



HEALTH BEAT



Volume 1, Issue 6

July 14, 2008

Calendar of Events:

- **July 2**—WOW
- **July 4**—Head to the Inner Harbor for Baltimore's 4th of July Celebration. Here you can see an array of entertainment throughout the day culminating with a fireworks spectacular scheduled to begin at 9:30. For general information please call 1-877-BALTIMORE.
- **July 9**—WOW
- **July 12**—Join NBA superstar Carmelo Anthony at the 4th Annual Melo's H.O.O.D. Movement 3 on 3 Basketball Challenge. This event will take place from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM at Cloverdale Park. Kids and young adults aged 10-18 are eligible to play in the 3 on 3 tournament. There will also be other activities throughout the day.
- **July 15**—Baltimore City Health Commissioner, Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, will be joining the nationally recognized Children's Sentinel Nutrition Assessment Program, to introduce the report, "Food Security: Ensuring the Health of Baltimore's Babies." Findings will be revealed at 11:00 AM at the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) offices located at 621 N. Eden Street.
- **July 16**—WOW
- **July 18-20**—Check out Artscape 2008, the region's premier celebration of the arts. Artscape features continuous musical performances by local, regional and national talent on four outdoor stages, indoor and outdoor visual arts exhibitions, film, theater, the Artists' Market with crafts and works of art for sale, opera, dance, fashion, literary arts activities, street theater and special activities geared towards children. For more information please visit <http://www.artscape.org/>.
- **July 23**—WOW
- **July 28**—Join us for Research Rounds in the Maxie Collier Conference Room at 12:00 PM. This month Darcy Phelan, from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, will be presenting on HPV Immunization. For more information and/or to RSVP, please contact Aparna Balakrishnan at aparna.balakrishnan@baltimorecity.gov.
- **July 30**—WOW

Message from the Commissioner



Because of our diverse functions, the Health Department is many things to many people. To patients who benefit from our health services, the Health Department is a community health clinic -- one that should be accessible to all and offer services of the highest quality.

We created the Clinical Services division to provide leadership for clinical services at the Health Department. We want patients to

be able to receive reproductive health care, tuberculosis care, dental care, and other services in friendly settings with timely care and follow-up.

One barrier to this vision is that our facilities are not in top condition. While we've made some strides in correcting basic structural deficiencies, there are many things to be desired. After we accomplish our headquarters move, our top facilities focus will be on the clinics.

A major step forward is the development of a quality management program, under the leadership of Chief Medical Officer and Deputy

Commissioner Dr. Laura Herrera. An effective program brings the expertise of all staff together to improve services.

I also appreciate the hard work of assistant commissioner Dr. Charlene Brown and her leadership team. We've seen huge strides since she arrived, and these are only beginning.

Providing clinical care is difficult but can be very satisfying. At the Health Department, we're reducing complications, pain, and infectious disease. As a pediatrician, I miss seeing patients, and I'll hopefully be starting again soon myself.
-Josh

Employee Spotlight: Clinical Services

The Clinical Services Division spotlights Evelyn Moody! Ms. Moody joined the Baltimore City Health Department more than 38 years ago as a clerk/typist in the Western Health District TB Clinic. In 1980, as tuberculosis rates declined and the Western Health District TB Clinic was closed, Ms. Moody carried her extraordinary work ethic with her to Headquarters where she joined what eventually became known as Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Division.

Now serving the Clinic Services Division, Ms. Moody has served under at least five or six Commissioners of Health and has amassed more than 28 years of experience related to purchasing, accounting and payroll. Through her work preparing and tracking program financial accounts and expenditures, and preparing purchase orders and requisitions, Ms. Moody supports the backbone of our programs' public health work: our ability to procure goods and services.

She continues to do these and other duties well beyond the scope of a Typist. The Division

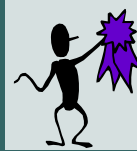
relies heavily on her bookkeeping efforts related to the STD/HIV clinics to validate budget versus purchasing expenditures and strategic planning for new program directors. Periodically, Ms. Moody has trained employees from other divisions who rely on her guidance and tutelage in navigating the City's various purchasing systems.

She has built a wide array of trusted relationships that facilitate her incredible efficacy as she communicates with vendors for price quotes and with buyers in the Purchasing Department and Accounts Payable to solve payment and procurement problems for those vendors. She is known throughout the Health Department for her outstanding work and open communication style. She has garnered the respect of countless colleagues at all levels inside and outside the Baltimore City Health Department.

The Clinical Services Division celebrates and appreciates Ms. Moody's ongoing support to the financial framework upon which all of our public health work rests. Her contributions are invaluable.

Congratulations to Eric Lomboy!

The Health Department would like to congratulate **Eric Lomboy** on his recent appointment as the **Chair of the State Lead Poisoning Commission**. We know you will bring wonderful energy and resolve to eliminate lead poisoning to your new role!



Join BCHD's 2008 Start! Baltimore Heart Walk Team, and help fight the nation's No. 1 and No. 3 killers—heart disease and stroke. The event will take place on Saturday, October 25, 2008, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The 3 mile walk will start in Federal Hill Park and continue through the Inner Harbor. To join the Health Department's team, please contact Shannon Cosgrove at shannon.cosgrove@baltimorecity.gov. For more information on the Heart Walk, please visit www.startgreaterbaltimoremd.org.

Tips on Helping Those with Pets

Today it seems everywhere we turn we see and hear about the gloom and doom in the real estate market and the growing number of foreclosures. It's so bad, even our beloved pets are being affected. We are seeing horrible pictures and reading tragic stories about the people who are being foreclosed on and the news is flooded with stories of their pets—family members too—who are being abandoned and left behind.

It is illegal to abandon an animal, but it is happening. Shelters all across the country, including BARCS, are seeing an increase in animal surrenders that are being attributed to "living situation." As a pet

lover, there are several things you can do to help animals or families in this situation:

- **Adopt!** Adopt an older pet that may have been abandoned and is currently at BARCS or recommend BARCS to a friend who is looking for a new pet.
- Encourage people to take their pet to a shelter or rescue group rather than leaving it chained in the yard or in the house they are losing.
- Help provide a temporary home for an animal in need by fostering.
- Donate funds or items to BARCS. Visit the BARCS Wish List online at www.baltimoreanimalshelter.org—items just sitting in your base-

ment or garage can help too.

- Volunteer your time. Help photograph adoptable pets, post ads online, answer phones or transport pets.
- If you know of a pet owner who is losing their home and needs help finding a pet friendly place to live, contact a local Realtor who does rentals. Not all Realtors do rentals but they can always refer you to one who does. A Realtor can search for specific criteria and find places that will allow pets or allow them on a case-by-case basis. You can also go to www.petrealtynetwork.com which is devoted to helping pet owners and their pets by connecting pet friendly people to pet friendly real estate.

Quality Management Initiative

By now many of you may have heard at least some mention of our plans to begin a quality improvement journey, and those who haven't heard about it yet should begin to hear more in the near future. **I want to begin to describe this plan to you so that everyone has at least some common understanding.**

Quality improvement (QI) has been around for some time, particularly in manufacturing, and in the last decade or so it has taken hold in healthcare as hospitals and other health care providers have become innovative in working to improve processes and systems. The patient safety movement has clearly demonstrated that quality improvement offers an outstanding structured approach for achieving real breakthroughs in all aspects of healthcare. QI has also made its way into public health, and BCHD wants to get on board early!

Healthcare quality has long had a "quality assurance" (QA) focus. In QA the focus is simply on measuring performance against a standard. But **measurement alone is not improvement!** Quality improvement instead focuses on improving a process or system. Quality assurance and quality improvement both have a role in an overall quality program,

and the combination of the two is generally referred to as quality management.

Quality management is **not a project but a process for problem solving and making continuous improvements. This does not mean more work. It does not mean more paperwork. It does mean working together in teams to make our work easier and better for those we serve.**

The quality management program is applicable to the entire Health Department, but we plan to begin with a few clinical service programs to get some experience with the program before expanding it to all other areas. The first team has been formed in Adolescent & Reproductive Health and after just two weeks is seeing real progress already! Once they get further along you will be hearing much more about their progress, not just from me from team members themselves.

I look forward to celebrating their results with you and sharing this journey together.

-Laura Herrera, MD, MPH

Save the Date for BARCStoberfest!



Mark your calendars now for

BARCS biggest fundraiser of the year! The 4th Annual **BARCStoberfest** will be held on **Saturday, October 18, 2008** in Patterson Park (rain date is Oct. 19). Visit the BARCS website at www.baltimoreanimalshelter.org to learn more about this popular family- and pet-friendly festival and to sign up to be a **sponsor, vendor, volunteer**, or to **donate** to the silent auction. Visit the BARCS website to learn more about this fundraiser or email us at info@baltimoreanimalshelter.org.

Move your paws for a cause! "**Strut Your Mutt**" is our newest event activity for BARCStoberfest. Raising funds for rescued shelter animals has never been easier or more fun. Bring your furry friend out for a walk in the park and let his or her pampered paws high-step it to benefit the futures of pets less fortunate. More details about the walk and on how to join in and get sponsored will be available soon on the BARCS website.

Healthy Start Funded to Open Four Satellite Offices in West Baltimore

After a year and a half of planning, Baltimore City Healthy Start is set to implement a major expansion of its successful targeted case management and home visiting program to four (4) West Baltimore communities. The expansion to the Ashburton/Dorchester, Forest Park/Walbrook, Allendale/Irvington, and Morrell Park/Violetville communities is part of a broader strategy by the organization to implement a Mobile Health Delivery System anchored by these satellite sites and a mobile health unit (to be implemented in a later phase of the expansion).

The planning and expansion process has been comprised of an extensive Community Needs Assessments, a half day Town Hall Forum, the ongoing community engagement of a Community Expansion Advisory Committee, and partnerships with service providers such as Total Health Care, Sinai's Division of Women's and Children's Service, Family Health Centers of Baltimore, and the Family Tree.

To date, the expansion has been funded by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Center for Maternal and Child Health. The satellite offices are scheduled to open in late August 2008. The Board and staff of Healthy Start view this expansion as a major strategy in its continuing efforts to reduce infant mortality and improve family and community well-being in Baltimore.



Work Out Wednesdays

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.

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Congratulations to the Reach Out and Read Program!



Congratulations to the Health Department's **Reach Out and Read Program** for being awarded the **Model Practice Award** by the National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO).