

Allegany County LHIC13-001  
 Healthy Allegany Final Grant Report Narrative  
 June 2015

<p>Community Health Workers</p>	<p>Three community health workers were hired on by the Allegany County Health Department in October 2013. The community health workers went through an extensive five-week training conducted by the Western Maryland Health System and the Western Maryland Area Health Education Center.</p> <p>The community health workers assisted Allegany County residents with making lifestyle changes, identifying and addressing health red flags, ensuring that clients had primary care providers and were following their provider’s instructions, and connecting clients to health and community resources. Fourteen different agencies referred clients for community health worker services. The majority of community health worker clients were high-risk individuals with multiple chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma, and behavioral health issues.</p> <p>During the grant period, Healthy Allegany community health workers had 452 visits (face-to-face and phone) with 88 clients. Community health workers made 406 referrals to medical and social services including transportation, medication, insurance, tobacco cessation, food, housing/utilities, and other resources. During the grant period, community health workers saw 234 improvements in client activity level, tobacco use, and progress toward health goals.</p> <p>Healthy Allegany community health workers provided services to more than 300 individuals at the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT). The IRT was a training exercise sponsored by the U.S. Army that provided free medical and dental care at the Allegany County Fairgrounds over the course of two weeks in August 2014. Community health workers provided IRT clients with 157 resource referrals and connections to community resources.</p> <p>The Healthy Allegany community health workers worked closely with community health workers at the Western Maryland Health System. They were trained together, used the same client tracking system, and shared information on local resources. Together during the grant period, Healthy Allegany and WMHS community health workers made more than 3,000 client visits and more than 1400 referrals to medical and social services. Clients working with community health workers have made more than 700 improvements in tobacco use, activity level, and progress toward health goals.</p>
<p>Health Literacy Assessments</p>	<p>Community health workers conducted health literacy assessments of six health care facilities in Allegany County: Tri-State Community Health Center (FQHC), Tri-State Women’s Health Center, Cathy Chapman and Associates, WMHS Vista Towers, WMHS LaVale Plaza, and WMHS South Cumberland Marketplace. The assessment was based on <i>The Health Literacy Environment of Hospitals and</i></p>

	<p><i>Health Centers</i> from the Harvard School of Public Health. The assessment reviewed navigation, print communication, oral exchange, technology, policies and protocols. Facilities received a detailed report of their assessment results and suggestions for how to improve health literacy in their facility.</p>
Community Resource Guide	<p>Healthy Allegany supported development of the Allegany County Community Resource Guide which was published in December 2013. The guide includes information on many, many local resources from behavioral health providers to food/ nutrition assistance to transportation resources to senior housing. 115 health care facilities and community organizations received the community resource guide. The consensus from these organizations was that the guide is a very helpful tool to refer clients/patients to the resources to meet their needs.</p>
Mobility Management Program	<p>From January through February, the Mobility Management Program received 625 calls for transportation assistance. 209 unduplicated clients were assisted with transportation vouchers for health and human service appointments. 540 vouchers were utilized, including bus, cab, and AllTrans (transportation for seniors and people with disabilities) vouchers. In total, the Mobility Management Program has received 2,527 calls and provided 2,446 transportation vouchers to assist 867 unduplicated Allegany County residents to attend health and human service appointments.</p>
Food Security	<p>Community health workers educated local health care providers on the need to assess food security and refer patients to community resources at the Bridges to Health training in May 2014. They shared a short food security assessment tool to use in health facilities. The Western Maryland Health System Vista Towers Primary Care Center reviewed the food security assessment tool and determined when and how would be the most appropriate way to ask patients the food security questions. After discussion with office staff, the assessment was cut down to two questions that could be asked as part of the intake paperwork. Vista Towers has now integrated this food security assessment into its intake process for all patients and refers patients to local resources when they show risk factors for food insecurity.</p>
Chronic Disease Education/Management in Non-traditional Settings	<p>In June 2014, health professionals from the Western Maryland Health System Center for Clinical Resources provided diabetes education programs in two low-income housing buildings in Cumberland, Queen City Towers and JFK Apartments. The majority of residents are seniors and people with disabilities. The on-site diabetes education program provided individuals who may not be able to travel to a facility with the opportunity to participate in the diabetes education program. 16 residents participated at JFK Apartments and 15 residents participated at Queen City Towers.</p>

<p>Associated Charities Support Services Program</p>	<p>During the grant period, 301 individuals received emergency support services through Associated Charities to address social determinants of health. This included prescription assistance, utilities assistance, housing assistance, food vouchers, and other forms of emergency assistance.</p>
<p>Provider Training</p>	<p>Healthy Allegany supported provider trainings on health literacy and cultural competency. Trainings included “Bridges into Health: Strategies to Reduce Inequities and Reduce Health Outcomes” in May 2014 and “Introduction to Cultural Competency” in August 2014. Trainings were organized by the Western Maryland Area Health Education Center in collaboration with the Western Maryland Health System. Attendees included physicians, nurses, social workers, counselors/psychologists, dental professionals, and other health professionals.</p>
<p>Allegany County Health Planning Coalition</p>	<p>During the grant period, as a means to formalize and strengthen the Allegany County Health Planning Coalition, Coalition founding partners, advisory board, and affiliates signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining their roles and responsibilities. The MOU is a formal commitment to the Coalition and development and implementation of the Local Health Action Plan. A number of new partners were also added to the Coalition including representatives from media, housing, business/economic development, physical and behavioral health providers, case management, and law enforcement.</p>
<p>Overall Impact</p>	<p>To help assess the impact of the Healthy Allegany program, the Allegany County Health Department requested emergency department data from the Western Maryland Health System, the only hospital in the county. These data look at Maryland residents only (as WMHS also serves many Pennsylvania and West Virginia residents). In FY13 there were 529 ED visits for asthma and in FY14 there were 546. In FY13 there were 357 ED visits for diabetes and in FY14 there were 340. In FY13 there were 234 ED visits for hypertension and in FY14 there were 235. In FY14 there were 2,281 ED visits for behavioral health (mental health and substance abuse) and in FY14 there were 2,160. Note that these data are based on primary diagnosis.</p> <p>To assess improvements in access to transportation, the Allegany County Health Planning Coalition surveyed clients at the Allegany County Health Department, Western Maryland Health System, and Tri-State Community Health Center (FQHC). In 2014, 23% of clients report missing appointments due to problems finding transportation, down slightly from 25% in 2011.</p>