

LHIC Healthy Weight Work Group Meeting
6.24.14 – 8:30 a.m.
Minutes

The following work group members were present: Bob Giromini, We Promote Health; Paula Minsk, MDAAP; Gail Doerr, Maryland University of Integrative Health; Laurie Collins, HCPSS; Maria Carunungan, HCHD WIC Program; Eric Masten, Healthy Howard; Cindi Miller, HCGH; Mike Senisi, HCPSS; Valerie Berry, Healthy Howard; and, Barbara Wasserman. Also present: Wendy Wolff, Maryland Nonprofits, and Jeananne Sciabarra, LHIC Director.

Eric opened the meeting at 8:40. The group did introductions and Eric explained the new staffing structure. Eric is the appointed co-chair and another co-chair will be selected by the group. Staffing will be done by Jeananne, LHIC Director, or the LHIC Program Manager who will be hired in the next month or so.

Work Group History

The group discussed some of the previous activities, such as participating in the development of the 9090 Wellness and Nutrition Policy with HCPSS. Valerie described the Childhood Obesity Prevention Project, which many of the group members participate in. Eric mentioned that BMI screenings had been done at child care facilities as part of the Healthy Childcare program. There had been an attempt to start a list of resources related to healthy weight. Paula described Docs in the Park, a program to promote healthy behaviors by bringing doctors, kids and families together in outdoor spaces.

Valerie and Eric described the upcoming event for pediatricians and family practitioners on the role of the subspecialist in childhood obesity and obesity prevention. The event will be on June 25, and slides will be available afterward.

The group discussed what had and had not been done in the past. There was concern that the group had frequently just jumped on board other existing projects, rather than taking initiative. The group seemed to lack organization and was not operating strategically. Other members expressed their expectations that the group should share resources, support one another's activities, and work to identify gaps that should be addressed. One of the group's strengths is that members bring the perspectives of the people they serve in their individual organizations.

Group members shared their organizations' interest in the group and what they hope to get out of the group:

Cindi – the group gives the opportunity to reach into other sectors, bring everyone together on a project. Noted the higher obesity rate in the Rt. 1 corridor and the area around the hospital, so she is looking to start a program in the Laurel area.

Mike – spoke about FitnessGram data and how HCPSS is using scores to affect instruction. Working on physical literacy, and writing curriculum around “why do you want to be healthy?”

Maria – the WIC program is very focused on breastfeeding as part of childhood obesity prevention. WIC has lactation consultants on staff and they are launching a breastfeeding campaign aimed at making fathers aware of the benefits of breastfeeding. WIC is working on a partnership with HCGH to connect with participants while in the hospital after the birth of a child. WIC collects height and weight at each visit. They are also looking to get a farmer's market at the Health Department so that WIC participants can use their farmer's market benefit checks immediately. (Cindi suggested Friends and Farms as a possible resource.)

Barbara – Days of Taste is a program directed at 4th graders to expose them to healthy foods, especially salads. They are looking to partner with HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service to see if they will use the salad dressing recipe that the kids in Days of Taste make. They are currently working on a grant to expand their program to serve families.

Eric – Several Healthy Howard programs:

The HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living) Zone in the North Laurel/Savage/Jessup area is run by Monica Lewis. She is working on a community garden and partnering with schools in the zone.

Childhood Obesity Prevention Program (COPP) is run by Valerie Berry. They are conducting a CME event to inform pediatricians about the role of the subspecialist in childhood obesity prevention.

Healthy Howard also has Healthy Schools and Healthy Childcare programs.

Gail – MUIH offers degrees in health education, nutrition, health coaching and others. Graduate students need to spend a certain amount of time in the community and are available for internships. Gail mentioned the Roving Radish, a program to bring healthy foods from local farms to the community. She also said that Whole Foods, which is opening soon in Columbia, is willing to contribute salad bars to schools in the county that do not yet have them.

Bob – We Promote Health works with the Get Active Howard County coalition to promote physical activity. Local professionals donate time to run programs. Boot Camp in the Park runs every Saturday at 8:00 a.m., through November.

WPH also runs We Can (Ways to Enhance Children's Activity and Nutrition), an NIH program, currently in 6 elementary schools. They discuss energy balance and food substitutions to make recipes healthier, and provide a healthy snack that the kids help make.

WPH also runs Family Wellness Day at Centennial Park in June.

Laurie – Middle school – 5 weeks of food and nutrition focused on enhancing and expanding the student's palette. Students who help prepare the food are more likely to try it. High schools offer an elective, Food and Nutrition, which gives students an opportunity to learn and apply nutrition concepts and learn about the food system. High schools also offer Culinary Arts. Laurie wants to get budding high school chefs interested in helping with other programs related to healthy weight. Another related high school class is Child Development – these students are likely to be future child care providers, pediatricians, nurses, etc.

Laurie also mentioned Empty Bowls, a fundraising program for Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center. Art students make bowls and students in Family and Consumer Science classes make some of the food for the events.

Paula – MDAAP brings pediatricians together and provides guidance on how to talk to families about childhood obesity. Practitioners are willing to share materials, so keep them in mind when marketing programs.

Action Items:

Members will review the current Action Plan and the sample Action Plans that Jeananne distributed to decide how the 2015-2017 Action Plan should be formatted.

Next Meeting:

There was some concern expressed that it might be difficult to focus on the Action Plan in the hour following the full LHIC meeting, but others felt that it would be difficult to schedule a separate meeting. Jeananne will send out a Doodle Poll.