



Allegany County Health Planning Coalition

Meeting Summary

March 10, 2026

This meeting was held via Google Meets.

INDIVIDUALS PRESENT

Melissa Nething, ACHD
Dr. Jennifer Corder, ACHD

Jim Raley, Archway

Lisa Beardsley, ACHD

Karen Howsare, UPMC

Rhonda Pick, FCRC

Charlene Trenam, ACHD

Tracey Leonard, ACPS

Mike Bice, ACHD

Krista Llewellyn, ACHD

Carrie Duckworth, ACHD

Theresa Stahl, ACHD

Gail Kenner, ACHD

Amy Moyer, Western MD Food Bank

Jordan Harman, ACHD

Haley Guillot, ACHD

Maria Frantz, Mountain Laurel

Maureen Lauder, ACHD

Tara Wetherell, MPC

Joanie Ellsworth, SurgCenter

Corey Edmonds, Mountain Laurel

Lyda Yoder, AHEC West

Michele Walker, PHUW

Ellie Folk, ACHD

Lisa McCoy, UMD Extension Service

Melissa Clark, AHED West

Jonathan Dayton, Maryland Wellness

Jennifer Smith, ACHD

Stacey Blank, UPMC

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I. INTRODUCTIONS/WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Melissa Nething is facilitating today's meeting.

Stacey Blank announced that UPMC will no longer be the co-host of LHIC but will remain a strong and engaged community partner with the Coalition. Melissa Nething has distributed new invitations for the bi-monthly meetings and Stacey has cancelled her invitation. Melissa will be sending out a survey to members of the committee to gather feedback on several issues.

II. ADOPT MINUTES OF JANUARY 13, 2025

Melissa asked if there were any changes or additions to the January 13, 2026 minutes. There was no response, so meeting minutes will stand as final, with Stacey making the motion to accept and Dr. Jennifer Corder seconding the motion. All meeting agendas and minutes are uploaded to the Allegany Speaks website under our Coalition group.

III. PRESENTATIONS

Western Maryland Food Bank

Amy Moyer, Director of the Western Maryland Food Bank, presented information about the history of our local food bank. It is a redistribution center serving both Allegany and Garrett counties and is the entity that aids the local pantries and other feeding agencies, and individuals. They partner with the Baltimore Food Bank, and they are the only food bank operating in the area to serve both Allegany and Garrett Counties.

The product the Western Maryland Food Bank receives is through donations. It can come from various entities, including from states who donate what they cannot use. There are not a lot of incoming donations locally, so these types of relationships are important. The Food Bank does clearing at Martin's, Weis, Walmart, and Aldi

three times per week and takes things that would otherwise be discarded. Sheetz also donates to the Food Bank, who then distributes to agencies and individuals.

The Food Bank also partners with community organizations, including the South Cumberland Library for the “Meal in a Mug” program and a summer “Story Time in the Park” with a children’s farmers market where they can choose food themselves. They currently manage a backpack program for 860 ACPS students each weekend, distributing bags of food that children can open and eat directly. They also partner with local pantries and local school systems to distribute holiday meals.

The Food Bank has its own pantry where people can get emergency food. While pantries have odd hours and certain restrictions, the Food Bank is open without restrictions. They are currently working to create a new “Choice Pantry” in their building, utilizing a former bakery outlet space, which will allow individuals to shop for items they need, accommodate food allergies, and increase access to fresh produce and meats. The Food Bank also stocks a “special needs” pantry that supplies hard-to-find, costly items like baby formula, diapers, wipes, and nutritional supplements such as Glucerna and Ensure, which are critical for individuals with specific needs.

In the last year, the food bank distributed 1.3 million pounds of food, and they anticipate exceeding that number in 2026 due to the increase in needs following the local floods last year. Additionally, they are seeing an increase in the number of walk-ins, as people are having a hard time making ends meet, even if they are working.

Looking AHEAD

Maria Frantz, Chief of Clinical Operations and Compliance at Mountain Laurel Medical Center, introduced herself and her role and gave an overview of the organization’s preparation for upcoming changes, including the AHEAD model implementation for Maryland. The AHEAD model involves a Maryland regulatory working group that includes the Department of Health, the Health Service Cost Review Commission, the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange, the Maryland Health Care Commission and the Maryland Insurance Administration. They are responsible for the following:

- Cost-shifting policy
- Medicare Advantage market stabilization
- Choice and competition
- Workforce and graduate medical education
- Post-acute care
- Total cost of care growth and primary care investment targets

Mountain Laurel is positioning itself to respond to the AHEAD model, the State Health Improvement Plan, and the Rural Health Transformation Program, all of which focus on improving health while decreasing costs in Maryland. As an FQHC, Mountain Laurel is working to protect Medicaid access through a sliding scale program for those unable to pay, and they are expanding their certified community assistance workers to help patients with Medicaid re-certifications and insurance options.

Mountain Laurel is prioritizing cancer screenings, wellness visits and disease prevention, and integrating substance use disorder treatment within primary care. They are participating in the Healthy Together grant focusing on cardiovascular diagnosis and remote patient monitoring. For the future, they are considering the possibility of more behavioral health access for school-age children. Additionally, they are contemplating a future student or resident rotation program.

Some of the challenges Mountain Laurel faces in their practice are postpartum behavioral health, peer recovery specialists and dental services, which is a huge need in their community and has a significant impact on overall health. They are building the practice to be a site that provides primary care, behavioral health and additional

services across the age range. They seek to be a place where the community knows they have access to healthcare, chronic disease management, remote monitoring, etc.

IV. Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Updates (previously called Local Health Action Plan)

- Melissa presented the CHIP draft which outlines goals and objectives that resulted from the assessment process. She will forward the draft CHIP to everyone in the next few days. The next steps involve collecting feedback on the draft and developing measurable goals and strategies around the priority areas of access to care, behavioral health and chronic disease.
- Melissa dropped a survey link into the chat to gather suggestions for the coalition, provide feedback on the CHIP draft, and nominate a new co-chair. The survey will close on April 21st, which is the date of the next workgroup meeting.

V. Updates

- Ellie Folk, Director of Cancer & Tobacco Cessation Programs, ACHD
 - Ellie provided an update on the regional health cancer screening program and noted plans to attend employee health fairs both at Rocky Gap and the Allegany County Public School system. She will also be attending the UPMC Western Maryland Breast Cancer Education event in April.
 - Wrapping up the 3rd quarter, the cancer program has assisted 76 clients with CDC-funded screenings for breast and/or cervical cancer, 20 clients with state-funded breast diagnostic imaging, ultrasounds or biopsies so far, and 21 clients with CPEST funding for colorectal, skin or lung cancer screenings.
 - Dr. Jennifer Corder pointed out that Ellie runs a regional program that supports Washington, Allegany and Garrett counties, taking referrals for patients in all three areas.
 - Ellie reminded everyone that March is colorectal cancer awareness month. She also stated that, while a colonoscopy is the gold standard for cancer screening, Cologuard finds about 90% of cancers. She also mentioned that her program has seen an increase in need for transportation with a support person for patients to get to and from their colonoscopies.
 - For adults 45 and older who are asymptomatic, ACHD can offer Cologuard and help clients get it shipped to their home and send them reminders to return their sample and get their results.
 - There is a cancer work group called the “Western Maryland Community Advisory Group” that has members from different organizations. Johns Hopkins is involved, health departments from Washington and Allegany counties, and UPMC are also represented. It meets every other month on a Tuesday from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. This is a good group to learn more about cancer in Allegany County. Please contact Ellie if you would like more information.
 - Dr. Corder mentioned that ACHD is hoping to collaborate with Johns Hopkins on cancer education with certain cancers that are currently getting a lot of attention.
- Melissa Clark, Executive Direction, AHEC West
 - Melissa updated everyone on Susan Stewart and her official retirement as of January 31st.
 - AHEC is celebrating their 50th anniversary this year. They are having a celebration in the fall, and she hopes that the LCHIC community will join them for the festivities.
 - AHEC West is currently offering community health worker and peer recovery specialist training. Additionally, Melissa has met with both UPMC and ACM regarding pathways from middle school to post grad and everything in between for careers in health.

- The ECHO program (Exploring Careers and Health Occupations) registration for high school students who may be interested in a career in health is open right now.
- Theresa Stahl, Nutritionist, ACHD
 - Theresa will be conducting a nutrition and dementia prevention program for seniors tomorrow in Frostburg and on March 26th she will be giving a National Nutrition Month presentation at ACHD.
- Lisa McCoy, University of Maryland Extension
 - Lisa announced she is retiring at the end of this month and that a replacement is expected in about three months. She will give the new person the information on how to reach out and be a part of this group.
- Lydia Yoder, Program Coordinator, AHEC West
 - Lydia mentioned AHEC's collaboration with UPMC for prescription assistance and also shared the ahwestconnect.org/help website for referrals for people needing help with transportation, food boxes, etc.
- Carrie Duckworth, Coordinator, Special Programs, ACHD
 - Carrie gave a "shout out" to Melissa Clark for being named an honoree for the 2026 Daily Record's Top 100 Women in Maryland.
 - Our H.E.A.L. Mobile has been delivered and is already on the road. We have been to Frostburg and provided reproductive health services. You can find the H.E.A.L. Mobile schedule on the ACHD website.

VI. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 12, 2026 at 1:30 p.m.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

Submitted by: Maureen Lauder