

MEETING NOTES

Local Health Improvement Coalition TOBACCO WORKGROUP

Monday, February 23, 2015, 8:30 am

Havre de Grace Municipal Building, 711 Pennington Avenue, Havre de Grace, MD, 21078

Attendees: Vickie Bands, Chair (UM/UCHS)
Susan Kelly (HCHD Health Officer)
Bari Klein (HCHD and UM/UCHS)
Mallory McCloskey (HCHD, Health Policy Analyst)
Dr. Russell Moy (Deputy HO, HCHD)
Charles Odhiambo (for Susan Twigg, HCHD)
Council President Richard Slutzky (Harford County Council)
Kristie Willats (UM/UCHS)
Bill Wiseman (HCHD, Public Health Education)

• General Business:

- Chairperson, Ms. Bands called the meeting to order, noting that the January meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather. Members were invited to re-introduce themselves. Copies of the summary of the November 17th meeting were distributed and approved.
- It was noted that because the Habitat building in Bel Air is not available for our use in May, the venue for that meeting will have to be changed. Alternate sites are being investigated.
- Ms. Bands provided a brief update on the status of the Harford County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA, web address, (www.tinyurl.com/ucHealthSurvey) and also reminded the group about *Kick Butts Day*, annually observed every March for purposes of engaging youth as advocates against tobacco and nicotine use.
- Mallory McCloskey reported on the CDC *Vital Signs* webinar on the topic of Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing that occurred on 02/10/15 and during which representatives from the Boston Housing Authority and the Minnesota "Live Smoke-Free" Association presented their experiences with implementation of restrictive and/or prohibitive policies. The entire webinar recording is available at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/1832377174878007297>. Information on research findings, health and economic consequences were provided by CDC. Several interesting "lessons learned" from those implementing policies included the importance of:
 - Engaging residents and finding out what they want
 - Engaging health partners and other allies
 - Ensuring organizational and political support
 - Using appropriate messaging . . . and
 - Tracking and documenting progress

Speakers expressed that they had not experienced the level of resistance to new policies by residents that they believed would exist. The webinar offered insight into effective processes of implementation and provided excellent resources for use by others via the website provided, above.

- Ms. Bands mentioned that the Havre de Grace Housing Authority with whom we have been working to implement smoke-free policy has new Board Members, possibly offering us greater opportunity for success in that regard. Mr. Wiseman assured her that tobacco cessation support would be made available to HdG Housing authority residents requesting it.

- A news article was circulated that prompted additional discussion of e-cigarettes, mentioning that if effectively regulated, e-cigs might provide an alternative to cigarette and other forms of tobacco use. Ms. Bands referenced a similar discussion with Dr. Phil at UM/UCHS about e-cigs. Dr. Moy reiterated the importance of periodic updates to the Workgroup's E-Cig position paper as the science and the "industry" changes, in order to remain current and recommended adding Dr. Phil to the LHIC Tobacco Workgroup. Ms. Bands will follow-up in this regard and the group agreed to revisit the position paper in a few months.
- Several Workgroup members reported persons they know have taken favorably to the E-cig position paper.
- Other discussion included the nature of e-cigs as a potential gateway to more harmful tobacco products and Mr. Odhiambo referenced survey data from 2011-2013 indicating that youth who used e-cigs were more likely to switch to conventional tobacco cigarettes than those who never used e-cigs.
- Bill Wiseman reviewed some background regarding CRF Tobacco Program and Synar Supplementary grant "enforcement" initiatives, citing recent statewide and some local jurisdictional rates of sales to minors that have risen remarkably over the past year. The Counties among the highest were Baltimore County and Prince George's County. More discussion followed that reinforced the benefits of crafting local legislation that would result in issuing "Civil" (vs. "Criminal") citations to retailer offenders. Improved efficiency by allowing enforcement by local health authorities and "keeping the money in the County" are key factors.
- Mr. Wiseman also distributed handouts with an update on the status of all tobacco-related bills currently being considered in the Maryland legislature. Notably:
 - House Bill #26 would amend the MD Clean Indoor Air Act to include e-cigs, where issues of enforcement pose a potential problem,
 - HB #357 that would prohibit smoking in vehicles in which young children also traveled . . . and
 - SB #7 that would prohibit the sale to minors of e-cigarettes, which is gaining momentum with the addition of sponsors.

Ms. Kelly provided some background as to the legislative process and commented that the chances of passing legislation often are tied to the number of influential sponsors.

- **Action Items:**
 - Review materials regarding civil enforcement legislation in Harford County in order to revive the issue this spring.
 - Dissemination and compilation of Employer/Worksite Tobacco Survey results.
- **Next Meeting:**
 - The next meeting is scheduled to be held on March 23rd at Historic Colored High School in Bel Air.
- **Adjournment:** 10:05am