### Members Present:
Audra Nixon; Melinda Kantisper; Stacey Bisnette; Jason Bashura; Paul Nagy; Jill RachBeisel; Erica Martin; Matt Reber

### Members Excused:
Emily Greenberger; Paul Nagy; Anthony Wisniewski; Judith Chernoff

### Staff:
Maura Rossman, Health Officer; Antigone Vickery, Deputy Health Officer; Kandyce Hopkins, Management Associate

### Guest:
Kelly Kesler, Linda Ashburn, Reena Rambharat, Angela Cabellon, Nikki Vernick

### Public:
N/A

#### Topic/Agenda | Discussion | Action / Follow-up
---|---|---
**Welcome and Call to Order** | The meeting was called to order by J. Bashura at 6:05 p.m. |  
**Introduction:** | The Board of Health has been undergoing discussion about priorities for the board’s focus. The Health Department has shared data and the board participated in the strategic planning processes for both HCHD & LHIC. The Board has requested additional information from HCHD, Howard County government, & Horizon Foundation to effectively assist with prioritization. |  
**Presentations:** | LHIC (Local Health Improvement Coalition) is centered around health equity & works to identify and reduce health disparities. The coalition is comprised of more than 500 individuals & 185 member organizations. LHIC works very closely with the Health Department & organizations such as Horizon Foundation, Howard County government, various nonprofit community members, businesses & Howard County General Hospital collectively to advance their mission vision and values through this strategic planning process to develop the Howard County Community Health Improvement Plan. LHIC is developing a plan that is broad & representative of the entire community with representation in a data driven sense, in both a qualitative and quantitative way. Data is used to identify some bucketed priorities as it relates to the State Health Improvement Process. LHIC translates the Community Health Improvement Plan, which is broad & representative of all 185 organizations individually. It's important to note that in addition to the data, there are a number of statewide as well as local community plans that | A. Nixon posed the question “What are the evaluating measures the ability for us to know the impact of the work LHIC does?” for discussion at a later time. The Board will discuss priorities in depth at the next meeting. |
are also taken into consideration in the process. There are numerous plans that have been formulated through needs, assessment & community derived initiatives such as the statewide diabetes plan, the age friendly community initiative that Howard County has embarked upon, & the Strategic Highway Safety Plan. This data is used to identify community level priorities which includes equitable health care at global health for all Howard County residents. Addressing health & these initiatives at the organization and system level as well as the specific individual level is also critical. LHIC began a process of collecting quantitative & qualitative data in order to determine priorities & focus on achieving & maintaining healthy communities. There is bit of a disconnect between what resources are available in the county & the county’s population. To bridge that gap, LHIC is focusing on culturally appropriate, accessible, & inclusive activities related to healthy beginnings with gestational diabetes, maternal and pediatric obesity, social engagement & support of mental health. LHIC has also held community forums, roundtable, discussions with stakeholders & community focus groups. The comments & the feedback received giving led us to affirm what had been identified based solely on data findings. LHIC’s main goals are based around engaging community members in healthy lifestyle activities. There have been talks of a unified communication campaign that will allow community members to see their role in wellness as it relates to the community health plan, encouraging & assisting people in become aware of accessible & inclusive opportunities for promoting healthier food choices, social engagement, & inclusive education around chronic disease prevention. LHIC also has a community mental health advisory council, whose focus & efforts lie in working to complement & in support of the various groups, while continuing to update and increase access.

The Horizon Foundation is the largest independent health foundation in the state of Maryland & is based in Howard County. Their mission is to improve the health and wellbeing of people who live & work in Howard County. Horizon has provided about 60 Million dollars in grant making since their inception. The initial gift from Howard County General was about 60 Million dollars, and they have grown to over 100 Million dollars. Horizon looks to foster healthy systems environments & behaviors to improve complete health as it relates to physical, mental and social wellbeing. Horizon wants to promote fair and equitable opportunities for everyone in the community and leverage research evaluation. Their role is to help drive system change and to create an environment to improve health outcomes. The foundation has a 4-part public health strategy: Policy, Programs, People & Proof. The Horizon Foundation’s strategic plan, which aligns with LHIC’s, has been extended for another year. In addition, they have a large focus on promoting healthy kids and families focusing on chronic disease prevention & mental health. They are also focusing on making sure that residents have the highest quality of healthcare, right up until the end of their lives with end of life care, advanced directives, elder adult mental health services & ensuring there is a full continuum of crisis services in the community. Horizon is committed to eliminating health disparities in communities of color. The foundation also uses qualitative data from the county & state level to underscore health equity. Much of their funding is earmarked for innovation. They collaborate with county & state government, the Health Department & other community groups from a philanthropic stand point.
The County’s role is unique, in that they have various resources as a government entity. Not only are they a governing body, they are also tasked with coordinating services. Dr. Rossman & HCGH act as expert advisors as it relates to health policies. Howard County Government is currently determining how to leverage their resources & funding aspects strategically. There are challenges regarding staffing. County continues to remain focused on vaccine efforts & ensuring that there are no vaccine inequities. $20 million was allotted initially with Care's funding & recovery is still going to continue. With the next round of funding, $68 million, County is looking at the critical industries that are directly related to health emergency. Considering all social determinants of health, County is continuously looking at ways to be creative & determine where those funding needs are. Vaccination rates today are 95% who have received, at least 1 dose, ages 12 and older. 5 to 11-year old’s are less than 50% right now. The pandemic has affected the County’s timing & priorities. Suicide continues to be leading cause of death for youth age ages 15 to 19. 40% of adults are struggling with mental health or substance misuse. County has a $2 million commitment & partnership with the school system, so that there is direct access to a social worker. There is also progress being made on growing mobile crisis teams to ensure there's 24/7 coverage. As an administration, County is really focused on continuum of care, particularly with substance misuse. They provided $1 million to Shepherd Pratt & $1.5 million that was also provided for case managers, peer support specialists and other wrap around services. The County Executive took a look at major statewide & national priorities. He testified in Annapolis & advocated for the Maryland Health Equity Resources Act, which now provides $50 million in statewide resources and grants to reduce health disparities & improve health outcomes. He has also supported drug prescription affordability. There is now a prescription drug affordability board, which is meant to help reduce the high cost of necessary & lifesaving medications. County’s major priorities are going to be dictated by the data. The focus is on health outcomes, chronic disease, diabetes, & maternal health. County continues to evaluate the policy & funding priorities as well as determining the right timing. As 1 of 4 counties in the nation to be recognized by the Robert Johnson Foundation, Howard County is committed to the culture of health.

Next meeting is January 25, 2021.