

Cecil County Community Health Advisory Committee Local Health Improvement Plan
Update #2
Priority Area: Mental /Behavioral Health-Access to Treatment
1/17/13

A subcommittee (4 members) of the Cecil County Mental Health Core Service Agency (CSA) Advisory Council met in January to begin work on the issue of provider expansion in Cecil County. The aim of this group is to determine ways to get individuals who are licensed to provide behavioral health treatment (LCSW-C, LCPC, licensed psychiatrists, psychologists, certified addictions counselors) into this county, develop ways to promote the growth of this workforce within the County, and also look at ways to possibly increase the number of group practices or Outpatient Mental Health Clinics in the county that can offer a range of services. Barriers Identified Include:

- Lack of reciprocity between State Licensure Boards.
- Specific to Public Mental Health System, lower reimbursement rates compared to commercial insurance.
- For therapists, independent licensure requires 2 year's post Master's Degree experience before sitting for exam.
- The shortage reaches beyond county lines into other states & regions, possibly even national shortages, for some mental health licensure.
- Providers must become paneled with each insurance agency individually...not all licensed providers can see all people...it is dependent on type of insurance sometimes.

Strengths Identified:

- We currently remain designated a Health Professional Shortage Area for psychiatry.
- Cecil College's partnership with Salisbury University's Social Work program for bachelor's and master's degrees.
- Sign-on bonuses being used by some providers.
- Cecil County is close to the ocean, other water ways, metropolitan areas, we have horse farms, things to promote the area as a good place to live.
- We have several nearby universities.
- We have a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) recently staffed with a psychiatrist in addition to a psychologist.

For further exploration prior to next meeting (to be scheduled in February):

- Additional/valuable membership for this workgroup.
- Explore how existing providers current recruit and retain staff.
- Survey current psychiatrist for their thoughts on this matter.
- Gain insight by talking to other behavioral health professionals who did decide to move here from another area to practice.
- Find out if Maryland or surrounding states have any intention of reviewing the issue of reciprocity for the various licensures.
- Find out what other groups already exist in Maryland that are specifically reviewing this issue specific to behavioral health.