

**Maryland Health Quality and Cost Council
Wellness and Prevention Workgroup
Meeting Summary**

**Friday, November 19, 2010
1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.**

Purpose

To update members on Healthiest Maryland Businesses. Introduce Healthiest Maryland Communities and discuss ways how businesses are already involved in their communities.

Teleconference Participants

Council Members: Fran Phillips, Dr. James Chesley, Dr. Roger Merrill, Tricia Supik (representing Leslie Simmons), Guy Van Tiggelen (representing Barbara Epke)

Invited Participant: John Miller (Mid-Atlantic Business Group on Health)

Staff: Audrey Regan, Maria Prince, Nicole Stallings, Katie Jones

Discussion Summary

Healthiest Maryland Businesses. The Workgroup was updated on the progress of its leading initiative, Healthiest Maryland. Healthiest Maryland Businesses (HMB) has shown great success in the area of recruitment with 103 participating businesses, representing over 175, 000 Maryland workers. The businesses are represented in a variety of industries: health care and social assistance (29%), finance and insurance (14%), and professional, scientific, and technical services (12%). The strong representation of health care and social assistance among HMB participants aligns with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) data, which shows health care and social assistance as the top private sector industry employing black Marylanders. The participating businesses are represented in 19 Maryland jurisdictions.

Healthiest Maryland Businesses also continues to expand the resources provided to businesses through collaborating with supporting organizations. The supporting organizations have been instrumental in providing technical assistance to businesses via wellness symposiums, toolkits, and webinars. The first opportunity to provide technical assistance to businesses occurred at the Western Maryland Medical System on November 12th. The symposium brought in wellness experts that highlighted Healthiest Maryland Businesses, essential components of a worksite wellness program, compliance aspects of worksite wellness, and provided a business example. The Mid-Atlantic Business Group on Health's Annual Meeting was another exceptional symposium because it educated businesses on the areas of collaboration between employers, hospitals, and the public health sector. Worksite wellness initiatives were presented on the state government (HMB) and county government level (Get Healthy Kent).

The Workgroup also discussed the criteria for including a worksite wellness resource on the Healthiest Maryland website. The Workgroup came to a consensus to include Carefirst Blue

Cross Blue Shield's wellness resources as a National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) accredited program.

The Office of Chronic Disease Prevention has contracted with the Maryland Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (MIPAR) at the University of Maryland Baltimore County to assess Healthiest Maryland Businesses (HMB) and the effectiveness of worksite wellness. This evaluation is viewed as a community participatory research with Maryland businesses, and will be completed in Fall 2011.

The successes of HMB have also been showcased on the national level as Deputy Secretary Fran Phillips presented Healthiest Maryland Businesses on behalf of Secretary Colmers at the National Business Coalition on Health Conference on November 14, 2010. The Healthiest Maryland initiative was well received as businesses are increasingly interested in ways to improve their bottom line. Deputy Secretary Phillips discussed with the Workgroup the main take aways from the conference: 1) need for communicating the evaluation components, 2) although businesses are focused on chronic diseases, they are also interested in infectious disease (i.e. public health's role in H1N1), and the 3) importance of including injury prevention basics in worksite wellness programs.

Healthiest Maryland Communities. The Workgroup was also presented with the conceptual creation of the next prong of Healthiest Maryland, Healthiest Maryland Communities (HMC). Continuing the "grasstops" social marketing approach, HMC hopes to empower pillars within the community to make policy and environmental changes making the healthiest choice the easiest choice.

Additional Discussion Topics

- Need to identify venues for recognition
- Need to identify Maryland businesses engaging in worksite wellness best practices for the creation of 8-12 success stories, in a variety of firm sizes.
- Dr. Jay Perman, President of the University of Maryland Baltimore, has a vision of bridging the important work of health we are all grappling with, particularly in childhood obesity.
- Some Workgroup members suggested the approach of meeting the community members where they are, and not reinventing the wheel.
- Need to continue to identify evidence-based interventions of reaching the community.