community-wide plan in the state and is being used as a national model for other counties to replicate.

Development of a Suboxone Treatment Program

The Harford County Health Department Addictions Treatment program is now only the second county in the state to offer a comprehensive outpatient suboxone treatment program to its clients. Suboxone (buphenorphine) is a newly available non-opioid, non-addicting medication that when combined with counseling services has been shown to be very effective at helping those people who are suffering from addictions or substance abuse. As one of the only counties across the state to offer suboxone, Harford County is leading the way towards bringing new and innovative treatment programs to our citizens.

Prevention of Zoonotic Diseases

The Bureau of Environmental Health undertook several new initiatives to revamp its zoonotic disease program. In addition to revamping the program to include more frequent inspections of local pet stores and animal emporiums, the Health Department has also begun to reach out to day care providers and petting zoo owners to enhance their knowledge and understanding of disease and potential spread of disease to visitors and customers. A new inspection manual, developed by Health Department staff, has now become a state-wide model and is being used in several other counties in Maryland.

Drive Thru Flu Vaccination Clinic

The challenge of providing prophylactic health care to the residents of Harford County just became a little easier as a result of the Health Department's innovative strategy to provide medications or vaccinations in "drive thru clinics". The Health Department held its first ever large vaccination clinic this year at Ripken Stadium in Aberdeen. Over 450 people received influenza vaccination in three hours without ever leaving their vehicles. This innovative approach to delivering vaccinations has won Harford County national recognition and is just one of several strategies being piloted to improve the immediacy of our public health response in a disaster.

"Public Health Matters" Television Show

Harford County Health Department is the first county in the state to have a monthly public health cable television show. The new show entitled "Public Health Matters" is hosted by our own Health Officer, features authoritative guests, and covers timely, current issues related to health and our local community. In the first year, we have already produced and aired programs on MTBE, Obesity, Smoking, Diet and Exercise, Heart Disease and Stroke, Water Quality, Lyme Disease, Drug Abuse, and Summer Safety Issues.

Response to Hurricane Katrina

The Health Department's Bioterrorism Coordinator was assigned as Harford County's Lead and headed a team of Health and Public Works crews down to Bay St. Louis, Mississippi to assist with recovery issues related to Hurricane Katrina. Two nurses and one social worker from the Health Department also volunteered their services to join other colleagues from across the State to assist with recovery efforts in New Orleans. Locally, Health Department staff set up additional services and clinics to receive and treat displaced families from Mississippi and Louisiana.

Public notification to property owners about MTBE and other gasoline constituents

In October 2005, a Maryland law went into effect requiring the local health department to notify each property owner within 1/2 mile radius whenever MTBE or several other gasoline constituents are detected in groundwater monitoring wells. The Harford County Health Department Bureau of Environmental Health responded to three new cases of groundwater contamination in the county. As a result of this new law, 371 property owners were notified of potential contamination of their drinking wells, allowing appropriate actions to secure their health and safety.

For more information, contact:

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