



FY 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Montgomery County, MD
Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Community Affairs



*Reducing Disparities and Changing
Lives through Prevention*



DHHS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Department of Health
and Human Services


African American
Health Program

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The African American Health Program (AAHP) was created and funded in 1999 by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). AAHP's purpose is to improve health access and awareness in order to eliminate health disparities in African Americans/Blacks and individuals of African and Caribbean descent.

Vision: African Americans and people of African descent in Montgomery County will be as healthy and safe as the rest of the population.

Mission: Eliminate health disparities and improve the number and quality of years of life for African Americans and people of African descent in Montgomery County.

Goals: AAHP works to raise community awareness of key health disparities; integrate relevant health concerns into existing programs and services; monitor health status data for African Americans and people of African descent; and implement and evaluate strategies to achieve specific health objectives.

Strategy: AAHP supports its goals by bringing together community partners and resources in a collaborative and effective manner. The program focuses on infant mortality, diabetes, oral health, cardiovascular disease, HIV/AIDS, and cancer. Services include outreach, education, and case management. AAHP is staffed by registered nurses, health educators, and community outreach workers.

AAHP operates in conjunction with a volunteer Executive Committee that provides strategic planning and advocates for funding opportunities. A number of community-based partners work with AAHP to provide guidance on the program focuses. In addition, the Diabetes Unit is guided by an advisory group to maintain its accreditation by the American Association of Diabetes Educators.

Administration and Additional Support: AAHP is funded by the Montgomery County DHHS and administered by BETAH Associates, Inc. In FY15, the program also received funding from Holy Cross Hospital through Maryland's Minority Outreach and Technical Assistance (MOTA) grant program. The grant supported AAHP Community Health Workers by funding health education efforts, disease screening, and other outreach activities.

Confronting health disparities continues to be a major challenge for public health policymakers and workers. Determining the causes of health disparities is complex and encompasses issues pertaining to health-related behaviors, social determinants of health, and access to care. Benefits of programs that address these challenges associated with health disparities may only be visible after many years. However, commitment and priority for policies to tackle disparities in health must be in place in order to be successful.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), culturally and ethnically appropriate preventive and intervention strategies, have been shown to influence risk and preventive factors.

The African American Health Program (AAHP) applies preventive and intervention strategies that are appropriate for its target populations (African Americans, Africans, and Caribbeans). AAHP incorporates evidence-based activities such as routine blood pressure screenings and nutrition, fitness, and weight management education to prevent cardiovascular diseases. AAHP's infant mortality program, "Start More Infants Living Equally healthy" (SMILE), is a nurse case management program that has demonstrated its effectiveness in addressing disparities in pregnancy outcomes in our County. AAHP addresses healthy living, diabetes prevention and control, and diabetes self-management. In addition, AAHP has developed a culturally-sensitive nutrition program for our African population. AAHP also provides HIV testing and education to help address prevention and reduction of this disease.

We also recognize that priorities can shift; taking care of our health and chronic diseases can be prolonged if issues are present such as the lack of affordable housing and homelessness; unemployment; separation of family, which is a problem in our African immigrant population; or suspension from school, which many Black males tend to experience at a higher rate than other youths.

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The AAHP Executive Committee continues to stress the importance of AAHP's mission, which is to "eliminate health disparities and improve the number and quality of years of life for African Americans and people of African descent in Montgomery County, MD. We also believe that more funding is needed for more programs, like the AAHP, that demonstrate prevention and intervention in action by incorporating strategies, which are key to improving health outcomes and reaching people before they become acute, in a crisis situation, have to go to the emergency room, or die.

The AAHP Executive Committee will continue to advocate for AAHP. With the support of our Executive Coalition and Executive Collaboratives, the AAHP Executive Committee will also continue to assist in helping to ensure that our target populations are aware of the services that AAHP provides. However, most of all, we will continue to stress the importance of addressing health disparities and having the resources (i.e., people and funding) to help ensure that AAHP continues to be a successful program that produces impactful outcomes.

Respectfully,
Pat Grant, Chair
AAHP Executive Committee

The AAHP mandate to eliminate health disparities among the Black population of Montgomery County, MD guided the various activities and events held during the fiscal year. Breaking down this global mandate to a bite-size and manageable scope was our focus throughout the year. We continued our use of prevention strategies and assessment of current data tools to understand where we are and where we need to be.

Education and outreach activities are the prevention strategies used throughout the focus areas of the program. During the year, it was possible to identify and understand which prevention strategy is appropriately in use for each focus area. What we observed is that almost all of the focus areas address all levels of the prevention spectrum – primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. Primary prevention activities focus on reducing the occurrence of diseases, educating people so they can engage in behaviors that will prevent the occurrence of diseases (e.g., cardiovascular, diabetes, hypertension). Secondary prevention activities, on the other hand, are designed to reduce the progress of disease such as a breast cancer screening demonstration; if a breast tumor is located, the client is referred for further assessment. Tertiary prevention activities are efforts to reduce limitations due to disability from a disease; at this prevention level the focus is on restoring the individual to some functional level (Friis & Sellers, Epidemiology for Public Health Practice, 2010).

Our activities in diabetes cover all levels of prevention. The accredited classes and the Healthy living and Activities clubs with their focus on promotion of healthy lifestyle choices are examples of primary and secondary prevention; one-on-one self-management counseling sessions represent tertiary prevention.

The STI/HIV/AIDS activities provide snippets of primary and secondary levels of prevention with year-round testing at venues throughout the County as well as various educational workshops that target special population groups such as teens, inmates, and individuals in drug rehabilitation centers.

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Our cancer, cardiovascular, and oral health activities provide mostly primary prevention services through education to increase awareness of these conditions and demonstration of the skills that help individuals identify signs of cancer (performing breast self-exams, taking gum bleeding seriously, etc.). Our trained Community Health Workers provide these services.

SMILE program activities educate future parents with pertinent, unbiased information on “primal health” and support during their child's “primal life” (i.e., “from conception to first anniversary” according to a definition by the Primal Health Research Centre, London). These activities include pre-sexual health education to teens; education of moms, spouses, and partners during pregnancy; and home visitations that provide support until the baby’s first birthday.

This fiscal year acknowledged the cross-cutting impact of mental health in all of the focus areas. All staff received Mental Health First Aid training to sensitize us as we provide our services in the community.

All of these activities could not have been sustained without the passion, staff commitment, and staff buy-in to eliminate health disparities among our target population. I acknowledge them and all that they did every day during the year. I also thank our many Community Health Workers and our advocates, the Executive Committee, Coalitions, Collaborative community members, and Montgomery County for the various ways in which they supported our activities. Finally, I thank our administrators, BETAH Associates Inc., for your continued guidance in our efforts to make this program the best and a household name in the County.

Sincerely,
Abimbola Idowu, MPA, DrPh
AAHP Project Director



Infant Mortality

- Nurse case management
- Home visitation
- Childbirth and breastfeeding classes



Diabetes

- Prevention and control education
- "Healthy Living" clubs
- One-on-one counseling



Heart Health

- Blood pressure screening
- Walks and symposiums
- Youth activity programs



STI & HIV/AIDS

- Regular and special event testing
- Support groups and events
- Teen summits



Cancer

- Education and outreach
- Screening and referrals
- Immigrant outreach project



Oral Health

- Oral health kits
- Health fairs and presentations
- Education (through other AAHP classes)

Accomplishment Snapshot



8,815

County residents
reached through
all activities



587

Community
outreach
events
hosted or
attended by
AAHP staff

91

Healthy births by
SMILE moms



84.6%

initiated
breastfeeding

94



Clients who received
diabetes counseling
& support for
self-management



Total visits to
onehealthylife.org

1,015

Blood
pressure
screenings



149 French-speaking
day laborers

reached by



Projet Santé Pour Tous
(Health for All Project)

Oral health kits
distributed at
health fairs

235

948



County residents
tested for HIV

34

Youths involved
with PowerPlay!
obesity awareness
& activity program

216



Ride On drivers registered in
Live Fit, Drive Fit program

Addressing Disparity

According to Healthy Montgomery data for 2012, the rate of infant deaths per 1,000 live births was 5.1. The mortality rates for White and Latino infants were 4.2 and 4.3, respectively. For African Americans, it was 8.2 – nearly double the rate of the others. Of babies born to Black women, 10.3% had low birth weight and 3% were born with very low birth weights. Among White women, 5.9% of babies had low birth weight and 0.9% had very low birth weights.



AAHP Goal

Reduce premature births and low birth weights among the Black community in Montgomery County.

Our Work

The Start More Infants Living Equally healthy (SMILE) program addresses factors such as a mother's stress, mental health, and conditions like diabetes. Support is available to families from pregnancy to the baby's first birthday. Services are free to Black residents of the County regardless of socioeconomic status.

Highlights

- Two SMILE nurses became International Board Certified Lactation Consultants
- Partnership with Family Ways provided additional support for SMILE clients
- Partnership with Capital Women's Care increased referrals of their prenatal clients
- Reproductive health education provided at Montgomery County Correctional Facility
- Clients at risk of domestic violence identified with Johns Hopkins School of Nursing DOVE study



By the Numbers

184 total referrals to SMILE

127 moms enrolled

- 58% African American
- 36% African
- 6% Caribbean

34 Childbirth & Breastfeeding Class moms

- 50% African American
- 29% African
- 3% Caribbean
- 18% Other

+ 17 dads & 7 others
attended with moms

91 Deliveries by SMILE moms

- 77 moms initiated breastfeeding (67 of them did so for at least 6 months)

Addressing Disparity

According to the CDC's latest statistics, more than 29 million people in the U.S. live with diabetes, and nearly 80 million more are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. The disease disproportionately affects African Americans, who are 1.7 times more likely to have diabetes than non-Hispanic Whites. African Americans are also more likely to develop related conditions such as diabetic retinopathy and kidney disease.



AAHP Goal

Support consumer prevention and management of diabetes, pre-diabetes, and related conditions

Our Work

The Diabetes Unit works to assist the community with diabetes prevention and management through a number of outreach initiatives. These efforts include education classes, healthy eating and activity clubs, self-management counseling, and other special initiatives throughout the County.

Highlights

- Partnership with County libraries publicized classes and clubs, increasing attendance
- Class accreditation by the American Association of Diabetes Educators renewed
- Positive response to club changes (hours adjusted, extra support for those with diabetes)
- Live Fit, Drive Fit program for Ride On bus drivers continued at three County locations



By the Numbers

357 Healthy Living & Activity Club members

122 Prevention & Control Class attendees

110 doctors of participants received outcome data for their patients who completed the class series (patients permitted data sharing)



Live Fit, Drive Fit

216 Ride On Drivers Registered

- Gaithersburg: 80
- Nicholson: 62
- Silver Spring: 74

Addressing Disparity

About half of African American adults have some form of cardiovascular disease. Many conditions, like high blood pressure, increase risk. According to 2013 Healthy Montgomery data, Black residents had the highest rate of hypertension in the County. Over a two-year period, African American residents visited emergency rooms for heart failure nearly three times as often as their White counterparts. Per the CDC, African American residents also experience the highest stroke death rate in the County.




AAHP Goal

Reduce or eliminate risk factors that predispose Black community members to cardiovascular disease.

Our Work

The Cardiovascular Unit works to educate and support the community by providing screening and outreach. As part of these activities, the Unit coordinates and works with community partners to plan special screening and education events, including heart health fairs and walks.

 By the Numbers	Outreach Team Screenings	Diabetes Team Screenings	Total Screenings FY15
Normal 119/78 or lower	213	56	269
Pre-hypertension 120/80-139/89	307	118	425
Stage 1 Hypertension 140/90-159/99	146	78	224
Stage 2 Hypertension 160/110 or higher	59	30	89
Hypertensive Crisis 180/110 or higher	5	3	8

1,015

Clients with Stage 1 or higher are advised to seek immediate care

Addressing Disparity

African Americans are disproportionately affected by sexually transmitted infections (syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia) as well as HIV and AIDS. In 2010, an estimated 1 in 264 Montgomery County residents over age 13 was diagnosed with HIV. Though Black adults and adolescents accounted for roughly 16% of the County's population at the time, they represented 66% of the diagnoses.



Our Work

The HIV Unit educates and supports the community by providing regular testing throughout the County and hosting special events and education series for at-risk audiences, including teens and detention center reentry populations. In addition, the Unit offers resources, referrals, and networking opportunities to the community.

AAHP Goal

Prevent the spread of sexually-transmitted infections, and for those with HIV, delay the onset of AIDS.

Highlights

- New partnership with Walgreens led to significantly higher testing numbers
- Testing activities expanded at three Montgomery College campuses
- Two staff added to fulfill new non-clinical setting testing required by new grant funding
- Retreat held for 20 HIV-positive residents; activities included talks, massage, and exercise
- Annual MoCo Teen Summit conducted for County teenagers



By the Numbers

948

TESTS

943 (99.5%) Negative • 5 (0.5%) Positive

486 (51.3%) Male • 462 (48.7%) Female

341 (35.9%) Clinical sites • 607 (64.1%) Non-clinical

250 (26.4%) African American • 250 (26.4%) African
215 (22.7%) Hispanic • 146 (15.4%) White • 39 (4.1%) Asian
28 (2.9%) Caribbean • 20 (2.1%) Other

Addressing Disparity

Almost 41% of Americans will be diagnosed with cancer at some point in their lives. According to Healthy Montgomery data for 2008-2012, Black residents experienced a higher death rate due to cancer than any other group in Montgomery County. Black residents also had the highest death rate reported for specific types of cancer, including breast, colorectal, lung, and prostate.

Our Work

The Cancer Unit conducts outreach and education on a consistent basis throughout the County, including during events held by other AAHP Units. Special demonstrations and presentations are facilitated upon request. While all types of cancer are addressed, emphasis is placed on breast, prostate, and oral cancers.

Highlights

- Prostate cancer education and outreach were offered at various events
- Cervical cancer education was also part of outreach



AAHP Goal

Reduce controllable risk factors that increase the likelihood of cancer and related health issues.



In the Community



Breast self-examinations are demonstrated at events to teach women how to screen themselves for lumps.

Addressing Disparity

According to the Office on Minority Health, African Americans have higher levels of gingivitis and periodontal loss of attachment than Whites. Black adults are more likely to have missing teeth, and children are more likely to have teeth extracted than their White counterparts. African American males have the highest incidence rate of oral cavity and pharyngeal cancers in the nation compared with women and other racial and ethnic groups.



AAHP Goal

Promote healthy oral behaviors and reduce oral issues that can lead to more serious health conditions.

Our Work

The Oral Health Unit conducts outreach and education on a consistent basis throughout the County, including resource dissemination at events of other AAHP Units. Special presentations are facilitated upon request. Whenever possible, oral health and hygiene tips are included in classes provided by other AAHP units.

Highlights

- 235 free oral health kits were distributed at various community events



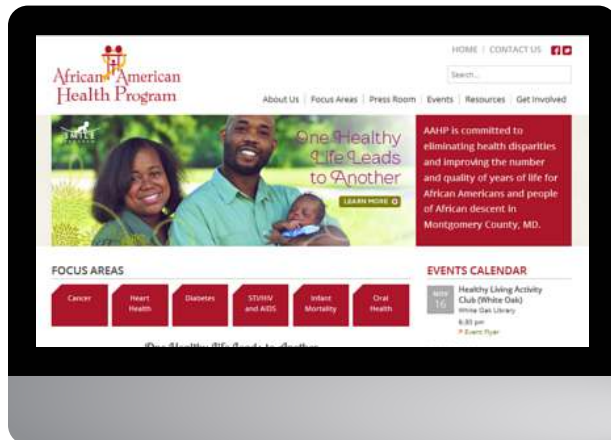
In the Community



Oral health kits include:

Toothbrush
Toothpaste
Mouthwash
Dental floss
Fridge magnet

This year began with the launch of a new website and a spike in site visits, a metric that continued to grow steadily throughout the year. AAHP attributes the increase to the new user-friendly interface, more frequent updates to content, and improved social media efforts that drive traffic to the onehealthylife.org.



AAHP Staff

Abimbola Idowu, DrPH, Project Director

Mazie Coleman, Program Assistant

Tannyka Coleman, RN, BSN, CM/DN, Nurse Case Manager

Denise Dixon, MS, HIV Coordinator, Outreach Specialist

Diane Herron, Outreach Specialist

Saundra Jackson, RN, BSN, CBE, Nurse Case Manager

Msache Mwaluko, Outreach Coordinator

Elna S. Narula, RN, BSN, Certified Diabetes Educator

Joy Nathan, BETAH Director of Client Services, Corporate Monitor

Nia M. J. Williams-Myles, RN, MSNEdu., MPH, Senior Nurse Case Manager

DHHS Staff

Heather Ross, MS, CHES, AAHP Program Manager

Linda Goldsholl, MS, RD, AAHP Diabetes Program Manager

Anita Mwalui, BS, MPH, AAHP Community Networking Coordinator

Consultants

Addy Assani-Uva, MS, RD, AAHP Diabetes Educator

Christian Mbulu, MPH, CHES, AAHP Diabetes Educator

Community Health Workers (with languages spoken)

Jolene Ayers-Ogunjirin (ASL)

Tim Baldauf-Lenschen (German)

Karen Blanton

Doumo Serges Doumo (French)

Yordit Gabremariam (Amharic)

Juliet Hope (KSL)

Nancy Margai

Viviane Makou (French)

Vienna Mbagaya

Patricia Morris

Enyeribe Nwokekeh (Ibo)

Melanie Reynolds, RN

Evelyn Tandau (KSW)

Juliette Traore (French)

In addition to its staff, health promoters, and various steering committees, AAHP receives support from a host of individual community members, representatives from local organizations, and established community partners.

Executive Committee

- Pat Grant, MS, Chair
- Beatrice Miller, RN, MS, Vice Chair
- Marilyn Gaston, MD, MPH
- Michelle Hawkins, DNP, MSN, MBA, RN
- Patricia Horton, RN, MBA*
- Arva Jackson, MSW*
- Art Williams, MS*
- Jacquelyn Williams, MPH

**AAHP founding member*

Executive Coalition Chairs/Liaisons

- Akua Asare, Co-Chair, Behavioral/Mental Health Collaborative
- Porlan Cunningham, Chair, Community Day Planning Committee
- Kristal Dail, Chair, Diabetes Collaborative
- Terrence Dupree, Co-Chair, Black Males Health and Wellness Collaborative
- Janell Mayo Duncan, Alt. Representative, DHHS LIEED
- Marilyn Gaston, Vice Chair, Data Workgroup and Cardiovascular Collaborative
- Pat Grant, Primary Rep., DHHS LIEED; Alt. Liaison to Healthy Montgomery
- Michelle Hawkins, Liaison to Commission on Health
- Patricia Horton, Chair, Cardiovascular Collaborative
- Arva Jackson, Chair, Infant Mortality Collaborative; Liaison to Commission on Aging; Alt. Rep., DHHS LIEED
- Laura Jenkins, Rep. to Healthy Montgomery Data/Evaluation Workgroup
- Billie Joseph, Chair, Communications Committee
- Teresa King, Co-Chair, Behavioral/Mental Health Collaborative
- Beatrice Miller, Liaison to Healthy Montgomery
- Anthony Morrison, Co-Chair, Black Males Health and Wellness Collaborative
- Cheryl Spann, Chair, STI/HIV/AIDS Collaborative
- Dawn Valentine, Rep. to Healthy Montgomery Data/Evaluation Workgroup
- Art Williams, Primary Representative, DHHS LIEED
- Jacquelyn Williams, Chair, Data Workgroup; Rep. to Healthy Montgomery Obesity Workgroup; Alt. Rep., DHHS LIEED

The Executive Coalition is comprised of many individual volunteer-community members, as well as volunteers from local service and community organizations, AAHP partner organizations, churches, and a host of other interested parties.

African Affairs Advisory Group
African American Advisory Group
Adventist Healthcare
Advocates for Youth
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (Gaithersburg-Xi Sigma Omega Chapter)
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Montgomery County Chapter
Asian American Health Initiative
Black Ministers Conference of Montgomery County
Boy and Girl Scouts of Troops 96 and 6260
Caribbean Affairs Advisory Group
CASA de Maryland
Celebrate Recovery, Church of the Redeemer
CHEER
Daisy Baby Boutique
DC Family Alliance, Inc.
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (Montgomery County Alumnae Chapter)
DIVAS MPH
Fit Solution
GapBuster Learning Center, Inc.
GOALS, Inc.
Good Hope Union United Methodist Church
Goshen United Methodist Church
Gwendolyn E. Coffield Community Center
Health Freedom, Inc.
HealthBeam Outreach, Inc.
Heart to Hand, Inc.
Holy Cross Hospital Community Health Department
Journeys Treatment Center
Kaiser Permanente African American Professionals Association
Latino Health Initiative
Lincoln Park Community Center
Lincoln Park Historical Society
Marilyn J. Praisner Community Center
Medical Nutrition Consultant, LLC
Mobile Med
Montgomery Cares
Mid-County Community Center
Montgomery College – Germantown Student Life Services Department
Montgomery College–Takoma Park AIDS Resource Center

Montgomery College –Takoma Park Nursing Department
Montgomery College – Takoma Park Student Life Department
Montgomery County Cancer Crusade
Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Adult Behavioral Services
Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services STD Clinic
Montgomery County Department of Parks
Montgomery County Department of Recreation
Montgomery County Office of Minority Health Resource Center
Montgomery County Mental Health Association
Montgomery County Pan-Hellenic Council
Montgomery County Public Libraries
Mt. Calvary Baptist Church
NAACP, Montgomery County Chapter
National Council of Negro Women, Montgomery County, MD
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., Sigma Sigma Sigma Chapter
Progress Place Resource Center
RaC3, Inc.
Radio One, Inc.
Rockville Pregnancy Center
RTIP Foundation
RVI Motion Media
Safe Kids Car Seat Program
Sasha Bruce Youthwork, Inc.
Shady Grove Fertility Center
Southern Christian Leadership Conference
Street Wize Foundation
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church
Suburban Hospital
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Mid-Atlantic
Takoma Park CO-OP
Teen and Young Adult (TAYA) Health Connection
The People's Community Baptist Church
The People's Community Wellness Center
U.S. Office of Minority Health Resource Center
Victory Christian Church
Walgreens
Walter Reed Army Medical Center
Wheaton Public Library
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Eta Pi Zeta Chapter



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