



## Harford County Health Department

### LHIC E-Newsletter

August, 2015

#### *Suicide Prevention Workshop*

The University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health hosted a Suicide Prevention Workshop in partnership with the Harford County Health Department, Harford County Department of Community Services, and Healthy Harford on May 14, 2015. Approximately 50 health care providers were in attendance at this event. Matthew Wintersteen, Philadelphia psychologist, was the keynote speaker at the workshop. Wintersteen provided health care providers with tips they can use when talking to a patient who is going through a difficult time and has expressed suicidal

thoughts. Additionally, a panel discussion was held that answered audience questions and discussed the array of mental health services available for those who are considering suicide. Panelists included: Sue Lichtfuss, Harford County Mobile Crisis; Dr. Sarah Edwards, Maryland Behavioral Health Integration in Pediatric Primary Care; Shreya Hessler, Bel Air psychologist; and Pat Thompson, Behavioral Health Unit of Upper Chesapeake Health.



### Healthy Harford Executive Director

Sharon Lipford joined Healthy Harford, Inc as its new executive director at the beginning of July 2015. Sharon brings over 25 years of experience in non-profit executive leadership and governmental strategic planning and administration. She is knowledgeable on the management of complex systems such as aging, disability, behavioral health, home less and criminal justice services. Sharon is also currently the chair of the LHIC Behavioral Health Workgroup. In her new role, Sharon will provide direction, oversight, and evaluation to all of Healthy Harford's collaborations and initiatives. Congratulations to Sharon on her new position!

### Healthy Harford Day 2015



Healthy Harford will be hosting its 5th Annual Healthy Harford Day, on Saturday September 26th, from 9:00am-1:00pm at 119 S. Hays Street, Bel Air, next to the Bel Air Farmers' Market. This event is designed to promote healthy eating, physical activity, and improved wellness in Harford County. Last year, over 2,000 people attended Healthy Harford Day for a fun-filled educational event. It's not too late to be a part of the event! If you would like to be a sponsor, performer/demonstrator, or a vendor, click [here](#) for more information.

## Public Health Data Update

The report on [Drug and Alcohol-Related Intoxication Deaths in Maryland, 2014](#) was released in May 2015. This report describes trends in the number of unintentional drug and alcohol-related intoxication deaths occurring in Maryland during 2007-2014. Trends are examined by age at time of death, race/ethnicity, gender, place of death, substances related to death. Notable data from the report include:

- A total of 1,039 drug and alcohol-related intoxication death occurred in Maryland in 2014, a 21% increase over the number of deaths in 2013.
- 85.7% of all intoxication deaths that occurred in Maryland in 2014 were opioid-related, which include deaths related to heroin, prescription opioids, and non pharmaceutical fentanyl.
- Despite cocaine-related deaths remaining relatively stable since 2008, there was a 29% increase in deaths between 2013 and 2014.
- Between 2013 and 2014, there was nearly a 50% increase in benzodiazepine-related deaths.
- The number of alcohol-related deaths increased by 13% between 2013 and 2014. More than half of all alcohol-related deaths occurred in combination with heroin.

## Research Update

According to the World Health Organization, at least 80% of heart disease, stroke and type II diabetes, and 40% of some cancers are preventable through proper nutrition, daily physical exercise, and smoking cessation. Despite this fact, the LHIC Obesity Workgroup, which encourages healthy eating and active living, will continue to face an uphill battle as the July 10, 2015 issue of the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report Article, [Adults Meeting Fruit and Vegetable Intake Recommendations, United States, 2013](#), found that most Americans are still not meeting fruit and vegetable intake recommendations.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), adults who engage in <30 minutes of moderate physical activity daily should consume 1.5-2.0 cup equivalents of fruit and 2-3 cups of vegetables daily. However, during 2007-2010, findings from the article showed that 76% of the total U.S. population did not meet fruit intake recommendations and 87% did not meet vegetable recommendation intakes. In Maryland, only 13.2% of respondents were meeting fruit intake recommendations and only 8.4% were meeting vegetable intake recommendations. Because fruit and vegetable consumption affects multiple health outcomes and is currently low across all states, continued efforts are needed to increase demand and consumption. The article suggests that improving fruit and vegetable consumption for adults might start with improving intake during childhood.



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Health Department**

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