

# Montgomery County Commission on Health

## FISCAL YEAR 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

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## Commission on Health FY 2019 Annual Report

The Commission on Health (COH) respectfully submits its Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Annual Report. Working both with the County's leadership as well as the dedicated, professional and conscientious staff of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the COH focused on key public health issues. The COH also provided recommendations to county leadership and DHHS staff on improving county resident health and well-being.

In FY 2019, the COH focused on data needs, behavioral health, access to contraception, tobacco and immunizations. The COH also continued to support DHHS in achieving public health accreditation. In these efforts, COH members recommended additional funding to increase Public Health Services' (PHS) capacity for collecting and analyzing health data; specifically recommending at least two positions dedicated to planning specialty and epidemiology to strengthen capacity of the County. Additionally, COH members worked to support tobacco regulations to increase certain tobacco licensing fees and to alter the minimum age to purchase tobacco products.

The COH studied the topic of behavioral health to determine how to address the behavioral health needs of county residents. We learned that the incidences of certain conditions are increasing and that disparities continue to exist. The COH recommended the Montgomery County Behavioral Health and Crisis Services (BHCS) Strategic Alignment to address the overarching issues of health equity in mental health. This initiative strives to avoid the duplication of efforts and promotes collaboration across programs and workgroups.

It has been an honor to serve as the chair of the COH during FY 2019. The Commission is filled with 19 dedicated and very accomplished professionals who willingly volunteer their time and knowledge to leave a lasting positive effect on DHHS and Montgomery County Residents. The Commission also benefits from the expertise of ex-officio DHHS members, support from DHHS staff and liaisons from other commissions. The COH respectfully submits the attached FY 2019 Annual Report and looks forward to continued work and collaboration to improve public health and advise the Council and County Executive.

Lenna Israbian-Jamgochian, PharmD  
Chair, Commission on Health

## Mission and Purpose

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The primary mission of the Montgomery County Commission on Health (COH) is to advise the County Executive and the County Council on public health issues, programs, services and the allocation of funds devoted to public health needs and to monitor and assess the priorities of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCDHHS) in its efforts to address the health needs of residents in this County. The purpose of this report is to comply with the annual requirement that the COH provide the County Executive and the County Council with an update on the activities of the COH from July 2018 through June 2019.

**CHAPTER 24-24 OF  
THE MONTGOMERY  
COUNTY CODE  
PROVIDES  
AUTHORITY FOR THE  
COMMISSION ON  
HEALTH. THE  
COMMISSION ON  
HEALTH (COH) WAS  
ESTABLISHED ON  
JULY 1, 1988**

## Structure

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The Commission is comprised of 19 voting members with representation from consumers and providers of health services in the County. As dictated by County Code, the COH also has a representative from the Montgomery County Medical Society. In FY 2019, there were 9 consumers, and 9 providers and the Medical Society representative. The ex officio (non-voting) members of the COH include: the County Health Officer; the Montgomery County Public Schools liaison; and the County Council liaison. The COH continues to represent a diverse cross-section of Montgomery County residents.

Membership consisted of 19 members who were racially and ethnically diverse and vary in age, gender, geography and experience in health policy, public health, and the health care system.

The COH Chair and Vice Chair are elected by COH members and serve one-year terms. During FY19 Lenna Israbian-Jamgochian was the Chair of the Commission and Fabienne Santel was the Vice Chair. The entire COH met monthly with the exceptions of August, November, December of 2018 and January and April of 2019. Meetings were not held in the aforementioned months as a result of inclement weather or public holidays.

## Meetings

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The COH meets at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month (except in August) at 401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD 20850. All meetings are open to the general public. At a minimum, every member of the Commission is expected to either serve on one workgroup and, when possible, as a liaison to other health-related County boards, commissions, committees or minority health initiatives and programs.

With its broad perspective of public health, the COH recognizes the value of collaboration and communication with other health-related boards, commissions and committees. Many commissioners have an area of specialization, interest or constituency of public health and are therefore encouraged to serve as liaisons with other relevant health-related boards, commissions and committees (BCCs). Integral to this area of special interest is the constraint that all actions are in voice of the entire COH and not self-serving in any manner. Finally, members of the COH also served on committees that allowed the COH to conduct its business such as the membership, nominating and retreat planning committees. These committees require significant time and are in addition to the monthly scheduled meetings.

## **FY19 MEMBERSHIP**

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### **CONSUMER REPRESENTATIVES**

Alana Aronin, MPH

Brenda Brooks, MA

Christopher Burt, MPH, MBA, MS

Desiree de la Torre, MPH, MBA

Sarah Galbraith-Emami, JD, MPH

Jessica Kronstadt, MPP

Tonya Saffer, MPH

Ashim Subedee, PhD

Kelley Timpa, MBA

### **PROVIDER REPRESENTATIVES**

Brandie Armijo, LPN, MSOM, Lac

Jessica Chung, PharmD

Maya Das, MD, JD

Crystal DeVance-Wilson, MS, MBA, PHCNS-BC

Michelle Hawkins, DNP, MSN, MBA

Lenna Israbian-Jamgochian, PharmD

Terri McGuire, PA, MHSc, MPH

Fabienne Santel, MD, MPH

CAPT Jason Woo, MD, MPH, FACOG

### **MEDICAL SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVE**

Brent Berger, MD

### **EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)**

Marla Caplon, RD, LD, Director, School Wellness Initiatives, MCPS

Travis Gayles, MD, PHD, Chief, Public Health Services, Health Officer, DHHS

Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst, Montgomery County Council

### **STAFF**

Ellen Segal, Office Services Coordinator, Public Health Services, DHHS

Karen Thompkins, MPH, Program Manager, DHHS

## MEET THE MEMBERS

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### **Alana Aronin**

Alana is President of Forte Group Consulting, a consulting firm specializing in public policy, community organizing, and public relations services for the broad range of public health interests. She has extensive experience in training advocates to create change at all levels of policy and building grassroots mobilizations to advance public health agendas. Alana has a MPH from The University of Michigan, and an undergraduate degree in Public Policy from James Madison College of Michigan State University.

### **Brandie Armijo**

Brandie is an Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Provider at the Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group, PC. She has 13 years of experience as a nurse in family medicine and internal medicine. Brandie received a BS in nutrition and a MS in oriental medicine and acupuncture at Midwest College of Oriental Medicine in Racine, Wisconsin. She is a NCCAOM Diplomate in Acupuncture.

### **Brent Berger**

Brent is an internist with Bethesda Medical Associates, a primary care practice with a focus on prevention and wellness. A native of Montgomery County, he has been practicing here since 1990, and is on the staff at Suburban Hospital. Brent received his BA from Johns Hopkins University and his MD from the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

### **Brenda Brooks**

Brenda is a Program Analyst at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), within the Office of Counterterrorism and Emerging Threats (OCET). Prior to joining the FDA, she had a long career as a federal Contracting Officer within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She received a MA degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and a BA degree from the University of Maryland.

### **Christopher Burt**

Chris serves as a Special Volunteer of the Health Inequities and Global Health Branch within the Center for Translation Research and Implementation Science (CTRIS) at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), National Institutes of Health (NIH). Chris' academic background includes a B.S. in Social Science from Indiana University, M.S. in Exercise Science from California University of Pennsylvania, M.B.A in Applied Management from Indiana Wesleyan University and a M.P.H. in Epidemiology and Emergency Management from Benedictine University, Lisle, IL.

### **Jessica Chung**

Jessica is a pharmacist at Barquist Army Health Clinic (BAHC) where she serves active and retired military members. Jessica Chung is a native of Rockville, Maryland. She received a BS in Biology at University of Maryland, College Park and a PharmD at Howard University.

### **Maya Das**

Maya is Vice President of Clinical Research at Processa Pharmaceuticals, a biopharmaceutical company focused on developing treatments for patients with unmet medical needs. Maya has more than 10 years of experience in the healthcare and life science sectors. Maya received a BS in Biochemistry from Beloit College and both MD and JD degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

## MEET THE MEMBERS

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### **Desiree de la Torre**

Desiree is the Director of Community Affairs and Population Health Improvement for Children's National Health System in Washington, DC. She leads the organization's population health improvement planning process, including support for community-based organizations, health equity, and compliance with federal community benefit regulations. She received a BS degree in Psychobiology from the University of California, Los Angeles, a MPH from Boston University, and a MBA from The Johns Hopkins University.

### **Crystal DeVance-Wilson**

Crystal has nearly 30 years of nursing experience working in acute and community settings across diverse populations and specialties. She is currently is a faculty member at the University of Maryland School of Nursing. Her specialty is Community/Public Health Nursing. She is a board-certified public health clinical nurse specialist and holds bachelors and master's degrees in nursing and business administration from Suffolk University, University of Maryland School of Nursing and the University of Baltimore and a PhD from the University of Maryland School of Nursing. Crystal's research interests are medication adherence and health behaviors.

### **Sarah Galbraith-Emami**

Sarah has spent over 15 years working in issues around international and comparative health law and policy for the World Health Organization and other international organizations. She currently works as a senior consultant in tobacco product regulation for WHO and teaches as an adjunct faculty at American University. Sarah received her law degree from Georgetown University Law Center and her Masters in Public Health from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health.

### **Michelle R. Hawkins**

Michelle is the Director of Care Management at Johns Hopkins HealthCare LLC. In her current capacity, she maintains oversight of the population health case management programs. She oversees social workers and outreach department that support care management efforts. She received a BS in Zoology from Howard University and a BSN from the University of Maryland School of Nursing. She received a MSN/MBA from Johns Hopkins University and a Doctorate in Nursing Practice from the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing.

### **Lenna Israbian-Jamgochian**

Lenna is a pharmacist with more than 20 years of experience in her field. She is a District Pharmacy Manager for Safeway/Albertsons and currently manages 35 pharmacies in Maryland and Delaware. She received her Bachelors in Pharmacy from Ohio State University and her Doctorate in Pharmacy from Virginia Commonwealth University.

### **Jessica Kronstadt**

Jessica is the Director of Research and Evaluation at the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). In this role, she oversees efforts to evaluate the accreditation program and to promote research to build the evidence base around accreditation. She received her Master of Public Policy from Georgetown University.

## MEET THE MEMBERS

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### **Terri McGuire**

Terri is a Certified Physician Assistant with experience in Primary Care, Urgent Care and Liver Transplant Surgery as well as Research Clinician in HIV-focused trials. She received her Bachelor of Science from Wake Forest University, Master of Public Health from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and Master of Health Science with Physician Assistant Certificate from Duke University. Terri is passionate about the ways in which public health and medicine intersect and she is thrilled about helping address health concerns within Montgomery County.

### **Tonya L. Saffer**

Tonya is Senior Health Policy Director at the National Kidney Foundation (NKF). She works to identify, develop, and advance legislative and federal regulatory policies to improve health outcomes and opportunities for kidney patients and enhance health professionals' abilities to prevent, identify and treat chronic kidney disease. She received a BA in Political Science from Arizona State University and a MPH in Health Policy from the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services.

### **Fabienne Santel**

Fabienne is a physician, medical writer and clinical research consultant. She received her BA from the University of Maryland at College Park, her Masters of Public Health from Florida A&M University and her MD degree from the SUNY Downstate College of Medicine in Brooklyn, New York. She is board certified in internal medicine and has practiced as a hospitalist, a primary care physician and volunteer provider in Montgomery County.

### **Ashim Subedee**

Ashim is a Program Director at the National Cancer Institute's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Development Center. In this role, he supports small businesses working to develop and commercialize anti-cancer therapeutics, diagnostics, and other technologies. Ashim completed his undergraduate degree in Biology from Iowa State University. He received his PhD in Biological and Biomedical Sciences from Harvard University.

### **Kelley Timpa**

Kelley is a Product Manager at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Office of the Director (OD), with the All of Us Research Program. She is passionate about patient health literacy and enjoys working with people from diverse communities on projects at the intersection of design, operations, health care, technology, and social innovation. Kelley received a BA in Economics at Vanderbilt University, and a MBA with a concentration in Healthcare Management from Johns Hopkins University.

### **Jason Woo**

Jason began his Commissioned Corps career at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and completed a residency in obstetrics/gynecology at Georgetown University Hospital. He currently serves as the Senior Medical Officer in the FDA's (CDER) Office of Generic drugs. Jason received his MPH from the University of Arizona School of Public Health and has a Diploma in Economic Development from the London School of Economics.

## Commission on Health Priorities

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At the Commission on Health Annual Retreat held on September 20, 2018, the Commission on Health set three priorities for fiscal year 2019. Two additional priorities (immunizations, tobacco/vaping) would be added during the fiscal year.

- Data Needs/Gaps within the DHHS
- Behavioral Health
- Access to Contraception
- Immunizations
- Tobacco & Vaping

## Commission Correspondence

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The Commission on Health sent the following letters during Fiscal Year 2019:

- Letter to the Maryland Economic Matters Committee supporting HB 1169. HB 1169 was introduced to increase licensing fees and alter the minimum age for an individual to purchase or be sold tobacco products, along with other recommendations, February 2019
- Letter to the Senate Finance Committee supporting the passage of SB 0895. SB 0895 was introduced to increase licensing fees and alter the minimum age for an individual to purchase or be sold tobacco products, February 2019
- Letter to the County Council recommending additional funding to increase Public Health Services' (PHS) capacity for collecting and analyzing health data. Specifically recommended were at least two positions dedicated to planning specialty and epidemiology to strengthen capacity of the County, April 2019
- Letter to the County Executive supporting the Montgomery County Behavioral Health and Crisis Services (BHCS) Strategic Alignment to address the behavioral health needs of county residents, June 2019

## Commission on Health Testimonies

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The Commission on Health testified at the following forums:

- Presentation to the County Council sitting as the Board of Health on October 16, 2018
- County Council HHS Committee Work Session for HHS Boards, Committees and Commissions on October 18, 2018

## Commission on Health Liaisons

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Board, Committee or Commission	Liaison
African American Health Program	Michelle Hawkins
Commission on Aging	Brenda Brooks
Commission on Veterans Affairs	Brandie Armijo
Healthy Montgomery Steering Committee	Michelle Hawkins and Tonya Saffer
Mental Health Advisory Board	Jessica Kronstadt
Commission on Children Youth and Families	Desiree de la Torre
Montgomery County Medical Society	Brent Berger
Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Traffic Safety Advisory	Maya Das

## Commission on Health Committees

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### Membership Committee

Jessica Chung  
 Michelle Hawkins  
 Jason Woo

### Nominating Committee

Brent Berger  
 Jessica Kronstadt  
 Jason Woo

### Retreat Planning Committee

Christopher Burt  
 Sarah Galbraith-Emami  
 Kelley Timpa

## Commission on Health Workgroups

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### **Access to Contraception Workgroup**

Jason Woo

### **Behavioral Health Workgroup**

Brandie Armijo, Brenda Brooks, Desiree del la Torre, Fabienne Santel

### **Data Team Workgroup**

Jessica Kronstadt, Maya Das

### **Immunization Workgroup**

Brent Berger, Brenda Brooks, Sarah Galbraith-Emami, Alana Aronin, Christopher Burt, Kelley Timpa

### **Tobacco Workgroup**

Sarah Galbraith-Emami, Michelle Hawkins, Christopher Burt, Alana Aronin, Jessica Chung

## Commission on Health Workgroups Summary Reports

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### **Access to Contraception Workgroup**

The Access to Contraception Workgroup reviewed data and information on sexual health in order to best understand where to focus support efforts and how to improve access.

### **Immunization Workgroup**

The Immunization Workgroup was added as a focus in mid-2019 to allow more proactive support of flu vaccines and other immunization initiatives. The workgroup met with DHHS Public Information Officer, the County Health Officer and the Nurse Manager of the Immunization Program to understand the history of flu immunizations in the County and current immunization outreach efforts.

### **Tobacco Workgroup**

Tobacco Workgroup focused on tobacco/e-cigarettes and the education of middle and high school students as a priority. To support these efforts, the Workgroup provided testimony in support of the passage of legislation (Maryland HB 1169 and SB0895) to decrease the utilization of tobacco usage among youth, minimize the health impact of tobacco use, and generate significant savings on the health costs associated with long term use of tobacco.

## Commission on Health Workgroups Summary Reports

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### **Data Workgroup**

The Workgroup met with the County's Chief Epidemiologist and DHHS staff to learn about data needs and gaps within Public Health Services (PHS). Although PHS has built strong relationships with local universities, it is essential that the agency has dedicated and experienced staff to support further health data collection and analysis.

The Workgroup wrote a letter to the County Council to request expansion of the Public Health Services budget to include funding to hire two epidemiologists. It will allow for data-informed strategic planning and more efficient allocation of resources within the County as we strive for greater health and health equity in our communities.

### **Behavioral Health Workgroup**

The Behavioral Health Workgroup worked closely with the DHHS Behavioral Health and Crisis Services (BHCS) to understand and support the Strategic Alignment efforts within the Department. To further support the efforts of BHCS, the workgroup recommended that County Council require incorporation of the Strategic Alignment goals and objectives as part of the grant-making process. The workgroup believes that this approach will strengthen and promote the Strategic Alignment's goal of collaboration and effectuate a unified and successful approach to addressing the county's behavioral health needs. The workgroup also encouraged Boards, Commissions and Committees and minority health initiatives and programs (MHIPs) align their future priorities with the BHCS Strategic Alignment.

## Montgomery County Commission on Health

Commission on Health  
1401 Rockville Pike  
2nd Floor  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

### WE'RE ON THE WEB!

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/PHS/CommOnHealth/COHIndex.html>



The Commission on Health was established on July 1, 1988. See chapter 23-24 of the Montgomery County Code for a description of the mission of the Commission on Health.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Marc Elrich  
*County Executive*

Raymond L. Crowel  
*Director*

The County Executive and County Council encourage people who live or work in Montgomery County to become actively involved in matters affecting the quality of life in Montgomery County. Appointments are made to over 75 Boards, Committees, and Commissions by the County Executive, with confirmation by the County Council.

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/boards/index.html>



Montgomery County Commission on Health

June 13, 2019

Mr. Marc Elrich, County Executive  
Office of the County Executive  
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor  
Rockville MD 20850

Dear County Executive Elrich:

The Montgomery County Commission on Health (COH) has studied the topic of behavioral health to determine how the COH can help address the behavioral health needs of county residents. We learned that the incidences of certain conditions are increasing and that disparities exist. Data from [Health in Montgomery County 2008-2016: A Surveillance Report on Population Health](#) reveal that both mental health and substance abuse related emergency room (ER) visit rates increased over time as did drug induced mortality rates. Non-Hispanic Blacks and persons ages 18-34 had the highest rates of mental health related ER visits. Non-Hispanic Whites and persons ages 18-34 had the highest rates of substance abuse related ER visit and drug induced mortality.

To address these gaps, avoiding the duplication of efforts and promoting collaboration across programs and workgroups, the COH is writing to you in support of the Montgomery County Behavioral Health and Crisis Services (BHCS) Strategic Alignment. We believe that the goals of the Strategic Alignment and the work done thus far has proven to be a valuable part in addressing the behavioral health needs of the county. The following are some examples of that work:

- Two therapists have been trained in Mental Health First Aid (a national program that teaches laypeople how to recognize and intervene during a behavioral health crisis) for seniors with plans for more trainings.
- A partnership between Everymind, BHCS leadership, and hospitals presented a community screening and discussion of the film "The S Word" as part of a suicide prevention effort.
- Stronger partnerships have formed with Montgomery County Fire and Rescue resulting in an increase in individuals who have been trained and supplied with Naloxone which can reduce the risk of death following an opiate overdose.
- A partnership with Leadership for Adaptive Change in Suicide Intervention (LACSI: EveryMind, Family Services, Montgomery County Public Schools, BHCS, Collaboration

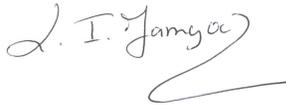
Council) to launch a youth-led campaign (BTheOne.org) focused on suicide and drug abuse prevention. The year-long campaign consists of a website and video PSA's created by high school students, with accompanying printed materials and a video contest.

To further support and implement the aforementioned strategies, we ask that the Council require incorporation of the Strategic Alignment goals and objectives as part of the grant-making process. In other words, when organizations apply for grants that have a behavioral health component, they would need to demonstrate how it ties in with the Strategic Alignment.

We believe that this approach will strengthen and promote the Strategic Alignment's goal of collaboration and effectuate a unified and successful approach to addressing the county's behavioral health needs. In addition, we ask that Boards, Commissions and Committees and minority health initiatives and programs (MHIPs) with behavioral health initiatives, if not already, align their future priorities with the BHCS Strategic Alignment.

We appreciate your consideration of this proposal. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "L. I. Jamgochian". The signature is written in black ink and includes a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Lenna Israbian-Jamgochian, PharmD  
Chair, Commission on Health

Cc: Montgomery County Council, Vickie Buckland, Acting Director, Montgomery County DHHS



Montgomery County Commission on Health

April 15, 2019

Councilmember Albornoz  
Chair, Health and Human Services Committee  
Council Office Building  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Albornoz:

On behalf of the Commission on Health, we are recommending that the County Council consider providing additional funding to increase Montgomery County Public Health Services' (PHS) capacity for collecting and analyzing health data. State-of-the-art data collection and analysis capability is needed for Montgomery County to be able to better understand the health of residents throughout the community and target interventions more effectively. Specifically, we recommend at least two positions dedicated to planning specialty and epidemiology to strengthen the capacity of the County.

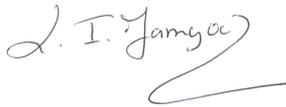
PHS has recently released several reports that provide critical information about the health of the County, including the Status of Health Report<sup>i</sup> and reports focusing on infectious disease<sup>ii</sup> and maternal and child health.<sup>iii</sup> The Zip Code Ranking Project Report further highlighted disparities among different geographic areas of the County.<sup>iv</sup> These findings inform the work of the health department, in partnership with Healthy Montgomery, governmental agencies, and community-based organizations to map out steps to enhance the health of the County. This underlines the importance of having access to and being able to dig deeply into the data to understand: (1) which parts of the county might be underserved, and (2) where it is necessary to invest in programming and policies to ensure all County residents have an equitable opportunity to be healthy.

Strong internal capacity is necessary to continue these and future efforts. Although PHS has built strong relationships with local universities, it is essential that the agency has dedicated and experienced staff to support further health data collection and analysis. There are currently two staff in the epidemiology/data team for Montgomery County with its population of over one million residents. In contrast, we have learned that Prince George's County has 6 staff positions with its population of just under one million residents, and Anne Arundel County has 3 staff positions with

a population of approximately 570,000 residents. In addition, the National Association of County and City Health Officials 2016 Profile indicates that local health departments serving one million residents or more nationwide have a median of 6 FTEs in the role of epidemiologist/statistician.<sup>v</sup>

One of the greatest assets of Montgomery County is its rich diversity. Strong epidemiologic capability is required for PHS to lead Montgomery County in understanding the health status and the determinants of health as well as the health disparities among the different populations that reside here. It will allow for data-informed strategic planning and more efficient allocation of resources within the County as we strive for greater health and health equity in our communities. For this reason, we respectfully recommend additional planning/epidemiological staff resources to enhance PHS' data collection and analysis.

Sincerely,



Lenna Israbian-Jamgochian, PharmD  
Chair, Commission on Health

Cc: Montgomery County Council Health and Human Services Committee

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/Resources/Files/Reports/PopHealthReportFINAL.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> [https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/Resources/Files/Infectious%20Disease%20Report\\_10-15-18\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/Resources/Files/Infectious%20Disease%20Report_10-15-18_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/Resources/Files/MaternalInfantHealthReport.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/Resources/Files/Reports/Zipcode%20Ranking%20Final%20Results.pdf>

<sup>v</sup> [http://nacchoprofilestudy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/ProfileReport\\_Aug2017\\_final.pdf](http://nacchoprofilestudy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/ProfileReport_Aug2017_final.pdf)



Montgomery County Commission on Health

**Testimony in Support of HB1169  
Business Regulation – Tobacco Products and Electronic Smoking Devices-Revisions  
Wednesday, February 27, 2019**

To: The Honorable Dereck Davis, Chair; The Honorable Eric Bromwell, Vice Chair; and  
Members of the House Economic Matters Committee  
From: The Montgomery County Commission of Health

The Montgomery County Commission on Health (COH) is a Commission under the Department of Health and Human Services whose role is to advise the County Executive and County Council on public health issues, programs and service. The enabling legislation of the COH also allows for advocacy at the state and federal levels. The COH strongly supports the passage of HB 1169, introduced to increase certain licensing fees and to alter the minimum age for an individual to purchase or be sold tobacco products, along with other recommendations.

Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Cancer Society have illustrated the danger of tobacco products and their impact on the morbidity and mortality of our population. Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States<sup>1</sup>. There is mounting evidence of the impact of tobacco use among young people. It is projected that 92,000 underage middle school and high school youth who smoke will die prematurely.<sup>1, 2</sup> In addition, it is known that cigarettes use is likely to lead to the use of alcohol, marijuana and the abuse prescription drugs<sup>3</sup>. There is now increasing popularity of e-cigarettes, use of Juul (electronic cigarettes) and vaping products.

In light of the alarming statistics on the impact of tobacco products by underage youth in Maryland, the COH strongly recommends the passage of HB 1169. Passage of this legislation can decrease the utilization of tobacco usage among our youth, minimize the health impact of tobacco use, generate significant savings on the health costs associated with long term use of tobacco. This legislation would result in alignment of the State of Maryland with neighboring jurisdictions (District of Columbia and Virginia) on increasing the age to purchase tobacco to the age of 21.

The Commission on Health asks that you support HB 1169 to ensure that we prevent young people from smoking and help save lives.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/full-report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/21697>

<sup>3</sup> Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Monitoring Changing Tobacco Use Behaviors: 2000-2014. <https://phpa.health.maryland.gov>



Montgomery County Commission on Health

**Testimony in Support of SB 0895**  
**Business Regulation – Tobacco Products and Electronic Smoking Devices-Revisions**  
**Wednesday, February 27, 2019**

To: The Honorable Delores Kelley, Chair; The Honorable Brian Feldman, Vice Chair; and Members of the Senate Finance Committee  
From: The Montgomery County Commission of Health

The Montgomery County Commission on Health (COH) is a Commission under the Department of Health and Human Services whose role is to advise the County Executive and County Council on public health issues, programs and service. The enabling legislation of the COH also allows for advocacy at the state and federal levels. The COH strongly supports the passage of SB 0895, introduced to increase certain licensing fees and to alter the minimum age for an individual to purchase or be sold tobacco products, along with other recommendations.

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In light of the alarming statistics on the impact of tobacco products by underage youth in Maryland, the COH strongly recommends the passage of SB 0895. Passage of this legislation can decrease the utilization of tobacco usage among our youth, minimize the health impact of tobacco use, generate significant savings on the health costs associated with long term use of tobacco. This legislation would result in alignment of the State of Maryland with neighboring jurisdictions (District of Columbia and Virginia) on increasing the age to purchase tobacco to the age of 21.

The Commission on Health asks that you support SB 0895 to ensure that we prevent young people from smoking and help save lives.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/full-report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/21697>

<sup>3</sup> Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Monitoring Changing Tobacco Use Behaviors: 2000-2014. <https://phpa.health.maryland.gov>