

**THE FIVE HUNDRED SIXTY-NINTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF HEALTH OF BALTIMORE COUNTY  
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2023**

The Five Hundred Sixty-Ninth meeting of the Baltimore County Board of Health was held September 22 at 9:30 a.m. via WebEx.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Steve Adelsberger, Katie McElroy, Judy Kistner and Camille Smith.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dr Havrilak, Winona Matthews

**OTHERS PRESENT,** Della Leister; Deputy Health Officer and Secretary Pro Tem, Nicole Garbarino; Program Manager, Tobacco Program, Colleen Wilmoth; Community Health Services, Renee Youngfellow; Chief, Quality Improvement, Samantha Allen; Accreditation Coordinator, Quality Improvement and Kathy Wynn, Executive Secretary.

Ms. McElroy opened the meeting. Should it be necessary to close the meeting, the Chair will conduct a recorded vote on a motion to close. A closing statement will also be prepared that cites the part of the Open Meetings Act that contains the applicable exception, lists the topics to be discussed in the closed session and give the public body's reason for excluding the public.

**I. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of June 23, 2023.

**Motion:** Ms. Kistner  
**Second:** Mr. Adelsberger  
**Decision:** Unanimous Approval

**II. TOBACCO**

Ms. Garbarino presented an overview of the Tobacco Program, reviewing goals, different functions and program components, funding sources and staffing updates.

There are four parts of the Tobacco Program:

- Prevent tobacco and nicotine use among youth and young adults
- Promote quitting among adults and youth
- Eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke
- Eliminate disparities related to tobacco use.

One of the primary functions of the Tobacco Program is providing community education and outreach. Tobacco program staff attend many different community events, e.g.; schools, faith-based organizations, libraries, and more providing education on tobacco, nicotine use and cessation.

In FY 2024, the tobacco program will fund four community organizations, three faith-based and one youth-focused, who will use this funding to provide education to the community on tobacco

and nicotine use. This will include youth electronic smoking device use and secondhand smoke. We are in the process of updating these applications and plan to post them very soon!

One of the most important functions of the Tobacco Program is providing cessation services. Cessation support is provided to county residents and employees. The program aims to meet people where they are, providing services in a variety of ways to best meet their needs. Cessation services are provided both in-person and virtually, in group and individual formats. Walk-in hours are held every Tuesday evening at North Point library. Individuals receiving cessation services also receive free Nicotine Replacement therapy, which includes gum, patches, and lozenges.

We partner with several other organizations, including Towson University, Villa Maria Dundalk, and MedStar Franklin Square. These sites provide their own cessation programming, we support their NRT needs.

The Tobacco Program conducts tobacco retailer education and enforcement throughout the County. We provide education to tobacco retailers on laws, such as T21 laws and requirements for age verification.

We conduct compliance checks. Citations are given to retailers who sell to underage purchasers. We also cite if IDs are not checked during these purchases or tobacco products are displayed in a way that is accessible to customers.

### Funding

The tobacco program has 3 funding sources. First is the cigarette restitution fund, which includes cessation services and community education and outreach. Second is the tobacco enforcement fund which funds enforcement activities and third is a very new source of funding. This is joint funding for tobacco and the chronic disease program. We are working with the Maryland Department of Health to develop a plan for this new funding.

### Staffing

Tobacco Program Staffing consists of the following:

- Program Manager
- Public Health Educator - provides cessation services. Beginning in October, this position will also be assisting with retailer education for our enforcement program
- Human Services Associate – This position will be coordinating with our community grant sites and does much of our community outreach.
- Human Services Associate (Enforcement Officer) - conducts compliance checks and assists with retailer education
- Management Analyst - assists with budgeting and data tracking, entry and analysis
- Human Services Assistant – this position provides enforcement. The position is currently vacant.

The program also has seven tobacco compliance assistants who are our underage buyers. These positions are special payroll work up to nine hours a week.

## Data

The 2021- 2022 YRBS YTS data is available on the Maryland Department of Health's website.

Highlights from the Baltimore County data for high school students:

- Over 30% of respondents reported ever using an electronic vapor product. Over 16% report currently using any tobacco products.
- Only 41.8% of students at the time of the survey who had tried to buy cigarettes in the past 30 days were denied because of their age. This really highlights the importance of enforcement efforts.
- And over 95% of students who use electronic vapor products use flavored products

## Enforcement Update

- Spring of 2023
  - New staff hired and onboarded
  - Retailer education completed
- May 2023- June 2023
  - Reviewed and updated enforcement processes
  - Hired underage purchasers
  - Trained staff
- June 14, 2023
  - Resumed compliance checks

## Enforcement Update by Numbers

- Over 900 compliance checks conducted since enforcement resumed
  - Over 170 citations given since enforcement resumed
  - 15 repeat violators
  - 4 hearings held

## Policy Updates

Senate Bill 259 would have prohibited the manufacture, sale, and shipment of flavored tobacco products into or within Maryland. Any licensee who violated the bill would have been guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to imprisonment for up to 30 days, a fine not exceeding \$1,000, or both. This did receive a hearing in the senate finance committee but it never received a vote. We expect to see something similar re-introduced in the 2024 legislative session.

The FDA set a deadline of August 2023 to finalize the details of rules that would prohibit the sale of menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars. The deadline was missed and the FDA has not provided an updated deadline for when this information will be released.

## **III. PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION**

We continue to gather information for our annual report.

## **IV. DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION BY THE SECRETARY**

Ms. Leister thanked Ms. Matthews for attending our Pit, Stop and Adopt held at Animal Services

### COVID

Numbers are increasing. The CDC approved the new vaccine which is a new formulation that more closely mirrors variants in circulation. Now that the state of emergency is over, the COVID vaccine is on the commercial market. Vaccine cost is \$120-\$150 per dose. The department has COVID grant funds though is not permitted to use those funds to purchase vaccine.

We have less than 400 doses for those individuals who are uninsured as our first allotment. We are working to go to where we know there are pockets of uninsured individuals starting with the homeless population. Individuals will have to attest that they do not have insurance coverage.

For individuals with private insurance, we would refer to their healthcare provider or local pharmacist.

Self-test kits are still available. We have them at all of our health centers. We will continue to provide the kits as long as we receive from the State. Self-test kits are also available from the federal government as during the state of emergency.

### Influenza (Flu)

Super Saturday will occur on October 14 at seven locations across Baltimore County. A location is held in each councilmatic district. Vaccine is free, no insurance information is collected. Individuals will be able to register online prior to Super Saturday. Walks in will be accepted. Prior to Super Saturday, clinics will be held for employees.

### Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)

We are collaborating with three different hospitals on the CHNA. A vendor will review the data and develop a written report. Each local health department and hospital will determine what to use the vendor for in helping them to collect data.

Ms. Leister is working to reach all stakeholders; key leaders, focus groups and general consumers. The survey is posted on the health website and on our Facebook page. The survey will be posted until the end of October.

### Program Updates

Animal Services, Communicable Disease and Environmental Health (ACE):

- We have kennel cough at our shelter which was caught early and is being contained. There are nice, healthy dogs available for adoption at the shelter.
- The shelter will be visited by the Oriole Bird
- Animal Services will be at the last home Orioles game with the cuddle shuttle.
- Councilman Koch presented a bill (46-23) to change the stray law to turning in animals from 24 to 72 hours. This bill passed.

- The Maryland Department of Health reported that an adult living in the Eastern Shore region has tested positive for West Nile virus, the first confirmed human case of the virus in the state this year. The patient is recovering from the infection.

### Clinical Services

- Dr. Branch received a letter from MDH Secretary Dr. Laura Herrera Scott commending the Department and Deborah D’Souza on being recognized with the *FY2023 WIC Breastfeeding Award of Excellence*. We were one of only two counties in our state to achieve this honor.
- Clinical Services has seen hundreds of children over the last three weeks for immunizations required by schools. An estimated 1200 are still pending exclusion from school.

### Behavioral Health

- The OD2A grant ended August 31. We were one of only 40 counties that received a subsequent award.

### Community Health Services (CHS)

- CHS is working with an organization and other hospitals to become a stroke smart county. There will be a public education campaign to recognize signs of stroke. They are working to obtain a proclamation by the County Executive.

### Personnel

- Dr. O’Dowd is officially Clinical Services Chief
- Renee is officially the new Chief of Quality Improvement
- Brenda Lydic, Finance and Administration Grants Division, retired after 36 years of service
- Linda Ey, Cancer Program, retired after 50+ years of service

### Facilities

We are working to put a public health vending machine, which will contain Naloxone, in the lobbies of Drumcastle and the Detention Center. This is an intervention closely tied to harm reduction. Public health vending machines can be used for any number of items. In addition to Naloxone, the vending machines will most likely have condoms and Fentanyl test kits. This was presented to the County Executive last week. He had some ideas he would like to see done in conjunction with the Opioid Strategy Coordinator in his office.

### Trainings/Events

- Dr. Branch presented at the MACo Summer Conference “The Cannabis Conundrum: Through A Public Health Lens”. He presented along with two other health officers.
- Last week we unveiled the new mobile outreach unit which we named MO. Staff had the opportunity to walk through the mobile unit. This vehicle does not require a CDL license.

The van is equipped with a wheelchair lift, generator and awning. It has a front door and back door. We hope to have a “Where’s MO” on the website. Individuals can click the link to see where/what event the mobile unit will be on a particular date.

- The Bureau of Behavioral Health hosted an Overdose Prevention Event on August 23 at the Hilton Garden Inn in White Marsh. The goal of the event was to provide opportunities for networking and learning about available resources. Dr. Branch provided opening remarks for the event. Two community members spoke about their recovery from addiction.
- A new logo was rolled out for the REACH program
- The State held an Opioid Operational Command Center (OCCC) Town Hall at Dundalk Community College last week. An estimated ten individuals spoke. Mentioned was the need for recovery housing along with the danger of Fentanyl. The goal was for attendees to share their ideas on what the State and County can do to address the opioid overdose crisis. Dr. Branch opened the town hall with a moment of remembrance. Staff were in the lobby for those in attendance to obtain information on other services.

### Superstar Awards

Margaret Jarboe - Clinical Services - Maternal Child Health

The MCH Division commended Margaret for her exceptional teamwork and dedication. Margaret efficiently manages various division tasks and actively engages in outreach events, displaying a positive attitude and eagerness to take on new responsibilities. Her commitment and willingness to assist make her an invaluable asset to our team.

April Abner - Community Health Services

During the COVID-19 pandemic, April met challenges head on that involved operating our vaccination clinics. April is a hard worker and was dedicated to the tasks at hand. That combination was supported by her strong organizational skills and resulted in April learning and initiating best practices. April always brings a positive energy to all of her work. She is the epitome of what an excellent public health nurse should be. Her professional attributes and her deep sense of caring for her patients are top notch. April strives to understand the bigger picture of the program and works diligently to attain those goals.

Adele Holly – Community Health Services

Adele Holly comes to work with a smile and readiness to take on the tasks of the day while supporting and meeting the needs of others. Adele's positive approach to her work greatly contributes to CHS' group dynamic, helping the team achieve shared goals. She utilizes her internal network to learn new skills and ensures the CHS team is able to get the job done!

Sarah Sheeley, Mercedes Maldonado, Christina Hauburger and Malaun Wright – Animal Services  
A member of the public who had a recent interaction with these staff persons sent in the following review:

“During every phone call and especially the subsequent in-person meeting, everyone on staff I came in contact with was helpful, considerate and empathetic. Although it wasn’t my animal, I’d be lying if said I hadn’t become a little emotionally invested in the situation. The way we were

treated was a very unexpected and pleasant experience. The staff went beyond their normal duties to assist us. I was beyond impressed. At no time did any of them display an attitude of routineness or indifference. They were attentive and engaged. Simply put, your staff was absolutely AMAZING! Too often managers only receive complaints from the public/customers. We wanted you to know that Malaun, Christina, Mercedes and Sarah are doing a fantastic job and each of them are a credit to both themselves and your office!”

Hope Nesbit, Dianna Curley, Chantal Jost – Animal Services

This message was received from a citizen in response to the quick actions taken by the field team when a feral community cat tested positive for Rabies. Block walking and community outreach through a press release was immediately completed which allowed citizens that were in contact with this cat to be treated in a timely manner. “Thank you to your team and partner organizations for saving my life! Timely dissemination of critical community information allowed all those that needed the warning to be able to take appropriate medical precautions. Thank you very much!” - Marty

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

**VII. REMARKS OF THE CHAIRMAN**

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for October 27.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 10:30am

**Motion:** Ms. Kistner  
**Second:** Mr. Adelsberger  
**Decision:** Unanimous Approval



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Della J. Leister, RN