Implementing Health In All Policies: Baltimore’s Cross Agency Health Taskforce

Public Health Institute's Dialogue4Health Intersectoral Collaboration for Health: Reports from Local Health Departments Web Forum

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• Average Life Expectancy:
  – United States=78
  – Maryland= 76
  – Baltimore City=72

• How many years can a newborn baby expect to live in Baltimore City?
Deaths that could have been avoided if all communities had the same opportunities for good health outcomes.

In 25% of Baltimore’s communities, over half of all deaths are avoidable.
Why Health in All Policies in Baltimore?

- The data speak clearly
- Disconnect of medical care riches
- Too many people dying too young because of “same approach”
Healthy Baltimore 2015

- Health policy agenda for action
- Goal: A city where all residents realize their full health potential
- 10 priority areas with measures of success
- 3-prong approach
  - Policy
  - Promoting access to quality care
  - Maximizing community engagement
- Place-based work
Healthy Baltimore 2015 Priority Areas

1. Promote access to quality health care for all
2. Be tobacco free
3. Redesign communities to prevent obesity
4. Promote heart health
5. Stop the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections
6. Recognize and treat mental health care needs
7. Reduce drug use and alcohol abuse
8. Encourage early detection of cancer
9. Promote healthy children and adolescents
10. Create health promoting neighborhoods
Efforts Underway

- Community Engagement
  - Neighborhood Health Profiles
  - Neighborhood Health Initiative

- Promoting Access to Quality Care
  - Hospital Coalitions
  - Community Benefits Group

- Policy
  - Office of Policy and Planning
  - Health Impact Assessments & Training
  - Creation of Cross Agency Health Task Force (CAHT)
Cross Agency Health Taskforce

- Group of all city agencies convened by Mayor to promote cross-sector efforts supporting Healthy Baltimore 2015

- For 2012, CAHT is focused on “Redesigning Communities to Prevent Obesity” through promotion of safe spaces for physical activity city-wide

- The taskforce is structured to
  - Identify areas for action
  - Support the efforts of other agencies
  - Provide mutual accountability

- CAHT members take the common priorities of the taskforce back to their agencies and champion this work internally
Roles and Expectations

• **CAHT Representatives**
  – Promote health and Healthy Baltimore 2015 in their agencies
  – Participate in CAHT collaborative efforts
  – Champion internal agency efforts to promote physical activity

• **Health Department**
  – Coordinate and administrative support
  – Offer health expertise via training and technical assistance
  – Actively participate in collaborative efforts
A “Layered” Intervention Strategy

- Baltimore Development Corporation: MainStreets program and attracting vendors to high-need communities
- City Schools: Safe Routes to School and Walking School Buses
- Family League: B’more fit for Healthy Babies
- General Services: Bike parking
- Housing: Youth leadership clubs in public housing to promote social cohesion, leadership, and physical activity
- Labor Commissioner and Human Resources: Employee wellness
- Library: Get Fit @ Your Library program
- Parking: Zipcar program
- Parks and Recreation: Outdoor recreation and Playful City designation
- Planning: Food Desert Retail Strategy
- Police: Badges for Baseball
- Transportation: Prioritization of pedestrian and bicycle safety (Taskforce and bike promotions)
Early Results: CAHT
Early Results: HiAP

• Health is increasingly invited to the table in built environment discussions now
• Health and social determinants data are used to inform policy making
• Neighborhood voice and priorities are increasingly included in “healthy policy” discussions
Challenges

• Helping agencies see their role
  – One-on-one meetings
  – Utilizing external experts

• Thinking BIG!
  – Found other homes for the smaller projects

• Ensuring CAHT members are fully empowered and supported in their roles
  – Outreach and engagement on multiple levels
Keys to Success

• Full leadership support and engagement
• Build overlap between agency’s mission and priorities and health
• Spend time and energy on the “early adopters”
• Build in time to create common language and understanding of health in all policies
• Utilize non-traditional partners to generate creative thinking
“Healthy neighborhoods are created when we are intentional about the ways in which we create public policy to right injustices.

Every aspect of government, society, and the economy has the potential to affect health and health equity.”

--Oxiris Barbot, Baltimore City Health Commissioner
Questions?

For more information:
http://www.baltimorehealth.org/

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