

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



Harford County Board of Health

Richard C. Slutzky
Council President

Mike Perrone, Jr.
District A

Joe Woods
District B

James "Capt'n Jim" McMahan
District C

Chad Shrodes
District D

Patrick S. Vincenti
District E

Curtis L. Beulah
District F

Follow Us!

Facebook
www.facebook.com/HarCoHD

Twitter
[@HarCoHealthDept](https://twitter.com/HarCoHealthDept)

Pinterest
www.pinterest.com/harcohd

YouTube
[Harford County Health
Department](https://www.youtube.com/HarfordCountyHealthDepartment)

Website
www.harfordcountyhealth.com