

MEETING NOTES

Local Health Improvement Coalition TOBACCO WORKGROUP

Monday, September 17, 2012, 8:30 am
Historic Colored High School, 205 S. Hays Street, Bel Air, MD, 21014

Attendees: Vickie Bands, Chair (Upper Chesapeake Health System)
Karen Goodison (Upper Chesapeake Health System)
Mary Kate Herbig (Harford County Law Department)
Susan Kelly (HCHD, Health Officer)
Mark Lewis (Upper Chesapeake Health System)
Mallory McCloskey (HCHD, Health Policy Analyst)
Laura McIntosh (HCHD, Health Policy Analyst)
Linda Pegram (HCHD, Public Health Education)
Dottie Ruff (HCHD, Public Health Education)
Bill Wiseman (HCHD, Public Health Education)

1. General Business:

- Chairperson, Ms. Bands opened the meeting and called attention to a prostate screening and tobacco awareness outreach event being held on October 21st at the New Hope Baptist Church in Bel Air and welcomed participation.
- Ms. Bands reported that the Upper Chesapeake Health System Marketing Department has agreed to take on the community awareness messaging project on which the Tobacco Workgroup has been working. Participation from a representative is expected at the next (October) Workgroup meeting and graphics may be available at that time.
- The group reiterated the importance of using the web and electronic media to promote tobacco use awareness and cessation assistance to employer groups, especially to large companies doing business in Harford County.
- There was some discussion regarding the production of a new *Public Health Matters* tobacco awareness segment and the possibility of using interviews with current or former cessation program clients to provide personal accounts of their addictions to tobacco as well as their successes in quitting.
- Upper Chesapeake Health System is recruiting volunteers to participate in tobacco-use focus groups they will be conducting. Their intent is to create diversity among focus-group participants for purposes of identifying the perceptions and needs of different target groups within the community. No dates or times have yet been determined.
- Health Officer Susan Kelly announced the next meeting of the entire Local Health Improvement Coalition will take place on Thursday, October 4th from 12:00pm until approximately 2:30pm at Harford Community College.
- Ms. Kelly also announced that she and others will provide a brief update on Local Health Improvement Process initiatives and progress (including work of the Tobacco Workgroup) at the next Board of Health meeting, convening the evening of October 2nd.
- Noting that tobacco smokers have lowered resistance to influenza, the group advocated for using seasonal flu vaccination sites to promote tobacco awareness.
- The group presented the possibility of somehow using the Harford County Public School's Public Health curriculum as a forum for students participating in that program to provide input and feedback to the Tobacco Workgroup.

- Ms. Ruff (HCHD, CRF Tobacco) received a call from a resident of a condominium where indoor smoking is prohibited, but where residents continue to smoke on their patios, often immediately adjacent to the residences of non-smokers who find it offensive or bothersome. Ms. Kelly suggested referring the matter to the Legal Resource Center regarding what options might be available to persons in similar situations.

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 continuing to identify potential public and private/business organizations with whom partnerships can be forged, to make resources available, and to develop strategies for internal communication with employees.
- Members were asked to consider ideas for potential inclusion in a public information and awareness campaign; a subcommittee will meet to initiate discussion in this regard.
- Members are asked to continue considering how to strategically utilize electronic media to promote tobacco use awareness and cessation.
- Names and contact information for other prospective invitees can be forwarded to Ms. Bands for follow-up.

4. Next Meeting:

- Monday, October 15, 2012, 8:30 – 10:00am, Havre de Grace Municipal Building, 711 Pennington Avenue, Havre de Grace

5. Adjournment

- 9:30am