



Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC)

March 5, 2024 | 3PM

All Virtual



I. Opening of the Meeting

Della Leister, Deputy Health Officer of the Baltimore County Department of Health, opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Ms. Leister, welcomed attendees and new members and turned the meeting over to Co-Chair, Rosemary Burrell, Chief of Population Health of the Baltimore County Department of Health.

Rose Burrell requested attendees to put their name, organization, and email in the chat to get attendance.

Rose Burrell took a moment to welcome all attendees and invited anyone joining for the first time to give a shout out or wave in the chat. She mentioned that there would be a chance to recognize new attendees at the end during the roundtable session.

II. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Rose Burrell requested that everyone review the meeting minutes that were sent out from the December LHIC meeting and if there were any suggested edits or changes to send them her way, and she would incorporate any adjustments before publishing the final minutes on the website. She noted that their feedback was important.

III. Guest Presentation

Ms. Heather Sheridan, Chief of Homeless Services, DHCD.

In Baltimore County, DHCD leads the Continuum of Care and focuses on housing development, including the Office of Housing and Vouchers.

For the first time, Baltimore County has a housing development fund for affordable housing projects, covering various levels of area median income (AMI).

Affordable housing targets various income levels, including teachers, law enforcement, EMS professionals, and county government employees, often referred to as attainable housing. The goal is to make housing attainable for everyone, starting with those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. DHCD conducts point in time counts to survey unsheltered and sheltered individuals.

The point in time count is a 24-hour snapshot conducted annually in January, dictated by HUD. Unsheltered counts are decreasing, indicating progress in housing efforts.



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Baltimore County has about 600 shelter beds, expanding during winter with freezing weather shelters. Numbers dipped during COVID due to fewer volunteers and reluctance of unsheltered individuals to come in.

In January, all shelter beds were filled due to cold temperatures, ensuring people stayed inside and safe from hypothermia. During COVID, Baltimore County received funds aimed at eviction prevention, distributing about 115-120 million to those at risk of losing housing. The funding helped many but didn't reach those already outside. Post-COVID, the total households served is increasing, and first-time homelessness is on the rise.

Pre-COVID, only about 4% of homeless individuals were first-time homeless from permanent housing. Now, it's about 30%, highlighting the rising cost of housing.

Baltimore County is fortunate to have extensive services for the homeless, unlike some counties that lack shelter beds and rely on motel stays. Annually, the programs serve 3,000 to 4,000 people, including homeless prevention, shelter diversion, homeless outreach teams, shelter services, short-term rental assistance, and permanent supportive housing, with about 300 in the permanent supportive housing program.

Baltimore County has about 535 year-round shelter beds, expanding through two freezing weather shelter locations and a seasonal long shelter for homeless men.

DHCD convenes with DSS every two weeks to manage the coordinated entry hotline for homeless services and maintain a real-time by-name list of people needing housing.

Referrals to housing are made every two weeks based on length of time homeless, disabilities, and high vulnerabilities using a vulnerability assessment tool. Many choose not to enter shelters due to concerns about leaving pets, valuables, stigma, safety, space, and privacy. Shelters can be stressful and traumatizing environments.

Shelters have limited storage for personal items, with some providing clear lockers or plastic storage bins, but space is restricted.

Homeless individuals move between the city and county for services. The county-city line is blurred when seeking help. HUD holds counties to system performance measures, including service numbers, permanent housing placements, and housing duration.

Returns to homelessness within six months have decreased. The length of time homeless remains stable, but housing and utility costs contribute to ongoing homelessness.

Coordinated entry hotline (410-887-8463) operates from 08:30 AM to 07:00 PM, Monday through Friday. The domestic violence shelter hotline is available 24 hours. Baltimore County is fortunate to have resources for placing people into hotels if actively fleeing danger and two street outreach teams serving the unsheltered population.



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Prologue serves the central and east side of the county, while Community Action Network (CAN) serves the west and southwest. Veterans receive support from providers like Shepherd Pratt and St. Vincent de Paul.

III. Hospital Reports - Population Health

Lifebridge Health – Has finished reporting on assessment; working on starting implementation process. Campaign to residents in populations.

MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center- Reminder about the Healthy babies, partnership with library. Support group since 2014.

University of Maryland St. Joseph's Medical Center (SJMC). Finished flu shot clinics. 1400 shots administered. Diabetes Prevention classes. Chronic Disease Teams: Teaching Self-Management. Partnership with "The Y", health equity fair

Greater Baltimore Medical Center (GBMC). Working on implementation

IV. Subcommittee Reports

Chronic Disease- Nicole Garbarino- Baltimore County's current chronic disease priorities focus on reaching disparate populations with health education, linkage to care, and services, while enrolling individuals in established programs to prevent common chronic diseases and promote lifestyle changes. Programs include Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS), with four chapters in high-incidence areas, advertising in diners and bus ads, satisfaction surveys, and a new chapter at Randallstown Recreation Center. The B-Fast Stroke Awareness Campaign promotes stroke awareness through posters and refrigerator magnets. The Health Disparities Grant focuses on the Healthy Hearty Ambassador Program for blood pressure self-management and dietary approaches to stop hypertension. The Community Supported Agriculture Grant identifies food-insecure communities and facilitates the use of EBT and SNAP benefits for fresh produce, recruiting farmers to accept these benefits and providing food boxes early next fiscal year. The Cancer program aims to improve screening rates for breast, cervical, colon, and lung cancers among medically underserved populations, offering screenings for uninsured or underinsured individuals and providing navigation services for those facing barriers. The program has served 344 individuals for breast/cervical cancer screening and 127 for colorectal cancer screening this year, with no lung cancer screenings reported yet. March, being National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, highlights the importance of early screening for colorectal cancer, with recommendations for individuals of average risk to start screening at age 45 and earlier for those with significant risk factors, following guidelines from the National Comprehensive Cancer Network and the American Cancer Society.

Opioid Prevention Team -Elise Andrews provided updates on overdose prevention efforts, including a January presentation from the Bridge to Treatment National Expansion Program focused on ensuring the standard of care for substance use disorder in acute care settings. The program has expanded from California to national facilities. The March in-person OPT meeting will feature presentations from Mosaic Group and MedStar Franklin Square about their efforts in Maryland. February's meeting included a data presentation on substance use treatment facility utilization and a national study showing a decrease in the perceived need for treatment despite increasing overdoses. Discussions



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addressed the impact of COVID, access to treatment, and resource needs, with plans to understand the treatment landscape and engage individuals to ensure they can access treatment regardless of insurance status or transportation issues. Quarterly meetings are held in person, with the next one on March 21 at CCBC Essex. Additionally, efforts are underway to expand naloxone receptacles, including a new outdoor vending machine on the west side of the county and receptacles in health clinic waiting rooms, social services waiting rooms, animal services, and plans for libraries and Department of Aging facilities.

Tobacco Coalition – Janet Chan provided updates on tobacco cessation programs, which continue to offer one-on-one and individual services, with walk-in options available. On Tuesday evenings at North Point and Essex Libraries. There are staffing updates, including a vacancy for a Human Services Assistant under the SYNAR Enforcement Grant and onboarding for a Human Services Associate under the Cigarette Restitution Fund Prevention and Cessation Grant. Recently, a Human Services Associate and Management Analyst were hired under JUUL/Altria settlement funds from a class action lawsuit and addressing the public health impact of vaping and youth addiction. The tobacco program has community grants available, including two under the Cigarette Restitution Fund for community tobacco education and mental tobacco education, and one under the SYNAR Enforcement Grant for tobacco retailer education. Five non-government organizations have applied for these grants.

Low Birth Weight- Teresa Messler is working on objective 2A to establish and maintain a community resource hub to link pregnant women to resources and support services. Presentations included representatives from 211, MD Mom, and Find Help. The 211 service offers national coverage, assessment, crisis intervention, and advocacy 24/7 in all languages, connecting clients based on location and available services with follow-up. MD Mom is a HURSA-funded program to improve maternal health in Maryland, creating a centralized web-based resource map covering 25 priority categories. Find Help, a nationwide program with over 67 million users and 600,000 listed programs, facilitates 250,000 referrals a month, working with health departments and providers. MedStar has embedded Find Help in their website. The platform is user-friendly, with customizable filters and language options. Contact Teresa Messler for more information on these organizations.

Food Insecurity – Rosemary Burrell reported that Ashley Wallington is no longer with the Baltimore County Department of Health and will no longer be reporting out for the Food Insecurity subcommittee. Ashley did however, nominate a successor who is currently in training and will join with the group for the annual symposium in June. She mentioned taking part in educational support for farmers to support increasing enrollment in federal SNAP benefits. The training offered a comprehensive understanding of challenges and opportunities for farmers.

Homelessness Continuum of Care- Heather Sheridan- The point in time count was completed at the end of January, and partners were acknowledged for helping with the mobile health van. Startup funds were received to increase youth voice in services for unaccompanied homeless youth (18-24 years old). With the county's ten-year plan to end homelessness expiring in 2023, they are now moving to an annual plan with SMART goals for each committee under the COC structure. There is a need for space for a freezing weather shelter location for the 2025-2026 winter season on the west side and partners are being sought to establish formal cooling centers for the warmer months. They have solicited requests for proposals for a safe parking site but still need space, so anyone with resources



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and space for people living unsheltered in their cars is encouraged to contact them. Becky was thanked for her email and will be contacted again soon.

VI. Announcements

New Members:

- Julie Brophy - Public Library: Manager of the Adult and Community Engagement Department of Baltimore County Public Library.
Public Library has 19 branches and five vehicles that go out into various community stops. They help coordinate events such as flu vaccine clinics and 'Stop the Bleed' training at multiple branches." Julie encouraged everyone to reach out for collaboration and shared her email for contact.
- Diane Richards: County Shelter Administrator.
- Shanna McClendon – Maryland Physicians Care Community Engagement Coordinator.
Upcoming Events include the second annual Spring Health Fair on May 3 at Security Mall.
- Next meeting June 4, 2025 will be an extended meeting (the Annual Symposium) – held in person. More information to follow.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:17Pm