



**Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC)
Annual Meeting Minutes | October 24, 2019
8:00-11:30 AM | Harford Community College**

Attendance: See Attached

Welcome & Housekeeping

Ronya Nassar welcomed the group and discussed the agenda. She then introduced Dr. Russell Moy, Harford County Health Department Health Officer.

Dr. Moy's Address

Summary of Main Points:

- In 2018, Harford County's infant mortality rates have exceeded Maryland's for the first time. Examples of effective interventions include teenage pregnancy prevention, smoking cessation, WIC, and perinatal regionalization comprehensive prenatal care.
- Harford County's Substance Exposed Newborns (SEN) rates have doubled over the last 10 years. MEGAN's Place was implemented in May as a trusted, safe, and non-judgmental place for at-risk pregnant, postpartum women and their families to meet in Harford County. The organization is effective by building trusting relationships, support, wraparound services, and navigation for clinical connections.
- Maryland and Harford County is seeing record high rates in congenital syphilis. Maryland has the 9th highest congenital syphilis rate in the county.
- In 2018, opioid-related overdose deaths were down 3% in Harford County which was the first decrease in opioid-related overdose death rates that Harford County has seen in 7 years. For the first 6 months of calendar year 2019, there has been a 17% decrease in opioid-related overdose deaths when compared to the first 6 months of calendar year 2019.
- The Klein Family Crisis Center has seen over 600 patients since the opening in June. By surprise, there has been a larger volume of mental health patients compared to addiction patients.
- Vaping and Electronic Smoking Devices (ESDs) has become an epidemic throughout the United States. A mysterious lung-illness has been linked to ESDs and vaping resulting in at least 1,479 illnesses and 33 deaths nationally. In addition, Maryland has seen at least 35 cases and 0 deaths. The Chronic Disease Prevention Workgroup drafted a position paper that recommends all persons should refrain from vaping or using e-cigarettes, particularly those containing THC, an active component of marijuana.

- Slides are available at: <https://harfordcountyhealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Moy-LHIC-Annual-Meeting-10.24.19.pdf>



Health Literacy: It Takes a Village!

Mary Anne Williams from the University of Maryland Health Sciences & Human Services Library presented on health literacy.

- Factors of low health literacy: Reading, Understanding, Listening, Speaking, Numeracy.
- Factors that may hinder understanding and health services: Intimidation, fear, vulnerability, shock of a diagnoses, stressors from family, medical jargon, and reading level, healthcare setting, and forms.
- Recommendations: Use plain language, short sentences, avoid polysyllabic words, explain vague words, have readable font size and style, and give ample white space.

Priority Group Reports/Updates

Chronic Disease Prevention & Wellness: Vickie Ensor Bands & Molly Mraz

- Electronic Smoking Devices have been added to the HCPS policy for being an offense. There is an online platform now for students that have been caught vaping.
- The workgroup put together a position statement on vaping. We welcome feedback and any comments can be sent to ronya.nassar@maryland.gov. You can find the vaping position paper here: https://harfordcountyhealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/LHIC-Vaping-Position-Paper_Revised-10.18.19.pdf
- The next steps are to create a media literacy project for HCPS students.

Family Health & Resiliency: Marcy Austin & Shelby Graves

- The current priority groups are transportation, communications, and family planning. The goal is to address the stigma related to Substance Use Disorder.
- Transportation remains a barrier in the County. Current sources include MA Transportation for medical and dental services, EPOCH for affordable transportation, and Harford Transit Link assists residents in finding transportation services.
- Focus groups were used to receive information from the target population and determine best practices. New materials were developed such as new flyers for MEGAN's Place.

Behavioral Health/MHAAC:

- Rod Kornrumpf from UM Upper Chesapeake Health gave an update on the Klein Family Harford Crisis Center.
 - There have been over 600 cases with a large portion needing mental health services. Of the patients seen, 2/3 have not been seen at Upper Chesapeake. The next goal is to reduce the number of Emergency Department visits that actually need the Crisis Center services. Doing this could free up the Emergency Department.
- Silvana Bowker from the Office of Drug Control Policy gave an update on what they are doing in Harford County.
 - The office has been involved in creating campaign's and public service announcements that reach a variety of age groups. They have also been partnering with groups such as STARS, SADD, the Sherriff's Office, Jails, and Veterans. The Office of Drug Control Policy hosts a plethora of events. Please visit <http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/449/Office-of-Drug-Control-Policy> for more information on events and to see all that they do!

Thank you for all that attended the Annual LHIC meeting of 2019. If you would like to attend one of the priority workgroups, please see the dates below for the next meetings:

- Chronic Disease & Wellness
 - Monday, November 18th, 8:30-10:00 at Harford Community College
- Family Health & Resiliency
 - Tuesday, November 12th, 8:00-10:30 at Harford Community College
- Behavioral Health/MHAAC
 - Tuesday, November 26th, 8:00-10:00 at the EOC