

**MARYLAND STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON  
HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Dennis R. Schrader  
Secretary  
Maryland Department of Health  
201 West Preston Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201

RE: COMAR 10.52.07.04B - 2021 Biennial Report of the State Advisory Council on Health and Wellness

Dear Secretary Schrader:

Pursuant to COMAR 10.52.07.04B, the State Advisory Council on Health and Wellness (the Council) is directed to submit a biennial report of its activities. This letter serves as the Council's 2021 report, and describes its activities during the years 2020 and 2021.

The Council is pleased to help improve the lives of Marylanders by addressing important public health challenges. If you have any questions about this report, please contact Ms. Kristi Pier, Director of the Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, at 410-767-6722.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Kiel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Jessica Kiel, MS, RDN, LDN  
Registered, Licensed Dietitian-Nutritionist  
Chair

cc: Jinlene Chan, MD, MPH, FAAP, Deputy Secretary, Public Health Services  
Donna Gugel, MHS, Director, Prevention and Health Promotion Administration  
Pamela Williams, MHA, Director, Cancer and Chronic Disease Bureau  
Kristi Pier, MHS, MCHES, Director, Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Control

**MARYLAND STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON  
HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

2021 Biennial Legislative Report

COMAR 10.52.07.04B

January 2022

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## Overview

The State Advisory Council on Health and Wellness (the Council) was created by Senate Bill 38 - Department of Health and Mental Hygiene - Updating Advisory Boards and Councils during the 2017 Maryland General Assembly Session. The Council assumed the responsibilities of the State Advisory Council on Arthritis and Related Diseases, the State Advisory Council on Heart Disease and Stroke, and the State Advisory Council on Physical Fitness. To continue the work of these advisory councils, the Council operates four committees: Arthritis, Diabetes, Heart Disease and Stroke, and Physical Fitness.

Further, the Council promotes evidence-based programs for developing healthy lifestyles, and for the prevention, early detection, and management of chronic diseases. The Council makes recommendations to the Maryland Department of Health (the Department) related to health, wellness, and chronic disease prevention.

In addition to their statutorily required duties, the Council is the designated Advisory Committee for the Department's federal Preventive Health and Health Services (PHHS) Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The PHHS Block Grant requires an Advisory Committee within the State to meet at least twice annually to review progress and provide guidance and approval of the annual PHHS Block Grant workplan and budget. The PHHS Block Grant provides funding to the Department to address Healthy People 2020/2030 objectives, including chronic disease and emerging issues, such as building Maryland's Community Health Worker program.

## Membership

The Council is comprised of 34 members. Twenty-eight are appointed by the Secretary of Health (the Secretary) to four-year terms, and four serve ex-officio. Additionally, the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities and the Maryland Association of County Health Officers each have a representative. Each Council member serves on at least one of the Council's four Committees.

Ms. Jessica Kiel served as Chair for the Council from October 2019 to September 2021, and was reappointed to this role by the Secretary on October 1, 2021. Current council members are listed below.

<b>Maryland Department of Health</b> <i>Pamela Williams, MHA</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Sumit Bassi, MD</i>
<b>Maryland State Department of Education</b> <i>Jason Semanoff</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Crystal Bell</i>
<b>Maryland Department of Aging</b> <i>Cameron Pollock</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Teresa Titus-Howard, PhD, MSW, MHA</i>
<b>Maryland Department of Disabilities</b> <i>Jennifer Eastman</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Lois Freeman, DNP</i>
<b>Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities</b>	<b>Public</b> <i>Vacant</i>

<i>Namisa Kramer</i>	
<b>Maryland Association of County Health Officers</b> <i>Roger L. Harrell</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Kristin Watson, Pharm.</i>
<b>American Heart Association</b> <i>Seth Martin, MD</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Vanina Wolf, MS, L.Ac.</i>
<b>Arthritis Foundation</b> <i>Vacant</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Mary Pat Bertacchi, MS, RDN</i>
<b>American Diabetes Association, Maryland Chapter</b> <i>Titilayo Ogunmakinwa</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Jonathan Dayton, IAAI-FIT, NREMT</i>
<b>Johns Hopkins Medicine</b> <i>Gary Gerstenblith, MD</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Julie Maneen</i>
<b>MedChi</b> <i>Aruna Nathan, MD</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Erika Prolifi</i>
<b>University of Maryland</b> <i>Vivienne Rose, MD</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Vacant</i>
<b>Maryland Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics</b> <i>Mychelle Farmer, MD</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Geeta Sharma, MPT</i>
<b>Maryland Nurses Association</b> <i>Vaple Robinson, PhD</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Rachel Pigott, OTR/L</i>
<b>Maryland Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics</b> <i>Jessica Kiel, MS, RDN</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Afton Thomas, MD</i>
<b>American College of Emergency Physicians*</b> <i>Vacant</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Sara Vaser, MD</i>
<b>Public**</b> <i>Mary Backley</i>	<b>Public</b> <i>Pamela Xenakis, RDN</i>

\* The American College of Emergency Physicians relinquished their designated seat on the Council via written correspondence in October, 2019.

\*\* Criteria for the 18 at-large members of the general public include meeting at least one of the following:

- Individuals with a chronic disease or family members of an individual with a chronic disease;
- Licensed healthcare providers;
- Individuals with a physical fitness background;
- Employers or representatives of the business sector;
- Representatives of health insurers;
- Representatives of community-based organizations; or
- Individuals with an expressed interest in health and wellness.

## Committee Priorities

The Council is divided into the minimum four statutorily required Committees, and in February of 2018, each Committee identified a Chair or Co-Chairs. After Chairs and Co-Chairs were selected, the Committees identified goals, potential priorities, and actionable tasks for the next

two years, and voted to affirm priorities. During 2021, action plans were updated and aligned with previous goals.

The priorities and workplans for the four Committees align the Council's goals with the Department's mission. Areas of focus for all Committees include:

- Working with providers when possible to improve healthcare outcomes and ensure standards of care are met;
- Aligning existing resources in the State to further the Council's mission;
- Reviewing baseline data, creating objectives with measurable targets, and determining which activities the Council will undertake; and
- Ensuring measurement and tracking of Council activities.

Each Committee meets separately, outside of the larger Council meetings at regular intervals.

## **Council Activities and Meetings**

During 2020 and 2021, the Council met the obligations of their advisory role for the PHHS Block Grant by creating partnerships with stakeholders and working with these stakeholders to develop and promote educational programs in Maryland on topics related to the Council's mission. The Council met four times in 2020 and four times in 2021. In addition to fulfilling their required duties as the PHHS Block Grant Advisory Committee, the Council heard from a variety of speakers and considered a wide breadth of topics including but not limited to: the Maryland legislative process, the Department's HPV Task Force, the Maryland Dental Coalition, the Coordinating Center, the Maryland Primary Care Program, 2018 data on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), and updates to the Maryland Diabetes Action Plan. Meeting dates are listed below.

### 2020

January 15  
April 15  
July 15  
October 15

### 2021

January 20  
April 20  
July 21  
October 21

## **Council Legislative Activity**

In addition to the noted tasks, the Council reviewed legislation relevant to its mission in both the 2020 and 2021 legislative sessions of the Maryland General Assembly. The Council's Legislative Ad Hoc Committee provided leadership for the Council to review and take the following positions (during the 2020 session, quorum was not reached for any of the legislative-related

meetings. Accordingly, no positions were taken):

- House Bill 134 (2021), Public Health - Business Regulation – Flavored Tobacco Products – Prohibition. Letter of Support. This was an emergency bill that sought to prohibit businesses licensed to manufacture, sell, buy, and store tobacco products from manufacturing, shipping, importing, or selling any flavored tobacco products, which included cigarettes, other tobacco products, and electronic smoking devices (ESDs).
- House Bill 1296 (2021), Education - Public School Students - Daily Physical Activity (Student Health and Fitness Act). Letter of Support. This bill had a goal of integrating at least 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity each week in public elementary schools, with a minimum of 90 minutes dedicated to physical education and the remaining time to recess.
- Senate Bill 365 (2021) Public Health - Neighborhood Business Development Program – Food Desert Projects. Letter of Support. This bill sought to expand the scope of the Neighborhood Business Development Program (NBDP) in order to retain businesses that offer access to healthy foods in food deserts and areas that serve food deserts.

## **Conclusion**

The Council will maintain focus on its mission of promoting evidence-based programs for developing healthy lifestyles, and for the prevention, early detection, and management of chronic diseases. In 2021, each Council meeting included a member highlight, allowing members to share information about the mission and work of their organization. The Council will continue its work to educate its members about relevant topics, invite members to share their expertise, and inform on legislation impacting health and wellness. In addition, the Council will support and collaborate with the Department on emerging issues, as requested. The Council looks forward to advancing its goal of helping all Marylanders to develop healthy lifestyles.