

Healthy Lifestyle Task Force Report
Cecil County Community Health Advisory Committee
January 17, 2013

The Healthy Lifestyle Task Force has met twice in the last six months. The meetings were held on September 28, 2012 and November 8, 2012. In September, Cathy A Demeroto from Maryland Hunger Solutions gave a presentation on Ending Hunger and Promoting Well-Being. Ms. Demeroto discussed challenges related to food security like: food deserts, and the relationship between poverty and obesity. She educated the Task Force on Dietary Guidelines for Americans and nutrition programs like the federal nutrition programs WIC, and Food Stamps. Ms. Demeroto also shared some local data regarding Food Stamp participation. Angela Johnson updated the Task Force about Community Transformation Grant (CTG) activities sharing the results of the School Health Index (SHI) for the three participating schools. All three schools completed an Action Plan that included one action for physical activity and one action for nutrition. Each school is required to begin implementation by the conclusion of the school year. Nancy Crawford gave an update on Elkton Housing Authority (EHA) initiative to go smoke free. On October 1, 2012 the Home for the Elderly, under EHA, went smoke free outdoors except for a designated area. Mrs. Crawford stated that two residents at the Senior Building had quit smoking and that a “Smoke Free Building” sign has been installed. Beginning January 8, 2013, the Health Department will sponsor Smoke Free classes on the second Tuesday of every month. The smoke free policy for EHA will be completed and presented to the board and mailed to applicants for public comment in March 2013. HUD is set to approve the policy in April 2013 and then it will be sent to the tenants in May 2013.

At each meeting a description of the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) and Diabetes Self Management Program (DSMP) was shared with Task Force members including the various community sites in Cecil County where these free programs are held. Two Chronic Disease Self-Management Programs, one Diabetes Self-Management Program, and one Chronic Pain Self-Management Program were completed - 38 participants finished the programs. Master Trainers completed the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program Update Training in December of 2012. A Lay-Leader Update Training is scheduled for March 21, 2013.

Cecil County Falls Prevention Program promotes healthy behaviors and creates a safe environment for older adults in the County by providing a multifaceted intervention program. The program includes exercise to address physical mobility, vision assessment, medication review, and review of home and environmental hazards. This grant consists of two programs, Stepping On Falls Prevention Program and Tai Chi – Moving for Better Balance. The programs reach older adults (and their caregivers) who have a fear of falling, live at home, have had a fall in the past year, and are not suffering from dementia. In 2011, two instructors were trained in Stepping On and three instructors were trained in Tai Chi – Moving for Better Balance. One additional instructor was trained in Tai Chi – Moving for Better Balance on August 30-31, 2012. Two Tai Chi – Moving for Better Balance classes have been completed with fourteen participants. Another Tai Chi – Moving for Better Balance class began on October 16, 2012 with twelve participants and will conclude in January 2013. A Stepping On program began on December 13, 2012 with twelve participants and will also end in January 2013. More Tai Chi – Moving for Better Balance and Stepping On programs are set to start February 2013. Cecil College has included both programs in their Spring 2013 course catalogue free of charge through their Life Long Learning Program. Both classes will be held at the Elkton Station location starting February 2013.

The next Healthy Lifestyle Task Force meeting is Friday, March 8, 2013 at 12 noon in the auditorium at the Cecil County Health Department.