

# FY 23 Annual Report

HARFORD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

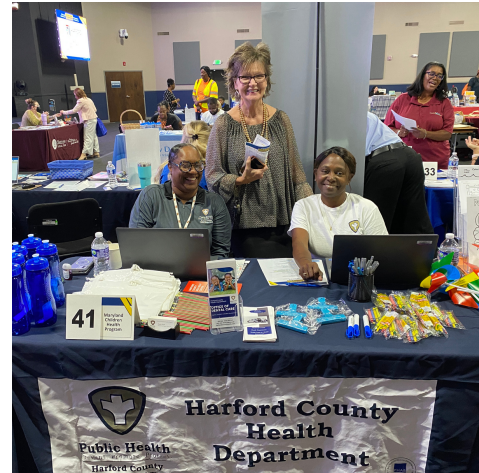
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**Harford County  
Health Department**



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# Letter from the Health Officer

Our Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report offers an overview of the Harford County Health Department's efforts to advance health and wellness. The report will provide insight into the successes achieved and diverse opportunities presented during the last year (July 2022 - June 2023). The Harford County Health Department is committed to making Harford County the healthiest community in Maryland.

When we entered FY 23, we used everything that was learned from the pandemic to continue to strengthen our work at the Harford County Health Department. The pandemic required extensive coordination between our communicable disease, emergency response, environmental health, health education, health planning, outbreak investigation, and population health units. The health department will continue to provide COVID-19 response and partnerships as necessary in FY 24 and will continue utilizing lessons learned from the pandemic to strengthen existing programs and partnerships.

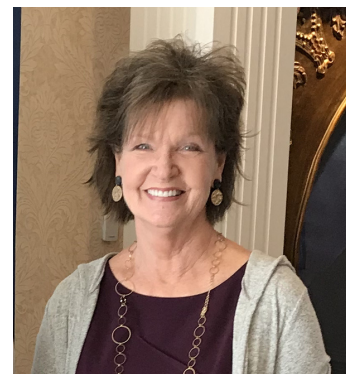
The aim of FY 23 was to continue to strengthen and expand wraparound services. Our 1 N. Main Family Health Center continued to thrive by successfully offering pediatric dental care, providing Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) services, a free teen and young adult walk-in health clinic, our new nutrition program, and nuestra comunidad care coordination services. In FY 23, an average of 4,039 WIC clients were seen and 5,936 dental visits were completed. The health department Clinical Health Bureau assisted in providing 2,625 flu vaccinations in Harford County elementary schools and completed 1,497 family planning visits. We have increased our clients seen in many of our programs, specifically, we have increased the number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) clients seen and provided 2,781 translation or interpretation services.

We anticipate these programs to continue to excel in FY 24 with the 1 North Main Family Health Center continuing to evolve and provide families access to wraparound services in one convenient location.

Thank you for your part in advancing Harford County's public health. The Harford County Health Department looks forward to continuing our work and meeting challenges together in the Fiscal Year 2024.

## **MARCY AUSTIN**

Harford County Health Department  
Health Officer



# About the Health Department

The Harford County Health Department is the local operating arm of the Maryland Department of Health. The health department employs more than 190 committed professionals to deliver a vast array of services in Aberdeen, Bel Air, Edgewood, and Havre de Grace.

- **Mission:** To protect, promote, and improve the health, safety, and environment of Harford County residents.
- **Vision:** To make Harford County the healthiest community in Maryland.
- **Values:** Teamwork, Leadership, Collaboration, Integrity, Commitment, & Cultural Sensitivity

## Board of Health:

- Patrick S. Vincenti, President
- Dion F. Guthrie
- Aaron D. Penman
- Tony Giangiardano
- James Reilly
- Jessica Boyle-Tsottles
- Jacob Bennett



# Local Health Improvement Coalition

HCHD directs the Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC) and hosts the coalition's annual meeting each year. During the virtual October 2020 meeting, LHIC members shared individual work group plans to address behavioral and mental health, family health and resiliency, and chronic disease prevention and wellness priorities within Harford County.

## Behavioral Health

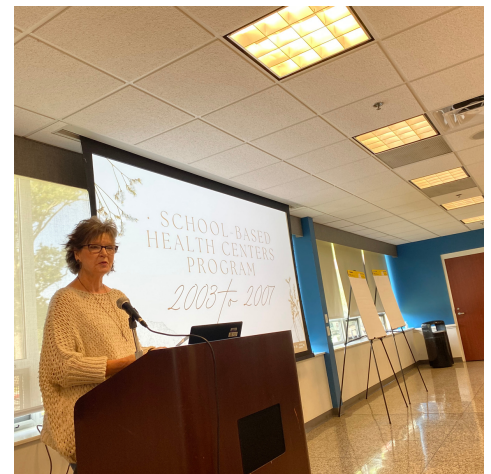
- The Behavioral Health workgroup focuses on addressing mental and behavioral health needs in the community, including overdose prevention.

## Family Health & Resiliency

- This work group's primary focus is connecting pregnant and postpartum women experiencing substance use disorders (SUD) to essential services, treatment, and resiliency resources.

## Chronic Disease Prevention & Wellness

- This workgroup has three main areas of focus: healthy eating and active living, cancer prevention and screening, and tobacco use Prevention. The workgroup is also dedicated to improving health literacy within each focus area. Most recently, the group has placed a focus on diabetes prevention.



# Snapshot of Services



**Public Health**  
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Harford County  
Health Department

## Administration

**6,849**

Birth Certificate  
Copies Issued

**9,211**

Death Certificate  
Copies Issued

**33,453**

Medicaid Transport  
Rides

## Behavioral Health

**3,817**

Psychiatric Visits  
Completed

**13,487**

Total Services  
Provided

**2,030**

Substance Use  
Appointments Held

## Care Coordination

**772**

New CC+ Referrals

**549**

Navigated Through  
Health Care System

**2,781**

Translation Services  
Used

## Clinical Health

**2,625**

Flu Vaccinations  
Elementary School

**1,497**

Family Planning Visits

**847**

Client kept  
immunization visits

## Environmental Health

**1,326**

Total Food  
Inspections

**681**

Animal Bite  
Investigations

**1,525**

Total Building Permit  
Reviews

## Family Health

**5,936**

Dental Clinic  
Visits

**4,039**

WIC Clients Seen  
Yearly (Avg)

**718**

MCHP  
Applications

**545**

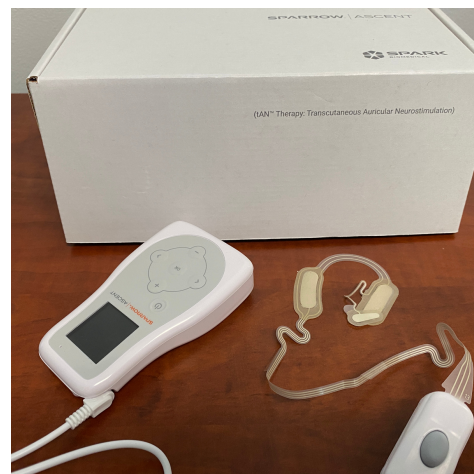
Family Home  
Visits

# Spotlight: Transcutaneous Auricular Neurotransmitter (tANS)

In January 2023, the Harford County Health Department began offering a new FDA cleared outpatient detox treatment, transcutaneous auricular neurotransmitter (tANS), to help diminish withdrawal from any opioid. Adults 18 years and older who struggle with opioid dependence are eligible for this treatment along with supportive medication to promote an opioid-free life.

The tANS device is a pain-free, wearable technology designed to deliver drug-free personalized opioid withdrawal relief through a non-invasive form of electrostimulation. Transcutaneous auricular neurostimulations are delivered through a multichannel earpiece electrode worn on and around the left ear and targeting two cranial nerves, the vagus and trigeminal nerves. The device can be utilized until the patient is symptom-free of withdrawal and all participants enrolled in the detox are required to attend treatment at Harford County Health Department. Treatment, in addition to the device, includes individual therapy, an intensive outpatient program (IOP) for five days, peer recovery support, and medication management. The treatment is aimed at achieving the goal of opioid abstinence and the outpatient detox is covered by most insurance.

The goal of offering this new device is to break down the barrier of addiction to help make the path to recovery more attainable.



# Spotlight: Care Solace

The Harford County Health Department partnered with Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) to expand access to community mental health and substance use treatment providers for students, staff, and their families through Care Solace. The school system can provide this service to all stakeholders thanks to a grant of more than \$165,000 from the health department.

Everyone deserves access to mental health care. With the growing demand for mental health services, the health department is thrilled to support Care Solace, a mental health care coordination service, for the purpose of connecting any and all HCPS students, school staff, and their families to quality mental health and substance use treatment providers who will meet their needs.

With Care Solace, families and staff gain access to a dedicated Care Companion to navigate the mental health care system on their behalf, calling providers to find the right fit and availability. They will connect individuals with verified providers accepting all medical insurance or even individuals without insurance. Care Solace has also equipped HCPS with a customized online tool that gives community members a way to anonymously search for community-based providers matched to their needs.





# Administration

The Bureau of Administration supports all HCHD programs and continues to provide excellent customer service to the public. Administration collaborates with each HCHD program to ensure that their administrative needs are met, enabling programs to provide clinical and preventive community health services throughout Harford County.

## Administration services include:

### Internal Support Services:

- Budget & Procurement
- Facilities Management
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Billing
- Compliance

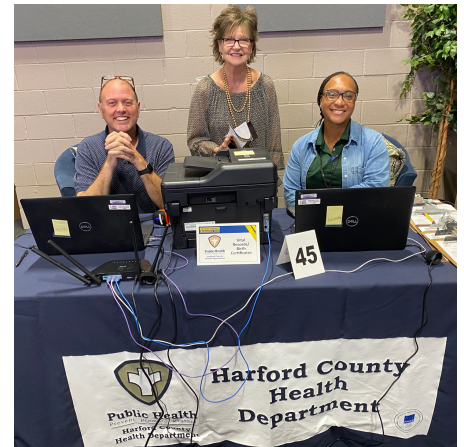
### Public Services:

- Birth Certificates
- Certificates of Death
- COVID-19 call center support

## Highlight: MCHP

Every year, Medicaid enrollees must renew and verify that all of their information is correct in the system. People who were due to renew in March 2020 have had their coverage extended due to the pandemic, however, in FY 23 the Pandemic extension ended on April 30, 2023. There have been no closures since the pandemic started, so if someone started in March 2019 they needed to renew starting March 2023 since they did not have to renew in March 2020. Letters went out to all individuals reminding them to renew, however, addresses and other contact information have changed in the system, therefore many people were unable to be reached.

Our Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP) has gone above and beyond to assist individuals by offering additional hours on two Saturdays each month since March 2023. MCHP also began calling all individuals on the renewal list to educate them on the steps individuals needed to take so that they would not lose their medical coverage. MCHP continues to work with other HCHD programs, specifically communications, and community partners to spread awareness about reauthorizing their information.



# Behavioral Health

The Bureau of Behavioral Health provides comprehensive mental and behavioral health services to Harford County residents. Behavioral Health has integrated services within the county through partnerships with Harford County Public Schools, Department of Social Services, the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health, and other valued community service providers. In March 2023, the bureau was informed of their successful 3-year CARF reaccreditation.

## Behavioral Health services include:

- Addiction Resources
- Medication Management
- Mental Health Counseling & Group Therapy
- Opiate Recovery Court
- Peer Recovery & Support
- Prevention, Treatment, & Recovery
- Teen Diversion



## Highlight: Free to Be

The Harford County Health Department launched its new program, Free to Be, in January 2023 to support LGBTQ+ teens in Harford County. The Free to Be program offers monthly gatherings on the first Friday of every month and is a community-based LGBTQ+ program, supervised by HCHD staff and volunteers, that offers a welcoming atmosphere for teens (ages 12 to 17) to find support, guidance, and a sense of community. The program strives to provide a supportive environment to gather, socialize, organize, and help each other. Free to Be is participant-led to allow teenagers to have a safe space to present their authentic selves for positive youth development.

## Looking Ahead

An additional certified psychiatric nurse practitioner joined our team earlier this year to increase our services for both our adult and adolescent programs in order to provide more access to care for our clients. The Bureau has begun to expand its child and adolescent services at our 120 S. Hays location as we prepare to offer an intensive outpatient program, as well as a support group for adolescents who identify as LGBTQ. We will also begin offering adolescent mental health services and continue providing referrals to treatment at the 1 N. Main Family Health Center. We are also looking ahead as we develop a mental health intensive outpatient program and expansion of our integrated behavioral health and primary care model we started earlier last year.

# Care Coordination

The Care Coordination Bureau is committed to ensuring that Harford County residents have access to comprehensive preventative health services to improve and maintain their health and wellness.

## Care Coordination services include:

- Care Coordination Plus (CC+)
- Administrative Care Coordination (ACCU)
- Adult Evaluation Review Services (AERS)
- Nurse Monitoring (NM)
- Lead Case Management
- The Lead & Asthma Program (LAP)

## Highlight: Older Adult Home Modification Grant

The Harford County Health Department was awarded an Older Adult Home Modification Grant from Housing and Urban Development in October of 2022. It is a three year grant. The HCHD in collaboration with The IMAGE Center of Maryland and The Right Turn Rehabilitation Services agency are working on this grant. The senior population is an important part of the Harford County community, and they deserve to be provided with care and comfort to lead healthy lives. To help seniors age in place, this grant program will provide minor to moderate home modifications that promote aging in place, reduce fall risk and decrease the housing cost burden. For a Harford County senior resident to be eligible they must be a Harford County resident, at least 62 years of age, a homeowner, have homeowners insurance and meet the income guidelines. So far to date we have had 61 referrals to the program. 20 residents have had their home modifications completed and 22 are in the pipeline. The 2 main reasons they are not eligible is the homeowners can not afford homeowners insurance or they are overscale financially.



# Clinical Health

The Bureau of Clinical Health encompasses direct clinical services, preventive clinical and educational services, infectious disease, and emergency preparedness.

## Clinical Health services include:

- Family Planning
- Health Services
- Infectious Disease
- Cancer Prevention
- Tobacco Use Prevention

## Highlight: Tuberculosis Outbreak

In April, the Communicable Disease team did a major contact investigation for an active Tuberculosis (TB) case at Joppatowne High School. This was the first active TB case in a school in over a decade. The nursing team collaborated with HCPS and provided TB blood testing to 106 students and staff. Treatment was also initiated and maintained for those who required it. TB Education was provided to the school community.

## Looking Ahead:

Tobacco Cessation and Cancer Prevention Programs are now a part of the Clinical Health Bureau and continue with high numbers for cessation participations and individuals screened for breast, cervical, lung and colon cancer. The Family Planning and STI Clinic is involved in an extensive Quality Improvement project to increase clinic numbers and reach more people in need of services in Harford County through outreach and other initiatives.



# Population Health

The Population Health Unit is responsible for assisting HCHD programs and external partners in improving health outcomes and factors in the groups that they serve. This is done by creating unique events, providing presentations in the community, assisting with data analysis, creating health education campaigns, advocating for health equity, and much more!

## Population Health Programs:

- Communications/ Public Information
- Epidemiology
- Minority Health
- Health Policy
- Tobacco and Diabetes/ Chronic Disease Prevention
- Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC)

## Highlight: Health Equity Report

In FY23, the Harford County Health Department completed the 2023 version of the Health Equity Report. The report outlines the existing health inequities in Harford County and pinpoints specific areas that are most affected by these disparities. Additionally, the report showcases the current efforts undertaken by the Health Department alongside our community partners and highlights programs that combat these issues. Prior to completion, the HCHD presented the report to partners to receive input and suggestions on what should be included in the report. The Health Equity Report aims to empower the community to understand the nature of the inequities while providing the Health Department with invaluable insights to enhance our public service efforts.



# Environmental Health

The Bureau of Environmental Health is responsible for Land & Water Resources, Permits and Plan Review, and Inspections in the county.

## Environmental Health services include:

### Land & Water Resources:

- Perc Testing
- Septic System Inspections
- Septic System & Well Complaints
- Well Permits & Water Quality

### Permits & Plan Review:

- Building Permits & Review
- Food Facility Plan Review

### Inspections:

- Food Service Facility Inspections
- Rabies, Vector Control, & Zoonotic Diseases
- Nuisance Complaint Investigations
- Public Pool & Spa Inspections

## Highlight: Additional Funding for Technology Upgrades

In FY23 the Harford County Executive with the support of the Harford County Council provided an additional \$750,000 in funding to the Harford County Health Department Environmental Health Bureau for the purpose of technology advancement. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed on May 9, 2023 moves the Environmental Health Bureau toward full adoption of Harford County Government's permitting software provided by Tyler Technologies. Staff from Harford County Government and Environmental Health have already begun the initial steps in this worthy endeavor. Once completed, the Environmental Health staff will be performing inspections in the field with tablets, and in the office the current double data entry being done by field and administrative staff will be eliminated.



# Family Health

The Bureau of Family Health provides comprehensive wraparound services to Harford County families. Families may access preventive health services, recovery support, home visiting programs, and services that empower them to access additional community and health resources that they might need.

## Family Health services include:

### Family Services

- Dental
- School-Based Health Centers
- MA Trans

### Maternal Child Health

- Healthy Families and Home Visiting
- Helping Families Recover
- MEGAN's Place
- MC Surveillance
- WIC
- MCHP

## Highlight: Nutrition Services Program

Nutrition services are provided by a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN). The dietitian conducts a nutrition assessment and provides knowledge and practical skills according to each client's individual needs and preferences. The dietitian will listen to you and base all recommendations on your personal health history, current lifestyle, favorite foods, and eating and exercise habits, as well as answer any questions you may have. The RDN will help you set goals and give you tools and resources to help you achieve your health and wellness goals.



# DIRECTORY OF SERVICES



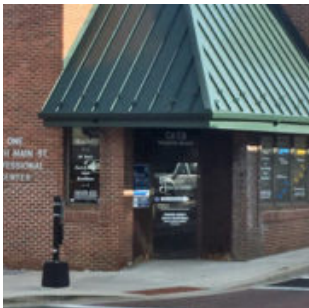
## Aberdeen

253 Paradise Rd. Aberdeen, MD 21001  
Phone: 410-273-5681  
Services: School Health Readiness, Teen Diversion



## Bel Air

120 S Hays Street Bel Air, MD 21014  
Phone: 410-838-1500  
Services: Administration, Behavioral Health, Environmental Health, MA Transportation, Walk-in Health Insurance Assistance (MCHP) & Vital Records



1 North Main Street Bel Air, MD 21014  
Phone: 410-638-3060  
Services: Dental, WIC, Teen Clinic, Nuestra Comunidad, Nutrition Services

## Edgewood

1321 Woodbridge Station Way Edgewood, MD 21040  
Phone: 410-612-1779 410-612-1776 (WIC)  
Services: MEGAN's Place, Family Planning, Immunizations, Infectious Disease, PrEP, STI Testing, WIC, Walk-in Health Insurance Assistance (MCHP), HIV Testing, Hepatitis C testing, Tuberculosis Services



2204 Hanson Rd. Edgewood, MD 21040  
Phone: 443-922-7670  
Services: Dental

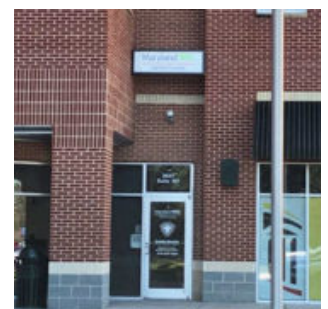


## Havre de Grace

2015 Pulaski Highway Havre de Grace, MD 21078  
Phone: 410-942-7999  
Services: Care Coordination, Cancer Prevention, Tobacco, MCHP



2027 Pulaski Highway Suite 107 Havre de Grace, MD 21078  
Phone: 410-939-6680  
Services: WIC





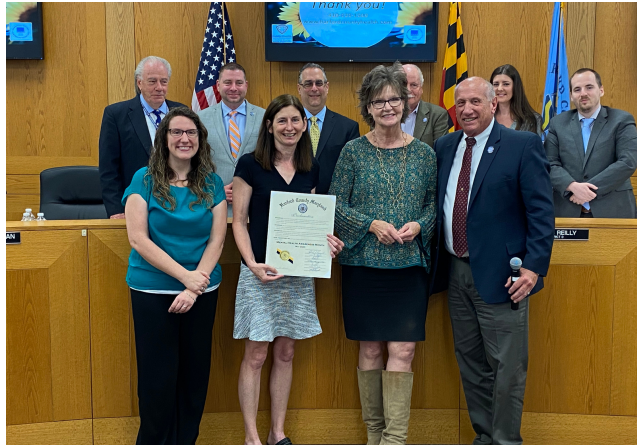
# THANK YOU!

The Harford County Health Department would like to extend a special thank you to its employees, our valued community partners, frontline workers, and to all Harford County stakeholders who contributed to advancing the health of Harford County residents in Fiscal Year 2023. Your efforts, insights, and innovative ideas are an essential part of our success as a county. Thank you to Harford community members who shared their voices with us throughout the past year. We look forward to sharing progress with you again next year.



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