

FY 24 Annual Report

HARFORD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Harford County
Health Department**



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Letter from the Health Officer

Our Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report offers an overview of the Harford County Health Department's efforts to advance health and wellness. The report will provide insight into the successes achieved and diverse opportunities presented during the last year (July 2023 - June 2024). The Harford County Health Department is committed to making Harford County the healthiest community in Maryland.

The goal for FY 24 was to create more unique programs and focus on accommodating our diverse population of residents. Our Behavioral Health Bureau continued to thrive by successfully offering a comprehensive geriatric program, as well as a mental health support group for females aged 60+, in addition to the many services that were previously in place. Our Free to Be program, a community-based LGBTQ+ program that offers monthly get-togethers where teens (ages 12-17) can find support, guidance, and a sense of community, has increased their numbers significantly since they began. There are currently 22 members enrolled each month.

At the start of 2024, our Clinical Health Bureau began offering evening clinics to their Family Planning clients from 8:15am until 6:00pm for the first and third Wednesday of the month, as well as Immunization clinics from 3:00pm until 6:00pm on the same days. This accommodation has allowed 94 more clients to be seen at a time that works for them.

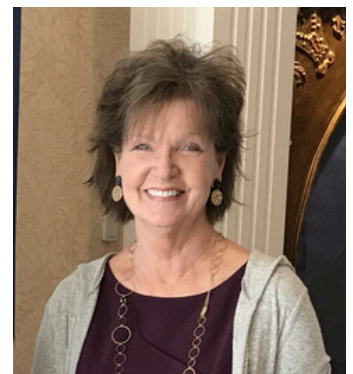
Our Minority Health program continues to exceed expectations with their annual I You We Matter Youth Symposiums for the young men and women of Harford County. In FY 24, they created and sustained a successful partnership with the Ward Y in Abingdon, which served as the venue for both events. They hosted 77 young ladies at the event in November 2023 and 25 young men in June 2024.

We have increased our clients seen in many of our programs. Additionally, we have increased the number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) clients seen and provided 5,288 translation or interpretation services. We anticipate these programs to continue to excel in FY 25.

Thank you for your part in advancing Harford County's public health. The Harford County Health Department looks forward to continuing our work and meeting challenges together in the Fiscal Year 2025.

MARCY AUSTIN

Harford County Health Department
Health Officer



About the Health Department

The Harford County Health Department is the local operating arm of the Maryland Department of Health. The health department employs more than 190 committed professionals to deliver a vast array of services in Aberdeen, Bel Air, Edgewood, and Havre de Grace.

- **Mission:** To protect, promote, and improve the health, safety, and environment of Harford County residents.
- **Vision:** To make Harford County the healthiest community in Maryland.
- **Values:** Teamwork, Leadership, Collaboration, Integrity, Commitment, & Cultural Sensitivity

Board of Health:

- Patrick S. Vincenti, President
- Dion F. Guthrie
- Aaron D. Penman
- Tony Giangiardano
- James Reilly
- Jessica Boyle-Tsottles
- Jacob Bennett



Local Health Improvement Coalition

HCHD directs the Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC) and hosts the coalition's annual meeting each year. During the December 2023 meeting, the Health Officers presented data on the health of Harford County. LHIC members also shared individual work group plans to address behavioral and mental health, family health and resiliency, and chronic disease prevention and wellness priorities within Harford County.

Behavioral Health

- The Behavioral Health workgroup focuses on addressing mental and behavioral health needs in the community, including overdose prevention.

Family Health & Resiliency

- This work group's primary focus is connecting pregnant and postpartum women experiencing substance use disorders (SUD) to essential services, treatment, and resiliency resources.

Chronic Disease Prevention & Wellness

- This workgroup has three main areas of focus: healthy eating and active living, cancer prevention and screening, and tobacco use Prevention. The workgroup is also dedicated to improving health literacy within each focus area. Most recently, the group has placed a focus on diabetes prevention.



FY24 Snapshot of Services



Public Health
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Health Department

Administration

9,880

Birth Certificate
Copies Issued

9,161

Death Certificate
Copies Issued

30,073

Medicaid Transport
Rides

Behavioral Health

3,964

Psychiatric Visits
Completed

15,734

Total Services
Provided

1,496

Substance Use
Appointments Held

Care Coordination

981

New CC+ Referrals

685

Navigated Through
Health Care System

5,288

Translation Services
Used

Clinical Health

318

Flu Vaccinations Ages
1-18

2,067

Family Planning Visits

2,799

Client Case Management
Encounters

Environmental Health

1,147

Total Food
Inspections

800

Animal Bite
Investigations

1,403

Total Building Permit
Reviews

Family Health

6,938

Dental Clinic
Visits

4,166

WIC Clients Seen
Monthly (Avg)

1,437

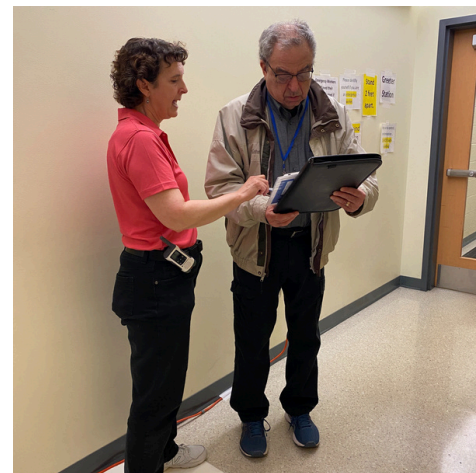
New MCHP
Applications

553

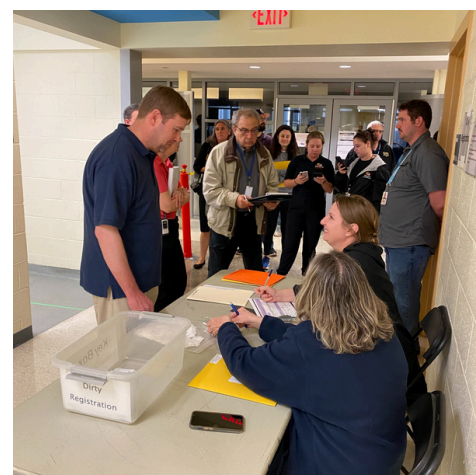
Family Home
Visits

Spotlight: Peach Bottom Exercise

The Harford County Health Department, with its community partners, participated in two FEMA-graded exercises in FY24. On April 16, 2024, the first exercise was held at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with agency partners and led by Rick Ayers, Director of Emergency Services for Harford County. On April 17, 2024, the exercise was held at Harford Community College (HCC) and led by Lisa Swank, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for the Harford County Health Department.



The Health Department is responsible for setting up monitoring and decontamination centers. This part of the exercise was held at Harford Community College and was supported by many Environmental Health staff and other HCHD support staff. HAZMAT is a strong community partner in our efforts to protect staff who would assist with the operation of a community radiological reception center. Routine training is provided to staff regarding the operation of monitoring equipment that would be used to detect the presence of contamination.



In a real event, Potassium Iodide is provided to residents at a radiological reception center if it has been ordered by the county health officer during a radiological event. If a true nuclear meltdown would occur, the health department would have two monitoring and decontamination centers open – one at HCC and one at Fallston High School. The Peach Bottom FEMA-graded exercises occur every two years and show the amazing partnership that HCHD has with many local, state, and federal partners.



Spotlight: Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration

The Harford County Health Department held its first annual Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration in FY24. The event, which was held on Saturday, October 14, 2023, at the HCHD Woodbridge location, was put on to honor Hispanic heritage and the diverse Hispanic community in Harford County. The HCHD team of Spanish-speaking staff and the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Workgroup organized this event and 52 families attended, in the rain.

In FY24, HCHD provided LEP services in another language 5,288 times. This was a 90% increase from FY23. The activities included resource handouts, children's face painting, pumpkin decorating, traditional Hispanic dancing, Zumba, and traditional Hispanic food. Despite the rain, many vendor tables and partners attended and the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Community Outreach and Health Improvement gave 32 flu vaccines and 34 blood pressure checks. The event was a huge success and continues to highlight the importance of outreach to the growing resident communities in Harford County.



Administration

The Bureau of Administration supports all HCHD programs and continues to provide excellent customer service to the public. Administration collaborates with each HCHD program to ensure that their administrative needs are met, enabling programs to provide clinical and preventive community health services throughout Harford County.

Administration services include:

Internal Support Services:

- Budget & Procurement
- Facilities Management
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Billing
- Compliance

Public Services:

- Birth Certificates
- Certificates of Death
- COVID-19 call center support

Highlight: Vital Records Waiting Room

In FY24, the Vital Records Program expanded its waiting room to accommodate the growing demand for walk-in birth and death certificates. The waiting room was also redesigned to advertise the many programs the Health Department offers throughout the county. Harford County Health Department is one of the few health departments in the state that still offers walk-in birth and death certificates. Compared to FY23, the Vital Records Program saw a 19% increase in birth and death certificate copies distributed.



Behavioral Health

The Bureau of Behavioral Health provides comprehensive mental and behavioral health services to Maryland residents. Behavioral Health has integrated services within the county through partnerships with Harford County Public Schools, Department of Social Services, the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health, and other valued community providers. The Bureau continues to accommodate both in-person and telehealth needs for all ages.

Behavioral Health services include:

- Addiction Resources and Treatment
- Mental Health Resources and Treatment
- Medication Management
- Peer Recovery & Support
- Integrated Behavioral Health and Primary Care Treatment

Highlight: Geriatric Program and Intensive Outpatient Mental Health Program for Youth & Adolescents

Behavioral Health launched its new Geriatric Program in March 2024 to provide increased services to our older population. Services include comprehensive neurocognitive evaluations, ongoing psychiatric assessments, medication management services, individual and group therapy, and a specialized mental health group for women ages 60 and above. Behavioral Health launched its new Intensive Outpatient Mental Health Program for Youth & Adolescents in February 2024 following the closure of Teen Diversion. Services include comprehensive assessment, medication management, individual, group and family therapy, and case management. The group meets 3x a week and is focused on treating youth and adolescents ages 13-17.

Looking Ahead

The Bureau is continuing to provide alternative and innovative treatment modalities by offering specialty group therapy sessions and facilitating staff development. We are also looking ahead as we develop a mental health intensive outpatient program for adults and expansion of our integrated behavioral health and primary care model we started earlier in 2023.



Care Coordination

The Care Coordination Bureau is committed to ensuring that Harford County residents have access to comprehensive preventative health services to improve and maintain their health and wellness.

Care Coordination services include:

- Care Coordination Plus (CC+)
- Administrative Care Coordination (ACCU)
- Adult Evaluation Review Services (AERS)
- Nurse Monitoring (NM)
- Lead Case Management
- The Lead & Asthma Program (LAP)

Highlight: Nuestra Comunidad

The Care Coordination Plus Program started in 2015 with one Care Coordinator. To date we have six Care Coordinators. Over the past year we have expanded Care Coordination services to the Spanish speaking Harford County residents who are insured and uninsured. The program is called Nuestra Comunidad “Our Community” Care Coordination. We have two Spanish speaking Care Coordinators. Their office is located at 1 N. Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014. They have assisted clients in accessing health insurance if eligible, medical care, dental care and psycho/social needs. The number of referrals received is growing rapidly. They have been busy visiting with Community Agencies to spread the word.



Clinical Health

The Bureau of Clinical Health encompasses direct clinical services, preventive clinical and educational services, infectious disease, and emergency preparedness.

Clinical Health services include:

- Family Planning
- Health Services
- Infectious Disease
- Cancer Prevention
- Tobacco Use Prevention

Highlight: Back to School Vaccines and Sexual Health Clinic

The Clinical Health Bureau had a very busy back to school campaign for the 2023 season. We provided 367 vaccines during August and September to children aged 5-17. We also held 7th grade vaccination clinics in the Spring of 2024. We vaccinated 46 children for TDAP and Meningitis.

Our Sexual Health Clinic was able to surpass their performance measures FY24. We had over 2067 visits. This was 570 more visits from FY23. We have added two evenings per month and are now accepting walk ins for STI, pregnancy tests, and emergency contraceptive five days per week. For our STI visits we are now offering rapid HIV and Hepatitis C testing at the visit. This will help to better link clients to care faster.



Population Health

The Population Health Unit is responsible for assisting HCHD programs and external partners in improving health outcomes and factors in the groups that they serve. This is done by creating unique events, providing presentations in the community, assisting with data analysis, creating health education campaigns, advocating for health equity, and much more!

Population Health Programs:

- Communications/ Public Information
- Epidemiology
- Health Policy
- Minority Health
- Tobacco and Diabetes/ Chronic Disease Prevention
- Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC)

Highlight: Health Equity Report

In FY24, the Harford County Health Department (HCHD) Population Health Bureau, in partnership with the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Community Outreach and Health Improvement, completed the 2024 Harford County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). The CHNA provides a thorough evaluation of the health status of Harford County. The report includes both primary and secondary data in qualitative and quantitative forms. Primary data is collected through an online survey that is distributed to residents throughout the county and asks questions regarding their health status, risk factors, and health outcomes.



Environmental Health

The Bureau of Environmental Health is responsible for Land & Water Resources, Permits and Plan Review, and Inspections in the county.

Environmental Health services include:

Land & Water Resources:

- Perc Testing
- Septic System Inspections
- Septic System & Well Complaints
- Well Permits & Water Quality

Permits & Plan Review:

- Building Permits & Review
- Food Facility Plan Review

Inspections:

- Food Service Facility Inspections
- Rabies, Vector Control, & Zoonotic Diseases
- Nuisance Complaint Investigations
- Public Pool & Spa Inspections

Highlight: EPL Software and Rabies Vaccine Clinics

In FY24, the Environmental Health Bureau, with the support of Harford County Government staff completed the migration of our residential building permits, demolition permits, and burning permits into Harford County's Enterprise Permitting and Licensing (EPL) software. The EH staff working with these permit types have begun utilizing iPads for field inspections and the administrative staff have discontinued double data entry in these permit areas. The full migration of EH program areas into EPL will continue into FY25. Additionally, the section of Harford County Code 157 that includes Environmental Health fees was updated for the first time in 24 years thanks to the support of the County Executive and the County Council. These changes will take effect on January 1, 2025. Finally, the Environmental Health Bureau has begun to partner with the Harford County Humane Society to offer additional low cost rabies vaccination clinics throughout the year in various Harford County locations.



Family Health

The Bureau of Family Health provides comprehensive wraparound services to Harford County families. Families may access preventive health services, recovery support, home visiting programs, and services that empower them to access additional community and health resources that they might need.

Family Health services include:

Family Services

- Dental
- School-Based Health Centers
- MA Trans

Maternal Child Health

- Healthy Families and Home Visiting
- Helping Families Recover
- MEGAN's Place
- MC Surveillance
- WIC
- MCHP

Highlight: MEGAN's Place

MEGAN's Place understands that maternal health is fundamental to securing a healthy start for infants and predicting overall family health throughout the lifespan, and each family's access to community resources, support, and health services are essential components to ensuring family health and wellness. The team at MEGAN's Place has diligently worked over the past year to engage families, and build up in person support services and weekly family playgroups. Thanks to their hard work, program enrollment has more than doubled compared to the year prior. In addition to assisting families with resources and accessing services, MEGAN's Place is also able to provide families with various household and childcare necessities. This year MEGAN's Place was able to expand on the essentials available to families to include durable goods, such as car seats, infant carriers, strollers, playmats and baby proofing items. Pack n' plays, bassinets, and sleep sacks are also available to promote the importance of safe sleep.



DIRECTORY OF SERVICES



Bel Air
120 S Hays Street Bel Air,
MD 21014

Phone: 410-838-1500
Services: *Administration, Behavioral Health, Environmental Health, MA Transportation, Walk-in Health Insurance Assistance (MCHP) & Vital Records*



1 North Main Street Bel Air,
MD 21014

Phone: 410-638-3060
Services: *Dental, WIC, Teen Clinic, Nuestra Comunidad, Nutrition Services*



Havre de Grace
2015 Pulaski Highway
Havre de Grace, MD 21078

Phone: 410-942-7999
Services: *Care Coordination, Cancer Prevention, Tobacco, MCHP*



2027 Pulaski Highway
Suite 107 Havre de Grace,
MD 21078

Phone: 410-939-6680
Services: *WIC*



Edgewood
1321 Woodbridge Station
Way Edgewood, MD 21040

Phone: 410-612-1779
410-612-1776 (WIC)
Services: *MEGAN's Place, Family Planning, Immunizations, Infectious Disease, PrEP, STI Testing, WIC, Walk-in Health Insurance Assistance (MCHP), HIV Testing, Hepatitis C testing, Tuberculosis Services*



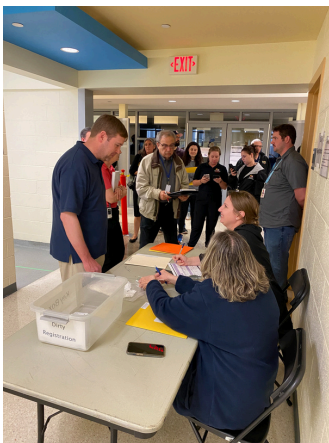
2204 Hanson Rd.
Edgewood, MD 21040
Phone: 443-922-7670
Services: *Dental*

THANK YOU!

The Harford County Health Department would like to extend a special thank you to its employees, our valued community partners, frontline workers, and to all Harford County stakeholders who contributed to advancing the health of Harford County residents in Fiscal Year 2024. Your efforts, insights, and innovative ideas are an essential part of our success as a county. Thank you to Harford community members who shared their voices with us throughout the past year. We look forward to sharing progress with you again next year.



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