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**Allegany County Health Planning Coalition**

Meeting Summary

January 14, 2025

This meeting was held via MS Teams.

**INDIVIDUALS PRESENT**

Melissa Nething, ACHD Elizabeth Little, UPMC

Dr. Jennifer Corder, ACHD Susan Stewart, AHEC West

Paula McKenzie, ACHD Jim Raley, Archway

Krista Llewellyn, UPMC Samantha Kennedy, ACPS

Melissa Clark, AHEC West Carrie Duckworth, ACHD

Julie Teeter, AHEC West Lisa McCoy, UMD

Tracey Leonard, ACPS Corey Edmunds, Mountain Laurel

Mindy Bradshaw, MPC Matt Thomas, MPC

Jordan Rhoads, ACHD Jennifer Smith, ACHD

Jordan Lewis, ACHD Kim Rice, ACPS

Haley Guillot, ACHD Ellie Folk, ACHD

Tahmya Delozier, PCM Jonathan Dayton, MRHA

Carey Moffatt, UPMC Jen Thomas, WellSky

Laura Knotts, ACHD Paula Fuller, ACM

Theresa Stahl, ACHD Renee Knisely, LMB

Susan Walter, TSCHC Raghu Reddy, Western MD Surg Center

Gail Kenner, ACHD Sarah Bush, CareFirst

Sheila Robertson, TSWHC Tracey Bryant, MPC

Lorena de Leon, MPC Brittany Helmstetter, UPMC

Jennifer Lee-Steckman, ACHD George Townsend, Legal Resource Ctr, UMD

Terri Brown, ACHD

1. **INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME**

Melissa welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **ADOPT MINUTES of November 12, 2024**

Melissa asked if there were any changes or additions to the November 12, 2024, minutes, hearing none; Susan Stewart made a motion to accept the minutes and Jordan Lewis seconded. Minutes were approved as submitted.

1. **PRESENTATIONS:**

**Lorena de Leon, DPA, MBA, Sr. Director, Population Health and SDoH for Maryland Physician’s Care (MPC) – Allegany Food Initiative Project**

Lorena’s presentation about MPC included statistical information about the number of Maryland members served, their process of designing a social risk score to understand members’ needs, steps to identifying a high concentration of food needs in Western Maryland and looking into the reasons behind the food issues.

MPC stratified the population and used the platform to coordinate services and build strategic partnerships across the state. When screening members on social needs, they discovered that food was double that of other needs. In 2024 when they held 8 focus groups to figure out barriers to access, they also discovered reasons members did not want referred, as well as a growing lack of sustainable funding for pantries and food resources.

Access issues identified were food desserts, literacy issues, transportation as well as the produce piece.

They approached the Board and were approved for a nominal amount of money to build out partnerships with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) across the state. MPC focused on 1500 members that were high-risk food insecure with a large percentage located in Western Maryland. MPC was able to get this project set up in 4 months.

Lorena shared their first attempt coordinated with Instacart and the negative experience so that others would understand the issues and not repeat.

MPC partnered with America’s Hauling for Hope (active in Washington County) and were able to expand to Allegany County by giving $25,000 for the purchase of a secondary Penske truck to do deliveries to the high-risk food insecure. CBOs, Western Maryland Food Bank, and America’s Hauling for Hope are now providing almost 200 Allegany County households with 80 pounds of food (dependent on family size), and it is going well. Lorena listed counties where services are provided: Allegany, Washington, Baltimore and Baltimore City, Frederick, Prince Georges, and Montgomery, and will be opening the first food bank in Garrett.

Statistics for 2024: 21% fulfillment in Qtr. 1, increased to 64% in Qtr. 4, and the target for 2025 is 80%.

Lorena thanked partners at UPMC and ACHD for their help as they continue to expand the program and initiatives. Lastly, she shared information about hydroponic initiatives where partnerships were developed and funding donated for Horizon Goodwill and Washington County where youth are producing plants to supplement pantry boxes. MPC was awarded a disparities grant through ACHD that allowed a portion of money to go to Westmar and students have started growing their plants with the plan to expand this to supplement some of the pantries that need access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

Melissa Clark asked how often boxes are dropped. Lorena replied that deliveries are once a month on rotation with the amount determined by the size of the family. The intent is not to cover the entire month but provide enough food mid-month for about 2.5 weeks picking up where food from other resources runs out.

MPC has upcoming meetings with UPMC and has other partners looking to tap into the model they created, and because it clearly is a need and they have the transportation infrastructure, it has been an incredible success.

Lorena reported that one of the things the truck will be doing is helping Garrett County, where getting staples to the region is a problem, and MPC is working with WMFB and America’s Hauling for Hope to get consistent deliveries to the new food bank. MPC donated $25,000 to get infrastructure built out and construction on the food bank should begin soon.

**Jennifer Lee-Steckman, CNM, Director of Reproductive Health and Terri Brown, MSN, CRNP, Ob/Gyn-BC – Reproductive Health Services at Allegany County Health Department**

Jenn shared some history about Title X services and explained that ACHD began providing services on 9/1/24 (Monday – Friday 7:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.) to improve maternal and child health. Services include better contraceptive options, reducing unintended pregnancies, addressing health disparities, decreasing abortion rates, and strengthening economic and social benefits. Gynecological services are limited to education, wellness exams, STI, cancer, pregnancy, etc. The overall mission of the Reproductive Health (RH) program is to provide accessible compassionate comprehensive family planning and reproductive health services for individuals and families but also our community.

RH has two clinicians providing services daily and they build on Title X services that lead to poor outcomes including help with hypertension, diabetes and obesity which could increase maternal morbidity and mortality. To change birth outcomes, it is necessary that a patient’s basic needs to be healthy are met. The RH program partners with Behavioral Health on substance use disorders and dental health for dentition referrals which affect preterm labor and preterm birth. Since transportation is an issue, RH is partnering with ACM to offer on-site services at their location. Referrals are critical, but a case management piece is essential, and Jenn explained that a patient needs to have a conversation with their PCP. RH is considering starting hypertension treatment in the clinic and then linking patients with a PCP to manage long term.

Terri Brown added that RH also partners with Theresa Stahl to provide ACHD Nutrition Services the same day.

Sam from the Judy Center at Westmar Early Learning Center in Lonaconing reported that a case management survey is required to be sent out and is glad for the referral option to RH. She inquired about support groups for

miscarriages and family planning in general.

Jenn shared about a program that may still be available called Resolve Through Sharing that is a comprehensive program that some obstetrics units affiliated with hospitals could have a certified person to work with bereavement or early loss. Beth Little will inquire to see if a program is still available and will share it in email.

Dr. Corder wanted to make the group aware that although Reproductive Health is accepting any patients and insurance, that ACHD is continuing to work on challenges related to contracting with commercial insurance and requested any expertise. Lorena de Leon offered to meet with Dr. Corder at another time regarding assistance.

1. **COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CHIP) UPDATES (previously called Local Health Action Plan)**

**CHIP** –

Melissa reported on the launch of the Needs Assessment and asked partners for their help in distributing the survey which will be sent in email following the meeting. The email will contain a link for uploading to social media, websites, etc. and provides guidance on how to help promote the survey that will run into March. The survey will be used to help build out the next Community Health Assessment Report. The goal is for 1,000 survey responses to help identify current needs and then follow up with focus groups to help identify priorities. Participants are encouraged to use the QR code or link to do a quick survey, however, a paper copy is available. Any paper copies should be collected and given to ACHD Health Planning Department.

The goal is to finish the survey, collect the data, write the next report, and have our next Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) in place by July 2025 for FY26.

The next Workgroup meeting is scheduled for 1/21/25 at 3:00 p.m.

1. **UPDATES**

***Cancer Committee Update: Ellie Folk, Director of Cancer Screening Program***

* Ellie reported that the program is halfway through the fiscal year and shared performance measures met: 83 clients screened in BCCP, more than doubled African American clients served (goal was 5, screened 11 so far); 18 clients were assisted with screenings for either colorectal, lung, or skin cancer.
* Breast and Cervical Cancer Program assists clients with getting PAP and HPV testing. Early detection of HPV and/or abnormal cervical cells can help prevent cancer. HPV vaccination is recommended for 11–12-year-olds. It is a two-dose series that can help prevent individuals from getting HPV if vaccination occurs prior to exposure. For more information, go to the CDC website.
* Colorectal Cancer: UPMC Western Maryland now has two physicians so patients are screened more quickly. CCP Program will begin to offer Cologuard testing which is done every three years with a normal result.
* January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month. Ellie will share a flyer per Lorena’s request.
* If you have any clients that could benefit or know someone newly diagnosed with cancer, reach out.

Raghu Rheddy, Surg Center commented that in addition to UPMC having two full-time GI doctors there is also a large group of physicians working under UPMC at the Surgery Center, so the backlog is shrinking, and they can take on more new patients for screening or for a procedure. Trying to keep services local as much as possible.

1. **PARTNER ANNOUNCEMENTS & UDPATES**

Melissa requested partners help in sharing the Needs Assessment survey as much as possible.

1. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. A meeting reminder will be sent.

1. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

Submitted by: Tana Wolfe