



## Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition

Full LHIC Meeting Minutes

July 18, 2024, 9:00 am – 11:00 pm

Hybrid – In-person (Heroes Room) & Virtual (Zoom)

### Minutes

#### Members Present:

Erin Anderson, Howard County (HC) Health Department  
Sandra Añez Powell, Wellpoint  
Linda Ashburn, Howard County Health Department  
Erin Ashinghurst, Accessible Resources for Independence  
Senam Attipoe, Stillborn and Infant Loss Support  
Karen Basinger, University of Maryland Extension  
Marilyn Berchie, Trinity Wellness  
Dawn Berkowitz, Maryland Cannabis Administration  
Bernadette Bindewald, Howard County Health Department  
Shannon Blount, Howard County Public School System  
Amelia Brandt, CareFirst BlueCross Blue Shield  
Sydney Butler, Leaders of Tomorrow Youth Center  
Genesis Caplan, University of Maryland Extension  
Maria Candanoza, Howard County Health Department  
Matthew Castner, Johns Hopkins HC Medical Center  
Kelly Chase, Community Member  
Shakia Colbert, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield  
Dana Couch, NAACP Howard County Branch  
Samantha Cribbs, Howard County Health Department  
Johnia Curtis, Howard County Health Department  
Jen Dawson, Maryland Physician's Care  
Lisa DeHernandez, Howard County Health Department  
Shar Ferrell, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield  
Rachel Filar, Howard County Office on Aging and Independence  
Jessica Fisher, Howard County Health Department  
Connie Ford, Howard County Health Department  
Katrina Fowlkes, Perfect Generation Ministries, Inc.  
JaKaiya Frisby, American Lung Association  
Natalie Hall, Howard County Health Department  
Misty Harding, Accessible Resources for Independence  
Shannon Harris, Howard County Health Department  
Nayanie Henriquez, Howard County Health Department  
Emily Hodson, Chase Brexton Healthcare  
Loretta Hoepfner, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Michelle Holder, Food at the Center  
Sherlina Holland, Maryland Health Department of Health

Cindy Li, Community Health Initiative  
Sonya Lloyd, Howard County Health Department  
Ilise Marrazzo, Howard County Health Department  
Heidi Marine, Chase Brexton Healthcare  
Lauren McGee, Chase Brexton Healthcare  
Lois Mikkila, Association of Community Services  
Rebecca Mitch McKee, Anne Arundel Counseling, Inc.  
Meghan Monpremier, MedStar Health  
Kristine Nellenbach, Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities  
D'Paul Nibber, Horizon Foundation  
Sunyoung Nicolas, Howard County Health Department  
Audra Nixon, Howard County Board of Health  
Emily Paterson, Maryland Poison Center  
Tavia Patusky, Columbia Association  
Octavia Peterson, America Heart Association  
Crystal Pope, Johns Hopkins HC Medical Center  
Tori Rain, Hope Works of Howard County  
Mayra Ramos, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield  
Stephanie Reid, Howard County Health Department  
Leah Richey, University of Maryland Horowitz Center  
Marnetta Sanders-Ennis, HC Health Department  
Michelle Rosenfeld, HC Office on Aging and Independence  
Maura Rossman, Howard County Health Department  
Carrie Ross, Community Action Council of Howard County  
Joan Scornaienchi, Howard County Drug Free  
Sarah Sherry, Community Member  
Carrie Singley, Johns Hopkins HC Medical Center  
Sadija Smiley, Stillborn and Infant Loss Support-SAILS  
Darshal Smith, Dee the Doula Maternal & Holistic Wellness Services  
Lauren Soummers, Howard County Health Department  
Morgan Spliedt, HC Office on Aging and Independence  
Lisa Starkey, Ascension St. Agnes  
Erica Taylor, HC Office of Children and Families  
Terri Taylor, Howard County Fire & Rescue

Quiana Holmes, The Council of Elders of the Black Community of HC

Laurencia Hutton, Maryland Department of Health  
Blair Inniss, Leal Resource Center for Public Health Policy  
Lois Joellenbeck, Howard County Health Department  
Kelly Kryspin, Autism Society of Maryland  
Julie Kwedar, Maryland Highway Safety Office  
Paloma León, Howard County Board of Health  
Vanda Lerdboon, Howard County Health Department

Allison Tillman, Bayada Home Health  
George Townsend, Legal Resource for Public Health Policy  
Patrice Tucker, United Healthcare Community Plan  
Antigone Vickery, Howard County Health Department  
Chynáe Vicks, Howard County Health Department  
Joan Webb Scornaienchi, HC DrugFree  
Matt Wilson, Howard County Health Department  
Anthony Wisniewski, Howard County Board of Health  
Eileen Zeller, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

**Staff Present:**

Janet Afoakwah, HC Local Health Improvement Coalition  
Ashton Jordan, HC Local Health Improvement Coalition  
Reena Rambharat, HC Local Health Improvement Coalition

Topic/Agenda	Discussion	Action/Follow-up
<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	<p>Reena Rambharat, Deputy Director of the Bureau of Assessment, Planning and Community Engagement of the Howard County Health Department (HCHD), commenced the meeting.</p> <p>Dr. Maura Rossman, Health Officer of the Howard County Health Department (HCHD) and the co-chair of the Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC), welcomed attendees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Expressed amazement at attendance despite it being mid-July.</li><li>Highlighted the high level of engagement and participation from the community in Howard County.</li><li>Emphasized the importance of the day's agenda, mentioning her involvement in the County's Cannabis Commission and the implications of recreational marijuana legalization.</li><li>Shared bittersweet news about Ms. Rambharat, transitioning to a new role after over three years of service.</li></ul> <p>Ms. Rambharat thanked Dr. Rossman and provided updates, noting that Dr. Jeanette Nazarian, with Johns Howard County Medical Center and the other co-chair, was unable to join but Matt Castner, Director of Population Health provided remarks on her behalf.</p> <p>Mr. Castner echoed congratulations to Ms. Reena and highlighted the importance of the coalition's work, sharing updates on maternal health program efforts at the Johns Hopkins Howard County Medical Center. Ms. Rambharat introduced Janet Afoakwah, the new Community Engagement Coordinator, and shared her transition to a new role as Deputy Director of the Bureau where LHIC sits, ensuring continued collaboration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Announced the upcoming post for the new LHIC director, encouraging attendees to share it with potential candidates.</li></ul>	<p>Members are urged to review the past minutes and presentations available at: <a href="https://www.hclhic.org/home/MeetingYears/1">https://www.hclhic.org/home/MeetingYears/1</a></p> <p>For additional information or questions contact <a href="mailto:lhic@howardcountymd.gov">lhic@howardcountymd.gov</a></p>



<p><b>Cannabis Updates</b></p>	<p><b>Legal Resource Center for Public Health Policy-Cannabis</b>                  Mr. George Townsend, Legal Resource for Public Health Policy-Cannabis, began his presentation, outing the Legal Resource Center’s role, services, and recent developments in cannabis policy, highlighting Howard County’s proactive engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of Legal Resource Center’s services, including the Cannabis Community Needs Assessment, legal technical assistance, educational resources, webinars, and legislative session tracking.</li> <li>• Updates on key legislation from the recent session: Cannabis Reform Act alterations, local zoning authorization, and Community Protest Act.</li> <li>• Details of changes to cannabis advertising regulations and the creation of a new cannabis nursery business category.</li> <li>• Community protest mechanisms for cannabis business license renewals, allowing residents and businesses within 1000 feet to protest.</li> <li>• Mentioned the absence of licenses for onsite consumption establishments in Maryland and the Maryland Cannabis Administration's report on the review of such establishments throughout the United States.</li> <li>• Highlighted the potential for counties to have a significant degree of control over onsite consumption establishments, including the ability to prohibit them and impose zoning restrictions on Cannabis Business Regulation.</li> <li>• Explained the variation in cannabis business types based on county regulations.</li> <li>• Referenced the investigation and report by the Howard County Council's cannabis work group regarding the operation of consumption sites in Howard County.</li> </ul> <p><b>Public Health and Safety Updates from the Maryland Cannabis Administration (MCA)</b>                  Ms. Rambharat introduced Dawn Berkowitz, the Managing Director of Public Health, and Communications at the Maryland Cannabis Administration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussed the transition from the Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission to the Maryland Cannabis Administration and the focus on public health efforts.</li> <li>• Noted the decline in medical patient renewal following the accessibility of adult use cannabis.</li> <li>• Highlighted the social equity component and community reinvestment goals of the cannabis reform act.</li> </ul>	<p>George Townsend email and phone number:  <a href="mailto:gtownsend@law.umaryland.edu">gtownsend@law.umaryland.edu</a>                  and (410) 706-8189</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emphasized the regulations in place to prevent unrestricted cannabis use in public spaces.</li><li>• Explained that employers and landlords can enforce strict cannabis-related policies on their properties.</li><li>• Stressed the illegality of driving under the influence of cannabis and the federal illegality of transporting cannabis across state lines.</li><li>• Mentioned the importance of responsible cannabis consumption and the implementation of social equity licenses.</li><li>• Noted the conversion of medical cannabis dispensaries to sell both medical and adult use cannabis.</li><li>• Explained the social equity verification portal and the addition of new dispensaries.</li><li>• Highlighted the tightly regulated cannabis market in Maryland.</li><li>• Discussed statutory changes and updated emergency regulations for the adult use cannabis market.</li><li>• Introduced the "Be Cannabis Smart" campaign as a public health and safety branding initiative.</li><li>• Provided details on the revamped webpage and co-branding with the Maryland Department of Health.</li><li>• Shared the topics covered under the "Be Cannabis Smart" tab, including drug driving awareness.</li><li>• Mentioned the airing of ads on TV, streaming platforms, and social media for the "Be Cannabis Smart" campaign.</li><li>• Shared thoughts on neighborhood activities.</li><li>• Discussed collaboration with partners and focus group testing for campaign ads.</li><li>• Described positive messaging for legal cannabis, emphasizing responsible use for those 21 and older.</li><li>• Highlighted the "Be Cannabis Smart" campaign's focus on safe and sober driving, working with law enforcement and the Department of Transportation.</li><li>• Showcased various ad placements and materials for the "Be Cannabis Smart" campaign, including coasters, billboards, and a truck with messaging.</li><li>• Commented on the consistency of the campaign's look and feel, comparing it to driving ads.</li><li>• Discussed plans to collaborate with Merriweather for Ad placements and emphasized the importance of safe storage, especially in relation to children and pets.</li><li>• Emphasized the importance of safe storage for cannabis products, comparing it to alcohol, cleaning products, medicine, and tobacco.</li><li>• Shared plans to resurrect the campaign in the Fall, collaborating with key physicians for on-camera interviews and prevention ads targeting older kids and teens.</li></ul>	<p>To access the Helpline Brochure (Guide to Responsible Cannabis Consumption for Adults 21+). Please access it from <a href="#">here</a></p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlighted the accessibility of campaign materials for Local Health Departments and partners, including customizable options.</li> <li>Encouraged sharing of social media posts and materials to increase visibility.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Presentations Q &amp;A</b></p>	<p>Ms. Rambharat opened the floor for questions including a query about hard copies of campaign materials from Jessica Fisher. Ms. Berkowitz suggested for Ms. Fisher to send an email for more information. She also suggested to print the materials from the website.</p> <p>Anthony Wisniewski asked legal-related questions, discussing ongoing court cases and the interplay between federal prohibition and state laws on Cannabis Regulation and Safety. Mr. Wisniewski raised concern about the potential for impaired individuals to drive to and from cannabis businesses and suggests implementing policies like those for medical procedures. Mr. Townsend acknowledged the relevance of regulating the location of cannabis businesses and emphasizes the need for safety information and alternative transportation options to address impaired driving.</p> <p>Mr. Wisniewski proposed policy suggestion based on the model of medical procedures, requiring designated drivers or attestations for individuals impaired by cannabis.</p> <p>Terri Taylor inquired about the availability of lock boxes at dispensaries and the requirement for tamper-resistant packaging, expressing concern about children accessing cannabis products. Mr. Townsend stated that dispensaries are not currently required to sell lock boxes on site and acknowledges the importance of tamper-resistant packaging.</p> <p>Ms. Taylor shared instances of children accessing cannabis products and individuals experiencing adverse effects, prompting a discussion on the lack of regulation for hemp products and the challenges in enforcing regulations for intoxicating products.</p> <p>Ms. Berkowitz discussed the legal challenges in regulating hemp products and the impact of ongoing court cases on the authority to regulate and test these products, as well as the availability of lock boxes at medical dispensaries.</p> <p>Mrs. Berkowitz encouraged open communication and feedback, emphasizing the importance of addressing various safety concerns</p>	

related to cannabis products, including the need for tamper-resistant packaging and lock boxes.

Natalie Hall raised questions about the regulations for cannabis consumption in indoor spaces and the impact on the Clean Indoor Air Act, prompting a discussion on the potential need for legislative changes. Mr. Townsend explained the current restrictions on indoor smoking at cannabis businesses in Maryland and discusses the options for consumption, including edibles and outdoor smoking areas.

Ms. Hall inquired about the regulations regarding firearm ownership for individuals with medical cannabis cards, prompting a commitment from Mr. Townsend to further investigate and provide information.

Karen Basinger offered a presentation on cooking with cannabis and invites further inquiries, encouraging engagement with the topic.

Dr. Rossman encourages attendees to visit a nearby dispensary and shared personal experiences with different dispensaries in Howard County, highlighting the diverse setups and experiences offered by each location.

- Expressed frustration with the lack of options for lower-dose products at dispensaries, making it difficult to start with a low dose and adjust as needed.
- Criticized the packaging of products, noting that the colorful and attractive packaging may not be suitable for an addictive substance and highlights the difficulty in reading small font sizes.
- Raised concerns about receiving promotional texts for cannabis products, likening it to the marketing tactics used for addictive substances like tobacco.
- Advocated for more research on cannabis and suggests learning from the regulation of tobacco and alcohol.
- Acknowledged the concerns about font size at dispensaries and shares that the MCA had not been aware of this issue until it was brought to their attention.
- Mentioned presenting a section of text in size six font to illustrate the issue and the impact it has on readability.

Mr. Townsend acknowledged the concerns about font size at dispensaries and shares that the MCA had not been aware of this issue until it was brought to their attention.

Stephanie Reid inquired about secret shoppers like tobacco efforts for dispensaries. Ms. Berkowitz discussed the thorough and unannounced inspections conducted by compliance folks at MCA on dispensaries.

Karen Basinger presentation on Cooking with Cannabis if interested please contact Karen at [kbasinge@umd.edu](mailto:kbasinge@umd.edu)



	<p>Ms. Basinger also asked if there is a cost to get a medical cannabis card. Ms. Berkowitz explained the changes in the cost of registering for a medical cannabis card, including the elimination of the cost for a physical card and the requirement for a physician certification on an annual basis.</p> <p>Ms. Rambharat expressed gratitude for the presentation and anticipates ongoing conversations and discussions with the presenters.</p>	
<p><b>Workgroup Updates</b></p>	<p><b>Chronic Disease Prevention &amp; Management Group</b> Crystal Pope, Johns Hopkins HC Medical Center, shared updates on the Chronic Disease Prevention and Management Group's activities, including the promotion of nutrition-based program resources and men's health awareness.</p> <p>Ms. Pope discussed the goals and achievements of the Chronic Disease Prevention and Management Group, including hosting events and promoting evidence-based programs.</p> <p><b>Food Security Committee</b> Carrie Ross, Community Action Council of Howard County, provided updates on the Roving Radish Mobile Market, including transaction data and plans for future expansion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussed the Owen Brown seedling project</li> <li>Shared that August 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 23<sup>rd</sup> there will be a mobile market at Deep Run Elementary School and the University of Maryland Extension will be doing a food demonstration.</li> </ul> <p>Ms. Rambharat shared a request for agencies to exhibit and provide information during the Howard County Fair. Interested individuals may contact Karen Basinger for more information.</p> <p><b>Growing Healthy Families</b> Erica Taylor, Howard County Office of Children and Families, provided an update on the "Growing Healthy Families" work group, including a recap of the Black Maternal Health Week event and the partners involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared feedback from the event, including suggestions for improvement and future considerations for collaboration.</li> <li>Discussed plans to update the Maternal, Infant and Child health resources page and engage providers through trainings.</li> </ul>	<p>Members may review the HCLHIC Action Plan on the HCLHIC website at: <a href="https://www.hclhic.org/community/action-plans">https://www.hclhic.org/community/action-plans</a></p> <p>To learn more about the HCLHIC workgroups and co-chairs, visit: <a href="https://www.hclhic.org/about/our-team">https://www.hclhic.org/about/our-team</a></p> <p>If you are interested in joining one or more of the workgroups, please email us at: <a href="mailto:LHIC@howardcountymd.gov">LHIC@howardcountymd.gov</a></p> <p>Members can view the Chronic Disease webpage here: <a href="https://www.hclhic.org/healthy/chronic-disease">https://www.hclhic.org/healthy/chronic-disease</a></p> <p>Members can view the Healthy Eating webpage here: <a href="https://www.hclhic.org/healthy/eating">https://www.hclhic.org/healthy/eating</a></p> <p>Request print copies of Food Map and Brochures <a href="#">here</a></p> <p>Members can view the Maternal/Infant/Child webpage here: <a href="https://www.hclhic.org/healthy/child">https://www.hclhic.org/healthy/child</a></p>



- Noted upcoming classes at the library and the Doulas and Donuts event, as well as plans for future events and the next work group meeting.

**Movement Group**

Michelle Rosenfeld, Howard County Office on Aging and Independence, provided updates on the Movement Group's transition to monthly meetings, preparations for Walktober and Fall Prevention Week, and collaboration with various organizations.

- Shared details about falls prevention events, resources, and Walktober initiatives, including multi-generational events and walkinars.
- Announced plans for a series of 90-minute webinars or "walkinars" to promote collective walking in Maryland.
- Mentioned the testing of a new dance fitness class at the 50 plus centers, with a free demo scheduled for August 14th at the Bain 50+ Center.

**Health Literacy Advisory Committee**

Chynáe Vicks, Howard County Health Department, shared the conclusion of the Health Literacy Advisory Committee and the transition to a new work group called the Community Health Worker Learning Collaborative, aiming to support and employ more community health workers across the county.

- Encouraged those interested in serving as co-chairs or being part of the learning collaborative to reach out to the LHIC email.
- Provided an overview of the Disability Inclusion Grant Accessibility Assessment, highlighting the partnership with Accessible Resources for Independence (ARI) and the identification of accessibility barriers and recommended solutions.

Ms. Vicks introduced Erin Ashinghurst, ARI, and acknowledged her as co-chair for her support and efforts with the Disability Inclusion Grant Accessibility Assessment project.

Ms. Ashinghurst provided an overview of the Disability Inclusion Grant Accessibility Assessment, highlighting the partnership with ARI and the identification of accessibility barriers and recommended solutions.

- Wished everyone a Happy Disability Pride Month and encouraged checking out disability pride and disability-centered films and movies on Kanopy and accessible resources for free streaming services.
- Acknowledged the partnership with HCHD and expressed continued support.

Visit your local library or [Kanopy's webpage](#) to add your library card.

Information on Out of The Darkness please visit: <https://bit.ly/HCOOTD2024>

HMSPC Walk team link: <https://supporting.afsp.org/team/HCLHIC-HMSPC>

Darkness Walk Form 2024, vendors to apply: <https://afsp.wufoo.com/forms/g1cuy4ak1da8r2j/>





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraged attendees to navigate the Kanopy’s website scheduled events, etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy Minds and Suicide Prevention Coalition</b></p> <p>Jessica Fisher, Howard County Health Department, celebrated the success of May's Mental Health Awareness Month and encouraged continued support for the campaign.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared plans for Suicide Prevention Month in September, including the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Out of the Darkness Walk on September 21st.</li> <li>Invited participation in the walk and encouraged reaching out for information about being a vendor, having a table, creating a walk team, or joining the team.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Announcements Next Steps &amp; Wrap-up</b></p>	<p>Ms. Rambharat announcements, including the CareFirst Get Fit for Two, free fitness sessions, youth activities, Fall Prevention Activities, Farmers Market Nutrition Program, Yoga in the Park events, and more, with details available on the slides and in the chat box.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mentioned the Out of the Darkness walk and provided information on how to register or participate as a vendor.</li> <li>Opened the floor for additional announcements before wrapping up the meeting.</li> </ul> <p>Ms. Rambharat announced the next hybrid full coalition meeting will be held on October 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am and the posting of meeting recordings and minutes on the website.</p> <p>Ms. Rambharat adjourned the meeting at 11:02 am.</p>	<p>Members are encouraged to review the minutes from Full HCLHIC and HCLHIC Work Group Meetings on the website under meeting portal:  <a href="https://www.hclhic.org/home/meetingportal">https://www.hclhic.org/home/meetingportal</a></p> <p><i>2024 Quarterly Full Coalition Meetings:</i>  <a href="#">Register</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 17, 2024 at 9:00 - 11:00am</li> </ul>

Respectfully submitted by  
 Janet Afoakwah, MPH  
 Community Engagement Coordinator  
 Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition