



MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Maryland Community Health Resources Commission

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CHRC News

Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports Update

The Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports is an initiative to support student behavioral health and other related needs. The first RFP under this initiative is expected to be released in **August**. To sign up for the Consortium's mailing list, click [HERE](#).

The Consortium most recently met on July 28, 2023. Meeting materials can be found [HERE](#).

Pathways to Health Equity Program Update

The Community Health Resource Commission has submitted the Pathways to Health Equity Program's July 2023 legislative report. This report provides a status update on the nine grantees' implementation strides and progress to date. The Pathways implementation period for the nine programs will continue through April 30, 2024. The next phase of the program, the Health Equity Resource Communities (HERC) Call For Proposals (RFP), will be released in October 2023. The Legislative Report can be found [HERE](#).

For more information about HERC grants to address health disparities, improve health outcomes, expand access to primary care and prevention services, and help reduce health care costs, click [HERE](#).

Pathways Grantee News



This month's newsletter features the Pathways grant to **Greater Baltimore Medical Center**. This two-year, \$1.5 million grant supports the work of the "In-Home and Neighborhood Approach to Health Equity" program, which aims to address health disparities, improve health outcomes, improve access to primary care, promote primary and secondary prevention services, and reduce health care costs and hospital admission and readmissions in Baltimore's African American and Hispanic communities.

The program accomplishes its mission by providing primary and preventative care services, including vaccinations and screenings, disease management, and care

coordination services regardless of a participant's ability to pay. The grant also supports Gilchrist's Elder Medical Care's efforts to provide in-home primary care for elderly patients who cannot travel to the Jonestown clinic. Finally, the program helps address Social Determinants of Health (SDoH), such as food insecurity, transportation issues, housing instability, mental health needs, and other barriers to care.

At the grant period halfway mark, GBMC has served over 600 individuals with diabetes, obesity, and/or challenges relating to behavioral health or SDoH through their Jonestown Clinic and Gilchrist's Elder Medical Care practice, all of whom were subsequently referred to a primary care provider. Approximately 100 elderly patients received disease management and care coordination services in their home.

The success of the program has not gone unrecognized. In May, Karen Thompkins (Director of Community Partnerships at GBMC) and Wayman Scott (Associate Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Community Relations at Gilchrist) both pictured below, were honored by the Daily Record and the **Maryland Hospital Association as 2023 Community Outreach Health Care Heroes**. Honorees include doctors, nurses, technicians, administrators, and critical care service team members who deliver health services to underserved communities across the state.

A video announcing the Community Outreach honorees can be viewed [HERE](#). You may also read about Mr. Scott's and Ms. Thompkins' honors [HERE](#).

Karen Thompkins
(Director of
Community
Partnerships at GBMC)



Wayman Scott
(Associate Director of
Diversity, Equity, and
Inclusion and
Community Relations
at Gilchrist)



Grantee News

Primary Care Coalition Completes CHRC Food Security Grant in Prince George's County



primary care coalition

The Primary Care Coalition (PCC) recently completed a CHRC grant to expand its Food is Medicine program. The program combines clinic-based screenings with

community-based food assistance and nutrition/diabetes management education to improve diabetes management and long-term disease prevention. First implemented in Montgomery County, CHRC funding allowed the program to expand its service area into Prince George's County. It also addressed issues around food security that were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly compensating for unexpected income loss. Community health workers were trained to link food-insecure patients to food assistance and food-insecure patients with diabetes or prediabetes to nutrition education as well.

In total, the program served 2,165 individuals, exceeding PCC's goal by over 900 participants. By combining food assistance referrals with nutritional education, PCC enabled diabetic and prediabetic program participants to make significant changes in their diets that translated into measurable, positive health outcomes. At the end of their participation in the program, more than 60% of program participants reported consuming less soda, fast food, and high-salt foods than they did before the program, and more than 55% reported increased consumption of fruits and vegetables. Those changes translated into clinical measures as well, with more than 60% of program participants improving their A1c or maintaining it at a healthy level, and more than 55% reducing their BMI or maintaining it at a healthy level.

The program also received \$35,000 from the Nexus Montgomery Regional Partnership for a short-term pilot to test Food is Medicine concepts as part of wraparound services for CDC-approved diabetes self-management programming. While the FIM pilot has now wrapped up, PCC's experience has shown the benefits and long-term impacts of this intervention. PCC and their partners are interested in testing the model more rigorously so it can be offered as an evidence-based diabetes management program.

To learn more about CHRC grants that address diabetes and food security, click [HERE](#).



Update - Anne Arundel Safe Stations

In 2018, the CHRC awarded a two-year, \$500,000 grant to the Anne Arundel County Mental Health Agency to expand its Safe Stations program. This program allows individuals struggling with substance

use disorders to seek treatment by walking into any Anne Arundel County police or fire station and asking for help. Then, a mobile crisis team provides access to those seeking treatment to recovery services, care coordination, and peer support.

CHRC funding supported an additional mobile crisis team, allowing the program to serve 749 individuals. 504 individuals were referred to and received treatment. 522 individuals received care coordination services. The team also responded to over 1,900 overdoses in Anne Arundel County during the same timeframe. To sustain the

program, the Agency was able to leverage additional funding from the Maryland Behavioral Health Administration's State Opioid Response grant and local support.

While the CHRC grant ended three years ago, Safe Stations are still operating. Two recent articles highlight the success of the program. In July 2023, Dr. George Everly, a professor at the Johns Hopkins Schools of Medicine and Public Health, published an article in *Psychology Today* that praised the Safe Stations program for using "evidence-based acute care and compassion." The article observes that 70% of patients are connected to treatment after getting involved in the program. Dr. Everly also discusses the effect this program has had on reducing crime in Anne Arundel County. The article can be found [HERE](#).

Another article, published in *Crisis, Stress, and Human Resilience: An International Journal* by Dr. Everly, Lt. Steve Thomas of the Anne Arundel County Police Department, and Jennifer Corbin, Director of Anne Arundel County Crisis Response describes the program's support for individuals trying to navigate the substance abuse treatment system by themselves. It also takes a deeper dive into the psychological underpinnings of the program and its effect on crime in Anne Arundel County. This article can be found [HERE](#).

To learn more about CHRC grants that address behavioral health, click [HERE](#).

Events

August is National Immunization Awareness Month

August is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM), an annual observance to highlight the importance of routine vaccination for people of all ages. Information and resources for healthcare professionals, parents and patients can be found on the [CDC](#) website.

About the Commission

Wes Moore, Governor

Aruna Miller, Lieutenant Governor

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary, Maryland Department of Health

CHRC Commissioners: Edward J. Kasemeyer, Chair, Scott Gibson, Flor Giusti, Maria J. Hankerson, PhD, David Lehr, Karen-Ann Lichtenstein, Roberta Loker, Carol Masden, Sadiya Muqueeth, DrPH, Destiny-Simone Ramjohn, PhD, TraShawn Thornton-Davis, MD.

Mark Luckner, Executive Director

MCHRC | 45 Calvert Street, Room 336, Annapolis, MD 21410

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