

# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



## Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (HCLHIC)



# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition

---





## Community Health Improvement Plan

### FY 2026 - 2028 Strategic Plan

**Submitted by:**

*Maura Rossman, MD*

Health Officer, Howard County Health Department &  
Co-Chair, Howard County LHIC

*Jeanette T.M. Nazarian, MD*

Vice President, Medical Affairs/Chief Medical Officer,  
Johns Hopkins Howard County Medical Center &  
Co-Chair, Howard County LHIC

*B. Reena Rambharat, MPH, MCHES®*

Deputy Director, Bureau of Assessment, Planning & Community Engagement,  
Howard County Health Department

*Maribet Rivera-Brute, MPH*

Director, Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition

July 14, 2025

# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



## Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	4
Introduction and HCLHIC Mission and Vision .....	5
Local Health Improvement Priorities .....	6
Development of the 2026-2028 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives .....	6
Strategic Plan Implementation and Monitoring .....	7
Healthy Beginnings Priority.....	8
Healthy Living Priority .....	12
Healthy Minds Priority .....	16
Community Health Worker Learning Collaborative (CHWLC) .....	19
Appendix A: Strategic Plan Process.....	21
Appendix B: Action Plan.....	21



## Introduction and HCLHIC Mission and Vision

The Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (HCLHIC), part of Howard County Health Department (HCHD), was formed in 2011 as part of the Maryland Department of Health's (MDH) [State Health Improvement Plan](#) (SHIP) process. The Coalition is made up of over 200 partner agencies and over 600 individual members working collaboratively to identify and reduce health disparities and achieve health equity in Howard County. HCLHIC uses the [Collective Impact](#) framework as a guide to ensure that all Howard County community members have access to equitable and culturally appropriate preventive health care and health promotion opportunities across the lifespan. The coalition is Co-Chaired by the Health Officer for Howard County and the Chief Medical Officer and Vice President, Medical Affairs for the Johns Hopkins Howard County Medical Center (JHHCMC). The [current membership](#) of the HCLHIC is listed on the HCLHIC webpage. Funding for the Coalition staffing and activities is provided by the Howard County Health Department and competitive grants.

This Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (HCLHIC) Strategic Plan (also known as the Community Health Improvement Plan or CHIP) describes the priorities, goals, objectives and activities to guide the coalition's work for FY2026-2028. Appendices A and B outline the modified [Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships \(MAPP\) 2.0](#) process used to develop this plan along with the Action Plan that describes specific action steps to implement the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. The Action Plan will evolve as the coalition's work continues.

Central to the HCLHIC's work are its mission, vision and values:

**Mission:** Howard County's Local Health Improvement Coalition works to achieve health equity and to identify and reduce health disparities for all in Howard County.

**Vision:** All community members in Howard County have an equitable opportunity to achieve health and wellness.

**Values:**

- Evidence-Based
- All partners have a voice
- Inclusive of Howard County's diverse community
- Collaboration
- Transparency



## Local Health Improvement Priorities

The work of the HCLHIC is organized within three priority areas developed for the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan, with consideration given to:

- Disparity related to health outcomes;
- Population health impact;
- Evidence-based and research-supported promising practices;
- Coalition capacity; and,
- Measurability of outcomes.

These priorities were sustained for the 2026-2028 plan based on feedback during the CHIP process from partners and community members to build on the efforts in the previous Strategic Plan. In the development of the plan, consideration was given to the Maryland SHIP priorities and the JHHCMC Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA).

HCLHIC engages community members and partners across the lifespan through culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive activities and resources via the following priorities:

1. **Healthy Beginnings:** Healthy lifestyle activities related to prevention and care to improve maternal, infant and family health.
2. **Healthy Living:** Healthy lifestyle activities for disease prevention through improved access to healthy foods, health education, safe physical activity opportunities, and healthcare.
3. **Healthy Minds:** Healthy lifestyle activities for social engagement to support mental wellness and behavioral health.

## Development of the 2026-2028 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives for the HCLHIC FY26-28 Strategic Plan were developed in a process adapted from the MAPP 2.0 framework, incorporating input from the HCLHIC workgroup co-chairs, members and community feedback. The Community Health Improvement Plan Steering Committee provided input and guidance on the development of the plan and the HCLHIC mission, vision and values. Steering committee members are listed in Appendix A.

The process began with review and presentation of Howard County data from multiple sources including: Howard County Health Assessment Survey (HCHAS, 2014-2024); Maryland Vital Statistics Administration (2010-2022); Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS, 2013-2022);



Maryland Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS, 2016-2022); Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP) Public Health Dashboard (2016-2024); American Community Survey (2017-2022); CDC Wonder (2018-2022); and qualitative data gathered through community forums, roundtable discussions and focus groups. Key data are cited later in this plan.

Based on a review of these data, workgroup co-chairs and staff developed problem statements for the Healthy Beginnings, Healthy Living and Healthy Minds priorities. Staff and workgroup co-chairs facilitated roundtable sessions with partners and community members to gather feedback on root causes of the public health concerns and propose solutions relevant to the problem statements. After a review of the evidence base for the potential solutions, workgroup co-chairs, in consultation with other subject matter experts, identified three (3) solutions for each priority. The potential solutions were shared with the community for prioritization and additional input through three (3) in-person health forums and via a survey available in multiple languages (English, Spanish, Korean and Chinese). The draft plan was shared with the Steering Committee and HCLHIC members for feedback, followed by voting in accordance with the HCLHIC By-Laws. The final plan was distributed widely among coalition members. The action plan provides a roadmap with pertinent details related to implementation of the goals and objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan. The dynamic nature of the action plan allows for additional goals, objectives and activities to be added based on emerging public health issues. A more detailed description of the process to develop this FY2026-2028 HCLHIC Strategic Plan is provided in Appendix A, Strategic Plan Process. A detailed action plan is provided in Appendix B.

## Strategic Plan Implementation and Monitoring

The goals, objectives and strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan will be implemented through strategic community engagement by the following four (4) HCLHIC workgroups:

- Growing Healthy Families Workgroup
- Healthy Lifestyle Workgroup
- Healthy Minds & Suicide Prevention Coalition
- Community Health Worker Learning Collaborative

The workgroup members provide input on activities to achieve the goals and objectives under each priority area as part of the Action Plan. Additional planning meetings are held as needed to implement specific short-term initiatives. HCLHIC staff and co-chairs, with support and input from workgroup members, facilitate the activities to achieve the identified goals and objectives. The coalition uses a variety of tools and strategies for its work, e.g. collaboration to develop and

# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



share culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive messaging, health education opportunities and other resources. HCLHIC works with Community Health Workers (CHWs) to engage communities experiencing health disparities to learn from and share essential health resources. Recognizing the impact of Social Determinants of Health on wellbeing, HCLHIC incorporates [CAREAPP](#) as a tool to connect community members to over 2,500 Howard County programs addressing mental and other health services and resources to address crucial social drivers of health needs such as food, housing, transportation, education and employment assistance.

The HCLHIC Executive Committee, comprised of the Coalition Co-Chairs, workgroup co-chairs, HCLHIC Director and staff meet twice a year to discuss the progress and updates related to the activities outlined in the Action Plan. A mid-point review in December 2026 will assess the outcomes and track progress towards achieving each goal. Adjustments to activities will be made as needed and the final or end-point assessment in June 2028 will document whether goals and objectives in the Action Plan have been met.

Changes related to long-term health outcomes are tracked primarily using data from the Maryland Department of Health's SHIP measures and the Howard County Health Assessment Survey (HCHAS). Short-term progress is monitored through outputs and process objectives over the course of the FY 26-28.

The following sections describe the goals, objectives and strategies developed from the comprehensive review of both qualitative and quantitative data, with input from community members and partners throughout Howard County. Health disparities in specific populations are highlighted to inform strategic initiatives to achieve health equity among community members most adversely impacted by poor health outcomes.

## Healthy Beginnings Priority

**Description:** Healthy lifestyle activities related to prevention and care to improve maternal, infant, and family health.

**Data:**

- Infant Mortality:
  - Rate: 4.7 infant deaths per 1000 live births overall in 2022, 3-yr rate
  - Disparity: 6.7 per 1000 live births in Blacks in 2022, 3-yr rate
  - SHIP target: 5.2 for Maryland overall by 2029
- Low Birthweight Births:



# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



- Rate: 9.2% of live births overall in 2022
- Disparity: 13.1% of live births in Blacks in 2022
- SHIP target: 8.7% for Maryland overall by 2029
- Maternal Deaths:
  - Rate: 36.2 pregnancy-related deaths per 100,000 live births overall in 2022, 5-yr rate
  - Disparity: 60% of the 10 maternal deaths between 2010 and 2022 were Black women
  - SHIP target: 17.2 or fewer pregnancy-related deaths per 100,000 live births overall for Maryland by 2029

**Goal 1.** Improve health outcomes for Black/African American infants and mothers through improved maternal care before, during and after pregnancy.

**Objective 1.1:** By June 2028, increase awareness of educational and other resources available to Black/African American mothers and infants in Howard County.

### Strategies

- Collaborate with workgroup members to coordinate the annual Black Maternal Health Week celebration.
- Promote educational programs related to perinatal care for Black mothers.

**Objective 1.2:** By June 2028, increase awareness of doula services as a potential alternative or in conjunction with traditional hospital care.

### Strategies

- Promote the use of doulas, the HCHD Perinatal Equity and Care for Everyone (P.E.A.C.E.) program, community health centers and resources in Howard County Community Schools.
- Collaborate with healthcare institutions to promote culturally appropriate high-quality care for Black/African-American mothers and infants.
- Disseminate culturally relevant and accessible information about the value of doulas.

**Goal 2:** Enhance equitable access to healthcare by expanding awareness of affordable health coverage, community health services and transportation assistance, while also improving opportunities for prenatal care and nutrition education for women in Howard County.



**Objective 2.1:** By June 2028, collaborate with the Growing Healthy Families workgroup members to increase awareness of affordable healthcare coverage, availability of community health centers and information about transportation assistance to health care facilities.

### Strategies

- Strengthen partnerships with community-based organizations to enhance access to and awareness of affordable healthcare, prenatal care and maternal health support by sharing culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive resources for new mothers.
- Explore themes related to women's health issues including ways to improve access to care through collaborative focus groups.
- Expand partnerships with faith-based organizations to increase awareness of programs and events for prenatal care.

**Objective 2.2:** By June 2028, collaborate with workgroup members to increase opportunities to access affordable prenatal care and nutrition education for women.

### Strategies

- Collaborate with the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program and similar organizations to promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive prenatal care and healthy eating and nutrition resources for women.
- Strengthen collaboration between healthcare providers, nutrition experts, and faith-based organizations to ensure seamless access to support services for maternal health.

**Goal 3:** Engage community members in women and maternal health activities by increasing awareness of culturally appropriate, accessible, and inclusive opportunities to improve access to healthcare.

**Objective 3.1:** By June 2028, enhance awareness, access to affordable healthcare and well-being for women in Howard County by creating tools to support women in the community.



### Strategies

- Explore themes related to women's health issues through focus groups.
- Create and promote a culturally appropriate, accessible, and inclusive toolkit to guide advocacy efforts related to improved access to healthcare for women in Howard County.
- Collaborate with other HCLHIC workgroups to promote physical and mental health among women in Howard County.
- Promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive resources for mothers with multiple births (twins, triplets), fathers and grandparents.
- Foster collaborative partnerships with community-based organizations to promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive resources for women.

**Objective 3.2:** By June 2028, expand engagement opportunities to improve physical and mental health and social engagement among women in the community.

### Strategies

- Incorporate messaging about mental and physical health during Black Maternal Health Week.
- Create engagement opportunities related to mental health for women in collaboration with Growing Healthy Families and Healthy Minds and Suicide Prevention workgroups.
- Foster collaborative partnerships with community-based organizations to promote culturally appropriate and accessible resources to improve health outcomes for pregnant women.
- Collaborate and promote culturally appropriate and accessible resources from providers offering alternative therapy (e.g. music and animal therapy).
- Collaborate with healthcare organizations, faith-based organizations, schools, and community-based organizations to promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive mental health resources for mothers experiencing stress and anxiety.



## Healthy Living Priority

**Description:** Healthy lifestyle activities for disease prevention through improved access to healthy foods, health education, safe physical activity opportunities, and healthcare.

### Data

- Overweight and Obesity:
  - Prevalence: 59.8% of adults are overweight or obese in 2022
  - Disparity: 68.3% of Black adults are overweight or obese in 2022
- Obesity in High School Students
  - Prevalence: 9.7% of high school students were obese overall in 2022
  - Disparity: 12.4% of Black and 21.7% of Hispanic high school students were obese in 2022
- Physical Activity
  - Prevalence: 44% of high school students report physical activity at least five days a week in 2022
- Food Insecurity
  - Prevalence: 9.7% reported food insecurity overall in 2022
  - Disparity: 18% of Black and 12% of Hispanic people reported food insecurity in 2022
  - SHIP target: 8.3% reporting food insecurity by 2029
- Diabetes
  - Prevalence: 12% overall in 2024; Gestational diabetes at 11% in 2021
  - Disparity: Hospital readmission rates 19% overall, 22% in Blacks in 2023
- Hypertension:
  - Prevalence: 28% overall in 2021
  - Disparity: 34.5% in Blacks in 2021
  - SHIP target: 18.9% overall in Maryland by 2029
- Fall-related deaths:
  - Rate: 10.2 per 100,000 in 2022, 3-yr rate, increased from 9.3 in prior period

**Goal 1:** Advance healthy lifestyle behaviors through culturally responsive, inclusive, and accessible communication strategies that promote nutrition education, physical activity, safe pedestrian environments, and equitable access to health services, with a focused commitment to reaching and uplifting the most vulnerable community members.



**Objective 1.1:** By June 2028, collaborate with the HCHD and partners to implement and evaluate healthy lifestyle messages for priority populations to improve health outcomes.

### Strategies

- Plan, implement, and evaluate population-specific culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive healthy lifestyle social media messaging.
- Engage Community Health Workers (CHWs) to promote culturally appropriate healthy lifestyle messages within specific zip codes in Howard County.
- Collaborate with Howard County Department of Transportation to disseminate educational materials on pedestrian safety.
- Engage faith-based organizations to integrate health messaging into community programs or outreach events.
- Create short, engaging videos and infographics on nutrition, preventive care, and available health services.

**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.

### Strategies

- Collaborate with businesses and local healthcare organizations to display culturally appropriate, accessible, and inclusive health information in their organizations.
- Promote interactive nutrition education workshops in collaboration with healthcare and community-based organizations to encourage healthy eating.
- Update and disseminate Food Assistance and Nutrition Education Program Guide on a bi-annual basis.

**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.

### Strategies

- Collaborate with community partners and members to raise awareness and encourage use of health services.



- Partner with faith-based organizations, schools and local businesses to disseminate health information where community members gather.
- Partner with healthcare organizations to disseminate culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive health educational materials in waiting rooms.
- Promote the use of CAREAPP to increase nutrition education, chronic disease prevention and other health education resources.

**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.

### Strategies

- Collaborate with the Howard County Office of Transportation to promote “walk to work” or “walking school bus” activities and share culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive resources to encourage safe pedestrian movement and physical activity.
- Collaborate with schools and community organizations to create opportunities for youth to engage in physical activity.

**Goal 2:** Increase awareness of culturally appropriate, accessible, affordable, and nutritious food to decrease food and nutrition insecurity among Howard County community members.

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

### Strategies

- Promote awareness of free and low-cost partner food and meal sites through the [Food Connections Map](#).
- Update and disseminate Food Pantry and Hot Meals brochures on a bi-annual basis.
- Support and promote community and container gardening efforts in Howard County.

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



### Strategies

- Promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive educational materials on healthy eating and food access tailored to diverse populations and languages.
- Identify individuals at risk for food insecurity through the CAREAPP Needs Assessment and refer them to culturally appropriate and accessible food resources.
- Collaborate with faith-based organizations to increase awareness of food distribution sites and promote culturally appropriate food resources at places of worship.
- Collaborate with local communities, faith-based organizations, and schools to provide nutritional education.

**Goal 3:** Increase awareness of fall risk and opportunities to promote culturally appropriate and accessible resources to decrease falls and increase physical activity among community members.

**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.

### Strategies

- Collaborate with organizations to promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive resources to reduce falls risk during Falls Prevention Week and year-round.
- Collaborate with organizations such as the Howard County Office on Aging and Independence, Howard County Fire and Rescue and JHHCMC to promote movement and strength training among community members year-round.

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

### Strategies

- Create and promote walking groups in neighborhoods, especially in senior communities, to encourage people to be more active and connect with others.



- Create short videos promoting movement to increase physical activity among community members across the lifespan.
- Disseminate free and low-cost physical activity and [falls prevention programs](#) using CAREAPP.
- Partner with community-based organizations, healthcare providers and subject matter experts to promote educational events to increase awareness of risks in the home to prevent falls.

## Healthy Minds Priority

**Description:** Healthy lifestyle activities for social engagement to support mental wellness and behavioral health.

### Data

- Depression, Hopelessness:
  - Rate: 16.5% of adults reported a depression diagnosis in 2022, increased from 14.2% in 2016
  - Disparity: 32% of youth overall reported hopelessness in 2022, compared with 44% in females, 41% in Hispanics, and 34% in Blacks.
  - SHIP target: Reduce percentage of students feeling hopeless from 42% overall in Maryland
- Suicide:
  - Rate: 16% of youth considered suicide in 2022, increased from 14% in 2013
  - Disparities: 21% females, 19% Hispanics, 16% Black youth considered suicide in 2022. Of the 28 youth (10-19 yr old) suicides between 2013-2022, 46% were non-Hispanic white, 36% non-Hispanic Black. Suicide readmission rates for Blacks (18%) were higher than overall (13%) in 2024, but all other mental health admissions are much lower for Blacks (6%) than overall (21%), 2023.
- Firearm assault deaths:
  - Rate: Yearly average of 6 (2015-2018) increased to 14 (2019-2022)
  - Disparity: 92% male, 83% Black in 2022

**Goal 1:** Promote safe home practices such as safe storage of medications, firearms, and other harmful materials, and reduce stigma of mental health support through education and community engagement.





**Objective 1.1:** By June 2028, collaborate with workgroup members to create and promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive materials to make homes safer to prevent suicide.

### Strategies

- Promote the Safeguard your Home brochure to increase awareness of strategies to make homes safer.
- Create and promote an online toolkit to increase awareness of suicide prevention strategies with checklists, action steps and infographics.
- Collaborate with community centers, healthcare organizations, community-based organizations and local businesses to disseminate educational materials among community members.

**Objective 1.2:** By June 2028, increase community engagement to support mental health among priority populations through local partnerships and peer support programs.

### Strategies

- Increase awareness of culturally competent mental health providers in Black/African American communities.
- Collaborate with schools to disseminate resources to normalize conversations around mental health, provide culturally appropriate, and accessible resources and empower students to seek help without fear of stigma.
- Promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive social engagement opportunities and resources for those with substance use and mental health disorders.

**Goal 2:** Develop initiatives highlighting community violence intervention programs, promoting safe firearm storage and ownership practices, and collaborating with law enforcement agencies to address illegal firearms and reduce gun violence.

**Objective 2.1:** By June 2028, support community-based initiatives to reduce firearm-related deaths among priority populations in Howard County.

### Strategies

- Collaborate with workgroup members on outreach programs to educate the community on firearm safety and violence prevention.



- Promote safe firearm storage practices and access to free firearm storage devices/options.
- Collaborate with the school system on community-based violence intervention campaigns as an alternative to violence for at-risk individuals.

**Objective 2.2:** By June 2028, expand partnerships with local organizations, schools and law enforcement agencies to provide support and address the unique mental health needs of priority populations in Howard County.

### Strategies

- Collaborate with Howard County Police and other law enforcement agencies to increase resource accessibility and promote prevention initiatives through joint efforts.
- Identify and collaborate with Black/African American-led community-based organizations already working on mental health initiatives.
- Collaborate with schools to create a virtual event for parents and students to increase awareness of mental health early intervention.

**Goal 3:** Promote culturally appropriate and accessible mental health and behavioral resources through partnerships with local organizations and businesses serving priority populations.

**Objective 3.1:** By June 2028, collaborate with organizations and social groups hosting mentorship programs to promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive mental health resources.

### Strategies

- Promote culturally appropriate, accessible, and inclusive mental health resources through outreach events and collaboration with partner agencies including schools, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations.
- Promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive Substance Use and mental health resources widely via CAREAPP, HCLHIC website, and workgroup members.
- Expand awareness and access to culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive mental health and social support resources, with an emphasis on peer mentorship for adults and youth.
- Disseminate culturally responsive mental health training resources from community partners and national organizations to enhance healthcare



providers' knowledge to offer culturally appropriate and equitable mental health care.

**Objective 3.2:** By June 2028, collaborate with organizations and social groups providing resources for community members seeking help to improve behavioral health priority populations.

### Strategies

- Increase awareness of culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive behavioral health resources among patients in healthcare setting.
- Promote educational materials and culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive behavioral health resources to reduce stigma around assessing services.
- Collaborate with schools, libraries, community centers and faith-based organizations to promote opportunities for youth to engage in open discussions around mental health.

## Community Health Worker Learning Collaborative (CHWLC)

**Description:** Community Health Workers (CHWs) play a key role in promoting health and wellness by empowering individuals to adopt healthy behaviors and bridging gaps in access to culturally appropriate healthcare and social services.

The CHW Learning Collaborative provides a dynamic peer learning environment where CHWs exchange valuable resources, share best practices and collaborate with organizations that support and employ them across the county. Through this initiative, CHWs strengthen their ability to serve their communities more effectively while fostering partnerships that advance culturally appropriate and equitable healthcare access.

**Goal 1:** Create a centralized CHW network across all organizations in Howard County to enhance collaboration, improve culturally appropriate, accessible, and inclusive resource sharing and expand access to community-based health initiatives.

**Objective 1.1:** By June 2028, lead efforts to connect CHWs across the county to share resources and funding opportunities.

### Strategies



- Host quarterly CHW Learning Collaborative meetings to foster networking, share best practices and enhance professional development among CHWs across Howard County.
- Expand outreach efforts and actively engage CHWs across Howard County by building strong outreach networks, fostering professional development opportunities and creating sustainable pathways for collaboration.
- Increase awareness and accessibility of CHW certification by developing targeted outreach efforts, highlighting professional growth opportunities and showcasing the impact of CHWs on community health.
- Actively promote funding opportunities to ensure long-term sustainability and growth of the CHW workforce in Howard County.

**Objective 1.2:** By June 2028, maintain and expand the CHWLC Workgroup membership to enhance workforce retention, foster professional development and ensure the long-term sustainability of CHW programs across the county.

### Strategies

- Partner with local universities, healthcare providers, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations to promote CHWLC through outreach events, digital communication channels and signage on site.

**Goal 2:** Elevate CHWs as trusted advocates in healthcare and social services by strengthening public awareness, expanding professional development and fostering partnerships that improve access and equity in community health.

**Objective: 2.1:** By June 2028, develop best practices and expectations for CHWs to enhance professionalism, ensure consistency in service delivery and strengthen their role in bridging healthcare and social services.

### Strategies

- Highlight the unique ability of CHWs to bridge the gap between healthcare and social services by increasing awareness, strengthening collaboration and demonstrating their impact in improving health outcomes and social equity.
- Develop a CHWs Continuing Education Unit (CEU) professional development opportunity based on Howard County specific needs.



- Proactively seek and establish partnerships with diverse organizations to enhance CHW training opportunities, ensuring access to specialized knowledge, professional development and workforce sustainability.

**Objective 2.2:** By June 2028, establish a sustainable network connecting CHWs with community organizations, schools, local leaders and businesses by portraying the positive impact of CHWs in the community, developing structured referral mechanisms, fostering ongoing partnerships and increasing awareness of CHW contributions to healthcare and social services.

### Strategies

- Highlight the impact and benefit of CHWs in the community.
- Create Community Asset Profiles for specific Census Tracts in Howard County.
- Collaborate with community partners and utilize CAREAPP to facilitate and monitor resident engagement in health education and social resources.

**Objective 2.3:** By June 2028, integrate CHWs into existing Howard County Health Department (HCHD) programs by developing structured workflows that enhance coordination, streamline service delivery and strengthen CHW engagement in healthcare and social services.

### Strategies

- Identify priority areas to promote health education opportunities by leveraging Community Assets Profile data.
- Establish cross-sector partnerships with healthcare organizations, community-based organizations, businesses and social service agencies to promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive health education resources.

## [Appendix A: Strategic Plan Process](#)

## [Appendix B: Action Plan](#)



## Contact Us

8930 Stanford Blvd.,  
Columbia, MD 21045

410-313- 6204

[LHIC@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:LHIC@howardcountymd.gov)

<https://www.hclhic.org/>

@hclhic