

Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County Charter:

Background:

The Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County (PHCC) was established in 1994 to serve as a community health network and as a forum for collaboration and sharing of information between county agencies and services. Over thirty non-profit and county agencies are represented in the membership. In addition, this group serves the local health improvement coalition for Charles County, as set forth by the Maryland Department of Health in 2012.

The focus of the PHCC is to improve the health outcomes of county residents as laid out the *Charles County Health Needs Assessment* which will be completed every three years. The *Charles County Local Health Improvement Plan* will also be completed every three years to mirror the goals of the state health improvement process. Each of the PHCC subcommittees will be tasked with the development of an action plan with clear strategies, activities, and tracking measures for project implementation over a three-year period.

Mission and Vision Objectives:

The **MISSION** of the Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County is to serve as a community health network and forum for collaboration to identify and address the health needs of our community.

The **VISION** of the Partnerships for a Healthier County is to improve the health and quality of life for all Charles County citizens with the goal of increasing life expectancy across all racial and ethnic groups.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Executive leadership of the PHCC is shared by the heads of four local entities: the Charles County Department of Health, Charles County Public Schools, University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center, and the College of Southern Maryland. The leaders of each organization assign one staff member to serve on the PHCC steering committee.

A steering committee is composed of representatives from each of the four entities and the chairs of the PHCC subcommittees. The steering committee serves as an advisory board to the executive leadership. The steering meeting meets quarterly to set the priorities and direction of the coalition. During a community health needs assessment year, the steering committee meetings will meet in the Spring to prioritize the health needs of Charles County and develop the Charles County Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

Additionally, the PHCC also has 3 subcommittees or teams that are charged with the development and implementation of programs with a focus on a particular health condition or disease topic. The teams include: The Chronic Disease Prevention and Management Team, the Behavioral Health Team, and the Access to Healthcare Team. Every three years, these teams must complete an action plan that includes evidence-based strategies with long term, intermediate, and short-term objectives to address the goals set in the Charles County Health Improvement Plan or CHIP.

General facilitation and day to day operations of the PHCC will be the responsibility of the Charles County Department of Health A Chair of the PHCC is assigned by the health officer. The administrative assistant to the health officer will assist the PHCC Chair with communications and membership tracking. In addition, the Charles County Department of Health will maintain the website and Facebook page for the Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County.

The University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center will lead the community health needs assessment process. This process will occur every three years and will result in a community health needs assessment report. The report will be used by the PHCC Steering Committee members to undertake health prioritization and to develop the Charles County Health Improvement Plan and Team Action Plans.

Membership:

Membership in the Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County is free and open to all interested individuals. The PHCC membership form is on the Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County webpage, which is located within the Charles County Department of Health website at charlescountyhealth.org. Once the form has been completed, the individual will receive an email from the Chair and will start to receive PHCC correspondence and meeting invitations.

Individuals can also request to become a member and receive a copy of the membership application by phone call, by email, or by word of mouth. Once the membership application is completed, an individual is officially a member.

All members have a say in the PHCC. Members are free to advise the chair and steering committee on appropriate topics and speakers for general meetings. Members are free to participate in any of the subcommittees. Members are critical in the development of the strategies and activities of each subcommittee. It is vital that all members have a voice and role in the implementation of community level strategies in order to ensure population health level change.

Current members can and should work to actively recruit new members from organizations and industries that may be missing from general membership.

Meetings:

General meetings for all members will be held four times a year in February, May, September, and December. Meeting will occur on the second Wednesday of the month for February, May, and September. The December meeting will occur on the first Wednesday of the month due to the approaching holiday season. Meetings will take place at the Waldorf Jaycees from 11-1, unless weather or other public health emergencies do not permit in-person meetings. In those circumstances, it is up to the discretion of the Chair to determine whether a meeting will be canceled or held virtually. Lunch will be served at the general meetings.

The subcommittees will meet monthly or quarterly. Frequency of team meetings will be determined by the subcommittee leaders and membership.

Budget and Resources:

Responsibility for the payment of the meal will fall to the four leading entities. The payment schedule is as follows:

February Meeting: Charles County Department of Health

May Meeting: University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center

September Meeting: Charles County Public Schools

December Meeting: College of Southern Maryland

Oversight and operations of the Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County will be provided in-kind by the Charles County Department of Health. Staff time for the Chair and Administrative Assistant will be covered.

The University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center will cover the cost of the community health needs assessment report that will be conducted every three years.

The Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County is not a 501c3 non-profit organization and therefore cannot accept funds. If grant funding opportunities are needed to cover the cost of initiatives being implemented by the PHCC, one of the member agencies may accept those funds on behalf of the coalition.

Internal Balances and Reviews:

The Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County, in collaboration with the University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center, will conduct a community health needs assessment process every three years, undertake objective health prioritization using the Hanlon Method, develop a Charles County Health Improvement Plan, and assist subcommittees with the creation of three-year action plans. The action plans will include SMART objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-based. Strategies should be evidence-based and best practices that have been shown to be effective interventions.

Updates and reports of subcommittee activities will be provided by the subcommittee leaders on a quarterly basis at the PHCC Steering Committee meetings.

Decision Making/Voting Processes:

All changes to the structure and oversight of the Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County can only be made upon the approval of the Executive Leadership. The Executive Leadership meets once a year with the Steering Committee members to receive a briefing on the status of the local health improvement coalition, its community health needs assessment process, the health improvement plan, and the action plan initiatives. Any proposed changes are briefed by Steering Committee members to the Executive Leadership who then vote to approve or reject the motion.

The Steering Committee is responsible for decision making in the general operations of the Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County. The final decision regarding meeting location, menu, and agenda are approved by this group; however, input from individual members on topics and speakers are always accepted and incorporated.

The Steering Committee is responsible for facilitating the health prioritization process and voting on the health priorities for the county. After a thorough analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data from the community health needs assessment report, the Steering Committee votes on the three-year priority areas. Once the priorities are established, the Steering Committee also decides upon the goals and objectives set in the Charles County Health Improvement Plan. Once those objectives are finalized, they are shared with the subcommittees who begin work on the subcommittee action plans.

Individual members are responsible for the development and implementation of the subcommittee action plans completed every three years. Individual members contribute to and provide feedback on the activities and strategies set forth in the action plans. Once the teams have finalized their plans, they are presented before the Steering Committee for final approval.

This charter has been updated on _____ and was approved by the Partnerships for a Healthier Charles County Steering Committee members.