

MCHRC



MARYLAND COMMUNITY
HEALTH RESOURCES
COMMISSION



MARYLAND RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Introduction

- “Maryland’s Rural Health Stories” highlights the human impact of programs in rural communities funded by the Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC).
- To date, the CHRC has awarded 233 grants totaling \$71 million. Of this, more than half (121 of 233) have supported programs in rural Maryland.
- Under this collaboration with the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA), patients offer their perspective, through on-camera interviews and written testimonials.
- This is the first patient testimonial in “Maryland’s Rural Health Stories.”
- More patient testimonials from across the state will be released later this year.
- To access these testimonials, please visit:

<https://health.maryland.gov/mchrc/Pages/RURAL-HEALTH.aspx>

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To learn more about CHRC and MRHA and how they partner with rural organizations, please visit their websites:

<http://dhmh.maryland.gov/mchrc/pages/Home.aspx>
www.mdruralhealth.org
www.mdruralhealthplan.org

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Rachel’s Story

Impact of the Calvert County Health Department’s Healthy Beginnings Program

Rachel received life-changing recovery treatment services through the Calvert County’s Healthy Beginnings Program, which was supported by a three-year grant from the CHRC.

When she was 15 years old, Rachel was diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, and unresolved childhood trauma. She tried multiple medications to find a release from her symptoms. When she turned 17, she met friends that introduced her to Percocet to help make her feel better. In time, Percocet led her to harder drugs, like heroin and crack/cocaine.

Rachel says, *“I wouldn’t give any psychiatrist a chance to help me, because I always gave up before they could get my medications right. I tried multiple times to get clean. Nothing stuck because I wasn’t giving it my all, and I eventually always relapsed. I did anything and everything just so I wouldn’t go through withdrawals.”*

Four years into her journey with opioid addiction, at 21, Rachel found out she was pregnant. She then turned to the Healthy Beginnings Program at Calvert County Health Department, which offers a range of services for women of childbearing age. This program addresses the pervasive issue of Substance Abuse Disorders by

providing wrap-around services, including WIC, social services, domestic violence services; and transportation for health-related appointments. Women are also connected with an obstetrician for early and consistent prenatal care.

The Healthy Beginnings Program provided Rachel with weekly group and individual sessions with a therapist, and access to maintenance drugs that enabled her to maintain sobriety from opioids. Once babies are born, the program also provides education on infant care and parenting skills.

Some of Healthy Beginnings’ noted successes include:

- 90% delivery rate of babies without withdrawal from illicit opioid use; and
- Percentage of babies born with low birth weight is equivalent to infants born to mothers without a history of substance use.

“If it wasn’t for the Healthy Beginnings Program, I don’t know what would have happened to me,” Rachel says.

Rachel’s son turned 3 this April and she

“Due to this program, I am able to be a good mother to my son.”

is proud to be employed at the Calvert County Health Department as a Peer Support Counselor where she assists other new mothers struggling with addiction. Rachel has achieved important certifications to further her community impact and continue to support her family.