



Harford County Health Department

LHIC E-Newsletter

April, 2015

Drug Exposed Newborns

Between 2012 and 2013, there was a 45% increase in the newborn drug/alcohol exposure rate for Harford County residents with the rate increasing from 24.7/1,000 newborns in 2012 to 35.8/1,000 newborns in 2013. In order to raise public awareness about the problem of drug exposed newborns in Harford County, the Office of Drug Control Policy is hosting a Drug Exposed Newborns Community Meeting on May 13th in partnership with the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health and the Harford County Health Department. The event will begin at 6pm at Harford

Community College, Chesapeake Center.

To register, [view the Save the Date.](#)

Suicide Prevention

Recognizing &
Responding to
SUICIDE RISK



Workshop for Primary Care Providers

Members of the Behavioral Health Workgroup have given several presentations on suicide prevention over the last couple months including a presentation at John Carroll and to the Harford County Medical

Society. Additionally, the Harford County Health Department in partnership with the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health, Healthy Harford, and Harford County Government, is sponsoring a training entitled "Recognizing and Responding to Suicide Risk in Primary Care" for medical and mental health providers who serve youth and young adults. A panel discussion will follow. Primary care providers will have the opportunity to network with mental health providers who can support their patients in crisis or at risk of suicide. The training will take place on May 14th from 6:00pm-8:30pm at University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health. For additional information and/or registration for the event, [see the flyer.](#)

Maryland Community Health Resources Commission- Care Coordination Grant

The Harford County Health Department received official notification that it was awarded the Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC) grant (\$320,000 over 3 years). The grant allows the Health Department to serve as a single point of contact with Upper Chesapeake Medical Center's case management programs. The Health Department will focus on a Community Team (providing community services and social support to high-risk, high-cost patients), while the hospital will focus on a Medical Team (providing clinical primary and specialty care case management services). Together the Health Department and Hospital will attempt to provide coordinated care to high-risk, high-cost patients by avoiding unnecessary emergency department visits and hospital inpatient admissions.

Public Health Data Update

- [The 2015 County Health Rankings Report](#) was released by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.



This report measures the health of nearly all counties in the nation and ranks them within states. This report examines health outcomes (such as length and quality of life) and health factors (such as smoking and obesity) and found that Harford County remains consistent with last year ranking 10th best in health outcomes and 6th best in health factors among the 24 jurisdictions in Maryland.

- The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) has released new targets for improving the health of Marylanders by 2017, as part of its State Health Improvement Process (SHIP). SHIP contains 39 health measures in five vision areas - healthy beginnings, healthy living, healthy communities, access to health care, and quality preventive care. For the 2017 targets, some measures have been removed or revised, and three measures have been added including:
 - Increase the percentage of adults with a usual primary care provider
 - Reduce the percentage of uninsured emergency department visits
 - Reduce dental-related emergency department visits

The SHIP data dashboard contains county-level SHIP measures, the new targets for 2017, and an interactive atlas allowing comparisons across counties. This dashboard can be accessed via [this link](#).

Research Update

The LHIC Tobacco Workgroup released a position paper in the fall of 2014 with an overall recommendation that until regulating authorities say

otherwise, e-cigarettes should be treated as other tobacco products regarding use restriction and policies. Particularly, the position paper expressed concern over the increasing number of students who are using e-cigarettes that have never used conventional cigarettes.

This concern was further solidified with the recent release of the April 17, 2015 issue of the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report Article, [Tobacco Use Among Middle and High School Students, United States, 2011-2014.](#)

Findings from the 2014 National Youth Tobacco Survey show that current e-cigarette use among high school students increased from 4.5 percent in 2013 to 13.4 percent in 2014. Additionally, current e-cigarette use among middle school students more than tripled from 1.1 percent in 2013 to 3.9 percent in 2014. The article further shows that this is the first time since the survey started collecting data on e-cigarettes in 2011 that current e-cigarette use has surpassed current use of every other tobacco product overall. Nicotine exposure during adolescence, a critical time for brain development, might have lasting adverse consequences for brain development, cause addiction, and might lead to sustained use of tobacco products.

National Public Health Accreditation Update



Health Department staff gathered for a staff photo in celebration of receiving accreditation.

The Harford County Health Department (HCHD) received formal notification on March 4, 2015 that it has achieved national accreditation status from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The decision brings the number of governmental public health departments now accredited by PHAB to 67 among more than 3,000 eligible state, local and territorial public health departments throughout the country. The HCHD becomes one of only four local health departments in Maryland to achieve national accreditation status through PHAB. Frederick, Worcester, and Allegany are the other nationally accredited local health departments in Maryland.

Achieving accreditation indicates that the HCHD is dedicated to improving and protecting the health of the community by striving to continuously improve the quality of the services it delivers. The HCHD is honored to be recognized for the commitment to quality and performance while delivering critical public health services. You can be sure that the quality of care that the HCHD provides to its clients is the very essence of their existence and the HCHD is dedicated to protecting and promoting the health of the Harford County community.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Harford County
Health Department**

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