



The Montgomery County Community Health Improvement Process (CHIP)

The mission of Healthy Montgomery is to achieve optimal health and well-being for Montgomery County, Maryland, residents. The Healthy Montgomery process is based upon an ongoing sustainable community and consensus-driven approach that identifies and addresses key priority areas that ultimately improve the health and well-being of our community.

Healthy Montgomery Goals

- ❑ Improve access to health and social services;
- ❑ Achieve health equity for all residents; and
- ❑ Enhance the physical and social environment to support optimal health and well-being.

Healthy Montgomery Objectives

- ❑ To identify and prioritize health needs in the County as a whole and in the diverse communities within the County;
- ❑ To establish a comprehensive set of indicators related to health processes, health outcomes and social determinants of health in Montgomery County that incorporate a wide variety of county and sub-county information resources and utilize methods appropriate to their collection, analysis and application;
- ❑ To foster projects to achieve health equity by addressing health and well-being needs, improving health outcomes and reducing demographic, geographic, and socioeconomic disparities in health and well-being; and
- ❑ To coordinate and leverage resources to support the HEALTHY MONTGOMERY infrastructure and improvement projects.

Healthy Montgomery Background

For several years, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and its community partners have recognized the need to conduct timely, comprehensive health needs assessments using data that identify health and human services needs in the various communities and populations in the County. Such needs assessments identify and characterize disparities in health status among the County's communities and populations, identify unmet needs, plan and implement strategies to meet the needs, and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies.

In June 2008, DHHS and the Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families sponsored a meeting that brought together organizations in the County that provide services to improve the health and well-being of Montgomery County residents. The purpose of this meeting was to evaluate how the local public health system delivers essential public health services to its community. In this context, the definition of the local public health system includes all organizations that directly or indirectly provide health and health-related services to County residents, including academic institutions, businesses, community nonprofit organizations, foundations, health care institutions, government agencies, religious, and fraternal organizations.

The meeting attendees collectively assessed how well the ten essential public health functions¹ are carried out in the County, using a tool from the National Public Health Performance Standards Program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention². Consistent findings included the need for:

- valid, reliable, and user-friendly data related to health and the social determinants of health, and
- a mechanism to coordinate the efforts of public and private organizations to identify and address health and health-related issues in the County, including disparities in health status among County residents.

Montgomery County initiated Healthy Montgomery to address these needs.

¹The 10 essential public health functions identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention can be viewed at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/od/ocphp/nphpsp/essentialphservices.htm>

²<http://www.cdc.gov/od/ocphp/nphpsp/>



The Montgomery County Community Health Improvement Process (CHIP)

Healthy Montgomery builds on all past and current efforts, including environmental scans, comprehensive needs assessments, community health-related work, and relevant information from the healthcare provider organizations in the County. In developing and implementing improvement strategies, Healthy Montgomery works with community groups and local experts and investigates “best-practice” strategies and techniques developed by other related undertakings, including an examination of the community health improvement tools and techniques that have demonstrated success in other parts of the country. Healthy Montgomery assures accountability by identifying and using performance indicators that measure progress toward achieving its goals and data sources that track the quality and quantity of human services and the impact on health outcomes.

Healthy Montgomery is an ongoing process that includes periodic needs assessment, development and implementation of improvement plans and monitoring of the resulting achievements. The process is dynamic, thus giving the County and its community partners the ability to monitor and act on the changing conditions affecting the health and well-being of County residents.

Healthy Montgomery Highlights:

The **Montgomery County Community Health Improvement Process was launched in June 2009** with a comprehensive scan of all existing and past planning processes. Past assessment, planning, and evaluation processes were compiled that related to health and well-being and to social determinants of health across a multitude of sectors, populations, and communities within Montgomery County.

In 2010, the focus was on establishing a core set of indicators that could be examined through a comprehensive needs assessment. Approximately 100 indicators were released at the **launch of the Healthy Montgomery website in February 2011**. The website provides a one-stop source of population-based data and information about community health that can help planners, policy makers, and community members identify issues and devise solutions.

In 2011, the Healthy Montgomery Needs Assessment was drafted and used by the Healthy Montgomery Steering Committee (HMSC) for its October 2011 Priority-Setting Process. The assessment consolidated the most currently available health and well-being data and identified key findings for the HMSC. Community conversations were held across the County to capture input from residents to inform the priority setting process as well. **The HMSC selected six broad categories for action, two for immediate action: behavioral health and obesity. The other four priority areas are cancers, cardiovascular health, diabetes, and maternal and infant health.**

In June 2012, The Behavioral Health and Obesity Work Groups were formed and charged with the task of developing action plans that demonstrate impact on access, health inequities, and unhealthy behaviors. They were guided to build on existing strengths, maximize collaboration, build efficiencies across sector efforts, fill critical gaps, and develop evaluation plans to measure impact. As part of the planning process, each Work Group created indicator tables focusing on each of their issue areas, inventoried existing resources, programs and policies, considered gaps, and identified viable, evidence-based health improvement strategies for implementation. **The Behavioral Health Action Plan Report and the Obesity Action Plan were approved by the HMSC in March 2014. Implementation and evaluation of the Action Plans have begun.**

For more information, visit:
www.healthymontgomery.org