STATE OF MARYLAND
Community Health Resources Commission
45 Calvert Street, Annapolis, MD 21401, Room 336

Larry Hogan, Governor - Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
John A. Hurson, Chair - Mark Luckner, Executive Director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COMMUNITY HEALTH RESOURCES COMMISSION AWARDS GRANTS TO EXPAND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

(**Annapolis, MD**) -- The Maryland Community Health Resources Commission announced today 15 grant awards totaling $3.4 million to expand access in underserved areas, to reduce health disparities, and to help reduce avoidable hospital costs. These grants will increase the capacity of community-based safety net providers such as federally qualified health centers, free clinics, behavioral health providers, and local health departments. The programs are estimated to serve 35,000 Marylanders. An overview of the 15 grant awards is attached.

More than 60 organizations submitted applications requesting $31.3 million in response to the Commission's Call for Proposals this year. Projects awarded this year will work to: (1) support comprehensive women's health services and reduce infant mortality rates; (2) increase access to dental care for low-income adults and children; (3) promote behavioral health services and help address the heroin and opioid epidemic; and (4) expand access to primary care services and promote management of chronic diseases.

"These projects will expand the capacity to deliver services in these underserved communities," commented John A. Hurson, Chairman of the Commission. "The Commission is looking forward to working with these grantees in the coming weeks and months." Since its inception in 2005, the Commission has awarded 169 grants totaling $55.8 million, supporting programs in all 24 jurisdictions of the state. These programs have collectively served more than 260,000 low-income and uninsured or underinsured Marylanders.

"These grant awards align with Maryland's commitment to expanding healthcare access for all of our residents," said Dr. Howard Haft, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Public Health Administration.

The Commission looks to support programs that are innovative and sustainable. It provides initial public funding, serving as an "incubator" to launch creative public-private partnerships to expand access for underserved populations. The initial grant funding has enabled grantees to leverage $18.8 million in additional federal and private/non-profit resources.

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Community Health Resources Commission
FY 2016 Grantees

Reducing infant mortality and promoting women's health services

Baltimore City Health Department. The applicant requests grant funding to support the continued implementation of the B'More for Healthy Babies (BHB) Initiative. Grant funds would be utilized to support the salaries of two new public health investigators who will use aggressive, trauma-informed strategies to outreach pregnant women who are currently unable to be located though traditional outreach methods or who refuse to talk to care coordinators. The investigators will use cutting-edge strategies to direct vulnerable pregnant women and newborns into appropriate obstetric and pediatric homes. The project seeks to serve 240 women annually who are lost to the system.

Increasing access to dental care services

Allegany Health Right. The applicant, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in Allegany County, has received two dental grants from the CHRC in the last two years, and the current proposal seeks to expand the existing Dental Access Program and to serve low-income seniors and disabled adults. The program continues Allegany Health Right's model of community outreach and engaging private dentists to provide dental services at a discounted rate of 50% - 80%. CHRC grant funding would be utilized to support the salaries of a community health worker and dental case manager and to provide discounted costs for dental services to program participants. The program is estimated to provide 720 Medicare-covered seniors with oral health education and provide dental services to 200 individuals per year in this two-year program.

Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Washington. This first-time applicant, the social ministry outreach of the Archdiocese of Washington, requests grant funding to open a new, comprehensive, four-chair dental clinic in Temple Hills, Prince George's County, and would provide dental services to an estimated 1,320 low-income residents. The applicant currently operates two other dental clinics in the region, and the new (third) proposed clinic would focus exclusively on serving low-income and un/underinsured residents in Prince George's County. Grant funding would be utilized to help support the salary costs of the first two years of the new clinic.

Carroll County Health Department. The proposal requests grant funding for a two-year program to expand access to pediatric dental services in Carroll County by improving the administrative efficiency of the existing Carroll County Health Department Pediatric Dental Program. The proposal states than only 52.6% of Medicaid children in Carroll County were able see a dentist within the last year (SHIP metric), the second worst average in the state. The requested grant funds will support non-personnel costs, including equipment, staff training, and software/EMR costs, in order to modernize the outdated equipment of Carroll's existing dental program, support the administrative efficiency of the program, and enable the grantee to upgrade the practice management system. The program will serve 1,986 individuals over a two-year period.

Mt. Laurel Medical Center. This applicant, a Federally Qualified Health Center in Garrett County, has not received a grant from the CHRC in the past. The proposal requests grant funding for a two-year program to provide dental screenings and referrals to discounted dental care to patients of Mt. Laurel with chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. Garrett County is one of the most dentally underserved areas in the state, and this program would expand access to dental services and promote the integration of medical and dental care services in a primary care setting. Grant funds would support the salary costs for program staff and dental supplies. The program is expected to serve 40 individuals in the first year, with an expected number of patients served by the end of the project period to be 90.

Expanding Access to Integrated Behavioral Health Treatment Services

Garrett County Health Department. The proposal requests grant funding to support the use of tele-health technology to increase access to Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT) and responds to the recommendations of the Governor's Heroin and Opioid Emergency Task Force. The proposal aims to serve 30 individuals in year one, increasing to 50 in year three. Garrett's Center for Behavioral Health is the only certified addiction treatment service in the jurisdiction. The Center works with the only community provider who prescribes buprenophrine, and who is unable to keep up with the demand for service. The program involves a collaboration between the Garrett County Health Department and the University of Maryland School of Medicine's Department of Psychiatry. Grant funds would support the salary costs of program staff and the contracting of an outside evaluator.

Behavioral Health Systems Baltimore. The applicant, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in Baltimore, requests grant funding to support the operating costs of a new "Stabilization Center" in Baltimore. The center will be located at the current site of a Federally Qualified Health Center and will intercept EMS calls for alcohol/substance use, divert these individuals from hospital emergency departments, and refer them to services at the Stabilization Center. Individuals would receive case-management after discharge from the Center. Projected capacity of the Center is 30 individuals at any time, with the capacity of 27,000 visits per year when fully operational. CHRC grant funds would be utilized to support the salaries of peer recovery support specialists.

Potomac Healthcare Foundation. This first-time applicant, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit community behavioral health provider, requests funding to establish a 50-bed residential Recovery Support Center in West Baltimore. The project would address three of the seven goals of the Governor's Heroin and Opioid Emergency Task Force by: (1) expanding access to treatment by removing one of the barriers for accessing care, housing; (2) enhancing the quality of treatment via an evidence-based approach that utilizes residential recovery housing; and (3) boosting overdose prevention efforts, as "stable housing and quality treatment are the bulwarks against overdose." Grant funds would support the salary costs of case managers at the program. The project would serve an estimated 258 individuals in year one, 390 in year two, and 390 in year three.

Bon Secours Baltimore Health System. This proposal requests grant funding to support the creation of a new Forensic Diversion Program (FDP) for inmate pre-trial mental health stabilization prior to competency determination from the courts, seeking to serve an estimated 141 inmates. The goal of the Bon Secours FDP program is to enable court-involved individuals with serious mental illness awaiting trial to receive services at Bon Secours in lieu of another placement in the state hospital system. Grant funds would be utilized to support staff training on working with a forensic population; salary costs for the project manager; and supervised housing, copayments, and transportation for patients.

Expanding access to primary care services

Wicomico County Health Department. This applicant requests grant funding to support the opening of school-based health centers (SBHC) at two schools in Salisbury (Wicomico High and Bennett Middle). In addition to serving students, the SBHCs would be open to the adult staff members of the two schools and will provide two new access points for both primary and behavioral health services. Billable services will be billed to Medicaid and third-party insurers. CHRC grant funds would be utilized to support the salary costs of the new SBHCs.

Shepherd's Clinic. The applicant is a free clinic in Baltimore City that predominantly serves low-income, un/underinsured individuals by providing a number of services including primary, specialty, and wellness programs, as well as its Diabetes Self-Management Program. The proposal requests funding to triple the capacity of the Diabetes Self-Management Program, which currently serves approximately 220 individuals, and CHRC grant funds will be used to hire a part-time certified diabetes educator.

La Clinica del Pueblo. The applicant, a Federally Qualified Health Center, requests grant funds to open a new health center site in Hyattsville, Prince George's County, which would serve the Langley Park, Hyattsville, Riverdale, Mt. Rainer, and Bladensburg communities, providing access to medical, behavioral health, and other social support services. The new site in Hyattsville would be open to all patients, with the goal of serving 920 patients in year one. In August 2015, the applicant secured a FY 2015 New Access Point grant from HRSA to support the new site in Hyattsville and has leveraged additional funding from private foundations. Grant funds would support the salary costs of the new health center site.

The Lower Shore Clinic. The applicant, a community behavioral health provider, requests grant funding to support the "CareLink" program that targets individuals with behavioral health needs who visit the hospital ED (Peninsula Regional Medical Center [PRMC]) in high volumes and provides intensive case management services for these individuals post-hospital discharge. The proposal involves a partnership with PRMC and is designed to help reduce 30-day readmission rates for individuals participating in the program. The CareLink program is currently underway in two different hospital systems in Montgomery County, and one of these two community-hospital partnerships is supported by another CHRC grant awarded to Family Services last year. CHRC grant funds would be utilized to support salary costs of the care management team, transportation, and other client costs. The program is projected to serve 250 patients over its duration.

Charles County Health Department. The proposal involves an innovative "public health-EMS-hospital" partnership that seeks to address over-utilization of EMS and ED services in Charles County by assisting frequent ED/EMS users to manage their chronic conditions in a primary care setting or at home. Grant funding would support a Mobile Integrated Healthcare team, which would be comprised of a paramedic, a nurse practitioner, and two community health workers. The program is a collaboration among the Charles County Health Department, Charles EMS, and Charles Regional Hospital, each of which is supporting the project financially. The program is projected to serve 60 patients over three years.

Chinese Culture and Community Service Center. This first-time applicant, a 501(c)(3) and a member of the Montgomery Cares program, seeks grant funding to support the relocation and expansion of the Pan Asian Volunteer Health Clinic. In addition to primary care, case management, free drugs, and lab testing, the applicant provides free screening and vaccinations for Hepatitis B, which particularly impacts Asian Americans, who comprise 14% (140,000 residents) of Montgomery County's population. The Clinic is staffed by volunteer physicians and part-time administrative staff. Grant funding would support the salary costs of a full-time case manager and clinic coordinator to provide advanced labs and vaccines. The program will serve 2,405 patients over a three-year period.

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