



Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition

Food Insecurity Virtual Meeting

August 11, 2022

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Virtual via Zoom

Minutes

Members Present:

- Linda Ashburn, HC Health Department
- Debby Bors, HC Health Department
- Tracy Broccolino, HC Community Action Council
- Willie Flowers, HC NAACP
- Laura Henderson, HC Health Department
- Lois Joellenbeck, HC Health Department
- Paloma Leon, Luminus
- Ivette Lopez, Safe Food Pantry
- Morgan Phillips, Living Legacy Foundation
- Carrie Ross, HC Community Action Council
- Razan Sahuri, Univ. of MD Extension Snap Ed
- Nikki Savoy, Accessible Resources for Independence
- Weida Stoecker, MD Dept of Agriculture

Staff Present:

- Reena Rambharat, HC Local Health Improvement Coalition
- Sonya Lloyd, HC Local Health Improvement Coalition
- Vanda Lerdboon, HC Health Department

Topic/Agenda	Discussion	Action/Follow-up
Welcome and Introductions	<p>Reena Rambharat, HCLHIC Manager for the Howard County Health Department (HCHD), called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.</p> <p>Ms. Rambharat provided a welcome to members in attendance and asked members to introduce themselves and state their organizations. Ms. Rambharat reviewed the meeting goal of convening a collaborative Food Security Committee to reduce food insecurity and advance efforts towards nutrition security for Howard County residents.</p>	
Food Insecurity in Howard County	<p>Ms. Rambharat re-capped the Maryland Department of Health grant funding HCHD recently received to establish a Food Security Committee and Survey Review. She also discussed the purpose of the funding, which is to establish a food security committee in collaboration with partner agencies and doing needs assessments in the community to find out what the needs of residents are related to accessing healthy foods. The survey is currently under review with the State of Maryland.</p>	<p>Link to last meeting documents can be found on the LHIC portal here: https://www.hclhic.org/home/meetingportal</p>

<p>Announcements</p>	<p>Ms. Rambharat spoke about three funding opportunities in the LHIC Digest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tobacco Grant: HCHD seeks to fund community-based organizations to reach populations identified as having a known health disparity related to tobacco/vape use, diabetes, and chronic disease; Applications are due on September 9th. • Health Disparities Grant: HCHD seeks to award two categories of grants. The first is for local organizations to identify and recruit 40 community leaders to create a network of certified Community Health Workers (CHW). The second grant will be awarded to local organizations to provide ongoing support for this CHW network. Application deadline is August 31st. • Food and Nutrition Security Stipend: HCLHIC invites organizations to apply for a stipend opportunity to assist with conducting the Howard County Food & Nutrition Security survey. Applications are due on August 19. <p>Ms. Morgan Phillips of Living Legacy Foundation announced they work with food distributors that donate a lot of produce to the community. They have a new partner, Coastal Sunbelt, which donates produce. They are doing food giveaways at pop up clinics and backpack events. Give a 30-day leeway.</p> <p>Mr. Willie Flowers of Howard County NAACP announced funding from the Center of Science in the Public Interest a goal to add healthy kids’ menus in restaurants in Howard County and Charles County. Need support for this to pass this bill in Howard County. Food trunks were not added to this goal.</p> <p>Ms. Carrie Ross of Community Action Council announced they have mobile pantries going to different communities and will be continuing into the fall. Goal is to grow these pantries and have more permanent pantries at different schools. These pantries also include signing people up for SNAP benefits. Glenelg United Methodist Church bought a van from a Grant they received and are using it to bring out to Western Maryland.</p>	<p>Digest Link: https://conta.cc/3cWhrAB</p> <p>Tobacco Grant: https://www.howardcountymd.gov/health/tobacco-and-chronic-disease-grant</p> <p>Health Disparities Grant: Health Disparities Grants Howard County (howardcountymd.gov). Grant info session is August 12th at 1pm: https://howardcountymd.webex.com/howardcountymd/j.php?MTID=m8c39a43d7a088328348cf68e461e5dda</p> <p>Food and Nutrition Security Stipend application: Action Alerts LHIC (hclhic.org)</p> <p>If interested in partnering with Living Legacy Foundation and receiving produce contact mphillips@thellf.org.</p> <p>If interested in joining the healthy kid’s menu in HOCO restaurants contact: mscpresident20@gmail.com 443-610-0716.</p> <p>To contact Carrie Ross with any questions email cross@cac-hc.org or access website: www.cac-hc.org</p> <p>If interested in serving as co-chairs to this Food Security Committee, please email Reena at brambharat@howardcountymd.gov</p>
<p>Information Gathering: Planning Phase</p>	<p>Ms. Rambharat held an open discussion about partner work and gaps, potential collaborations, and potential focus areas. The LHIC is gathering feedback from residents and want to get feedback from partners too. She asked participants to share what information they’re already collecting on food insecurity within their respective organizations. Ms. Rambharat opened the floor for partners to briefly share what you are doing to help reduce food insecurity and promote nutrition security for residents and what gaps have they seen in their work.</p> <p>Ms. Nikki Savoy of ARI mentioned a lot of people with physical and muscular disabilities in the community having food</p>	

insecurity, nutrition deficits, unable to cook healthy foods, and diabetes as well as movement issues. Suggestions include quick healthy meal preps, put together a program called Table Top Cooking that uses recipes to make it easier and accessible for people to cook for themselves if they have challenges. There should be food sources for people with disabilities that have appetizing menus. Interested in doing outreach.

Ms. Laura Henderson of WIC at Howard County Health Department said ongoing Legislation in Congress to increase the age of eligibility for children receiving WIC and women after breast feeding or pregnancy. Request action by asking Congress to pass legislation that will expand WIC services. Would advance fresh fruits and vegetables permanently, breastfeeding services, continue to work in hybrid model.

Ms. Rambharat shared what other communities and programs in other jurisdictions are currently doing on Food Security:

- Community Ecology Institute to explore collaboration: <https://www.communityecologyinstitute.org/>
- Institute for Public Health Innovation to explore their *Food Is Medicine Program*: <https://www.institutephi.org/>

Other Jurisdictions with a Food Council:

- Prince George's County Food Equity Council: <http://www.pgcfec.org/>
- Montgomery County Food Council: <https://mocofoodcouncil.org/>
- Garret County is working with representatives of the Western Maryland Food Council, Garrett Growers, the University of Maryland Extension to improve access to fresh local produce in remote areas of the county. Website and Food Brochure Flipbook: <https://gogarrettcountry.com/garrett-county-food-access-infrastructure-initiative/>
- St. Mary's County is working with various community partners (i.e. local farmers and garden communities) to connect with citizens and provide education about the benefits of growing and eating fresh, local produce. Website: <https://healthystmarys.com/> and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/healthystmarys/>
- **Charles County**: Healthy Charles County is working with its partners to promote healthy, nutritious meals and consumption of farm fresh vegetables to its residents Are <https://www.facebook.com/healthycharlescounty>

Nikki Savoy of ARI's email: nsavoy@arinow.org, phone 443-717-3915

Weida Stoecker from the Department of Agriculture offered to partner with ARI. Weida's email is: Weida.stoecker@maryland.gov

Laura Henderson's email: lhenderson@howardcountymd.gov and phone 410-313-5891. Link to Take Action in Congress with legislation for WIC: <https://nwica.salsalabs.org/ChildNutritionReauthorization0/index.html>

Ms. Nikki Savoy of ARI shared a resource program called *SHARE* which is led by Catholic Charities. They accept SNAP payments; food boxes can be picked up or arranged for delivery service. Cost is \$25 to \$30. They have fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, and various menus.

Mr. Willie Flowers of HC NAACP shared information about the Community Ecology Institute on the Campus of Free Town Farm. Pure Community Gardening: George Washington Carver Growing Food Together CSA. The goal is to not put pressure on families or individuals. It is wheel chair accessible. They do a sweat equity CSA: 3 levels of being a member. Try to make it easy for people to grow your own food. Learn techniques of urban gardening in a quarter area acre and supplement with local farmers. Harvest twice a week on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings.

Ms. Debby Bors of Howard County Health Department mentioned the Little Free Pantry at UU Church at the Owen Brown Interfaith Center on Cradle rock Way in Columbia.

Ms. Rambharat asked members if a document listing food pantries/resources for the residents? Would the committee be interested in working on this?

Ms. Savoy said in the chat that having a food resource guide would be helpful. ARI has one for people with disabilities.

Mr. Flowers said it would be a good idea to create a food resource guide as well. He goes on to state that there is a level of expectation in Howard County: a certain pride in asking for food and that there is level of discretion with food distribution. The distribution of food in Howard County with the quality and presentation is very important to the food.

Ms. Henderson agreed that presentation is very important as well as being sensitive to cultural preferences, veganism, allergies to food, it needs to be a high-quality resource and to keep in mind the populations we are serving.

Ms. Ivette Lopez of Safe Food Pantry spoke about client's with food allergies that do not often find the food they need. Allergy friendly food is very expensive. Another issue is the public not donating food that is allergy friendly. The Safe Food Pantry tries to provide gluten free and allergy free food, however it is very expensive and must buy food at retail price. Major issue of cost and availability of allergy friendly food. Trying to raise awareness at community level.

Ms. Paloma Leon of Luminus said in the chat: At Luminus we have a small pantry but we do not have fresh food and sometimes we do get a request of this, so a guide with clear

<https://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/share/>. The list of host distribution sites is here:

<https://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2022-Host-sites-geolocation-Word-conversion.pdf>.

Information on the George Washington Carver CSA:

<https://www.howardcountynaacp.com/csa>

More information about the little free pantry can be found here:

<http://mapping.littlefreepantry.org/pantry/793>.

Safe Food Pantry's website:

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

Email to contact Paloma Leon:

pleon@beluminus.org and website www.beluminus.org

	<p>information about what type of food they can find (canned, fresh, allergies friendly etc.) where our clients can check and go it will be helpful.</p> <p>Ms. Carrie Ross of HC Community Action Council said they do deliveries of food that include a diabetic option, heart healthy option, and a vegan option, as well as, fish options, and halal options when delivering food to seniors and homebound residents.</p> <p>Ms. Paloma Leon of Luminus said they have a small pantry that have dried goods such as pasta and rice. Sometimes they receive requests from clients for fresh foods and they have issues of transportation. Do not know where to send these requests to.</p> <p>Ms. Carrie Ross of HC Community Action Council said she will reach out to her contact at Luminus to help provide fresh foods to Luminus clients from the HC Community Action Council.</p>	
<p>Next Steps & Wrap-Up</p>	<p>Ms. Rambharat adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Ms. Rambharat will send out an email with the minutes and a doodle poll for the next meeting day/time followed by a meeting invite.</p>

Respectfully submitted by
Sonya Lloyd, MA
Community Engagement Coordinator
Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition