Howard County LHIC
Local Health Improvement Coalition

HOWARD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

8930 Stanford Blvd | Columbia, MD 21045
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www.hclhic.org

Meeting Minutes: Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (HCLHIC)

Date: October 15, 2026

Time: 9:00 – 11:00 am

Location: In-person at 8930 Stanford Blvd, Columbia, MD 21045. Virtual via Zoom.

Coalition Co-Chairs Present: Dr. Maura Rossman

Note Taker Present: Maribet Rivera-Brute, Zoom AI Transcript

1. Attendees

Members Present: Linda Ashburn; Erin Anderson; Miriam Anderson; Christine Ballou; Bernadette Bindewald; Shannon Blount; Malarie Burgess; Fiona Burke; María José Candanoza; Matthew Castner; Samantha Cribbs; Claire Earnst; Lekwalo Edwards; Michelle Feng; Jessica Fisher; Stephanie Foster; Mikah Goldman Berg; Emily Harris; Lisa de Hernández; Nayanie Henríquez; Allysin Houle; Lois Joellenbeck; Autumn Joiner; Priya Koushik; Shivonne Laird; Jennifer Lee; Jen Lowther; Heidi Marine; Joseph Puig; Reena Rambharat; Stephanie Reid; Tamala Reid; Maribet Rivera-Brute; Carrie Ross; Kelly Russo; Giannina Santistevan; Wayman Scott; Morgan Spliedt; Kirsten Wheeler; Matt Wilson.

2. Agenda Items

2.1 Welcome and Introductions and Action Items

Ms. Maribet Rivera-Brute started the meeting at 9:01 am and welcomed everyone virtually and in person to the Full HCLHIC Meeting.

Ms. Rivera-Brute set meeting rules (chat box to submit questions, raise virtual hand), housekeeping items and non-recording notification rules. Ms. Rivera-Brute reviewed the agenda and introduced Dr. Maura Rossman, Director, Howard County Health Department for Welcome and Opening Remarks.

Dr. Rossman opened the Full HCLHIC meeting with a welcome to in-person and virtual attendees and then yielded the floor to Ms. Rivera-Brute. Dr. Rossman announced her retirement as a Health Officer from Howard County Health Department (HCHD). She expressed her gratification of being part of HCLHIC since 2011 and conveyed to all the Coalition members best wishes and continued support.

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The agenda for this meeting included the following topics:

- Welcome Remarks and Introductions
- Postpartum Support International
- Medicaid Updates
- HCLHIC and Workgroup Updates
- Discussion on Mental Healthcare Challenges in Howard County
- Member Announcements, Resource Sharing, and Networking
- Next Steps and Wrap-up

Action Items/Resources Shared:

- HCLHIC website: https://www.hcLHIC.org/;
- Community Request Form: https://www.hcLHIC.org/about/contact;

2.2 Member Presentations and Action Items

Postpartum Support International (PSI)

Speaker: Mika Goldenberg, Director of Advocacy, PSI (Maryland Chapter support noted; "perinatal mental health" framing and services overview)

Key takeaways (as presented):

- Perinatal mental health conditions are the most common complication of pregnancy, affecting birthing parents and family systems; risk factors include prior MH history, financial stress, sleep disruption, and traumatic birth.
- PSI provides helpline, peer support navigators, more than 36 free online support groups (including loss, military families, Black moms/dads), peer mentors, and a provider directory (Perinatal Mental Health trained providers).
- Emphasis on 988 for crisis and the National Maternal Mental Health Hotline for 24/7 non-crisis support.

Action Items/Resource Shared:

- PSI website: https://postpartum.net/

Medicaid Updates

Speaker: Giannina Santistevan, HCHD—Access to Care Bureau; supported by Allison Houle, HCHD.

Key takeaways:

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- Overview of Medicaid program (state/federal), enrollment scale, and coverage for births/children/long-term services in MD.
- Recent & upcoming changes noted as effective October 1, 2026 and January 1, 2027 (eligibility groups, work requirements for ACA expansion adults, increased renewal frequency, retroactive coverage window adjustments). Note: Staff emphasized proactive outreach, address updates, and self-attestation transitions.
- Local data points and community action steps to prepare and inform residents; emphasis on fear/information gaps as likely drivers of churn.
- Q&A points (selected):
    - Volunteer training/outreach via Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and distribution of plain-language fact sheets; encourage residents to check Maryland Health Connection and ensure address/income are current.
    - Clarifications around postpartum exemption durations, the five-year bar for most green card holders (not applicable to children/pregnant women), and 2027 self-attestation period.

Action Items/Resource Shared:

- HCHD Medicaid page: https://www.howardcountymd.gov/health/medicaid-health-insurance (plus phone 410-313-5845; medicaid@howardcountymd.gov for assistance)

2.3 Workgroup updates and Action Items

Ms. Rivera-Brute introduced Ms. Samantha Cribbs and Ms. Erica Taylor (Co-Chairs) to present the following Growing Healthy Families workgroup updates:

- Women's Health Focus Groups
    - The draft of the Women's Health Focus Group Report has been completed, and the final report is expected to be completed by the end of November. Once finalized, the Executive Summary will be posted on the HCLHIC website, while the full report will be available upon request.
- Growing Healthy Families (GHF) Workgroup Meeting
    - The next Growing Healthy Families Workgroup Co-Chair Meeting is scheduled for October 22, and the next GHF Workgroup Meeting will be held on November 18.

Ms. Rivera-Brute introduced Carrie Ross (Co-chair) to present the Healthy Lifestyle (HL) workgroup updates which included the following:

- Falls Prevention + Walktober 2026 – Planning meetings ended in September 2026.
- Walktober 2026 started with 40 events.

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- Food Connections Map video created and posted on the HCLHIC website.
- Safe Routes to School grant ended in September 2026.
    - Walk Audit in May 2026
    - Communications campaign on National Walking Month in May
    - Bike Rodeo event in September 2026
    - Participated in Walk/Bike Bus in September 2026
    - Educational stations provided during the Back to School Night at Mayfield Woods Middle School in September 2026
- Walking groups – sign up form here: https://bit.ly/letswalkhoco. QR code provided to scan.
- Nutrition classes at North Laurel Community Center with Family Options Program started on October 8 and will continue for 8 weeks.

Ms. Rivera-Brute introduced Ms. Jessica Fisher (Co-Chair) to present the following Healthy Minds and Suicide Prevention Coalition (HMSPC) Updates:

- The next HMSPC Workgroup Meeting will be held on November 12.
- The HMSPC Workgroup is planning another Firearm Safe Storage Workshop for March 2027. The initial event planning meeting was held on October 13, 2026. Planning efforts are currently underway, including identifying and securing a suitable venue for the event.

Ms. Rivera-Brute introduced Ms. María José Candanoza and Ms. Amanda Toohey (Co-Chairs) to present the following Community Health Worker Learning Collaborative (CHWLC) updates:

- CHW Promotional Opportunities:
    - Photovoice Project: Successfully hosted 6 Photovoice Exhibitions from October 2025- October 2026. Developed Impact Reports for Elkridge, Savage/Jessup, Harper's Choice, Long Reach, Ellicott City and Oakland Mills Photovoice events, which will be made publicly available soon.
    - Preparing for the next Photovoice Exhibitions on November 9, 2026 featuring the community of Owen Brown. Register here.

- CHW National Awareness Week Activities:
    - During the last two weeks of August, we conducted multiple community outreach and tabling events across Howard County in recognition of CHW National Awareness Week. These events focused on increasing public understanding of:
    - Who Community Health Workers are
    - The diverse roles CHWs play in outreach, education, navigation, and community support
    - How individuals can become CHWs, including pathways to certification and local training opportunities

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- These activities directly support Goal 2 of our FY26–28 CHWLC objectives by elevating CHWs as trusted advocates and strengthening public awareness of the profession.

- Strengthening Workgroup Capacity and Resource Sharing
  - Resource mapping and internal collaboration: This effort aligns with Goal 1, which focuses on developing a centralized CHW network and enhancing accessible, culturally appropriate resource sharing across the county.
  - CHWLC Meeting on September 16:
    - Reviewed progress toward FY26–28 CHIP goals
    - Alzheimer/Dementia Awareness and Education
    - Reflected on outcomes from CHW National Awareness Week
    - Discussed strategies to strengthen communication and referral pathways
    - Identified upcoming professional development needs and opportunities
- Community Assets Profile Project – Near Completion
  - We are nearing completion of the Community Assets Profile Project. This year long initiative required extensive collaboration and engagement, and we are proud of both the process and outcomes. Deliverables include:
    - A virtual community asset map capturing all identified resources
    - Multiple Photovoice exhibitions reflecting community strengths, challenges, and lived experiences
- Photovoice Impact Reports:
  - These reports will serve as important tools to support:
  - Community education
  - Program and service improvement
  - Awareness and outreach
  - Advocacy efforts related to health equity

Ms. Rivera-Brute provided an update about the Coalition:

- Action Plan for the 4th quarter has been updated.
- Visit the HCLHIC website for more information.

Mental Healthcare in Women in Howard County Activity

Ms. Rivera-Brute prepared an interactive exercise for the group. She presented the exercise that included the following questions and solicited feedback from the group:

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- What one word describes the type of mental health care that is hardest to find under Medicaid in Howard County right now?
- What can we do to help ease the stigma on mental health in women?
- How can you support the gap of the Medicaid changes and mental health care with postpartum women? What could you bring to the table? What strategies do you suggest?

Members submitted their responses via the link provided. The group then discussed their responses.

Ms. Rivera-Brute introduced Ms. Emily Harris to provide updates on the Howard County Food Council and included the following:

- Howard County Food System Mapping Activity: At our General Meeting on August 25 at the University of Maryland's CMREC facility, we completed a Food System Mapping Activity for Howard County. Participants identified existing organizations in 13 food system sectors, as well as current collaborations and gaps. The data was captured and will be synthesized and analyzed in the coming months. A report will be made available to our members and will be posted to our website.
- At the General Meeting on October 14th at the Harriet Tubman Cultural Center, we held a gleaning activity in collaboration with the Society of St. Andrew. The goal of the activity was to identify at least five new, potential gleaning pathways building more connections between foods sources (farmers, food processors, and food distributors), food pantries, and groups of volunteers. The participants identified new potential pathways.
- Workgroups – In the next few weeks, we will be inviting our members to join our Workgroups as members or co-chairs. The workgroups will begin to meet in January 2027 and will focus on our two priorities (Food System Collaboration and Farm Fresh at the Table).
- Hydroponics Program - We're scheduling education sessions with the 7 schools with hydroponics systems for the 2026-27 school year. Sessions will take place between October – May.
- Visiting Chefs + Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) - We will be working collaboratively with HCPSS, local Howard County chefs, and the Roving Radish for this program. Thirteen schools with BRIDGES programs will each receive one healthy cooking class for students. Thirteen schools that are distribution sites for Roving Radish boxes will each receive one family evening event that includes a healthy cooking demonstration, recipes cards to take home, and other health department resources. These classes and events will take place between October – May.
- Website Update: We've updated our website to make it more organized and user-friendly due to the growing amount of information that is being posted, so check it out.

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- Our next meeting is on Wednesday, December 9, from 10:00 – 11:30 am, Virtual via Zoom. Annika LaFave from the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council will be giving a demonstration of the Maryland Food Insecurity Map and we will be brainstorming so plans for 2027.

Action Items/Resource Shared:

- Safe Routes to School education materials: https://www.hclhic.org/healthy/physical-activity
- Food Connections Map video: https://www.hclhic.org/foodmap
- CHIP FY26-28 Action Plan: https://www.hclhic.org/community/action-plans/267
- CHW website: https://www.howardcountymd.gov/health/community-health-workers-chws
- Howard County Food Council website: https://www.hclhic.org/council. Contact Emily Harris at eharris@howardcountymd.gov.

2.4 Announcements and Action Items

Other announcements shared:

- 2027 Full LHIC quarterly meetings – January 21, 2027, 9 am. Link and schedule is available now.
- Community Assets Profile Project – The Community Assets Profile (CAP) project is available to view on the HCLHIC website.
- The new Community Health Worker (CHW) website is now available on the Howard County Health Department (HCHD) website.
- HCHD WhatsApp Channel is now available. Other groups were created as follow:
    - Elkridge Channel
    - Columbia Channel
    - Jessup/Savage Channel
- HCLHIC Digital Content Tools for organizations to add to the newsletter are now available on the website. Check out the tools here.
- Let's Walk, Roll, Ride, MOVE! – Howard County Walktober 2026 is a month-long celebration of walking and active living during October. HCLHIC needs your support by hosting at least one walking or movement event during Walktober 2026. How to get involved:
    - Complete the HoCo Walktober 2026 Interest Form to receive Walktober giveaways, flyers, and educational materials for your events.
    - Add the Howard County Walktober 2026 logo to your event's promotional materials.
    - Visit https://www.howardcountymd.gov/walktober to learn

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about events near you.
    - Email your promotional materials to Christine Ballou at cballou@howardcountymd.gov.
- Columbia Photovoice
    - Join Community Health Workers for a special Photovoice Community Exhibition featuring the Owen Brown community.
        - Date and Time: November 9, 5:00 – 6:30 pm
        - Location: East Columbia 50+ Center, 6610 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045.
    - Registration is strongly encouraged. Click here to learn more and to register. For questions or accommodation requests, please email chw@howardcountymd.gov.
- Community Advocacy 101 Training:
    - HCLHIC in collaboration with the University of Maryland, Francis King Carey School of Law, Legal Resource Center for Public Health Policy, will hold an advocacy training for community members and organizations.
        - Date and Time: November 16, 5:30 – 7:00 pm
        - Location: HCHD, Heroes A Conference Room, 8930 Stanford Blvd, Columbia, MD 21045.
    - Register here.
- Sister, Soar! Fall After-School Running Club: Sister, Soar! is a Fall after-school running club by Sisters for Health that empowers middle school girls of color to build confidence, community, and healthy habits.
    - Dates and Time: September 22 – October 31, 2026, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
    - Location: Howard County Library System – East Columbia Branch, 6600 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045.
    - Click here to learn more and to register. Please contact them at sisforhealth@gmail.com or call 410-635-0387 for more information.
- Parents & Caregivers: Become a Baby LEADer!
    - Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD) is accepting applications for its FREE virtual Baby LEADers training program for families of children from birth to age 5 who have a suspected or diagnosed developmental delay or disability.
    - Application Deadline: October 16, 2026
    - Mandatory Orientation: October 20, 2026, 12:00 – 1:00 pm OR 7:00 – 8:00 pm
    - Virtual Training Sessions: Saturdays at 9:30 am – 12:00 pm; October 31, November 7, 14, 21, December 5, 2026
- Thriving Through Midlife: A Conversation About Women's Health
    - Join the Howard County Office of Aging and Independence (OAI) and the Commission for Women for "Thriving Through Midlife," a panel

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discussion designed to provide information and resources to help women make informed and empowering decisions about their health.
    - Date and Time: Thursday, October 22, 5:30 – 7:30 pm
    - Location: St. John Baptist Church, 9055 Tamar Dr, Columbia, MD 21045
    - Register here.
- Family Leadership Program:
    - Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) is offering a FREE, two-day Family Leadership Program for Howard County parents and caregivers of school-aged children with mental health challenges.
        - Dates and Times: Friday, October 23, 5:00 - 9:00 pm, and Saturday, October 24, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
        - Location: Hilton Garden Inn, 8241 Snowden River Pkwy, Columbia, MD 21045
    - The program is completely free and includes meals and a place to stay. Limited space. Learn more and apply here.
- LARS Mama & Baby Mobile Health Unit:
    - The Mama & Baby Mobile Health Unit is bringing free healthcare services directly to the community at Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services (LARS) twice each month! Services are provided free of charge.
        - Dates: Saturday, October 27, 2026
        - Location: Laurel Advocacy & Referral Services (LARS), 311 Laurel Avenue, Laurel, MD 20707
    - For appointments, call (301) 437-5788.
- Community Baby Shower:
    - Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated – Lambda Gamma Zeta Chapter, in collaboration with Trinity Maternal Wellness and the Howard County Office of Children and Families, invites you to its Community Baby Shower!
        - Date and Time: Saturday, November 7, 2026, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm
        - Location: Cradlerock Elementary School, 6700 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045
    - Click here to learn more and to register. Questions? Email lrhodes@howardcountymd.gov.
- FREE Cold Weather Gear Giveaway!
    - The Howard County Office of Community Resources and Services, in partnership with GRACE, is offering FREE cold weather gear for all ages and sizes, from infants to adults!
        - Date and Time: Saturday, October 17, 2026, 10:00 am – Noon
        - Location: North Laurel Community Center, 9411 Whiskey

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Bottom Road, Laurel, MD 20723
- All items are available while supplies last!
- Questions? Contact Valerie Mathis at 410-313-0242 (voice/relay) or vmathis@howardcountymd.gov.

- The Pink Bag Event:
  - The Mall in Columbia, in partnership with the United Breast Cancer Foundation (UBCF) and The Red Devils, invites the community to the Pink Bag event.
    - Date and Time: Saturday, October 17, 2026, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm
    - Location: The Mall in Columbia – Center Court, 10300 Little Patuxent Pkwy, Columbia, MD 21044
  - Planning to attend? RSVP to HCGH-Cancer-Center@jhmi.edu and include your name and county of residence. For more information, call 410-730-3300.
- The Breast Care Collective:
  - Join the WIIN Breast Care Foundation for The Breast Care Collective, a free community health and wellness event focused on breast care.
    - Date and Time: Saturday, October 17, 2026, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm
    - Location: Stonehouse Community Center, 6110 Foreland Garth, Columbia, MD 21045
  - Register here.
- Fostering Hope Summit:
  - Students in grades 7–12 and adults are invited to the Fostering Hope Summit, a FREE, all-expenses-paid event designed to provide practical tools, resources, and connections to help navigate everyday challenges.
    - Date and Time: Saturday, November 7, 2026, 12:00 –4:00 pm
    - Location: Krav Maga Maryland**,** 8895 McGaw Road, Columbia, MD
  - Register here. For more information, contact taylor@blossomsofhope.org.
- Our Boys, Our Men, Our Future: Health and Wellness Fair:
  - Join the Howard County Office of Human Rights & Equity and community partners for a FREE Health and Wellness Fair designed to support the health and well-being of men and boys in our community.
    - Date and Time: Saturday, November 21, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
    - Location: Harriet Tubman Cultural Center, 8045 Harriet Tubman Lane, Columbia, MD 21044
  - For more information, contact Ovan Shortt at 410-313-1453 (voice/relay) or oshortt@howardcountymd.gov.
- Tobacco & Cannabis Announcements:

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  - HCHD Tobacco and Cannabis website: Learn more about, Nicotine Use Prevention and Cessation, Tobacco/Nicotine Retailer Education and Enforcement, and Legal and Safe Cannabis Use.
  - Requests for Tobacco & Cannabis Prevention presentations and materials: Complete the Community Health Education Request Form found on the HCHD homepage
- Safeguard your home Brochures are available on the HCLHIC website to download.
- Howard County LHIC Calendar- scan the QR code to access the HCLHIC website for events here.
- HCLHIC Post-meeting Survey – Responses needed! Please complete the post-meeting survey.

3. Next Steps and Meeting

Date/Time: Thursday, January 21, 2027, 9:00 – 11:00 am, hybrid.

Other Action Items/Resource Shared:

- Link to access the materials from October's full HCLHIC meeting: https://www.hclhic.org/home/meetingportal.
- Link to complete the post-meeting survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/83FVZRD.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 am.