

MEETING NOTES

Local Health Improvement Coalition TOBACCO WORKGROUP

Monday, July 21, 2014, 8:30 am
Historic Colored High School, 205 S. Hays Street, Bel Air, MD, 21014

Attendees: Vickie Bands, Chair (Upper Chesapeake Health System)
Greta Brand (Independent Health Promotion Trainer/Educator)
Anne Cerruto (Harford County Office on Aging)
Erin Ferriter (Harford County Office of Sustainability)
Chuck Johnson (City of Aberdeen)
Bari Klein (UCHS, HCHD, Healthy Harford)
Mark Lewis (Upper Chesapeake Health System)
Mallory McCloskey (HCHD, Health Policy Analyst)
Laura McIntosh (HCHD, Health Policy Analyst)
Dr. Russell Moy (Deputy HO, HCHD)
Dottie Ruff (HCHD PHEd/CRF Tobacco)
Kristie Willats (Upper Chesapeake Health System)
Bill Wiseman (HCHD, Public Health Education)

1. General Business:

- Chairperson, Ms. Bands called the meeting to order requesting a review and approval of the minutes of the June 16, 2014 LHIC Tobacco Workgroup meeting notes. It was motioned and seconded that the minutes approved as distributed. Members were invited to re-introduce themselves.
- Ms. Bands deferred to Ms. Ruff to present and describe a wide variety of tobacco products (including cigars of all sizes and flavors, smokeless products and personalized hookahs) and vaping products she brought to exhibit at the meeting. Dottie drew from her experience presenting tobacco awareness and education in the schools and from working with youth violators referred by the Harford County Public Schools to the CRF Tobacco after-school cessation and education program, highlighting increased use by youth of cigar products (including little cigars or cigarillos) and vaping products. The cigarillos look like cigarettes but, because they are wrapped in tobacco rather than paper, are considered cigars and are therefore more affordable because they are not taxed as cigarettes.
- Considerable discussion followed on a number of related topics:
 - Dangers of FDA unregulated products, where manufacturers can state whatever nicotine levels they desire on their labels and where the dispensing of nicotine is not consistent throughout the longevity of use of the product;
 - The unsanitary nature of hookah use related to a variety of potential illnesses and conditions (e.g. legionella and herpes), the surprisingly heavy concentrations of smoke and/or vapor and nicotine consumed during normal sessions;
 - Student behaviors (including “vaping”) in contemporary MS and HS classrooms
 - Where youth find the money and means to sustain the expense of a tobacco-use habit
- Ms. Bands next called upon Mr. Wiseman to update the Workgroup on a new requirement of the FY15 CRF Tobacco Program grant application. Mr. Wiseman reported that because of the uptick statewide in illegal (underage) sale of tobacco products to minors, DHMH is requiring all local jurisdictions to integrate an “Enforcement” (that, is FT04N) component into FY15 grant activities. Mr. Wiseman recalled for the Workgroup that, upon the recommendation of CRF staff and with the approval of the CRF Tobacco Coalition, HCHD staff had not implemented an enforcement component since the 77% CRF Tobacco budget cut of FY10, beginning in July, 2009. While enforcement remains a critical consideration, the Coalition agreed, then, that since MD ADA

continued its federal SYNAR tobacco enforcement program, activity in this area would be duplicative and would diminish staff resources better invested in community and school tobacco awareness education and cessation services. This year, however, CRF staff will devise a strategy for providing tobacco vendor education as part of a statewide enforcement activity. The CRF staff will not engage in retail sales (criminal enforcement) compliance checks, pending the continued efforts of the Workgroup to convert local enforcement from “criminal” to “civil” offense.

- Ms. Bands reminded the Workgroup of its previous recommendation to investigate placing (Harford County “No Smoking”) magnets previously purchased with CTG monies as part of our marketing and awareness campaign, on all County vehicles, including law enforcement vehicles, city, town and county government vehicles. Mr. Wiseman was assigned to take on that responsibility.
- Mr. Johnson succeeded in arranging a 10-minute Tobacco Workgroup presentation in front of Aberdeen City Council on the afternoon of September 22nd, focusing on Workgroup accomplishments, our position paper on electronic cigarettes, and our hopes and expectations of working with CBOs, area employers and municipal shareholders on tobacco awareness and tobacco use restrictions or prohibitions. This represents the first such opportunity to speak before a Harford County municipal group.
- Finally, the group was asked to address the most current version of our proposed position statement/white paper on electronic cigarettes, and to provide feedback for what we hope becomes our final draft. Focus was placed on simplification and clarity where emphasis was on inclusion of only the strongest of statements. Several segments were deleted, while other sections were reorganized. Ms. Klein will redraft another version integrating all new Workgroup recommendations and will email that to the membership in the following days.
- Discussion prompted the question from Dr. Moy, “Do we as a collective group and as individuals think that electronic cigarettes are ‘more’, ‘equally’ or ‘less’ of a serious public health issue as tobacco product use. Members were individually “polled” as to their thoughts. There was consensus that e-cigarettes are a more serious issue. The following justifications were provided:
 - Without stringent FDA oversight, the industry remains uncontrolled, whereby there are inherent safety and health risks to users relative to manufacturing inconsistencies, product components, nicotine delivery systems as well as unrestricted advertising, marketing and sales practices.
 - There are too many “unknowns” about the short and long-term impact(s) of these products.
 - The profound increase in popularity and use, particularly by youth (as the next generation of health care recipients), who by all accounts also may be combining their use with traditional tobacco products.
 - Heightened concerns over the potential negative impact of nicotine on adolescent brain development, long term risk of nicotine dependence/addiction, and potential for initiation of the use of conventional cigarettes or other tobacco products.

2. Action Items:

- Review drafts of civil enforcement legislation and related materials (Ongoing)
- Revise draft of electronic cigarette (E-cig) position statement and related materials (Ongoing)
- Revise draft of Employer/Worksite Tobacco Survey.

3. Next Meeting: Monday, August 18, 2014 at, 8:30am, Havre de Grace Municipal Building

4. Adjournment: 10:15am