

Meeting Notes

Behavioral Health Workgroup (BHW) Introductory Meeting

Harford County Government, 220 South Main
Monday, August 19, 2013
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Attendees: Amy Axel, Deborah Blackwell, Renee Duzan, Terry Farrell, Debbie Gebhardt, Beth Jones, Susan Kelly, Becky Kierszhowski, Sharon Lipford Joe Ryan, Brendan Welsh, Laura McIntosh

I. Overview of the State Health Improvement Plan

- Susan Kelly provided an overview of the State Health Improvement Process and Harford County's local coalition work, reviewing the powerpoint "Harford County Local Health Improvement Coalition: Behavioral Health Workgroup"
 - The State Health Improvement Process was initiated in September, 2011 by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene with a review of 39 health indicators.
 - Harford County's process began in Harford County in December 2011 with over 50 stakeholders reviewing data and identifying top priorities: obesity, tobacco and behavioral health (mental health and substance abuse)
 - Sharon Lipford is the chair of the Behavioral Health Workgroup, which has been meeting for over a year and includes diverse representation, including schools, nonprofits, faith-based organizations and the courts.

II. Local Health Improvement Plan

- Sharon Lipford gave an overview of the Workgroup's action plan, reviewing work that has been done to date.
 - Families have been surveyed on youth risk behaviors. Parents are concerned about their children's use of alcohol and drugs, and high levels of anxiety among youth.
 - Work has been done to improve the referral process between hospitals and counseling resources. Division of Addictions, within the Health Department, receives referrals from the Emergency Rooms and can intervene and help a person be admitted to a detox facility. Or, Addictions can be contacted as part of discharge planning from the hospital and offer an immediate opening into treatment.
 - Office of Drug Control Policy has offered a number of Drug Take-Back events in collaboration with the Drug Enforcement Administration.
 - Maryland will begin a Prescription Drug Monitoring Program in the next two months which will offer a live database to pharmacists and physicians.
 - Office of Drug Control Policy gives numerous presentations to youth on refusal skills as well as to parents on emerging drug dangers.
 - Office on Mental Health offers Town Hall Meetings – this year the focus was on child and adolescents, in 2014 it will be seniors.

- Division of Addictions partners on Recovery Events – in September they are co-sponsoring a showing of the film “Anonymous People” with Father Martin’s Ashley.
- Division of Addictions receives a referral when a newborn tests positive for drugs. A nurse and addictions counselor from the Health Department visits the home and work to fast-track the family into care. Current barriers to this system include mom’s whose needs require a residential level of care, as well as difficulty finding transportation and childcare.
- The County has recently developed an Opioid Overdose Prevention Plan.

III. Review of Current Behavioral Health Goals

- Sharon explained that the Workgroup organizes its work around a “prevention, intervention and recovery” perspective.
- Next steps for the Workgroup include:
 - Establishment of an Overdose Review Team
 - Permanent prescription drug drop-off site at the Bel Air Barracks
 - It was noted that agencies such as Alliance often collect unused prescriptions from clients; this will greatly aid them in disposing of the medications safely and quickly.
 - Educating the medical community (including dentists) on the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program
 - Can this type of training be a requirement of medical professional continuing education credits? Past efforts to host training opportunities for doctors have not been very successful in terms of attendance.
 - Outreach to mothers whose children are born testing positive for drugs
 - Discussed any opportunity to work with women in treatment taking methadone or suboxone prior to becoming pregnant.
 - Expand work with emergency department and law enforcement
 - Promote recovery and support through peers, family and faith-based communities.
 - It was noted that the Division of Addictions has clients staying in treatment longer when they work with a peer specialist.

IV. Upcoming Meetings

- **Behavioral Health Workgroup:** September 24th at 9:30am, Historic Colored High School, 205 S. Hays Street, Bel Air
- **Local Health Improvement Coalition:** October 8th 11:30am-3:00pm, Harford Community College, Chesapeake Center, 401 Thomas Run Road, Bel Air