

Harford County Health Department - Local Health Improvement Process
Behavioral Health Workgroup
Tuesday, June 7th, 8:00am-9:30am
Meeting Notes

ATTENDEES:

Mallory Callahan (HCHD), Judge Mimi Cooper (District Court), Robin Hollar (Office of Drug Control Policy), Beth Jones (HCHD), Susan Kelly (HCHD), Bari Klein (HCHD/UMUCH), Jessica Kraus (Office on Mental Health), Dr. Richard Lewis (UMUCH), Sue Lichtfuss (Mobile Crisis), Sharon Lipford (Healthy Harford), Pamela Llewellyn (UMUCH/Union Hospital), Dr. Russ Moy (HCHD), Paula Nash (HCHD), Joe Ryan (Office of Drug Control Policy), Posie Thompson (HCHD), Brendan Welsh (HCHD), Linda Williams (ACR)

Welcome and Introductions

Sharon Lipford called the meeting to order and asked attendees to introduce themselves to the group. With a full agenda the workgroup immediately began reviewing recent updates from the prevention, intervention, and recovery sectors.

Report on Current and Developing Initiatives

Prevention: Coordinating Community Services

Joe Ryan, manager at the Office of Drug Control Policy (ODCP), began by highlighting a speech given on May 18th by Chris Herren, a former professional basketball player and opiate/heroin addict, at the John Carroll School in Bel Air. Over 800 youth and recovering addicts were in attendance, and he hopes to bring Mr. Herren back in the next year. He also mentioned that registration for the Harford County Drug Symposium (June 23rd) will be cut off at 300 participants. Current registration is at 250 and those interested can visit the county website.

Mr. Ryan told attendees that ODCP wants to work with members to create a provider letter for local dentists in an attempt to warn them of the dangers of over-prescribing opiates to patients. The letter will also serve as a reminder about the Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP), which monitors controlled substance prescribing patterns of participating practices. Susan Kelly suggested merging the letter into a co-signed partnership letter with all involved stakeholder organizations. It was also stated that the Harford County Drug Court will be shifting its primary focus to adults with opioid dependence exclusively, with a special emphasis on getting patient access to Vivitrol®. They are currently trying to work with insurance providers and should hear about the state's award notification by July 1.

Paula Nash, Social Work Division director at the health department, announced that the town of Bel Air issued a proclamation dedicating May as Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in response to the county's high suicide rates. The Bel Air parking garage, which is jointly owned by the town and county, will be targeted for more suicide prevention measures to be put into place including: limited access to top floors, security camera monitoring, diversion signage, and other evidence-based practices.

Sue Lichtfuss, director of the Harford County Mobile Crisis Unit, said that the Suicide Prevention Workgroup plans to provide QPR training to as many Harford County residents as possible (professional

& lay people); 230 people have been trained since April 3rd. There is a link to register for the 1-hour training on the OMH website. Attendees added people to the list that should be approached about the training including: churches, schools, family members, local law enforcement, etc.

Beth Jones, HCHD Director of Addiction Services, explained that upon reviewing several overdose fatality cases, most of them occur in residences and several have been in hotels/motels. The Overdose Fatality Review Team would like to get family members and hotel employees trained and supplied with Narcan™ as quickly as possible. They have recently seen an increase in deaths in which the heroin is laced with Fentanyl, a synthetic opioid analgesic much more potent than heroin, and have noted that addicts are not aware of its presence in their narcotics along with several other substances (notably caffeine).

Intervention: Integrated Clinical Care

Dr. Moy, Deputy Health Officer for the health department, began the intervention portion of the discussion by informing the group that over 300 substance-exposed newborns have been born at Upper Chesapeake Medical Center over the past 4 years, and that substance-exposed newborns have increased by a 142% over the past 14 years in Harford County. He emphasized that each sector is making progress but that communication efforts need to be increased in order to affect these numbers meaningfully. He also mentioned the Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby draft as a result of the March workgroup, the Commission on Women Presentation given in May, and the discussion of a Harford County model for newborn substance exposure as part of Harford County's June Roundtable meeting on opioid overdose convened by Senator Cardin and Congressman Ruppertsberger.

Susan Kelly, Health Officer for the health department, described the Criminal Justice Partnership Initiative grant awarded to Harford County. She explained that the opportunity was presented to the county last year and rejected based on limited resources, but will now be partnering with Washington County (MD), Baltimore County (MD), and Los Angeles (CA) through a 9 month learning collaborative. This project will be an opportunity for the justice department and detention centers to develop new policies for inmate care coordination upon release.

Pamela Llewellyn, social worker for UMHHC/Union Hospital, explained that the hospital will be incorporating short-term primary care consultations and rapid access to psychiatric professionals into their care model. This will help to close the gap between primary care and behavioral health in a way that both providers are aware of the treatment of the other. There will be a non-prescribing mental health professional at the hospital, as well as a primary care liaison that will help navigate patients through tandem provider visits. This model is evidence-based for addiction populations and so far 40 practices have been recruited to partner with the hospital. Upper Chesapeake has started screening each patient for depression upon admission and has already referred 14 patients to behavioral healthcare in the first month.

Jessica Kraus, executive director at OMH, talked about the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) expansion that has resulted in 100 deputies trained since a state grant in 2013 supplied the team with a coordinator. The new Harford County Sheriff is implementing 40 hour/week training for his staff. She also mentioned several community initiatives including the Life Matters Conference which took place on June 2nd at Mountain Christian Church. The event drew a crowd of over 250 and featured keynote speaker, Kevin Hines, mental health advocate and Golden Gate Bridge jump survivor. The Harford County Detention Center will be keeping their trauma and substance abuse grant in-house this year and will use the Trauma Addictions Mental Health and Recovery (TAMAR) treatment manual for group, family, and individual therapy. There is also talk of an event in December to highlight mental health and substance abuse awareness in the community.

Recovery: Hope, Wellness & Recovery

Beth Jones described the Vivitrol® initiative in the Harford County detention center in which inmates can sign up to be educated about the drug and injected prior to release in order to block the effects of opiates for about a month. Although many are interested in the program upon entry into the detention center, they have seen that upon discharge inmates are refusing the drug. She explained that the process is not smooth and that staff have to drive patient records back and forth between facilities. Eventually they do reach about 50% of patients with the recommended treatment, but those numbers could be higher. A Vivitrol® training will be held later in the afternoon for more people to be educated on the effects of the drug and treatment options.

With September being National Recovery Month, there will be the third annual Run4Recovery on September 10th at Harford Community College. The film “As I Am: The Life and Times of DJ AM”, a documentary that chronicles the addiction and recovery of world-renowned DJ Adam Goldstein, is now playing in theatres across the country. There will also be a drug take-back day on September 17th in Havre de Grace, MD.

Special Topic: Sports Injuries

Robin Hollar, grant specialist at ODCP, told the group that sports injuries have increased 37% in Harford county adolescents. This could be caused by a combination of increased popularity of sports programs and new facilities, and is leading to more children taking prescription pain medication at a young age. Her office would like to approach Harford County Parks & Rec to discuss providing educational programs to coaches and parents about the importance of monitoring medications and preventing injuries, as well as to schedule a sports medicine physician to be part of the conversation. This program could be in collaboration with Upper Chesapeake’s program “Public Health Matters”.

The next Behavioral Health Workgroup meeting will be held on September 13, 2016 at 8:00 am.