

**Local Health Improvement Coalition Meeting**  
**Harford Community College – Chesapeake Center**  
**October 4, 2012**  
**12:00pm-2:00pm**

**Minutes**

**Attendees**

See Attached.

**Welcome** – Susan Kelly, Harford County Health Officer

- Susan thanked all of the Coalition members and the partnering organizations for attending and their work over the past 9 months. A special thank you was given to Upper Chesapeake Health for their work.

**State Health Improvement Process** – Dr. Madeline Shea, Director, Office of Population Health Improvement, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

- Provided updates on the State Health Improvement Process.
- Identified that the Harford County Local Health Improvement Coalition goals are mirrored across the state including obesity, tobacco, behavioral health, as well as access to care.
- As a State, childhood obesity is improving but not in Harford County. Also, Behavioral Health Emergency Department visits are not on track in Maryland.
- There will soon be new data on child wellness checks from Medicaid. Additionally, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data will no longer be comparable to prior years due to a change in methodology which will now include cell phone surveys.
- Upcoming changes at the state level were mentioned including the Maryland Health Connections/Benefit Exchange, Behavioral Health Integration, Institute for a Healthiest Maryland, and Maryland Access Points.

**Workgroup and Subcommittee Updates** – Dr. Russell Moy, Harford County Deputy Health Officer

- A review of the State Health Improvement Process and Local Health Improvement Process was provided.
  - Harford County is doing better in 28 of the 39 objectives.
- Obesity Prevention/Healthy Eating and Active Lifestyle
  - Only 1/3 of Harford County adults are at a healthy weight.
    - The goal is to stop the trend of increasing and start reversing.
  - BMI was explained, the number is not as important as the realization that the numbers of individuals that qualify as obese have raised and are getting worse.
  - It was mentioned that the final Obesity Task Force report was presented on Tuesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> to the County Council with a major recommendation of establishing a Wellness Commission.

- Beth Hendrix discussed the strategies and progress of the Access to Healthy Food Subcommittee.
  - Food access, income and public transportation in Harford County were mapped and showed that access to healthy food is most difficult in the northeastern part of the County.
  - An Access to Food Community Needs Café was conducted in July 2012 to receive food provider feedback. It was determined that no additional locations of food banks or pantries are needed but that there could be improved coordination of resources among existing programs.
  - The Access to Healthy Food Subcommittee has merged with the Community Engagement Subcommittee as their work has greatly overlapped.
  - The Office on Aging created a senior “produce in a box” program to increase availability of fresh fruits and vegetables for seniors. This was done in coordination with the Department of Agriculture and the Extension Program.
- Arden McClune discussed the progress to date and strategies of the Built Environment Subcommittee.
  - The goal is to make pieces of the environment more attractive and to encourage activity.
  - Strategies included encouraging walking to school, reviewing the existing transit system, implementing both the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and the 2012 Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan, which includes moving forward with the Ma and Pa Trail Connection.
  - A Street Smart campaign will be launched to teach drivers, cyclists and pedestrians how to share the road.
  - Three public schools (Red Pump Elementary, Southampton Middle School, and Joppatowne High School) will pilot walking/biking to school programs.
- Kathy Kraft discussed the strategies and progress of the Community Engagement Subcommittee.
  - The main strategy includes creating a unified message of healthy eating and an active lifestyle. This includes raising awareness of all of the resources in the community.
  - The group is in the beginning stages of a media campaign which will be done under the name of Healthy Harford. Healthy Harford is the local community health initiative comprised of Upper Chesapeake Health, the Health Department and Harford County Government.
  - Emphasized the importance of engaging key stakeholders including restaurants, schools, childcare centers and businesses to begin Healthy Harford designation programs. Ideas for Healthy Harford Restaurant Designations include a Healthy Harford seal on the restaurant door, on healthy menu options, and encouragement of Food Management Certifications.
    - An attendee commented that the healthy options also need to be affordable.
  - Toolkits are being created for both physicians and medical providers on how to discuss issues of obesity with patients.
- Ginny Popielek discussed the strategies and progress of school wellness initiatives.

- Ginny began by acknowledging Mary Nasuta, Harford County Public School Nurse Coordinator, for her assistance on these initiatives.
- For the past two years, all Harford County Public Schools have been required to create a school wellness goal.
  - Ginny commented on the fact that over 700 people participated in Walk to School Day on October 3rd at Red Pump Elementary. Also, Forest Hill Elementary is using their wellness goal as their motto for the year: “Live, Learn, and Move.” On Walk to School Day, they did a lap around the school before starting their day.
- Most elementary schools are doing the “Let’s Move in Schools Initiative” created by First Lady Michelle Obama.
- The Community Transformation Grant, a partnership between the Health Department and Harford County Public Schools, includes efforts to support the health of students, staff and the community at three pilot elementary schools, Edgewood, Havre de Grace and William Paca/Old Post.
  - Grant activities include health screenings, hydration systems, recess equipment and walking trails. In addition, family wellness nights will be offered.
  - Public Health high school students will be closely involved in this work and a recognition opportunity will be offered to these students.
- Sharon Lipford gave an update on the progress and strategies of the Behavioral Health Workgroup.
  - Main goals are to develop mechanisms to integrate mental health and substance abuse treatment and to improve the delivery of behavioral health services.
  - A Youth Behavior Survey was completed among parents across Harford County
  - A focus group with Emergency Room Staff from Upper Chesapeake Health and Harford Memorial Hospital was conducted.
    - The conclusions from the focus group include: limited psychiatrists and mental health providers in the County, difficulty finding care among individuals with private insurance, lack of a safety net/support system.
  - Harford was one of four counties in the nation to be selected to participate in the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law “Performance Improvement Project”
  - Joe Ryan from the Office of Drug Control Policy informed the Coalition that on Saturday, September 29, a Prescription Drug Take Back Day was held in 4 locations in the County netting 1,650 pounds of unused prescription medication over the course of 4 hours.
  - A presentation was recently given to doctors through a partnership of the Health Department, Upper Chesapeake and Office of Drug Control Policy in an effort to educate prescribers about the dangers pain medication. Keith Mills, a local sportscaster, spoke as the “face of addiction.”
  - Next steps of the Workgroup include trainings on behavioral health integration, follow-up on work with ER Staff, utilizing doctors for early intervention/depression screening, and work with families, peers and faith-based communities on promoting recovery.

- Vickie Bands gave an update on the strategies and progress of the Tobacco Workgroup.
  - Emphasized that tobacco is a gateway drug and is a culprit of all cancer and chronic disease rates.
  - Noted that the Town of Bel Air recently approved a Hookah Bar.
  - The Tobacco Workgroup is attempting to get a public awareness program back out into the community. The Upper Chesapeake Health Marketing Department will be offering support to this campaign.
  - Work will be done with local businesses and primary care providers.
  - Also working to change public policies within municipalities around tobacco use.
  - Goal is to get tobacco back on the radar of the local community.
  - The Workgroup is always looking for new members, anyone interested in supporting this work should contact Vickie Bands or the Health Department.

### **Community Input and Next Steps**

- In support of the Local Health Improvement Process, the Health Department has produced two documents, the Community Health Assessment (CHA) and the Community Health Improvement Plan.
  - These documents point to the top three health initiatives the Coalition is currently focused on: obesity, tobacco and behavioral health.
- The health assessment determines factors that contribute to health issues and identifies resources that can be mobilized to improve the population's health.
- The health improvement plan is a long-term, systematic process for addressing issues identified in the health assessment in order to improve local health outcomes.
- Dr. Moy stated the importance of receiving community feedback on both the CHA and CHIP.
  - An online survey has been created to collect community feedback and can be taken by visiting [www.harfordcountyhealth.com](http://www.harfordcountyhealth.com). The Coalition was encouraged to help spread the word in the community about the CHA, CHIP and feedback survey.
- Groups will continue to meet to work on implementation of their action plans.
- Work will be done to monitor progress through data.
- Bari Klein announced Healthy Harford Day which will take place on Saturday, October 13 at the Bel Air Farmers' Market. This health-focused family friendly and interactive event will highlight the work of the Coalition, including a brief presentation by Councilwoman Mary Ann Lisanti on the work of the Obesity Task Force.

Attendees:

Vickie	Bands	Upper Chesapeake Health
Mary Jo	Beach	Health Department
Greta	Brand	Health Educator, Community Rep.
Virginia	Brown	University of Maryland Extension
Sharon	Chapman	Inner County Outreach
Cindy	Dawson	Health Department
Erin	Ferriter	Sustainability Office
Karen	Goodison	Upper Chesapeake Health
Elizabeth	Hendrix	Department of Community Services
Beth	Jones	Health Department
Susan	Kelly	Health Department
Bari	Klein	Health Department/Upper Chesapeake Health
Jayne	Klein	Klein's ShopRite
Kathy	Kraft	Upper Chesapeake Health
Whitney	Lang	Y of Central Maryland
Steve	Lentowski	Harford County Public Schools
Kelly	Lepley	Y of Central Maryland
Mark	Lewis	Upper Chesapeake Health
Sharon	Lipford	Department of Community Services
Mary Ann	Lisanti	County Council
Julie	Mackert	Health Department
Barbara	Mason	Office of Drug Control Policy
Mallory	McCloskey	Health Department
Arden	McClune	Parks and Recreation
Laura	McIntosh	Health Department
Vanessa	Milio	Chamber of Commerce
Jamie	Miller	Office on Mental Health
Russell	Moy	Health Department
Paula	Nash	Health Department
Mary	Nasuta	Harford County Public Schools
Linda	Pegram	Health Department
Andrea	Pomilla	Office on Aging
Ginny	Popiolek	Harford County Public Schools
Robert	Reier	Town of Bel Air
Jerry	Reyerson	Department of Social Services

Dottie	Ruff	Health Department
Joe	Ryan	Office of Drug Control Policy
Joan	Salim	Health Department
Gale	Sauer	Aberdeen Proving Ground
Madeleine	Shea	Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Tamara	Simmons	Harford County Government
Stefanie	Stevenson	Occupational Therapist
Robin	Stokes-Smith	Upper Chesapeake Health
Patrick	Sypolt	City of Havre de Grace
Carol	Taylor	FACE-IT Coalition
Kimberly	Theis	Upper Chesapeake Health
Stephen	Thomas	Sheriff's Office
Patricia	Thompson	Harford Memorial
Posie	Thompson	Health Department
Martha	Valentine	Cultural Arts Board
Keith	Warner	Sheriff's Office
Christine	Wiggins	Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Karen	Winkowski	Office on Aging
Tina	Zimmerman	Harford Community College