



HEALTH BEAT



Volume 1, Issue 3

April 14, 2008

Calendar of Events:

- **April 2—WOW**
- **April 2**—Join us at the Enoch Pratt Free Library from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM to hear the U.S. Surgeon General discuss childhood obesity. The event will take place in the Wheeler Auditorium.
- **April 8**—Come join us from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM for a Neighborhood Conversation with Mayor Sheila Dixon and Cabinet Members at Baltimore City Community College (2901 Liberty Heights Avenue, 21215). Registration starts at 6:30 PM.
- **April 9—WOW**
- **April 9**—Join us at 12:00 Noon for a Press Conference with Mayor Dixon to honor the Health Department's American Heart Association designation as a Fit Friendly Workplace.
- **April 9**—Baltimore Mental Health Systems, Inc. is sponsoring their 13th Annual Forensic Conference at the Best Western Travel Plaza. The theme this year is Changing Baltimore: Developing Dual Disorders Treatment for Recovery. The keynote speaker is Dr. Kenneth Minkoff. Consumers, DHMH leadership and judges will also be speaking. CEUs will be available.
- **April 15**—Join us for a press conference at 11:00 in the Maxie Collier Conference Room at 210 Guilford Avenue for the Take 5 to Save Lives Campaign.
- **April 16—WOW**
- **April 19**—Office of the State's Attorney for Baltimore City Presents the 8th Annual 5K Victims' Fund Run & Walk. Registration is from 7:30 AM to 8:30 AM at the Virginia Baker Recreation Center in Patterson Park. The race starts at 9:00 AM.
- **April 23—WOW**
- **April 30—WOW**

Work Out Wednesday

Every Wednesday at noon, BCHD employees meet in the Executive Office ready for a 20 minute walk along one of two routes: Inner Harbor or Mount Vernon.



Message from the Commissioner



Recently, I attended a lecture by researchers in St. Louis on health messages. The researchers compared people's reactions to three kinds of health messages: 1) Access to cancer screening is improving, but we need to do even better. 2) Not enough people have access to cancer screening. 3) There are unacceptable disparities in access to cancer screening.

All three of the messages were

true, but the first motivated people most to go out and get screened for cancer. The researchers concluded that positive messages made people want to contribute. Negative messages made them frustrated and angry and less likely to participate.

This was just one study, and the results may not be broadly applicable to other settings and issues. But I do think they serve as a reminder than even when we are facing daunting obstacles in public health, the fact that we're making progress does count. Not only are lives saved along the way, but success in public health -- as

in other things -- can lead to more success.

Have a great month!

Employee Spotlight Maternal and Child Health Division

The Bureau of Child Health and Immunization spotlights Rose Jefferson, RN! Ms. Jefferson has served as Coordinator of the Clinical Immunization Program for the last four years. Prior to this role, she was the Senior Supervisory Community Health Nurse in the Bureau for ten years. She also completed 21 years of service as a charge nurse at Spring Grove Hospital.

As Program Coordinator, Ms. Jefferson develops and implements all pediatric and adult immunization clinics for the Bureau. She also educates staff, patients, and the community about the benefits of immunization and the latest vaccines. Over the years, her activities have expanded beyond BCHD clinics to reach Baltimoreans at schools, churches, malls, senior centers, the YMCA, homeless shelters, and branches of the Enoch Pratt Free Library.

Her contributions to the public's health were recognized in 2007 with the "Maryland Nurse of the Year" award, one of twelve nurses in the State commended by the Maryland Nurses Association. Her drive, intelligence, clinical expertise, and kindness makes her a role model for staff and an inspiration to her patients. The Department is enriched by her work and her spirit.

Mayor Dixon Recognizes Health Department Employees



SHEILA DIXON
Mayor
250 City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

April 8, 2008

Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D.
Commissioner of Health
Baltimore City Health Department
210 Guilford Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Mr. Sharfstein,

In honor of Public Health Week, I am writing to thank the many talented and dedicated staff of the Baltimore City Health Department. As you know, my administration's goal is to make Baltimore "Cleaner, Greener, Healthier, and Safer." This goal is only possible because so many city employees go the extra mile in providing oversight, services, and assistance to thousands of city residents each day.

Please pass on my appreciation and encouragement. In my mind, in Baltimore, every week is Public Health Week.

Sincerely,

Sheila Dixon
Mayor
Baltimore City

SD:jm

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Legislative Update



The 2008 legislative session of the General Assembly has come to a close. In all, it was a very successful session for the Baltimore City Health Department. Below is a summary of some significant legislation approved this year.

HB 768/SB607 Children - Records - Access by the Baltimore City Health Department

On behalf of the Health Department, Senator Pugh and Delegate Anderson introduced HB768/SB607. This legislation passed the General Assembly and will:

- Extend the policy's sunset date from September 30, 2008 to September 30, 2011.
- Expand each department's current disclosure requirements to include records concerning a child convicted of a crime or adjudicated as having committed a delinquent act that caused the death or near fatality.

HB991 - HIV Testing - Informed Consent and Treatment - Pregnant Women

HB991 addresses and incorporates the recommendations made by the HB781/SB746

workgroup on informed consent and pre and posttest HIV counseling. It removes the need for written consent while still being informative allowing for clients to make educated choices. It is flexible and allows for the information to be communicated in several ways. If the test is positive, it provides for referrals for treatment and supportive services. In addition, for providers that provide prenatal care, the bill gives the provider multiple opportunities to test a pregnant woman including rapid testing at delivery.

HB62 - Lead Containing Products - Prohibition

HB62 would prohibit the manufacture, distribution or sale of both lead-containing products marketed to children. It further specifies requirements for labeling of lead-containing products not intended for use by children.

Kings Dominion 2008 Public Employee Days!

Kings Dominion is now offering \$20.00 off their \$51.95 regular general admission tickets. Please contact Katie at kathleen.burns@baltimorecity.gov to pick up your coupon.

Each coupon is good for \$20.00 off up to six (6) regular general admission tickets. The coupon is good Saturdays and Sundays through May 18. For more information on Kings Dominion, visit <http://www.KingsDominion.com>.

Prevention Wednesday Partnership



The Healthy Hearts Prevention Wednesday window sponsored by the Enoch Pratt Free Library.

The Health Department is partnering with city agencies on the Prevention Wednesday campaign, which focuses on issues where action today can prevent illness tomorrow. The Enoch Pratt Library, led by Dr. Carla Hayden, is providing innovative solutions to the challenges of getting health promotion messages out to the masses. The central library branch has dedicated a large storefront-type window to Prevention Wednesday, and each month a new message is presented in a relevant, eye-catching way. Graphic artist Jack Young leads the efforts, with displays that include giant size candy hearts directing

people to check their blood pressure, to timely messages about our obesity epidemic hitting children. In addition, Director of Communications Rosswell Encina provides expertise in the area of press conferences and outreach, coordinating visits from the surgeon general, ensuring the distribution of messages to the branches, and even partnering in programming efforts run by local hospitals. The Health Department wants to thank and recognize the amazing team at the Enoch Pratt Library for contributing to improving the health of all Baltimore residents.

Baltimore City Health Department Qualifies for "Fit Friendly" Honor

On April 4, 2008, the Baltimore City Health Department was presented with a "Fit Friendly Workplace" Award from the American Heart Association.

Fewer than 30 organizations throughout Maryland have received this honor. To become "fit friendly," businesses or organizations must demonstrate a commitment to key components of supporting a wellness culture for their employees, including increasing physical activity and promoting healthy foods.

Since July 2007, the Health Department has:

- assigned a wellness coordinator, Dr. Megan Coylewright
- instituted walking programs at its central location and several branches;
- promoted use of the stairs;
- and designed weekly emails encouraging employees to exercise and choose healthy foods.

A monthly healthy potluck lunch, active promotion of citywide employee initiatives, and educational seminars on heart health were also initiated.

Congratulations to the Health Department on this great accomplishment!

Take 5 to Save Lives!

April is National Donate Life Month. This month make a special effort to celebrate the tremendous generosity of those who have saved lives by becoming organ, tissue, marrow, and blood donors. If you are currently not an organ donor, take this chance to join your co-workers and sign up to be designated organ, eye and tissue donors. To sign up, visit the Living Legacy Foundation of Maryland's website at <http://www.thellf.org/default.asp?id=106>.



Organ Donation Leave Policy

The City of Baltimore's Organ Donation Leave Policy (AM-203-1), authorizes paid permission leave to full-time and part-time permanent employees of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore. Organ donation leave can be used without loss of any benefits to which the employee is otherwise entitled. For a full copy of AM-203-1, please see: <http://cob/bbmr/personnel/policies/am-203-01.htm>

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