



Howard County
Health Department



Annual Report 2016

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A Message from the Health Officer

Howard County is recognized as one of the best places to live in the United States. The Howard County Health Department is continuously working to ensure that our county is also the healthiest place to live. This is accomplished by providing access to quality and affordable clinical and behavioral healthcare, protecting the environment, monitoring food safety, collecting data to prevent communicable disease, and sharing information to promote wellness. Our dedicated public health staff serves individuals and groups, especially vulnerable populations, and those affected by health disparities.

Through collaboration with other governmental agencies and community-based organizations, we are able to provide more efficient and cost effective programs across the county and age continuum. Specific partnerships with Howard County Public School System and Howard County General Hospital are enabling children to receive health services at school and providing adults with chronic health conditions needed resources to better manage their health and prevent disease progression.

This past year we have been challenged with local emergencies, including record snow, emerging infectious diseases like Zika, the opioid epidemic, and most recently the flooding in Ellicott City. We are committed to making sure we are prepared to respond to these threats and reduce the impact they have on our community. I am confident that by working together with the Local Health Improvement Coalition, and other partners, we will achieve the vision of a community where all residents enjoy optimal health and wellness.

Maura J. Rossman, MD



Maura J. Rossman, MD
Health Officer

Board of Health

The Board of Health is comprised of Howard County residents with expertise in various areas concerning health. The Board meets ten times per year and has general responsibility for the health and sanitary interests of the people of the County, working in accord with the County Council to ensure the health and safety of those in Howard County.

Members

Carlessia Hussein, DrPH, RN – Chair

Darryl Burnett, MPH, CHES

Kevin Carlson, MD

Sheri Lewis, MPH

Paul Nagy, PhD

Deborah R. Rivkin

Robert W. Sheesley

Sue Song, PhD

Gary A. Stewart

VISION

A model community in which health equity and optimal wellness are accessible for all who live, work, and visit Howard County.

MISSION

To promote, preserve, and protect the health of all in Howard County.

VALUES

LEADERSHIP

We advocate for and implement effective public health practices. We are a trusted source of health care and information.

HEALTH EQUITY

We address the social determinants of health to achieve the highest quality of life for all.

INNOVATION & EXCELLENCE

We foster innovation and seek excellence in every endeavor.

COLLABORATION

We build and maintain partnerships to achieve common goals.

CULTURE OF RESPECT & CARING

We value and respect our staff and all those we serve.

ADVOCACY

We inform, educate, and empower to initiate change.

PROFESSIONALISM

We foster mutual respect, transparency, and accountability.

INTEGRITY

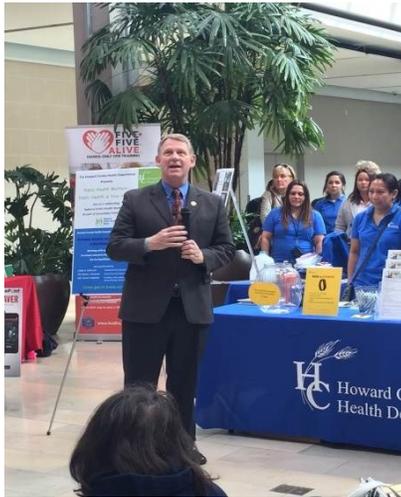
We honor the public’s trust and pledge to maintain the highest standard of service.

The services and facilities of the Howard County Health Department are operated on a non-discriminatory basis. This policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, creed, color, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, and sexual orientation.



Community Outreach and Health Promotion

The Bureau of Health Promotion implements wellness initiatives that reduce health risk factors, improve wellness and safety, and maintain a productive and active Howard County community and workforce. On April 9, 2016, the Howard County Health Department (HCHD) shared their various programs and services offerings with the community by holding its first annual Health Expo at the Mall in Columbia to celebrate National Public Health Week. Interactive informational displays, onsite vaccinations and screenings, and a variety of community education materials were provided to participants by the HCHD bureaus, Howard County General Hospital, and community partners. The event was attended by hundreds of Howard County residents, visitors, and shoppers.



Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition

Local Health Improvement Coalition

Howard County's Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC), a partnership of over 40 county agencies, nonprofits, businesses and other stakeholders that works to achieve health equity by identifying and reducing health disparities is now staffed and managed by the Health Department. The coalition strives to ensure all residents of Howard County have the best health outcomes possible by focusing on four targeted areas: Access to Care, Behavioral Health, Healthy Aging, and Healthy Weight.

Access to Care

The Bureau of Healthcare Access facilitates enrollment into quality healthcare by: processing insurance applications for low income children under age 19 through the Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP); assisting clients with applying for health insurance and providing services to help clients navigate the Medicaid system in the Administrative Coordination Care Unit (ACCU); and scheduling transportation for Medicaid recipients to receive necessary medical treatment with the Medical Assistance Transportation Program.

Child Health Services

The Bureau of Child Health offers a wide range of services for children and parents. They provide vision and hearing screenings to school aged children, case management for infants and toddlers with developmental delays, dental care for children, access to nutritious foods for women and children, and immunizations for children and adults.



School Based Wellness Centers

Keeping children healthy and in school is important. Eight School Based Wellness Centers are overseen by the Bureau, allowing children who become ill in school to be linked with their primary care provider and return to class when they are well, in order to continue their educational activities. The eight schools participating in the program are: Bollman Bridge Elementary, Bryant Woods Elementary, Ducketts Lane Elementary, Patuxent Valley Middle, Phelps Luck Elementary, Running Brook Elementary, Stevens Forest Elementary and Talbott Springs Elementary.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program

The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program is a free program for income eligible pregnant and postpartum women and children from birth to age five that provides access to nutritious foods, breastfeeding support and referrals to other health care, and support services. Enrollment in the HCHD WIC program as of June 2016 exceeded 4,000 participants. An onsite Farmers Market open on Mondays during the spring and summer months has contributed to increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables for participants.



EMPOWER



EliMinate Premature Outcomes With Education and Resources

In 2016 the Bureau of Child Health developed a new maternal-child health initiative, EMPOWER (EliMinate Premature Outcomes With Education and Resources), in partnership with the Fetal and Infant Mortality Review committee to address maternal health disparities of preterm birth among African American women in the county.

Teen Health Matters



TeenHealthMatters.org connects teens, their friends, parents, and mentors to resources that support making safe and healthy lifestyle choices. HCHD partners with Voices 4 Change, a youth-based organization focused on issues that affect young people in the county which serves as an advisory board for this site.

Family OPTIONS

The Family OPTIONS program provides parenting groups, linkages to resources, home visits and case management services to high risk pregnant and parenting teens under age 19 in Howard County.

Behavioral Health

The Bureau of Behavioral Health serves as the only publicly funded substance use disorder treatment program in Howard County for adolescents and adults. Services provided by the bureau include case coordination, peer recovery support, substance use disorder screening and treatment, and support for substance use disorder inpatient treatment and recovery housing. During the 2016 fiscal year, the bureau conducted 21 opioid overdose response trainings, educating 204 individuals to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose, perform proper rescue breathing, and how to accurately administer naloxone until emergency medical help arrives.



Environmental Health

The Bureau of Environmental Health protects county residents by identifying environmental hazards and developing methods to reduce or eliminate those hazards. The bureau inspects food service facilities, well and septic systems, and public swimming pools and spas in the county.

The Community Hygiene Program licenses and inspects public and semi-public pools and spas in Howard County, monitoring water quality and the safety of each facility. The program is also responsible for the investigation of animal bites, nuisance complaints involving excess trash, pest infestations, noise pollution, sewage overflows, hazardous waste, and general unsanitary conditions.



The goal of the Food Protection Program is to reduce foodborne illnesses in the county by inspecting and licensing food service facilities to ensure safe food handling practices are followed.



Clinical Services

The Bureau of Clinical Services is responsible for monitoring infectious diseases such as Meningitis, Tuberculosis (TB), Lyme, etc.; responding to disease outbreaks; assuring case management and treatment of certain diseases; and providing health evaluations for refugees. The clinic provides reproductive health services, confidential evaluation and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV counseling and testing.



Community Health

The Bureau of Community Health provides cancer education and screening services for the prevention of breast, cervical, and colon cancer to income eligible residents who are under or uninsured. The program also offers patient navigation through a care coordinator who can facilitate access to care for those fully insured individuals who require assistance. Additionally, the bureau offers no cost Tobacco Cessation classes taught by trained Tobacco Treatment Specialists and can provide nicotine replacement therapy.

Through the Adult Evaluation and Review Services (AERS) Program, nurses and social workers provide in-home evaluations to the elderly and the disabled in order to determine and recommend services and programs that can foster independence in the home and avoid institutionalization. The Emergency Preparedness and Response Program, also housed within the Bureau of Community Health, is charged with preparing the county and its healthcare system to respond to disasters and public health emergencies that affect the health functions within Howard County.



In 2016, the Emergency Preparedness and Response Program hosted a symposium to share the latest information about new and emerging infectious diseases like Ebola and Bird Flu, with community based health professionals throughout the state. Additionally, they provided Zika virus education and awareness at community events and disseminated over 500 Zika Prevention kits to several Howard County practices serving pregnant women and young families of child bearing age.

FY16 HealthStat at a Glance

Environmental Health	
Mandated Inspections	1,989
Foodborne Illness Investigations	229
Rabies Cases Investigated	698
Pool Inspections	526
Building Permit Reviews	795
Access to Care	
Medicaid Applications Processed	12,325
MA Transports Provided	49,019
Child Health Services	
Avg # of WIC Clients	4,002
% of Breastfed Babies in WIC	47
Immunizations Provided (adults and children)	1,342
Youth Vision Screenings	6,201
SBWC Enrollment	1,836
% Return to Class after SBWC Visit	98
Flu Vaccines Provided	2,062
Behavioral Health	
Behavioral Health Clients Seen	828
Behavioral Health Assessments Provided	703
People Trained in Overdose Response	204
Overdose Response Trainings	21
Clinical Services	
# of Disease Investigations	2,119
# of Individuals Served in Reproductive Health Clinics	1,752
HIV Screenings	1,186
Community Health	
AERS Evaluations Completed	900
Breast and Cervical Cancer Screenings	211
Colonoscopy Screenings	86
Enrolled in Smoking Cessation Classes	293

New Programs for FY17

CAREAPP

The Howard County Health Department's new initiative, **CAREAPP** (Community Access to Resources through Enhanced technology Applications for Providers and Public), will improve community service navigation by assisting clients with accessing social support services and resources. A web-based tool that includes: a live, searchable Howard County resource directory, a risk assessment screening tool, a bi-directional tracking system, and data analytics will be developed and used by a network of partner organizations in the County.

Journey to Better Health

Howard County Health Department, through partnership with Howard County General Hospital and The Horizon Foundation, is delivering a faith-based initiative, Journey to Better Health that will help detect early signs of chronic disease and improve the health of the community. The program offers screenings and evidence-based classes for participants to reduce their risk of developing diabetes and hypertension. The program also connects participants in need of additional social support with trained volunteer companions and resources to assist on their path to wellness.

Quality Improvement in Health Systems

Howard County Health Department was awarded a grant by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to improve population level health within primary care practices in the county. In collaboration with Howard County General Hospital, two Howard County practices will develop and implement policy, systems, and environmental changes to prevent and control diabetes and hypertension and improve the health of their patient population.