

Health Department

FY 2023 Operating/Program Review Responses Summary

STAFFING

- The Department continues to experience employee retention and recruitment challenges. As of November 2022, the Department filled 20 vacant positions yet it has lost 21 employees to attrition.
- In FY 2022 the Department's authorized General Fund staffing level was increased by ten (10) positions, increasing the General Fund full-time complement from 217 to 227 positions. The new positions include three (3) registered nurses to support the Immunization Program; two (2) disease control specialists to support the Communicable Disease Program; one (1) administrative assistant as a safety officer; two (2) system analysts to support the Electronic Health Record System; one (1) system analyst to support the Health Information Technology System and one (1) auditor. None of the ten (10) positions have been filled as of March 2022. As of November 2022 one (1) position was reported as filled.

WORKLOAD DEMANDS & PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- The 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) focused on four priority areas: Social Determinants of Health; Behavioral Health; Obesity & Metabolic Syndrome; and Cancer. The Department reports that heart disease is the number one cause of death in the County, followed by cancer.
- In response to question "*What data does the Department collect on healthcare services utilization, accessibility and availability in Prince George's County?*", the Department responded that "*Currently, the Health Department does not have access to the most recent hospital discharge data*". The Department estimates that 90% of the County residents have health insurance, although one in five residents ages 26-34 are uninsured.
- Health care resources indicators:
 - the number of physicians per 10,000 population: one primary care physician for every 1,890 residents
 - number of community hospitals and other facilities: no data provided
 - number of hospital beds and number of beds in other medical facilities: no data provided
 - number of dentists per 100,000: one dentist for every 1,570 residents
 - number of nursing homes and number of nursing home beds: no data provided
 - number hospices: no data provided
 - any other health care resources data: one mental health provider for every 550 residents
 - How the health care resources have changed over the past years? No information was provided.
- To better understand health care resources in the County, including facilities critical for crisis response, information was asked about the number of emergency departments in the County as

well as performance metrics for these facilities. The Department reported that it does not track such information.

- The Department does not track information on the usage of electronic health records systems in the County.
- The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act spending recommendations (adopted CR-067-2021) for the Health Department in FY 2022 totaled \$19.6 million. As of October 2022, the Department reports spending approximately \$12 million. \$3.8 million in unspent funds have been transferred for use in FY 2023 to support COVID-19 vaccination efforts, the usage of the remaining \$3.8 million of unspent funds is unknown.
- During the FY 2023 Budget Review, it was reported that the key challenge of the Environmental Health/ Disease Control Division is sustaining services. Percentage of State-mandated high and moderate inspections conducted in FY 2022 was estimated at 36%. The Department was requested to provide data on key inspection workload demands, such as inspections of Food Facilities, Wells, Septic Systems, HIAs, Swimming Pools, Trucks, Contractors, Lead and Asthma Home Visits, Percolation Testing, Building Permit Inspections. The Department clarified that 36% refers specifically to food service inspections only. Furthermore, the Department stated that the Environmental Health Services Division supported COVID-19 efforts in 2020 and 2021, and provided no inspection statistics.
- The Environmental Health Services Division reports employee recruitment and retention challenges; lack of equal pay when compared to other jurisdictions; and increased workload demands due to changes in legislative mandates.
- Previously the Department reported that the Family Health Services Division's *"service level of care for all of our programs is at an all-time low"*, in a follow-up response, the Department stated that the contributing factors and main challenges that the Division faces are employee recruitment and retention, lack of pay parity with nearby jurisdictions, failing infrastructure of the Cheverly Health Center, and redirection of employees towards COVID-19 relief efforts.
- 13. In FY 2022 the Family Health Services Division opened the Maternal and Child Health Center at Laurel. In response for any statistics available to capture the operations of the Maternal and Child Health Center in Laurel the Department reported that the Center can serve ten (10) clients a day.
- The Health and Wellness Division reported that the main challenges it faces are addressing issues with employee recruitment and retention, ensuring access to medical assistance transportation, medical assistance insurance and care coordination.
- During the FY 2023 Budget Review it was reported that *"there are 68 behavioral health beds in the County"*. Based on the Health Department's responses, between March and November of 2022 the number of beds has increased from 68 to 98.
- In response to the question *"How does the behavioral health capacity in Prince George's County (in terms of behavioral health beds, behavioral health service providers, and any other useful metrics) compare to the neighboring jurisdictions?"* The Health Department reported that *"Prince George's County has fewer beds than neighboring and similarly sized jurisdictions"*; youth residents have to seek services outside of the County; Montgomery County has invested \$421.9 million in Health and Human Services in FY 2023 (compare to Prince George's County allocating \$47 million of General

Funds into Health and Human services and anticipating nearly \$94.0 million in grant funds for a total of \$141.1 million).

- The role of the Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA) is to assess needs, gaps and plan for Behavioral Health Programs and services. In Prince George's County, LBHA is 100% funded by the Behavioral Health Administration; in other counties the funding is supported by the State and local allocations; and in Montgomery County LBHA is embedded in the County government and its employees are County employees.
- In Prince George's County, the Mobile Response Team (formally known as mobile crisis response teams) services are provided by iMind Behavioral Health LLC. The County currently has six (6) teams and provides 24-hour coverage. Totally Linking Care (TLC) MD funds four (4) out of six (6) teams, while the County funds the remaining two (2) teams and administers the service contracts. At least eight (8) teams are needed to meet the needs of Prince George's County.
- To comply with the Federal mandates, 988, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, was to be implemented by July 16, 2022. The Health Department reported that in Prince George's County Community Crisis Services Inc. (CCSI) is the federally designated call center to receive 988 calls. With regards to 988 implementation challenges, the Department reported that the federal government is working to address issues with area codes and routing to the appropriate call center. The Department also reported that moving vendor's funding through the County's procurement system is a challenge.
- To strengthen the Crisis Response in the County, the Department has been working to divert qualifying 911 calls for service into the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline partner, CCSI (handles 988 calls), with an option to dispatch Mobile Crisis Response Teams in addition to other response options. This effort requires cooperation from various stakeholders including the Office of Homeland Security, which is to identify qualifying calls and divert them. According to the Department the 911 Call Center diversion known as the 988 Police Diversion Initiative was launched on October 11, 2022. The Department reports that the initiative is being evaluated weekly by senior leadership and that currently there are procurement delays, which create staffing issues, which in turn can result in operational gaps.
- During the FY 2023 Budget Review, it was reported that the Department faced challenges in assisting Totally Linking Care (TLC) with spending \$5 million out of \$26 million Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) grant for establishing the first County based Crisis Receiving/Stabilization Center. A County-owned building in Clinton has been identified and an expedited collaborative approach in securing the facility was needed to use \$5 million by end of CY 2022. The Health Department reports that TLC is on track for spending these funds according to its board-approved spending plan. TLC continues to work with the Health Department to plan the Crisis Stabilization Center at Dyer. The vendor has an approved contract with TLC and is working with Prince George's County on the lease of space. Project should be completed by late spring or early summer. There is a question of funding gap for FY 2024 and beyond, and the County Executive's Office is leading the effort to address this concern and ensure sustainability of the Center.

- The Health Department clarified that no General Fund positions are currently assigned from the Health Department to support the operations of the Bridge Center at the Adam's House. There are 15 positions funded through three (3) grants administered by the Department.
- The Bridge Center continues to use ETO (Efforts to Outcomes) database system. The ETO Database Administrator position remains grant funded (a request to convert this position to merit was not successful) with funding available through January 2023. It is not clear how this position will be funded once existing grant funds end. The ETO Database Administrator manages all aspects of ETO database system operations including data analysis and performance evaluation (identifying trends in referrals, client demographics and measuring effectiveness of various treatments), and development of custom reports to meet agency and funder report requirements.
- The Bridge Center performance data shows that 1,343 persons were served in FY 2022, which represents a notable increase from 996 served in FY 2021, and a staggering increase from 294 clients served in FY 2018.
- Health Assures Program provides funding for the uninsurable residents of the County who can receive services at Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). The funding level has increased from \$2.8 million in FY 2022 to \$5.0 million in FY 2023 (budgeted in the Non-Departmental portion of the budget). There are currently six (6) FQHC providers in the County and a total of nine (9) locations. Due to doubling of the County's funding towards this program, while the Health Assures Fund covered 22,552 visits in FY 2022, twice as many visits, 44,000, are anticipated to be covered by these funds in FY 2023. The ARP funds will run out in June 2024. It appears that at this point, the higher level of funding will not result in actual expansion of the FQHC's capacity in the County (such as increasing the number of locations, or increasing the number of locations which offer a specific service such as dentistry, or expanding work hours to accommodate shift work), as the focus seems to be on reimbursement for visits.