MESSAGE FROM THE HEALTH OFFICER

Our Fiscal Year 2019 Annual Report offers an overview of the Harford County Health Department’s efforts to advance health and wellness throughout the county over the course of the past year (July 2018 - July 2019). The health department is committed to making Harford County the healthiest community in Maryland. This report will provide insight into the successes achieved and diverse opportunities presented during FY 19.

Our aim was to “turn the curve by integrating services,” as evidenced by organizational restructuring that streamlined the provision of key public health services. This Annual Report reviews the good public health work of the Harford County Health Department over the past year, made possible by our staff and community partners like you. For example, through many collaborative partnerships, the Klein Family Harford Crisis Center (802 Baltimore Pike, Bel Air, 1-800-NEXT-STEP) 24/7 hotline and walk-in crisis center for urgent behavioral health services opened its doors. We were instrumental in supporting this innovative effort, leveraging over $1 million dollars in State funding for launching the project. The Center will be a critical resource for reducing opioid-related deaths, with our most recent data showing a reduction in Harford County deaths for the first time in 7 years.

We recently opened MEGAN’s Place (Meaningful Environment to Gather and Nurture) in our Woodbridge facility, with the help of a $275,000 grant from the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission. This was in response to Harford County’s rising number of substance exposed newborns and is designed to be a safe, non-judgmental place for at-risk pregnant and postpartum women and their families who need assistance with information/guidance, resources/services, and care coordination/support.

Another important effort for helping those at risk for adverse health outcomes is the Department’s Upstream Project, funded by a $500,000 State grant, designed to address barriers to care posed by the broader social determinants of health, with a focus on care coordination and harm reduction strategies. This project has brought together the efforts of many disciplines, including public health nursing, community health outreach, care coordination, and health promotion.

These new projects support the many on-going, foundational public health efforts already taking place each year at the Harford County Health Department, including the hundreds and thousands of client encounters with our clinical, wraparound, environmental health, and administrative support services, as well as our efforts for improving population health. For Fiscal Year 2020, we look forward to fortifying our current efforts, building on our organizational strengths, and clearly communicating the benefits of our public health work to the community at large.

This is to thank each of you for your part in advancing Harford County’s public health. We look forward to continuing our work and meeting challenges together in Fiscal Year 2020.

Russell Moy, MD, MPH
Health Officer
Harford County Health Department