St. Mary’s County Community Health Advisory Committee

MINUTES

March 31, 2010

Present:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Dolores Martin</th>
<th>Roy Fedders</th>
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<tr>
<td>Christine Wray</td>
<td>Dr. William Icenhower</td>
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<td>Barbara Hak</td>
<td>Dr. Sarah Leonhard</td>
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<td>Eleanor Ritchie</td>
<td>Barbara Paterson</td>
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<td>Capt. Linda Ireland</td>
<td>Lori Jennings-Harris</td>
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<td>Georgette Gaskin</td>
<td>Laine Doggett</td>
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<td>Joan Gelrud</td>
<td>Enid Castro-Vega</td>
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<td>Patricia Wince</td>
<td>Robin Finnacom</td>
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<td>John Savich</td>
<td>Capt. Connie Walker</td>
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The meeting was called to order by Dolores Martin at 6:15 p.m. Handouts were distributed. After a brief review, a motion to accept the minutes from the November 18, 2009 meeting was accepted. Members and guests in attendance were introduced.

CHAC Membership Update / 2009 Annual Report to BOCC:

Dolores Martin stated that the CHAC is still seeking membership for the vacant position as a representative for the physically challenged. Anyone having recommendations for this position should contact Kim Robertson. Barbara Paterson, a recent applicant to the committee, was introduced to committee members. Her appointment will become official at the meeting of the Commissioners in June.

The 2009 CHAC Annual Report is due at the Board of County Commissioner’s office by April 30, 2010 and is being compiled. The final report will be sent to committee members upon completion.

Subcommittee Reports:

Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) & Diabetes Subcommittee:
Dolores Martin explained that Patty Belanger was unable to attend the meeting; however, she relayed information to Dolores for the committee. Dolores stated that subcommittee members plan to attend a proclamation reading by the Board of County Commissioners on May 4 to commemorate “National Stroke Awareness Month.” The subcommittee has continued to distribute diabetes awareness and stroke prevention information to the community at health fairs and community events.
2009 – 2010 Community Health Needs Assessment:

At this time, Dolores Martin explained that one year ago, St. Mary’s Hospital signed a contract with Holleran Consulting of Lancaster, PA, to conduct a community health needs assessment for St. Mary’s County. The kick-off meeting for this assessment was held in April 2009. Lisa Lehman, President of Holleran Consulting, was introduced and then provided a PowerPoint presentation and handouts to attendees with information resulting from data obtained for the Community Health Needs Assessment. Ms. Lehman commended the efforts of Barb Hak and Enid Castro-Vega in completing the health assessment. The objective of Ms. Lehman’s presentation was to review results of the community needs assessment and identify health needs and issues facing St. Mary’s County residents, to discuss the results of the Feb. 23 prioritization meeting, and to discuss the next steps in the strategic planning process. She explained that quantitative and qualitative data was obtained via secondary data profiles which includes existing health and wellness-related data, and data was obtained via 1,100 household surveys, face-to-face interviews, and focus groups held with Lexington Park residents, Mennonite residents, Human Services Council members, and physicians at St. Mary’s Hospital. Individual reports were compiled for each component of the data. Ms. Lehman stated that guidelines for the surveys were followed using the CDC’s Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Enid Castro-Vega of Health Connections conducted 214 face-to-face interviews with the vulnerable population, including the homeless, in Lexington Park.

Ms. Lehman summarized the findings of the data by comparison to the rest of Maryland and the United States. An overview of some of the findings included:

- The population growth in St. Mary’s County is well above that of the rest of Maryland and the United States.
- The gap in median income between males and females in St. Mary’s County is much greater than that of the rest of the United States.
- The percentage of married couples with households containing children under five years old and households with citizens over 65 years of age living below the poverty level is larger than that of the rest of Maryland and of the United States.
- The number of physicians in St. Mary’s County who accept Medical Assistance patients is very limited.
- While the overall incidence rate of cancer in St. Mary’s County is lower than that of the rest of Maryland and of the United States, the incidence rate of colorectal, lung, melanoma of the skin, and oral cancer are higher.
- The primary drug of use for residents of St. Mary’s County who are admitted to treatment centers is alcohol.
- 50% of the “vulnerable population” surveyed in the face-to-face interviews reported that they smoke tobacco on a daily basis, which is much higher than the rest of the County.
- The infant mortality rate (for infants under one year of age) and the child death rate (for children under four years of age) is significantly higher in St. Mary’s County when compared to the rest of Maryland and the United States. In fact, the infant mortality rate in St. Mary’s County is higher than that of the state of Mississippi, which has the highest infant mortality rate in the United States.
• Sexual abuse among children in St. Mary’s County is much higher than the rest of Maryland.
• The asthma rate for children in St. Mary’s County is higher than that of the national average and was listed as an area of concern among focus group participants.

Ms. Lehman stated that a meeting was held by needs assessment subcommittee members on Feb. 23 to identify the issues raised due to the assessment in order to prioritize them according to their impact on the County and to decide upon the feasibility of making realistic changes in these areas. Cardiovascular health, the infant and child death rate, and the shortage of primary care providers in St. Mary’s County who accept Medical Assistance patients stood out as the most significant areas of concern, followed by diabetes, cancer, and childhood sexual abuse. Other areas of concern included oral care (specifically within the vulnerable population), transportation barriers, the shortage of healthcare specialists, difficulty navigating the healthcare system, obesity, smoking, childhood asthma, and alcohol abuse.

An open discussion among CHAC members and guests ensued to further identify key areas that need to be addressed in order to develop a community health improvement plan. Among the items discussed were:

• Focusing on sexual abuse in general, not just childhood sexual abuse, as this behavior often follows a pattern from generation to generation.
• Identifying particular groups in the obesity data to see if a specific age group or race is primarily affected.
• Identifying which specialists, including mental health professionals, are needed in St. Mary’s County.
• Changing “access to care” to “availability of care.”
• Focusing on tobacco usage in St. Mary’s County.

John Savich recommended that this data be shared with other committees and agencies to determine which issues are already identified and may have existing services. Although MedStar is already addressing the shortage of specialists in St. Mary’s County, Christine Wray requested that the practitioner shortage still be included as an area of need because this also assists with grant funding. Dr. Icenhower noted that the best way to determine which specialists may be needed in the county is by examining emergency room data. Roy Fedders requested that obesity, particularly among school-aged children be addressed and nutrition and physical fitness in the schools should be examined. Trish Wince added that the schools have focused on including more nutritious foods at special events, and they have begun to refrain from selling non-nutritional foods (such as candy bars) for fundraisers. Capt. Ireland reiterated that nutrition has also been noted as a problem with new recruits at boot camp, some of whom suffer from stress fractures due to poor diet. Joan Gelrud stated that the Human Services Council is already focusing on the transportation issue in St. Mary’s County. Dr. Icenhower added that the health department already has a transportation program that assists with transporting patients to medical appointments in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore; however, budget cuts have created frustrations with this program. Dr. Leonhard stated that the no-show rate at Greater Baden Medical Services is 30%, which compares to similar facilities across the state, some of which may be attributed to lack of transportation and some to lack of personal responsibility of the clients.
Georgette Gaskin would like to see tobacco usage identified as an area of concern because it is also closely related to chronic disease. Capt. Walker requested that the data be examined further by defining the parameters used to identify the vulnerable population. Healthcare needs (including mental health services) of the discharged inmate population may be another area of need.

Ms. Lehman recommended that the committee make the health needs issues identified as the focus areas very specific in order to develop a workable plan. Barb Hak suggested that the next step for the assessment may be to form subcommittees to identify plans already in place in St. Mary’s County to avoid a duplication of efforts. It was noted that the assessment should be used as a collective community database for use by other agencies to promote efforts by other organizations.

**Comments and Questions:**

At this time, Dolores Martin presented Barb Hak with a certificate commending her efforts with the community health needs assessment.

Dr. Icenhower stated that he would like to provide a presentation in collaboration with Dr. Polsky to discuss prescription errors, including incorrectly filled prescriptions and prescriptions for controlled substances, at the next meeting.

With there being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m. The date of the next Community Health Advisory Committee meeting will be announced as soon as it has been scheduled.

Respectfully Submitted,
Roy Fedders
Recording Secretary