

# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



8930 Stanford Blvd | Columbia, MD 21045

410.313.6204 - Voice/Relay

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[www.hclhic.org](http://www.hclhic.org)

Maura J. Rossman, M.D., Health Officer

## Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (HCLHC)

### Healthy Lifestyle Workgroup Meeting

Thursday, March 19, 2026

1:00 – 2:00 pm

Virtual Via Zoom

### Minutes

#### Co-Chairs Present:

Carrie Ross – Co-Chair, Howard County Food Bank/Community Action Council

Michelle Rosefeld – Co-Chair, Howard County Office of Aging and Independence

#### Members Present:

Benjamin Wade – Howard County Public Schools System

Carla Gates – Reclaiming Health Learning Lab

Carmen Roberts – Howard County Office of Aging and Independence

Danielle Clifford-Earles – Howard County Office of Aging and Independence

David Ennis – Howard County Board of Health

Emily Luyo – Priority Partners

Eunise Foster – Howard County Department of Social Services

Genesis Caplan – University of Maryland Extension (UME), SNAP Ed

Gerardo Benavides – The Horizon Foundation

Heather Sites – Howard County Office of Aging and Independence

Johnathan McKinney – The Community Ecology Institute

Julie Kwedar – Maryland Highway Safety Office

Karen Seider – Mercy Medical Center

Lois Jollenbeck – Howard County Health Department

Michelle Feng – UME

Nikki Savoy – Accessible Resources for Independence (ARI)

Rachel Filar – Howard County Office of Aging and Independence

Reena Rambharat – Howard County Health Department

Shannon Blount – Howard County Public Schools System

Thomas Mooring – UME, 4H

Vanda Lerdboon – Howard County Health Department

Xingxing Liu – Korean Community Service Center

Zitao Weng – Korean Community Service Center

#### HCLHC Staff Present:

Maribet Rivera-Brute – Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition

Miriam Anderson – Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition

Website: [www.hclhic.org](http://www.hclhic.org) Facebook: [www.facebook.com/hclhic](https://www.facebook.com/hclhic) Instagram: @hclhic

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Rosemarie Jiménez-Rosales – Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition

Stephanie Foster – Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition

Topic/Agenda	Discussion	Action / Follow-up
<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b></p>	<p>Ms. Maribet Rivera-Brute opened the meeting today and provided attendees and new members an opportunity to introduce themselves.</p> <p>Ms. Rivera-Brute began the presentation portion of the meeting by introducing Ms. Carrie Ross, Co-Chair.</p>	
<p><b>Announcements and Updates</b></p>	<p>Ms. Carrie Ross shared the following updates: Community Action Council (CAC) oversees a community garden and will begin planting on March 20, 2026. Howard County Recs and Parks will be opening a community garden center. Opening will be March 23, 2026, at 11 am. CAC’s Community Assessment will begin for this term. Will make improvements in reaching out to all demographics.</p> <p>Ms. Reena Rambharat began her updates on the Food Council:</p> <p>Ms. Rambharat shared that Ms. Yekatit Bezooayehu’s last day was March 19, 2026. The establishment of the Food Council is almost complete. Working on finalizing the mission, vision and bylaws. Will then begin working on their action plans. The Food Council is also working the Hydroponics in schools programs in specific Elementary, Middle and High Schools. Updates will be shared as they occur. Ms. Rambharat shared the link to the Food Council committee.</p> <p>Ms. Michelle Rosenfeld from the Howard County Office of Aging and Independence provided Movement Updates: May 1, 2026 – OAI Showcase at the Columbia Mall and will feature keynote speakers, activities and more. Bain 50+ Center will host a Spring Fling on March 25, 2026. Will offer 5 express classes and ending with a Yoga session. Remaining 50+ Centers are gearing up for the upcoming season</p>	<p>Link to Howard County Food Bank: <a href="https://cac-hc.org/food-assistance/">https://cac-hc.org/food-assistance/</a></p> <p>Link to the Howard County Food Council: <a href="https://www.hclhic.org/council">https://www.hclhic.org/council</a></p> <p>Link to Howard County Office of Aging and Independence: <a href="https://www.howardcountymd.gov/aging-independence">https://www.howardcountymd.gov/aging-independence</a></p>

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	<p>3rd annual Winter Wellness Challenge that began February 2, 2026, and will end March 27, 2026 (8 weeks collaborative challenge). Each participant could earn “medals”, in the spirit of the Olympics.</p> <p>Ms. Rivera-Brute provided the following updates:</p> <p>Registration for the next Full LHIC meeting on April 16, 2026, is available</p> <p>Photovoice Exhibition featuring Harper’s Choice is March 24, 2026, 5:30 pm at Bain 50+ Center.</p> <p>Black Maternal Health Week 2026 on April 18, 2026, 11 am – 2 pm at Harriet Tubman Cultural Center.</p> <p>Ms. Vanda Lerdboon provided information on the Healthy Hearts Ambassador Program and consisted of the following: Currently holding the second cohort at ParkView Columbia Third cohort will be held on March 25, 2026, at the Columbia Community Center.</p>	<p><a href="#">Link to register for the full LHIC meetings: 2025 HCLHIC Full Coalition Meetings Tickets, Multiple dates   Eventbrite</a></p> <p><a href="#">Link to register for the March 24 photovoice: Through the Eyes of a Community Health Worker: A Photovoice Exhibition Tickets, Tuesday, Mar 24 from 5:30 pm to 7 pm   Eventbrite</a></p> <p><a href="#">Link to register for 2026 Black Maternal Health Week: Rooted in Justice &amp; Joy: A Black Maternal Health Week Community Event Tickets, Saturday, Apr 18 from 11 am to 2 pm   Eventbrite</a></p> <p><a href="#">Link to register for HHA program: Healthy Heart Ambassador (HHA) Program - Howard County Health</a></p>
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was also shared:

Let's Do Lunch – Howard County's congregate meal program that offers adults the chance to enjoy a nutritious meal while connecting with others at our 50+ Centers. Lunches are offered 5 days a week throughout the County at different 50+ centers.

Nutrition Education: A variety of classes offered at all the Howard County 50+ Centers and includes the following classes:

Tasty Tidbits - Hosted monthly at every Howard County 50+ center, Tasty Tidbits is an interactive recipe sharing program designed to help develop cooking skills and educate members on how to make healthy meals at home.

Ms. Clifford-Earles introduced Ms. Carmen Roberts to present information on the following:

Nutrition Education Talks - Throughout the year, sessions are available at 50+ Centers for members that wish to dive in deep to nutrition and healthy living topics.

Centers Without Walls - New in 2026, Howard County's Office on Aging and Independence will bring Nutrition Education out into the community, meeting people where they are.

Nutrition counseling is also free and available. They are 30-minute Individualized sessions with their Registered Dietitian for adults age 60 or older. Due to popularity, there is a limit of 2 sessions/year.

Home Delivered Nutrition Services include:

Home Delivered Meals in partnership with Meals on Wheels - Howard County provide up to two daily nutritious meals to homebound Howard County residents aged 60 and older, with volunteer delivery and participant costs based on a sliding scale.

Medically Tailored Meals in partnership with Moveable Feast - Medically tailored meals are clinical interventions designed to treat chronic health conditions through evidence-based dietary therapy.

Information was also shared about the following program:

Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (S-FMNP) – Designed to provide low income seniors with access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey and herbs. Older adults age

and Independence

Nutrition Services:

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/nutrition>



<b>Healthy Lifestyle Goals and Objectives Update</b>	<p>60+ who are current residents of Howard County with a Household income at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty guidelines are eligible.</p> <p>Opportunities for partnership and collaboration needs were shared with the group, along with contact information if interested</p> <p>Ms. Rivera-Brute provided the following updates on Healthy Living Goals:</p> <p><b>Healthy Living Goal 1 – Advance Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors:</b></p> <p>Objective 1.1: 1.1. By June 2028, collaborate with HCHD and partners to implement and evaluate healthy lifestyle messages for priority populations to improve health outcomes. Status: July–September 2025 Began SNAP/Diabetes social media communication campaign. Expanded dissemination through Maryland Hunger Solutions, HCPSS, African Immigrants Dream, OAI, JHHCMC, and RTA. Planned and launched social media outreach and community-specific messaging. Used CHWs to support tailored outreach in priority ZIP codes. Early planning for evaluation of messaging (proposed for 2027–2028).</p> <p>Objective 1.2: By June 2028, establish strategic partnerships with local healthcare providers, faith-based organizations, and businesses to collaboratively develop and distribute health education materials to promote chronic disease prevention and nutrition-focused wellness. Status: July–September 2025 Started partnerships with faith-based organizations such as St. Johns United Church and CrossLife Church Strengthen partnerships and collaborations with Maryland Hunger Solutions and HCPSS</p> <p>Objective 1.3. By June 2028, enhance community awareness of health education opportunities by improving access to tailored health information and essential health services through strategic outreach and engagement initiatives. Status: July–December 2025</p>	Link to the HCLHIC Action Plan: <a href="https://www.hclhic.org/community/action-plans">https://www.hclhic.org/community/action-plans</a>
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Participated in the Falls Prevention Retreat and Fall Prevention Week events.

Engaged residents at multiple Enterprise community resource fairs.

Promoted CAREAPP and shared health materials in residential communities.

Strengthened partnerships with Enterprise communities.

Supported walking group sign-ups at Parkview Ellicott City, Snowden River, and Columbia.

Objective 1.4. By June 2028, enhance physical activity and pedestrian safety among youth in Howard County by integrating health education initiatives with community-supported programs.

Status: July–September 2025

Met with Ducketts Lane Elementary School to support planning for the November 2025 “Ruby Bridges” Walk to School event.

Continued collaboration with schools and Transportation on safe walking resources.

Objective 1.5. By June 2028, to collaborate with community partners to continue physical activity initiatives to encourage Howard County community members of all ages and abilities to engage in movement for improved physical and mental health.

Status: July–November 2025

Launched Walktober 2025 with 170+ events; 4,400+ estimated participants.

HCHD Walktober Challenge logged more than 5 million steps.

Partnered with Howard County Villages for the Village Walktober Challenge (41 participants walking 4,009 miles).

Began walking groups at Legacy at Twin Rivers, Parkview at Ellicott City, Parkview Snowden River, and Parkview Columbia.

Continued planning meetings for Walktober and Falls Prevention Week.

### **Healthy Living: Goal 2 - Increase Access to Nutritious and Culturally Appropriate Food**

Objective 2.1. By June 2028, increase awareness of and access to culturally appropriate, accessible, affordable, and nutritious food for Howard County residents across the lifespan.

Status: July–September 2025



Completed seedling deliveries and supported container gardens.  
Updated and shared Food Pantry and Hot Meals brochures and Food Connections Map.  
Provided food access information at multiple Enterprise community events.  
Continued spotlight videos and collaboration with partners improving school meal options.

Objective 2.2. By June 2028, partner with local communities, schools, healthcare organizations, and faith-based organizations to promote food resources.

Status: July–December 2025

Began partnerships with St. John United Church and CrossLife Church.

Shared food resource information at Enterprise community events.

Strengthened referrals through CAREAPP.

Partnered with Sherwood Crossings to share food pantry and meal site information.

**Healthy Living: Goal 3 – Increase Awareness and**

**Prevention of Falls** Objective 3.1. By June 2028, collaborate with community-based organizations and residential communities to promote culturally appropriate and accessible falls prevention resources and activities.

Status: July–September 2025

Participated in the County Falls Prevention Retreat.

Joined Fall Prevention Week Kick-off events with OAI and LHIC.

Shared falls prevention resources at multiple Enterprise community fairs.

Continued collaboration with OAI, Fire and Rescue, and JHHCMC to support movement and strength-building opportunities.

Objective 3.2. By June 2028, create educational opportunities to increase knowledge about fall risk factors and preventative measures.

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<p><b>Future Events Brainstorm Activity</b></p>	<p>Status: July–September 2025</p> <p>Provided falls-prevention information during Fall Prevention Week events and community fairs.</p> <p>Encouraged physical activity and walking group participation in several Parkview communities.</p> <p>Strengthened ongoing partnerships with Enterprise communities to continue fall prevention outreach.</p> <p>Ms. Rivera-Brute concluded her presentation and introduced Ms. Carrie Ross to facilitate the brainstorm activity: The group discussed planning a future chronic disease and healthy lifestyle event, focusing on involving organizations that provide services such as blood pressure screenings and health education. While the local health department is a resource, participants expressed interest in bringing additional community organizations into the effort. Ideas given by the group included: high blood pressure screening, cooking demos, etc., Organizations that are willing to host events, resource fairs, exercise/interactive demos, reaching out to people with connections to the community. Several members volunteered to help with planning, and the facilitator acknowledged and appreciated their enthusiasm. Names were collected for follow-up once more information.</p> <p>This group usually hosts several events during the year, and it is always a good idea to welcome collaborative efforts. CHW Photovoice events are a great event and welcomes members to visit when events are held. Ms. Ross invited members to reach out to collaborate on future events.</p> <p>Ms. Rivera-Brute solicited to send more ideas and events to the HCLHIC email.</p>	<p>HCLHIC email: <a href="mailto:lhic@howardcountymd.gov">lhic@howardcountymd.gov</a></p>
<p><b>Next Steps &amp; Wrap-up</b></p>	<p>Ms. Rivera-Brute thanked the group for their time and closed the minutes. A copy of these minutes and presentation will be sent to members, along with other resources shared. Next meeting will be <b>Thursday, June 18, 2026, at 1:00 pm</b>. A calendar invite, meeting agenda, and the Zoom link to the meeting will be sent 1-2 weeks prior to the meeting date.</p>	

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Respectfully submitted by  
LaTonya Love, Administrative Specialist II  
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Howard County Health Department