

Fiscal Year 2015



Annual Report

Harford County
Health Department



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Harford County
Health Department**

A Letter from the Health Officer

We Did It! On March 4th, the Health Department received the news that we anxiously awaited. We received national accreditation from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The Health Department is one of only four health departments in Maryland to achieve this prestigious recognition, joining an elite cohort of public health departments across the country that have been accredited. The PHAB site visitors highlighted a few strengths that were evident during their visit. The first strength identified was that the Health Department is actively engaged with its community partners and is held in high regard, which was particularly evident during the Community Engagement session of the site visit. Partners had an opportunity to talk about our collaborations and partnerships, which are genuine and rooted in the premise of working together to improve our community. The site visitors also acknowledged the highly committed and dedicated staff at the Health Department. That comes as no surprise as our excellent staff is the cornerstone of the Health Department. Finally, the site visitors noted our CHA (Community Health Assessment) and CHIP (Community Health Improvement Plan), which are the foundation for improving the community's health. Following the news of accreditation in March, we took a deep breath, a short pause, acknowledged that our success was the culmination of years of preparation by staff and support of our community partners...and then we continued down the path of continued quality improvement.

During Public Health Week in April 2015, we hosted an Open House to celebrate our accreditation achievement and draw attention to the importance of public health and the broad array of programs offered by the Health Department. Staff from all of our programs are involved in community outreach and participate in more community events. You may have noticed a contingent of Health Department staff at the SARC Walk and Bike to Work Day this year. Additionally, we are continuing to work to expand our web-based accessibility through the addition of a YouTube channel and creation of a mobile-friendly version of our website. With the absence of an in-house epidemiologist, we strive to fill that void through the development of a partnership with Johns Hopkins School of Public Health to expand our data capacity. Finally, the Division of Behavioral Health continues to actively work with the Harford County Sheriff's Office, Harford County Government, and other community organizations, to help tackle the problem of heroin and opioid addiction as a public health issue.

There are many positive things happening at the Health Department, but the closure of the Aberdeen Community Center and the displacement of a large number of staff have negatively impacted our services. I appreciate the public's understanding and patience as we explore options for relocation. In the meantime, please get the latest updates by following us on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and our website.



Harford County Health Officer



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Website
www.harfordcountyhealth.com

Vision

To make Harford County the Healthiest County in Maryland.

Mission

To protect, promote and improve the health, safety, and environment of the citizens of Harford County through community assessment, education, collaboration, and assurance of services.

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This report includes key public health news and accomplishments from Fiscal Year 2015 (July 1, 2014—June 30, 2015), as well as some programmatic data. For more information on our programs, please visit our website at www.harfordcountyhealth.com.

FY2015 Snapshot of Services



Administration

Birth Certificates Processed	5,861
Death Certificates Processed	679
MA Transportation Taxi Rides Scheduled	70,295

Care Coordination

Clients Navigated through Health Choice Health Care System	2,462
High-Risk Postpartum & Infant Hospital Referrals	209
Evaluations for Aged and Functionally Disabled Adults	430
New Applications Processed - MD Children's Health Program	3,893

Clinical Services and Communicable Disease

Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention Screenings	63
Children's Dental Clinic Visits	4,287
Colorectal Cancer Prevention Screenings	23
HIV Client Case Management Encounters	6,049
Individuals Provided Behavioral Health Services	9,293
Investigations of Reportable Diseases	819
Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic Visits	683
WIC Program Average Monthly Caseload	5,691
Women's Wellness Clients Served	2,695
Vaccinations Provided Through School FluMist Program	9,744

Environmental Health

Inspections of Licensed Food Service Facilities	2,121
Investigations of Insect and Vector Control Complaints	141
Percolations Tests/Soil Evaluations Conducted	496
Well Permits Issued	206

Health Education

Community Education - Colorectal, Breast, Cervical & Skin Cancer	10,324
K-12 Public & Private School Students Educated on Tobacco	11,616
Tobacco Cessation Class Participants	176

Social Work

Avg. Monthly Family Service Coordination - Infants & Toddlers	488
Student Visits to School-Based Health Centers	1,855
Teen Diversion Day Program Clients	28



Health Department Achieves National Public Health Accreditation

The Harford County Health Department (HCHD) received formal notification on March 4, 2015 that it achieved national accreditation status from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The Health Department's accreditation efforts began almost three years ago when it first filed its intention to apply for accreditation and began preparing thousands of pages of documentation to meet rigorous performance standards. This effort culminated with a site visit from PHAB in January 2015. The HCHD became one of only

67 governmental public health departments accredited by PHAB among more than 3,000 eligible state, local and territorial public health departments throughout the country. It also became 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 services it delivers. The HCHD will continue its commitment to quality and performance while delivering critical public health services to the community.

New Funding Opportunities Help Expand Harford County Partnerships

Maryland Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC) Strengthens Care Coordination Efforts

The Health Department received official notification in the spring of 2015 that it was awarded a Maryland Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC) grant for \$320,000 over three years. The grant strengthens care coordination efforts within Harford County, focusing on the partnership between the Health Department and University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health (UM UCH) for identifying and helping high-risk, high-utilizing populations. The Health Department will focus on community services and social supports, while the Hospital will focus on clinical care and case management services. Together the Health Department and Hospital will assist high-risk, high-utilizing patients in an effort to assure quality care and avoid unnecessary emergency department visits and hospital inpatient readmissions.

Maryland Cancer Fund Supports New Faith Communities Health Program

Beginning in December 2014, the Cancer Prevention Unit partnered with two Harford County church congregations to support them in implementing the Faith, Activity, and Nutrition Program (FAN), which aimed to increase healthy eating and physical activity among church members. Inspired by the success of this partnership, in January 2015, the Health Department received a grant from the Maryland Cancer Fund of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to address the County's high cancer mortality and incidence rates by establishing a Faith Communities Health Program. The Health Department is partnering with faith leaders through the Faith Communities Health Program to support local congregations/faith-based organizations to promote improvement in health behaviors and outcomes in Harford County. Local congregations/faith-based organizations had an opportunity to apply for mini-grants in April 2015 to initiate, develop, and expand health ministries to improve nutrition, physical activity, and overall health of their communities. Ten local congregations/faith-based organizations are partnering with the Health Department through this program and will be implementing their health improvement efforts during FY16.

Focusing on Prevention and Treatment in Behavioral Health

Bringing Awareness and Attention to Recovery

In observance of National Recovery Month in September, the Division of Behavioral Health hosted a “Run 4 Recovery” on September 6, 2014. A 5K race and fun walk, was held at the Ma & Pa Heritage Trail in Bel Air. Approximately 112 individuals participated and proceeds of more than a thousand dollars were donated to Addiction Connection Resources (ACR) to assist recovering individuals by connecting them with services that facilitate recovery and promote productive, healthy lifestyles. The overarching goal of the 5K was to raise awareness that addiction is a disorder that can be successfully treated. It also aimed to bring attention and facilitate access to services for those locally suffering from addictions.



Working to Address Overdose Fatalities in Harford County

The Division of Behavioral Health began overseeing a Harford County Opioid Fatality Review Team aimed at promoting cooperation and coordination among agencies involved in the investigation of overdose deaths as well as those agencies that provide services to surviving family members. The purpose of the Review Team is to develop plans and recommend changes within the agencies represented on the team as well as advise DHMH on necessary changes to law, policy, or practice to prevent drug and/or alcohol overdose deaths. Additionally, after being approved to become a Naloxone Certification and Training Entity in March 2014, the Division of Behavioral Health began trainings throughout Harford County in September 2014. Naloxone is used to reverse an opiate overdose. A few entities that have been trained include the Harford County Sheriff's Office, Aberdeen Police Department, Bel Air Police Department, Department of Social Services, local support groups, and numerous residents throughout the County. In total, the Division of Behavioral Health has trained and supplied life-saving medication to 770 people. From September 2014 through July 2015, 24 lives were saved by individuals trained through their trainings alone.

Assisting Families to Ensure All Children Receive Appropriate Care

The Health Department began offering the Healthy Families America (HFA) home-visiting program at the beginning of FY15. HFA is a nationally recognized evidence-based home visiting program model designed to work with overburdened families who are at-risk for adverse childhood experiences. HFA strives to provide all expectant and new parents with the opportunity to receive the education and support they need at the time their baby is born. The Health Department has staff that provide evidence-based home visiting services to at-risk prenatal and postpartum families in the Aberdeen area zip code. All pregnant women and families with children under three years of age are eligible for this free service. Eligible families can participate in this program until their children reach age three.



Improving Access to Health Insurance and Health Care

Increasing Insured Individuals in Harford County through the Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP)

During FY15, MCHP completed 3,893 applications for insurance for 6,239 applicants. This was a 113% increase in the total number of applications and a 162% increase in the total number of applicants applying for insurance over the previous fiscal year. Of the 6,239 applicants, 277 were pregnant/postpartum women, 3,621 were children, and 2,341 were adults, of which 1,100 were eligible for family Medicaid. Similar to previous years, the Program was responsible for the determination of initial and continuing eligibility and ongoing case management for MCHP cases. MCHP staff processed new applications, redeterminations of eligibility, and interim changes according to grant guidelines. Additionally, MCHP staff attended various outreach events and provided support services to state residents regarding the use of their Medicaid benefits and other community and governmental services available to them.



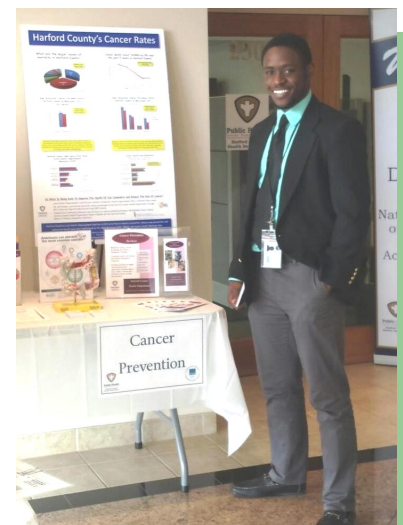
Providing a Primary Medical Clinic to the Homeless Population in Harford County

Beginning in June 2015, the Health Care for the Homeless program added a weekly primary medical care clinic to help serve the homeless population in Harford County. A physician from the Health Care for the Homeless Program in Baltimore travels to Bel Air on Mondays to see approximately ten clients for various medical needs. Lab work is available on-site and referrals are made for x-rays, CT scans, specialists, etc. Case management services are afforded to these clients providing them transportation, ability to apply for

insurance and entitlements, supportive counseling, follow-up appointments, as well as housing/shelter and prescription needs. This new service provides the opportunity for the homeless population to access benefits and get medical care all in one place.

Facilitating Access to Quality Cancer Screening and Diagnostic Services

In the spring of 2015, the Cancer Prevention Unit began piloting a Patient Navigation Program. This Program offers individualized assistance to fully insured clients to help overcome healthcare system barriers and facilitate timely access to quality cancer screening and diagnostic services as well as initiation of treatment services for those diagnosed with cancer. The program helps to address barriers (i.e. transportation), provides education and support, arranges appointments, provide reminders and prep instructions, ensures patients receive and understand their results, and follows up with patients to provide support to those needing additional work-up for diagnosis and/or treatment. Education and outreach on this new program have been provided to many throughout Harford County including contracted gastroenterologists, local primary care physicians and medical assistance providers as well as to the Route 40 Business Association. Additional outreach has also been provided at low-income housing facilities, food pantries, soup kitchens, community services agencies, senior housing complexes, faith-based organizations, health fairs, and wellness events. This Patient Navigation Program will be fully implemented in FY16.



Keeping the Public and Partners Informed of Ebola

In the spring and fall of 2014, some countries in West Africa experienced their most deadly outbreak of Ebola in recorded history. With a few cases of Ebola reaching the United States, public fears of an outbreak on American turf were growing. In order to keep partners and the public informed of Ebola and decrease fears of an outbreak occurring close to home, Harford County Emergency Management hosted a presentation for County partners on October 22, 2014.



The Health Department's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator provided an informational session on Ebola. UM UCH also provided information on its preparations for the possible care of an Ebola patient. Additionally, in the fall of 2014, the Health Department's Communicable Disease Program collaborated with many community and State partners in preparation for potential Ebola patients coming into the County. A Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) donning and doffing training as well as a home visiting training were provided. This was in addition to participating in numerous conference calls and creating new protocols.

Protecting Residents' Health and Safety

Working with the Maryland Department of the Environment

The Bureau of Environmental Health entered into an agreement with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for oversight of Best Available Technology (BAT) on septic systems. Under the agreement, the Health Department will ensure that BAT is properly installed and that all maintenance contracts are kept up to date. MDE will be responsible for enforcement when a property owner fails to maintain a BAT. The Health Department received \$50,000 in monetary compensation for its role. Additionally, the Maryland Secretary of the Environment, Benjamin H. Grumbles, visited Harford County in March 2015 to provide a presentation to a group of fifty Hickory Elementary School fifth grade students on the importance of protecting and preserving the groundwater. The event was collaboratively planned between MDE, the Health Department, and Harford County Public Schools in observance of National Groundwater Awareness Week.

Informing Tobacco Vendors of Tobacco Retail Laws

Due to the large increase in the frequency and number of illegal sales of tobacco products to minors in Maryland, the Health Department's Tobacco Program coordinated compliance checks in collaboration with the Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) in the spring of 2015. The HCSO conducted tobacco retail compliance checks at 59 licensed tobacco vendors throughout the County. Of that number, six criminal citations were issued. This enforcement activity was also accompanied by an intensive store-by-store education outreach to approximately 378 tobacco

retailers that were educated on vendor laws. This outreach was conducted by the Health Department in partnership with a number of community-based organizations. Additionally, two billboards were posted along Route 1 in Bel Air and on Pulaski Highway near Route 543, which serve as a public call to action. Vendor education and compliance enforcement efforts will continue in FY16.



Supporting Parents in Providing Proper Nutrition to Their Children

Celebrating Breastfeeding Success in the Harford County Community

The WIC program and UM UCH work together to support and encourage women in meeting their breastfeeding goals. On August 2, 2014, the second annual Run, Walk, Breastfeed event was held to celebrate the breastfeeding success of the community. This family-oriented event included a Kid's Fun Run, Stroller/Baby Wearing Walk, Health Fair, as well as the Global Big Latch On. Over 80 families were in attendance at the event, about 200 people altogether. The Global Big Latch On started the event. Approximately 54 babies, toddlers, and children were breastfeeding from 10:30am to 10:31am. Mothers reported enjoying being a part of the Big Latch as many felt this was the first time they really felt comfortable nursing in public.



Providing Grocery Store Tours to WIC Parents

In the summer of 2015, the WIC program kicked off a year of offering *Cooking Matters at the Store* tours for WIC parents. The WIC program partnered with *Share Our Strength* and the *Maryland No Kid Hungry Campaign* accepting a grant allowing WIC participants to receive grocery store tours and \$10 towards purchasing healthy foods. The store tours offer the participants nutrition information, tips on saving money, help with purchasing WIC foods, and other resources to assist with grocery shopping and cooking healthy meals at home. After attending the tour, the

participants have to opportunity to participate in the "\$10 challenge", which allows them to practice their newly learned skills. Three largely successful tours were held in the summer with a total of 43 participants in attendance. Four upcoming tours are planned for the fall of 2015.

Providing Dental Sealants to Children in All Title I Elementary Schools

In September 2014, the Health Department's Dental Program began providing free dental sealants to second and third grade students in the seven Title I elementary schools. A dental sealant is a thin protective plastic coating that is painted on the chewing surface of the back teeth where decay occurs most often. The sealant acts as a barrier to prevent cavities. Through this program, 1,488 dental sealants were applied to 451 students. Oral health education and an oral health goody bag were also provided to the students. For those children with urgent oral health needs, follow-up was provided by the Dental Program. This program comes on the heels of another successful dental outreach program that began in the schools last year -- the fluoride/dental screening program. Both of these programs are funded by DHMH's Office of Oral Health.



Obtaining Birth and Death Certificates Became More Convenient for Residents

In March 2015, the Health Department extended its hours of operation of its Vital Records Office from 8:00am-12:00pm to 8:00am-4:00pm. Previously, anyone needing a birth or death certificate after 12:00pm would need to wait until another day or travel to Reisterstown or Cecil County. By opening the office throughout daytime business hours, a long distance drive may be eliminated for most of the clients in need of a copy of a birth or death certificate. Additionally, in March 2015, the Vital Records Office began using a new computer system, Maryland Electronic Death Registration System, for processing death certificates. This system has brought many benefits to the Health Department as well as the clients. These benefits include: access to all death certificates in Maryland, no time limit on distribution, and the ability to enter a death certificate into the system for registration.

Bringing the Community and Partners Together to Address Health Issues

Healthy Harford Day Draws Large Crowds to Celebrate Health



Healthy Harford, a non-profit organization established by leaders from the Health Department, Harford County Government, and UM UCH, hosted its fourth annual Healthy Harford Day on September 27, 2014 next to the Bel Air Farmers Market. This year more than 1,500 were in attendance, a record crowd, which reflects the County's growing interest in healthier lifestyles. Due to the increased interest in the event, a few changes were made this year including moving to a larger location, a second performance stage, and an extension of the hours of the event. At the event, attendees had the opportunity to

engage in free exercise classes including Zumba, Kick Boxing, Streetwise Self Defense, Paddleboard Yoga, and many more. They also had the opportunity to learn about health resources available in the community. Additionally, a healthy plant-based cooking demonstration, hands-only CPR, and free health screenings were also featured.

Striving to Prevent Suicide through Health Care Providers

UM UCH hosted a Suicide Prevention Workshop in partnership with the Health Department, Harford County Department of Community Services, and Healthy Harford on May 14, 2015. The workshop aimed to provide primary care, pediatric, and mental health providers with the skills and resources needed to employ more effective intervention strategies, particularly with youth and young adults. Approximately 50 health care providers were in attendance. A Philadelphia Psychologist was the keynote speaker at the workshop. Health care providers were given tips to 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 talked about the array of mental health services available for those who are at risk of committing suicide. This workshop was coordinated by the suicide prevention workgroup, which is a subcommittee of the Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC) Behavioral Health Workgroup.



Additional Accomplishments for FY15

Following in the footsteps of the Dental Clinic and the School-Based Health Center (SBHC) at Magnolia Elementary, the SBHC at Edgewood Elementary was also approved as a Reach Out and Reach site in FY15. Staff did outreach to 67 pre-k children during which they read books and did wellness exercises with the students.

During FY15, the Bureau of Environmental Health Consumer Protection Unit completed a survey of all tattoo parlors in Harford County. The purpose was to verify that tattoo parlors are keeping proper documentation and taking appropriate sanitation measures. If deficiencies were observed, education was provided to both parlor owners and staff.

Over a five week period, the Health Department's Peer Recovery Coaches facilitated a forty hour training for fifteen Father Martin Ashley's staff and volunteers. The training served as a certification process for those who participated to become CCAR Certified Recovery Coaches.

The Cancer Prevention Program partnered with the Kaufman Cancer Center for Sun Sense Presentation on May 12, 2015, which was open to the general public. Guest speakers presented information on skin cancer and sun safety. Sun Guard Man was also there to emphasize different ways to protect the skin from harmful UV rays and to hand out educational brochures.

The Health Department launched a YouTube channel in the spring of 2015 as a component of a Quality Improvement project focused on improving the communication strategies with the public. The first video was focused on Emergency Preparedness, but plans are in place to use this avenue of communication even more in FY16.

In recognition of Children's Mental Health Awareness Week in May 2015, the Division of Social Work did educational outreach to Harford County Public Schools. As a part of this outreach, anti-bullying packets, which included both a DVD and magazines, were distributed to all elementary and middle school guidance counselors, nurses, and administrators.



Locations and Directory of Services*

WOODBRIIDGE STATION

**1321 Woodbridge Station Way
Edgewood, Maryland 21040
410-612-1779**

Services: Cancer Prevention, Communicable Disease, Women's Wellness and Colposcopy Services, Immunization, Public Health Education, Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Testing and Treatment, Tobacco Cessation, Women, Infants, & Children (WIC), Adult Evaluation Review Services, Hospital Discharge Program, Community First Choice and Healthy Families

DENTAL CLINIC

**2204 Hanson Road
Edgewood Plaza Shopping Center
Edgewood, Maryland 21040
443-922-7670 • Fax: 443-922-7673**

Services: Dental Care for Children and Pregnant Women on the MCHP Program

HEALTH SERVICES

**1 North Main Street
Bel Air, Maryland 21014
410-638-3060 • Fax: 410-638-4927**

Services: HIV Case Management, Homeless Service Coordination, Tuberculosis (TB) Program

THOMAS HAYS BUILDING

**120 South Hays Street
Bel Air, Maryland 21014
410-838-1500**

Services: Administrative Services, Behavioral Health Services, Emergency Preparedness, Environmental Health, Medical Assistance (MA) Transportation, Vital Records, Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP), and Administrative Care Coordination

CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

**Division of Social Work Services
253 Paradise Road
Aberdeen, Maryland 21001
410-273-5681 • Fax: 410-273-5556**

Services: Teen Diversion Program, School Health Readiness Program

*With the closure of the Aberdeen Community Building, programs have been temporarily relocated and locations are subject to change.