

# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



## 2022-2025 Strategic Plan

## Community Health Improvement Plan

Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition

### 2022 – 2025 Strategic Action Plan

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June 2, 2022

# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



## Introduction

The Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition was formed in 2011 as part of the Maryland Department of Health’s State Health Improvement Process (SHIP). This process and its measures align with the Healthy People 2030 objectives established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

The Coalition’s mission is to identify and reduce health disparities and achieve health equity among Howard County residents. The Coalition works with the intention to ensure that Howard County residents have access to equitable and culturally congruent preventive health care and health promotion opportunities across the lifespan. Using local health data and input from community members and partners throughout the County, the Coalition developed the 2022-2025 Strategic Action Plan, setting goals, process objectives and tactics for three key priority areas:

- **Healthy Beginnings**
- **Healthy Living**
- **Healthy Minds**

Maryland Department of Health’s SHIP measures and Howard County Health Assessment Survey (HCHAS) data serve as the basis by which long-term change will be measured however, identified process objectives will serve as outcomes by which short-term change over the course of the FY 22-25 plan will be measured.

The Coalition is Co-Chaired by the Health Officer for Howard County and the Vice President, Population Health and Advancement for Howard County General Hospital, a member of Johns Hopkins Medicine. Funding for the Coalition and staffing is provided by the Howard County Health Department.

## Local Health Improvement Priorities

The Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (HCLHIC) identified three priority areas with corresponding goals for the 2022-2025 Action Plan. These priorities and goals were developed with consideration given to:

- Disparity related to the health outcome;
- Population health impact;
- Evidence-based and research-supported promising practices
- Coalition capacity; and,

# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



- Measurability of outcomes.

Through strategic Community Engagement, the Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition works to promote health; prevent and support management of chronic diseases; and promote social engagement and mental health across the lifespan through culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive healthy lifestyle activities in the following priority areas:

1. **Healthy Beginnings:** Healthy lifestyle activities related to prevention and care for gestational diabetes, maternal and infant health and prevention of pediatric obesity.
2. **Healthy Living:** Health promotion related to chronic disease prevention and care, increased movement and healthier food and beverage choices.
3. **Healthy Minds:** Health promotion for social engagement and to support mental health.

## How do these currently impact Howard County?

The identified priorities and goals were developed based on review and presentation of the data from multiple sources including: the 2021 Howard County Health Assessment Survey (HCHAS); Maryland Vital Statistics Administration; Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBSS); Maryland Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS); Maryland Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program; CRISP Public Health Dashboard; and qualitative data gathered through community forums, roundtable discussions and focus groups. Quantitative data were reported using the metrics and language of the survey instrument and/or source referenced. Noted disparity evidenced by the data is provided to highlight how different groups experience certain health-related factors (weight, diabetes, infant health) in comparison to their proportion of the population. These disparities are not inherent attributes associated with any given group but are indicators of deep and long-standing systemic factors. Qualitative data was collected to provide context and insights to supplement the quantitative data and will be utilized in achieving the goals and objectives in the workgroups. Key quantitative findings from these data sources include:

### HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

- **MATERNAL WEIGHT** - Maternal obesity (pre-pregnancy) was a factor in 11.3% and maternal underweight (pre-pregnancy) in 13.0% of preterm births in Howard County (Maryland Vital Statistics Administration for Howard County, 2019). Based on Howard County Data from the Women Infants and Children (WIC) program (2019) 34% of pregnant women were overweight and 30% were obese pre-pregnancy.

# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



- **MATERNAL HEALTH** - Other risk factors for preterm birth in Howard County included smoking during pregnancy: 15.1%; gestational diabetes: 11.4%; and chronic hypertension: 28.1%; and pregnancy-associated hypertension: 24.3% (Maryland Vital Statistics Administration for Howard County, 2019).
- **INFANT MORTALITY** - The Infant Mortality Rate for all races in Howard County was 5.1 compared with 5.9 in Maryland. Notably, the rate among Non-Hispanic Blacks was 10.3 compared with 4.4 among Non-Hispanic Whites. (Maryland Vital Statistics Administration for Howard County, 2019). Leading Causes for infant mortality in Howard County include Preterm birth (<37 weeks gestation): 9.0% compared with 10.3% in Maryland; and low birth weight births: 7.2% compared with 8.7% in Maryland. (Maryland Vital Statistics Administration for Howard County, 2019)
- **PEDIATRIC WEIGHT** - The 2021 Howard County Health Assessment Survey (HCHAS) reported that the percentage of children who were advised by a medical professional to lose weight increased from 7% in 2018 to 18% in 2021. Based on Howard County Data from the Women Infants and Children (WIC) program between July – December 2018, 15% of children in the program were overweight and 17% were obese.

## HEALTHY LIVING

- **WEIGHT** - The 2021 HCHAS reported that 29% of adults were overweight and 25% of adults were obese. This means that 1 in 2 adults in Howard County is either overweight or obese. Notably of those identified as obese, 37% were Black, 27% were White and 7% Asian.
- **MOVEMENT** - The 2021 HCHAS reported an increase in both physical activities to raise heart rate (80% up from 73%) and to strengthen muscles (51% up from 49%) among Howard County residents over 2018 survey results. There was noted disparity with 31% of those who did not participate in physical activity to raise heart rate and 61% of those who did not participate in physical activity to strengthen muscles reported among those earning less than \$50K annually.
- **FOOD AND BEVERAGE CHOICES** - The 2021 HCHAS reported that 11% of individuals drink regular soda daily; 18% of individuals eat fruits three times or more per day; and 16% of individuals eat vegetables three or more times per day while 32% of residents eat vegetables less than once per day over the past week. Of those reporting having eaten vegetables less than once per day over the past week 47% earn less than \$50K annually.

# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



- **CHRONIC DISEASE -**

- **(DIABETES)** - The 2021 HCHAS reported an increase in the percentage of residents with both pre-diabetes (11%) and diabetes (13%) compared with 2018 (8% respectively for both). Prediabetes among residents <30 years old increased from 9% in 2018 to 28% in 2021. Diabetes rates among Non-Hispanic Blacks in 2019 was 12.3% compared with 6.1% for Non-Hispanic Whites (BRFSS, age-adjusted rate).

- **(HYPERTENSION) excluding pregnant women previously discussed** - The 2021 HCHAS reported that borderline or pre-hypertensive adults increased to 5% as compared with 1% in 2018 (6% for males compared with 3% for females); and, adults with hypertension increased to 36% compared with 27% in 2018 (45% for males: compared with 28% for females). Of note, 34% of individuals earning less than \$50K in annual income said that they do not take medication to help with their high blood pressure.

- **(CANCER) -**

**(BREAST & CERVICAL CANCER)** - In 2018, 78.3% of Howard County women ≥50 years of age had a mammogram within the past 2 years, down from the 2016 prevalence of 83.0% (BRFSS, 2018). Incidence rates of breast cancer were highest for Blacks (including Hispanic) in Howard County (153.6) and higher than MD (133.4). Mortality rates are higher for Black women in Howard County (23.3) than White women (17.4). In 2018, the proportion of Howard County women ≥18 years of age that had a pap test within 3 years was 72.8%. During 2013-2017, the 5-year average of new cervical cancer cases by race in Howard was 6.6 for Black women, 5.3 for Asian women, and 8.3 for Hispanic women.

**(COLORECTAL CANCER)** - The 5-year average colorectal cancer (CRC) incidence in Howard County remains highest in Blacks (46.0), and particularly high in Black men (52.1). Incidence in Whites, Hispanics were 36.7 and 19.3 respectively. CRC incidence is higher for men in Howard (33.7) than women (30.1). CRC mortality rate was highest for Blacks (18.4), followed by Whites (13.2) and Asians (10.0). Data for the Hispanic population was too limited for analysis.

**(TOBACCO USE)** Data from the Youth Risk Behavior/Youth Tobacco Survey (YRBS/YTS) indicates that from 2016 – 2018, the prevalence of any tobacco/electronic smoking devices (ESDs), cigarettes, cigars, smokeless

# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



tobacco use among middle school (MS) students has increased 100% and 47% for high school (HS) students. In 2018, tobacco use was highest for Black (6.7%) and Hispanics (6.1%) MS students. Among adults, data from the 2016 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) showed a higher proportion of tobacco use among adults with incomes lower than \$50K (13.2%) compared to those with incomes greater than \$50K (8.0%).

## HEALTHY MINDS

- **MENTAL HEALTH** – Data from the CRISP Public Health Dashboard shows that Emergency Department visits (ED visits/1,000) for any mental health condition were 26.27 in 2020. 14.0% of Howard County residents reported having 8+ days of not good mental health in 2020 compared to 11.3% in 2016 (BRFSS, age-adjusted rate). The prevalence of doctor-diagnosed Depression was 14.8% in 2020 compared with 12.2 in 2019 (BRFSS, age-adjusted rate).
- **SUICIDE PREVENTION** – The (3-year age-adjusted rate per 100,000) death rate increased to 8.3 in 2019 compared with 7.6 in 2016 (Maryland Vital Statistics Administration).
- **SUBSTANCE MISUSE** – According to the CRISP Public Health Dashboard, ED visits for any substance use disorder (ED visits/1,000) was 15.10 in 2020. Also notable with respect to chronic disease prevention, among those receiving Substance-Related Disorder (SRD) services, cigarette smoking has remained consistent at approximately 60%, twice that of adults receiving MH services (59.5% vs. 25.5%) (BRFSS, 2016).
- **SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT** – Social isolation was a recurring theme from the community engagement focus group sessions on healthy lifestyle conducted in October and November 2021 with community members. This focus is in line with the Howard County Age-Friendly Community Plan domain of “Social Participation: Access to a variety of affordable activities to combat social isolation” as one of the eight Domains of Livability.
- **BRAIN HEALTH** – The Alzheimer's (3-year age-adjusted rate per 100,000) rate for Howard County was 16.9 in 2019 compared with 19.2 in 2016 (Maryland Vital Statistics Administration). Of note, the readmission rate for Alzheimer increased to 15.1 in 2019 from 11.62 in 2016 (CRISP Public Health Dashboard).



## How will we address these in Howard County?

Using the data presented, the Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition (HCLHIC) will address these three priority areas by working to achieve the following goals, objectives and proposed tactics:

**Goal 1:** Engage community members in healthy lifestyle activities by increasing awareness; culturally appropriate opportunities; accessible and inclusive communications and initiatives related to promoting movement; healthier food choices; and, social engagement to promote improved physical and mental health.

- **Objective 1:** By May 2023, collaborate with Coalition members to develop and pre-test key messages to promote improved physical and mental health based on identified facilitators, barriers and engagement strategies related to movement, healthier food choices, and social engagement among priority populations in Howard County.
- **Objective 2:** By June 2025, collaborate with Coalition members to plan, implement and evaluate a marketing campaign to promote improved physical and mental health across the lifespan in Howard County.
- **Objective 3:** By May 2023, collaborate with Coalition members to develop and pilot a movement initiative including a community calendar and programming to encourage Howard County community members of all ages and abilities to engage in movement for improved physical and mental health.
- **Objective 4:** By June 2025, based on results of the pilot program, plan, implement and evaluate a Movement Initiative and toolkit to encourage Howard County community members of all ages and abilities to engage in movement for improved physical and mental health year-round.

### Tactics

- Convene quarterly Communications team meeting to plan, implement and evaluate Communication through the HCLHIC and partners and to review literature and materials for inclusivity and accessibility.
- Communicate messages in support of the Maryland Diabetes Action Plan, 2020 to “increase access to healthy nutrition and improve the availability of healthy lifestyle options for overweight and obese children and adults.”
- Create a unified communications toolkit for use by Coalition partners.
- Increase community outreach and education targeting hard-to-reach priority populations in their places of residences
- Create and ensure awareness of/access to a Movement Toolkit

# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



comprised of moving paths including accessible trails within Howard County for use by Coalition partners and community members.

- Maintain, update and increase access to the Physical Activity Resource Guide with physical activity resources for Howard County residents of all ages and abilities.
- Convene Movement group to continue efforts started through the Walktober initiative to encourage movement for increased physical and mental health.
- Collaborate with partners in the implementation of plans including the Age Friendly Howard County, Complete Streets, Strategic Highway Safety Plan, among others.
- Support partners in examining means to address social and economic conditions that influence health equity, such as housing, transportation, education, job availability, and neighborhood safety.

**Goal 2:** Increase culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive education on chronic disease prevention and support for management of chronic diseases and related health conditions in Howard County.

- **Objective 1:** Through June 2025, convene quarterly Chronic Disease Community (public) forums to increase awareness of and access to resources to increase culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive disease prevention activities across the lifespan for Howard County residents.
- **Objective 2:** Through June 2025, convene quarterly Chronic Disease Community (provider) forums to increase awareness of and access to resources across the lifespan and coordinated community planning to increase culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive support for management of chronic diseases and related health conditions

## Tactics

- Facilitate opportunities in support of the Maryland Diabetes Action Plan, 2020 to *“improve prediabetes outcomes. Reduce risk of diabetes in women with a history of gestational diabetes.”*
- Through residential community outreach and activities in support of place-based initiatives, increase access to healthy food and beverages and movement resources
- Conduct quarterly review of chronic disease management course data and other relevant points as part of the Continuous Quality Improvement process to ascertain areas for improvement as part of the coordinated planning process.
- Increase community outreach and education to address maternal and



# Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



infant health among populations with known health disparities including facilitation of Safe Sleep and Cribs and Car seat education.

- Facilitate cancer prevention and education to reduce tobacco/vaping use initiation and promote cessation and promote Breast and Cervical Cancer screening services.

**Goal 3:** Increase awareness of culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive mental health resources and supports to reduce stigma around mental health, promote brain health, and promote social engagement across the lifespan in collaboration with Coalition and community partners in Howard County.

- **Objective 1:** Through June 2025, collaborate with coalition members through various partner forums to advance shared priorities and ensure awareness of and access to resources to increase social engagement of culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive mental health resources and supports across the lifespan for Howard County community members.
- **Objective 2:** By June 2025, collaborate with Coalition members to promote culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive social engagement opportunities, mental health resources and supports for Howard County residents of all ages and abilities.

#### Tactics

- Participate and collaborate with partner forums to advance shared priorities.
- Maintain, update and increase access to the Behavioral Health Resource Guide, and the Mental Health Resource Guide containing Mental Health classes and support groups open to Howard County residents of all ages and abilities.
- Collaborate with Coalition members and groups such as the Community Mental Health Advisory Council, Greater Baltimore Regional Integrated Crisis System (GBRICS) and the Local Behavioral Health Authority to support communications and initiatives.
- Collaborate and engage with partners to advance the Howard County Age-Friendly Community Plan to combat social isolation and improve brain health among Howard County's aging population.

*\*Forum(s) in the above objectives include: presentations, outreach events, panel and/or roundtable discussions and other community-based activities.*



## How will the Coalition Operate?

The Coalition will operate through Workgroups facilitated to implement and monitor progress in each area of the plan. These groups will develop work plans to further specify actions, timeframes, and relevant assets, designate responsible parties, and track progress toward the objectives and goals. Tactics or activities may evolve as workgroups test approaches and adjust accordingly.

## HCLHIC-convened Groups\*:

*HCLHIC-convened groups will include but may not be limited to:*

- **Chronic Disease Prevention and Management Group (formerly CDSME Action Group)**
- **Food Security Committee**
- **Movement Group**
- **Healthy Minds & Suicide Prevention Coalition**
- **Health Literacy Advisory Committee**

## HCLHIC-adjacent Groups\*:

- **Age Friendly Howard County Initiative**
- **Fetal Infant Mortality and Child Fatality Review Teams**
- **Safe Kids Howard County**
- **Early Childhood Advisory Council**
- **Horizon Foundation's: Healthier Choices Coalition, Streets for All, Mental Health Matters Coalition**
- **Howard County General Hospital Faith Health Advisory Council (FHAC)**
- **Older Adult Mental Health Forum**
- **Veterans Collaborative**
- **Opioid Crisis Community Council**
- **Howard County Opioid Intervention Team**
- **Mental Health Community Advisory Council**
- **Others**

*\* HCLHIC staff will participate in as appropriate and mobilize Coalition members to connect and collaborate with groups also working to achieve healthy communities. The HCLHIC participates in and/or is affiliated with coalitions and groups facilitated by key Coalition partners including the Howard County Health Department; Howard County General Hospital, a member of Johns Hopkins Medicine; Howard County Government; and others.*