



Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC)

September 4, 2024 | 3PM

Hybrid/Perry Hall Library



Welcome and Introduction

Ms. Burrell, Chief of Population Health for the Department of Health, opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. The LHIC meets on a quarterly basis with most of the work being done between meetings.

Guest Presentation: Cannabis Update & Employment Issues by Annie Carver, Staff Attorney with the Legal Resource Center (LRC) for Public Health Policy at the University of Maryland School of Law

Ms. Carver's role as an attorney with the cannabis team is to help local health departments and the public health community understand and address public health challenges related to cannabis legalization. The LRC was founded in 2001 to provide legal technical assistance regarding tobacco law. The cannabis team was added in January 2024. Its mission is to help Maryland's public health community understand and respond to the challenges of cannabis legalization. The main people the team works with are local health departments and regulatory agencies. The cannabis team is funded by the Cannabis Public Health Fund through MDH. The team consists of three public health attorneys and a program coordinator.

The biggest project the team worked on earlier this year was the cannabis community needs assessment. The assessment was done to gain an idea of concerns and current challenges. Though the LRC can't provide legal advice, they can research and educate on various cannabis issues as they arise and create educational resources. The LRC provides presentations at meetings such as this. From January to April, LRC staff are in Annapolis tracking what is happening in the Maryland General Assembly and advocating for or against certain bills.

For the Community Needs Assessment, local health departments were asked a series of multiple-choice questions on what people are concerned about. Baltimore County has a number of concerns. Topics which stood out especially in follow up conversations were:

- **Very concerned:** Impact on pregnant and breastfeeding persons, cannabis use disorder, cannabis consumption sites, public use of cannabis, secondhand cannabis smoke, product safety measures for legal cannabis products and hemp products, dual use of cannabis and other substances.
- **Biggest public health concerns:** Impact on youth, public education about the risks of cannabis consumption, specialized education for pregnant and nursing moms, secondhand cannabis smoke and neighbor complaints about smoke and odor.
- **Currently experiencing:** Complaints regarding cannabis odors from neighbors and a lack of awareness regarding safety risks to children in homes with cannabis use.



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- **Currently implementing:** Seeking funding for public education campaigns and heightened tobacco enforcement.
- **Greatest challenges:** Public buy in.

Legislative and Regulatory Update:

Bills Passed:

HB 253-Cannabis Reform Act-Alterations

HB805/SB537-Local Zoning Authority and Community Protest (Passed)

Bills that Failed:

SB 399-Outdoor Cannabis Advertising (Failed)

SB513/HB525-Employment Protections (Failed)

In addition to the legislative session, there has also been a number of things happening in the regulatory system. On May 3, the Maryland Cannabis Association (MCA) proposed permanent regulations which were published for public review and comment. The LRC reviewed the proposed regulations and submitted public comments regarding public health concerns. The final regulations will most likely be done in September.

In 2023, the Maryland General Assembly authorized the MCA to license on-site consumption establishments in the State. The Maryland General Assembly wanted to know what form of its consumption site would be the best for the State and charged the MCA with making the report. The first model would allow establishments to make their own edibles on site and to serve those edibles. The other model would allow people to smoke indoors in on-site consumption lounges. It was determined these are the only two models that would be successful in this scene. Based on this finding changes were recommended that would allow either one to operate. Given that these changes are needed to the law to make them viable, they're most likely not going to start licensing the businesses until after next year's legislative session.

Maryland Cannabis Legalization and Workplace Safety:

Adult use Cannabis was legalized in 2023 for people 21 years and older within certain possession limits. It remains illegal on the federal level. Workplaces that receive federal funds may be required to drug test and have a no-drug policy. The substance is still prohibited generally, the consequences for being found in possession of cannabis are no longer criminal. Offenders may get a civil citation or reference to related services. In 2021, Maryland decriminalized cannabis use and possession within a certain amount.

Cannabis use and possession limits were presented and discussed by the LHIC. Adult-use and medical use cannabis and their differences, employment protections for cannabis use, workplace safety and implications for employers and employees were also presented and



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discussed. (see attached Power Point)

Hospital Population Health Reports

Lifebridge Health

Ms. Dashiell reported Lifebridge Health is winding down from back-to-school events and moving into reviewing their Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) implementation plans to begin to implement those initiatives.

MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center

Ms. DeRocco reported MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center is reviewing their CHNA. They also have a new mobile health unit that will begin going to the northern part of Baltimore City and some parts of Baltimore County of which one site is St. Stephen's Church in Essex. Ms. DeRocco will forward the schedule to Ms. Burrell. The mobile health unit provides primary care, GYN care and vaccinations.

University of Maryland St. Joseph's Medical Center (UOMSJMC)

Ms. Cohen reported that the UOMSJMC is winding down from their back-to-school fairs. They are preparing for flu clinics which will be held in public libraries and a few other places such as the YMCA and churches in the area.

Greater Baltimore Medical Center (GBMC)

Ms. Anderson reported that GBMC continues to work on their implementation plan and are going right into community reporting season.

Subcommittee Reports

Opioid Intervention Team (OIT) - Elise Andrews

The June meeting was in person at CCBC – Essex with a small group work focused on translating Drug Overdose Lethality Review Team (DOLRT) recommendations into an action plan. A data presentation was offered demonstrating Baltimore County Department of Health data aligned with the draft action plan. Participants were encouraged to identify data metrics from their agencies aligned with the draft plan. Groups also identified other agencies not represented at the meeting doing work on overdose response who may be able to contribute data.

At the August meeting, Maryland Department of Health, Public Health Services, provided an overview of the new Overdose Data Portal. This new data dashboard provides current overdose data that can be filtered by geography, time period, race and gender, representing an improvement over the previous dashboard. A representative from the Maryland Department of



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Health, Traumatic Brain Injury Partner Project provided members with a presentation about the intersection of TBI and substance use disorder, including symptoms of TBI that may impact treatment engagement and a screening tool providers can use.

The September meeting will be held in-person at CCBC-Essex on September 20 from 8:30-10:00 and will continue focus on developing an action plan aligned with recommendations from the Drug Overdose Lethality Review Team.

In conjunction with the County Executive, the OIT will be welcoming the Special Secretary for Overdose Response next Friday. The meeting will take place at the Eastern Family Resource Center. A preview of the quick response team will be given. We will also meet with the Torsch Foundation.

In observance of recovery month, an event is taking place on Saturday, September 21 at Heritage Park in Dundalk.

Tobacco Coalition – Nicole Garbarino

- In Fiscal Year 2024, the Maryland Breast and Cervical Cancer Program exceeded screening goals – a total of 622 individuals were served in Fiscal Year 2024, exceeding our goal of 538. Baltimore County was commended for achieving or exceeding all of our annual targets.
- Lung cancer screening is a priority for the cancer program in FY25. This is also an area that has been a challenge for the program in the past. We are asking community partners to share information on lung cancer screening and consider referring individuals who may be eligible.
- Cessation – we continue to offer one-on-one and individual tobacco cessation in both English and Spanish. We continue to hold walk-in hours every Tuesday evening from 4-7 PM; however, we are now alternating between North Point library and Essex Library in an effort to better reach the Essex community. In Fiscal Year 24, approximately 200 individuals participated in tobacco cessation through the Tobacco Program.
- We are continuing to conduct tobacco enforcement in Baltimore County. We continue to see high compliance check fail rates and many multi-time violators.
- The Tobacco Program is offering several grants in Fiscal Year 2025 to community-based organizations. Please contact Nicole for more information!
- We are looking to expand membership of our Tobacco & Cancer sub-committee! The sub-committee helps us decide how we address tobacco and electronic smoking device



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- use and cancer screening in Baltimore County. You don't need to be an expert in these topics to join, simply an interested professional or community member. Please reach out if you are interested in joining.

Low Birth Weight

The FIMR CAT has been working on our objectives:

Objective 1B: Enhance equitable home visiting services after a birth to support moms, including screening and referrals for healthcare, mental and behavioral healthcare, substance use treatment, and other needed support services.

The HOPE Program launched officially in June. Our 3 new PHNs started 6/10 and have pretty much completed their orientation, I have a home visit to do with them tomorrow and Monday and they will be finished. We still are looking to hire two SW – so if you have anyone who may be interested, please send them my way. We also will be looking to put in place a contract for an Infant Mental Health Specialist.

Objective 2A: Establish and maintain a community resource hub to link pregnant women to resources and support services.

Susanna's work group researched three potential options for the hub, each have benefits and drawbacks that were shared earlier, we are hoping that everyone will update their information with Maryland 211, MD Mom Resource Map and FindHelp.org,

Objective 2B: Develop public education campaign about early signs of pregnancy and the importance of early and consistent prenatal care.

The students from Towson University communications shared their presentations and suggestions. Due to staffing issues, we have not been able to work with Communications to get a campaign going.

Objective 3A: Enhance partnerships with faith-based and community-based organizations to have their support staff and volunteers available to help link pregnant women to needed resources.

We have been participating in many outreach events through the spring and summer and have more scheduled for fall. However, due to staffing issues, we have not been able to outreach specific organizations. Cassandra suggested contacting a particular church in Parkville where they have many new babies born each month.

Objective 3B: Data tracking that links birth and death data, other perinatal outcomes, and racial



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and ethnic inequities by geographical area, hospital or home birth, and other factors.

No updates at this time due to staffing issues.

- Allison presented Baltimore County FIMR Fiscal Year 24 referral data from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2024. The information shared included: number, race, causes of death, social determinants of health, maternal risk factors, genetic anomalies, substance use, entry into prenatal care, and maternal zip codes with racial composition. Zip codes are different than last year; but trend continues to be higher on the east and west sides of the county. Elise suggested that it may be beneficial to connect Ashley with the OD2A epidemiologists to see if there may be connection with the maternal overdose lists they get.

General updates from BBH/MCH triage:

- Gena O'Keefe and Kima Taylor completed their contract with the Baltimore County Department of Health for six months to reach out to birthing hospitals in Baltimore County regarding provider outreach and infant safe sleep messaging. Resulting in meeting mentioned next.
- MCH held an inaugural meeting with the Baltimore County Birthing hospitals on 7/10/24. The hospitals were praised for their work in implementing protocols and ensuring staff are up to date on safe sleep practices.
- Goal of these ongoing quarterly meetings will be to come together with Baltimore County Maternal Child Health which will include updates on legislation, resources, and referrals, as well as clarifications on expectations for hospitals and mutual support between hospitals and the local health department to collaborate to improve health and wellbeing of our birthing population.
- We reviewed some legislative updates; I'll share the PowerPoint from MDH with the minutes.
- HB 177/SB 59 Requires birthing hospitals to:
 - provide oral and written educational resources on how to provide a safe sleep environment, as soon as practicable prior to discharge. Written and oral resources can be supplemented by an educational video
 - ask the parents/guardians to describe the sleep environment that they will



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provide at home

- inform parents/guardians on the importance of safe sleep and the risk of suffocation and sudden infant death
 - provide a list of resources to the parents/guardians on where to obtain items necessary to provide a safe sleep environment
 - establish a process to implement these requirements by January 1, 2025
 - HB 119 Expands requirements for syphilis testing for pregnant women
Requires that a hospital determines the syphilis status of the woman prior to discharge of the newborn for the purpose of neonatal evaluation and treatment
 - Expands requirements for HIV testing for pregnant women
- HB 1051/SB 1059 Requires providers to complete and submit a PRA for the patient at the initial prenatal visit
- MDH must establish a mechanism for the PRA to be submitted electronically
 - following a high-risk pregnancy, the hospital or birth center shall:
 - complete and submit a PIMR to the LHD
 - provide the birthing parent resources and information specific to the birthing parent's circumstances
 - call the birthing parent at between 24-48 hours after discharge to evaluate the patient's status and provide additional information if needed
- Fall 2024 Babies Born Healthy Free Pregnancy Support Group kicks off on Thursday September 12th at 11am (flyer attached) – please promote it widely with your networks

Food Insecurity

New goals being submitted for approval by the Food Security Subcommittee:

In addition to the nutrition education outreach, we have conducted in the community, we have agreed to couple those efforts with access to fresh produce options by way of a community supported agriculture model (CSA). The subcommittee are proposing the following goals:

Connect local Baltimore County Farmers to low-income/low-access communities.



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- Partner with local farmers who are equipped to accept SNAP and WIC to host pop-up farmers markets within two identified communities on the East and West side of Baltimore County.

This goal will be executed in partnership with UMD Extension and local County Farmers. UMD extension will provide nutrition education resources and literature to participants. There may also be an opportunity to conduct additional outreach such as Pre-diabetes Risk Assessment screening and referrals to our Chronic Disease program.

- Research and develop a County led CSA market

The committee has discussed creating a marketplace stationary or mobile that sources its fresh products from local County farmers and brings those items to low-income/low-access disproportionately impacted communities. This model will be designed to also serve ALICE households who may not receive subsidies such as EBT, TCA, WIC...etc.

- Collaborate with Maryland Physicians Care (MPC), Farmer Chippy, Community Assistance Network, and UMD Extension to provide fresh locally sourced produce to MPC consumers and local residents. The Food Security Subcommittee will work mainly to connect residents with nutrition education resources as requested.
- The subcommittee will work with our Agriculture Business Development Specialist and UMD Extension to strengthen awareness and participation around salespoint training that equips farmers to accept SNAP.

Strategize with our local DSS office and Aging to Increase participation of Seniors in the SNAP program

- Will provide activities after meeting internally with leadership.

Chronic Disease

Chronic continues to try to make sure we are reaching disparate populations of Baltimore County to provide health education, linkage to care and services and enroll in established health programs to address:

- a. Type II Diabetes Prevention Could It Be You ?
- b. Cardiovascular early intervention Self-management of Hypertension DASH
- c. Nutritional intervention Weight Management TOPs
- d. Stroke Awareness BE FAST



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Program Updates:

1. TOPS

- a. 4 established chapters goals Woodlawn Senior center, Morningstar Baptist 2, liberty senior center
- b. Expansion to Essex July 11 2024 TOPS bilingual pilot Parks and Recreation Center location 5 sessions but some challenges with location and client recruitment We would like to have the opportunity to meet with any hospital physician groups and offer our services in helping their clients with weight reduction. . Reconsideration for alternative Essex site e.g., Essex Library will be pursued.
- c. Discussions with Parks and Recreation regarding Catonsville site as well as Drumcastle site for BCDH employees
- d. Advertising campaign development in process
- e. Physician referral to TOPS in Woodlawn area and security square mall area

2. BE FAST Signs of Stroke

- a. Advertising campaign completed transit, radio ads, place mats in diners,
- b. Provider visits throughout the county to promote printed BE FAST Posters and raise awareness

3. Expansion to sorority and fraternities and masonic organizations to market BE FAST

4. Healthy Heart Ambassador Program-- Health Disparities grant

- a. Launched first session in January last session referrals from Medstar Franklin and self-referrals 3/5 graduates of the 12-week program emphasis on DASH(Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension) 6 clients
- b. Grant funding ending 12-31-24 however partnerships with FQHCs, other community hospitals to do a modification of the program over a 6-week span is being developed

5. Prediabetes Could it be you? Type II Diabetes prevention Nutritional education Life style changes October 2 Walk Day with MDH Local health departments engage with community walkers and partnership organization

6. Outreach events

Continue to participate in Community events and developing additional partnerships Partnership with Maryland physicians Care last month

Homelessness Continuum of Care



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Ms. Sheridan reported they continue to work with the Department of health and the mobile van to target areas of multiple encampments and areas where people are living on the streets and need mobile services.

As the weather gets colder, we are working with the Department of Social Services to open up the freezing weather shelter.

If you are interested in joining our CoC, please email kruppert@baltimorecountymd.gov to join this group to address these issues. Our CoC meets on a quarterly basis and would benefit from representation from this health community, so please join us!

Announcements

- Ms. Burrell reported as a part of our week-long celebration of national Public Health Week in 2024, Baltimore County Health and Human Services launched a walk for Wellness on Friday, April the 5th. Forty staff members joined the Interim Health Officer on our inaugural walk. By June 26, the staff added a Wednesday walk to the agenda. The garage is sometimes utilized for rainy days and also to provide protection from the sun. This initiative has literally grown and what was a one-time event received so much support we continue this every Wednesday and Friday at noon. This week marks the 23rd week of our walks. We also have registered as official participants in the states' Walk Maryland Day. Ms. Burrell shared QR codes with participants that could be used to join the department on Wednesday and Friday or create a walk and become a walk leader in their organization.
- The Department of Health is preparing for its flu campaign, focusing on our most vulnerable neighborhoods. We will have a Super Saturday flu event.
- We are working very closely with some partner agencies about getting health care help for the communities that need it.
- The Department of Health will celebrate our 100th anniversary in October.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.