



Mental Health & Addictions  
Advisory Council



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
**Harford County  
Health Department**



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**Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council (MHAAC)  
Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHC) Behavioral Health Workgroup  
Harford County OCCC Opioid Intervention Team (OIT)**

**Meeting Minutes | January 31, 2023 | 8:00-10:00 AM | Virtual**

**Call to Order & Introductions:** Bari Klein, MHAAC Council Chair

- Meeting called to order. The meeting was held virtually after months of in person due to pending venue change to Harford Community College. 42 people were signed on to the meeting.

**Special Topic | Suicide Prevention Workgroup Update**

- Paula Nash, Director of the Teen Diversion Program at the Harford County Health Department, and Co-Chair of the Suicide Prevention Workgroup, provided a brief presentation on the Behavioral Health LHC Suicide Prevention Workgroup (SPW)
- The SPW began in 2013 through a grant funded by the Maryland Community Health Resource Commission. Funds were used to train primary care providers (PCP) to recognize the signs of suicidal ideation, as data supports that people considering suicide actually visit their PCP within the 30 days of their attempt.
  - As per data reported annual in Vital Records, suicides are 3x more prevalent than homicides in Harford County and the country at large. While homicides often capture the headlines, suicides result in a higher death rate. Harford County tends to rank in the top 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of Maryland counties for suicide completions. On average, 30 people die annual via suicide in our community.
  - Question Persuade and Refer (QPR): to address this issue, workgroup members have trained 35 QPR trainers to offer QPR classes throughout the county, both virtually and in person. Through this effort, hundreds of people are instructed every year (DSS, schools, churches, Office on Aging, Fire Companies, Employers APG, Veterans, general public, and people at risk), in this lifesaving suicide prevention program. QPR is often referred to as the CPR of mental health.
- The SPW Strategic Plan, which is up for revisiting this year, integrates many State and County suicide prevention goals.
  - Elevate understanding and reduce the stigma of suicide while promoting suicide prevention and expanding the crisis system across the county.
  - Expand access to QPR classes resulting in an increase in the number of people versed in suicide prevention.

Harford County Health Department  
Division of Behavioral Health  
120 S. Hays Street  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-877-2340

Harford County Government  
Department of Community Services - ODCP  
125 N. Main Street  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-638-3333

Office on Mental Health  
Core Service Agency of Harford County  
2231 Conowingo Road, Suite A  
Bel Air, MD 21015  
410-803-8726

- Host a regional Attachment-Based Family Therapy training to increase professionalism in this area. To date, 80 people have completed the training, and 2 therapists have been certified in this modality.
- Increase youth specific suicide prevention initiatives, through education, intervention and trainings 57% of people who present with suicidal ideation are under the age of 21.
- Accurate current real time data is currently unattainable. Using available data from the MDH Behavioral Health Administration, we use data to monitor trends quarterly and identify short-term trends, and adjust outreach efforts. Since state data is in arrears, local sources of data from schools, law enforcement, etc. is also used.
- Establishing a Suicide Fatality Review Board, has been a statewide goal for many years. Recently legislation has passed to support that initiative. Results are pending.
- According to new rules, any US Veteran with suicidal ideation is eligible for free treatment, either inpatient and outpatient, at ANY health care facility. As veterans experience a higher rate of suicide, the Veteran's Administration is committed to reducing the suicide numbers. in this population. Caveat, to receive these benefits, a person cannot be dishonorably discharged. As per Joy Ashcraft, Harford is 1 of 11 counties across the United States chosen to receive additional funding and resources for veterans due to its high suicide rate and high veteran/military population.
- A Veteran's Card has been created by Harford County Community Services with relevant information and resources for Harford County Veterans. Contact Silvana Bowker at [sbowker@harfordcountymd.gov](mailto:sbowker@harfordcountymd.gov)
- Join the SPW contact Tracy Kelly: [tkelly@harfordmentalhealth.org](mailto:tkelly@harfordmentalhealth.org) Paula Nash: [paula.nash@maryland.gov](mailto:paula.nash@maryland.gov), or Bari Klein: [Bklein@umm.edu](mailto:Bklein@umm.edu).

#### Updates:

- **Harford County Health Department Report** –Marcy Austin and Andrea Pappas
- Marcy Austin, Health Officer of the Harford County Health Department, presented on:
  - Healing Heart Wellness, a group that supports young people with ADHD, anxiety, autism, etc., and providers help them leverage their strengths and to build healthy habits.
  - One North Main Family Center which through a grant from the Community Health Resource Commission, provides dental, mental and primary care for uninsured residents.
- Andrea Pappas talked about the new Outpatient Opioid Detox program that will provide Transcutaneous Auricular Neurostimulation (tAN<sup>tm</sup>). This device helps diminish symptoms of opioid withdrawal.
  - Noninvasive treatment. The device is worn on the outside of the left ear and stimulates two cranial nerves. To be done at an outpatient level and the patient should be connected through the Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) at the Harford County Health Department.
  - WBAL interview with Dr. Julie Stancliff is available on social media and at the link below: <https://www.wbaltv.com/article/harford-county-new-technology-battle-opioid-addiction/42623157>
  - For any questions about this new program, reach out to the Harford County Health Department at 410-877-2341 or Andrea Pappas: [andrea.pappas@maryland.gov](mailto:andrea.pappas@maryland.gov)
- Continue to recruit for counselors, youth and adult providers.
- Preparing for CARF accreditation on February 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>.

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- **Department of Community Services/Office of Drug Control Policy (ODCP)** – Tara Lathrop
  - Introduced the new Director of the Department of Community Services Joe Sliwka
  - National Opioid Settlement received \$801,533 in funding and is working with the State and OCCC for guidance on how to utilize the money. Additional funds are pending.
  - Peer Networking and Professional Development Alliance partnership with ACR held bi-monthly meetings. Brandon Welsh from MDH gave a presentation on Peer Service Reimbursement.
  - Recovery Coach Academy to receive certifications to become Peer Certified Specialist will be offered in February and March. Email Meg Kaiser: ([mtkiaser@harfordcountymd.gov](mailto:mtkiaser@harfordcountymd.gov))
  - Innovations in Recovery Infrastructure Support (IRIS) Fellowship. Emphasis on recovery and wellness. Quality Improvement focus on the peer recovery workforce in Harford County.
  - First Responders Peer2Peer Initiative to meet on common ground and talk to their peers and share experiences, as they are at a higher risk of suicide and substance use. Goal is to help First Responders to be able to cope in a healthy way. First meeting in March, to help participants understand their role in recovery and response to overdoses/substance use.
  - Academic Detailing – education 1 on 1 with clinicians regarding the risk factors of prescribing opioids and other medications. Starting to reach out to orthopedic offices. For more information, contact Sandi Gallion: [smgallion@harfordcountymd.gov](mailto:smgallion@harfordcountymd.gov)
  - Recovery Courts – highlighted in MD Judiciary Annual Report. 24 graduates to date.
  - Pledge Program event on March 7<sup>th</sup> at Youths Benefit Elementary School. CORE and HOPE Trailers through Sheriff's office. Contact Sgt. Joe Sanchez: [sanchezj@harfordsheriff.org](mailto:sanchezj@harfordsheriff.org)
  
- **UMUCH & Harford Crisis Center** – Jennifer Redding
- Klein Family Harford Crisis Center data
  - July 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022. Urgent Care served 1,588 clients; Outpatient served 2,2659, and Residential served 1,023.
  - Mobile Crisis Response, call line open 24/7 @ 1-800-NEXT-STEP, fielded 5,769 calls during this period and 327 dispatches. The Mobile Crisis dispatch team are composed of 2 staff members that will go to the patient wherever they are if needed.
  - Primary diagnoses for engagement at the KFKFCC are depression, anxiety, and substance use disorders.
  - Emergency Petitions, where there is a concern for imminent risk to self or others, can be completed by law enforcement, counselors, or physicians. A total of 304 petitions have been filed during this time period. 166 were admitted to the hospital for further care.
  - 17 graduates of the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) in training in Mental Health and crisis de-escalation and other topic-specific training.
- Your Mind Matters event on May 19<sup>th</sup> at Ripken Stadium. This program in partnership with the Harford County Office on Mental Health Core Services Agency, is geared towards school age youth with the intent of destigmatizing mental health. Contact Angela Gray: [agray@harfordmentalhealth.org](mailto:agray@harfordmentalhealth.org) for sponsorship opportunities and Vendor tables.
  
- **Local Addictions Authority (LAA)** – Shawn Martin
  - Opioid Restitution Fund Advisory Council: next meeting will be held on Monday, Feb 13 from 3-4 pm.

- MCORR and MDRN Applicant Interest Meeting: series of virtual meetings. For new applicants seeking Maryland Recovery Net and MCORR. Dates and info can be found [here](#).
- Pearl Transit Way 2 Work Program offers free to low-cost transportation to low-income individuals.
- 3 Year Strategic Plan was submitted on January 15<sup>th</sup> and has transitioned from a 1 year to 3-year plan. Will present during the next MHAAC/LHIC meeting in March. Contact Shawn Martin: [shawn.martin@maryland.gov](mailto:shawn.martin@maryland.gov)
- **Harford County Emergency Operations Center (EOC)** – Tami Wiggins
  - Tami presented on Rick Ayers, behalf and announced that Rick Ayers has been appointed as the Director of Emergency Services. Two new Deputy Directors are former Councilman Joe Woods and Mike Brunicke.

**Community Announcements: All**

- Bari Klein, United Way, RUN Board Member - The United Way Project Connect event will be held on April 27, 2023 at the Edgewood EpiCenter. Please contact Jennifer Crosson [Jennifer.crosson@uwcm.org](mailto:Jennifer.crosson@uwcm.org) if you would like to participate. Only 40 vendors will be admitted this year due to space restrictions.
- Tara Lathrop – will be assisting with updating the applications for the MHAAC group.
- Zach Kosinski – Voices of Hope located at Aberdeen Plaza offers harm reduction services and Peer Recovery Specialists. Will be adding HIV and HEP-C services. Contact Zach Kosinski: [zachkosinski@voicesofhopemaryland.org](mailto:zachkosinski@voicesofhopemaryland.org) or call 443-993-7055.

**Upcoming Meetings:** Tuesday, March 28, 2023, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. location TBD

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