

Garrett County Health Planning Council

Strategic Plan 2008-2012



Promoting and protecting the health of Garrett County.

Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

Staff from the Garrett County Health Department and Garrett County Memorial Hospital developed this report under the direction of the Garrett County Health Planning Council to define strategies for communities and agencies to collaborate to improve the health of Garrett County residents.

The vision that was developed and adopted as a result of the Mobilizing for Action Through Planning and Partnership (MAPP) process provides an overarching goal for the community.

Our vision of a healthy Garrett County is one where:

- *All individuals are empowered to accept personal responsibility for their own health, as well as that of their family and their community through a holistic approach to wellness and respect for self and others;*
- *Individuals of all ages have access to education and resources to make healthy choices for a lifetime;*
- *All individuals have access to facilities and an active community design including a healthy environment;*
- *All have a commitment to the continual evaluation and quality improvement of health outcomes, the community health system and supporting infrastructure.*

The four strategic issue areas that developed through the MAPP process have been prioritized by various agencies and community surveys in Garrett County. The issues and associated results are:

Issue Areas	Results
Fragile Systems	Strengthen and support those components of our public health system that are fragile because of funding, workforce capacity, demographic shifts, etc.
Healthy Lifestyles	Empower, educate, and motivate Garrett County residents to lead a healthy lifestyle and prevent harmful behaviors such as substance abuse and domestic violence.
Vulnerable Populations	Achieve and maintain optimal health and independence for vulnerable populations (aging, disabled, economically disadvantaged, mentally ill).
Environmental Health	Ensure healthy living and working conditions for Garrett county residents by protecting and increasing our natural and built resources as our population grows.

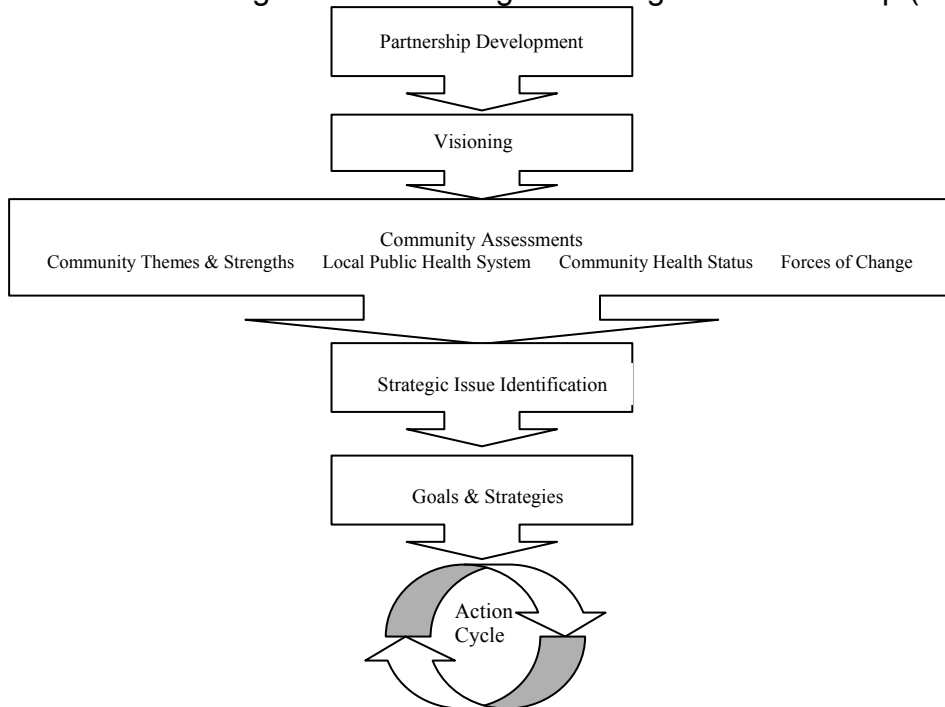
Recommended strategies for achieving each of the results have been developed. These include policies, best practices, and specific actions that can be undertaken by communities, agencies, or individuals throughout Garrett County. These priorities and strategies will guide the Health Planning Council for the next five years.

Introduction

In early 2006, members of the Garrett County Health Department, Garrett County Memorial Hospital and the Garrett County Health Planning Council determined the need for an up-to-date community health assessment. The members decided to use a model adapted from the National Association of County and City Health Officials and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention called Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP). MAPP is a community-wide strategic planning tool for improving community health. Through the MAPP process, communities strive to achieve optimal health by assessing their strengths, resources, and needs in order to develop and implement a strategic plan for public health improvement.

As Figure 1 illustrates, MAPP uses six phases to achieve its aim: 1) Organize for Success/Partnership Development, 2) Visioning, 3) Community Assessments, 4) Strategic Issue Identification, 5) Formulation of Goals and Strategies, and 6) the Action Cycle.

Figure 1: The Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnership (MAPP) process



The MAPP process allows for various levels of participation from its members. The two essential groups that guided the Garrett County MAPP process were the Core Support Team and the MAPP Committee. The Core Support Team consisted of a small group of individuals from lead community agencies. This Team was responsible for organizing, planning, and keeping the assessment on track. The existing Garrett County Health Planning Council acted as the MAPP Committee. This Committee was

composed of a group of over 20 individuals representing many different sectors of the community. It provided guidance throughout the entire assessment to the Core Support Team and the Community Assessment Subcommittees. Nearly 100 other Garrett County residents participated throughout the MAPP process in various meetings and subcommittees, such as the Vision Meeting and the community assessment subcommittees.

Visioning

A Vision Meeting was held as the official start to Garrett County's MAPP process on August 21, 2006. The purpose of the visioning step was to guide the community through a collaborative and creative process that leads to a shared community vision and common values. The shared community vision provides an overarching goal for the community and provides a common framework for the subsequent phases.

Invitations to the Vision Meeting were sent to over 150 county residents who represented various sectors of the community, including representatives from health and human services, local and state government, education system, local businesses, community service groups, faith leaders, students, and consumers. Additionally, the community-at-large was invited to the meeting through informational articles and advertisements that appeared in local newspapers.

Approximately 50 community members attended the Vision Meeting. The meeting was facilitated by Heidi Deutsch, Program Manager for the Public Health Infrastructure and Systems Team at the National Association of County and City Health Officials, and she began with a presentation on the purpose and process of MAPP. Those present at the meeting were divided into small groups to develop responses to the following questions:

- *What does a healthy Garrett County mean to you?*
- *What are important characteristics of a healthy community for all who live, work, and play here?*
- *Who is responsible for keeping Garrett County healthy?*
- *How do you envision the local public health system in the next five to ten years?*

The meeting concluded with a facilitated discussion of the similarities and differences between the various groups' responses to these questions.

The Garrett County Health Planning Council used the themes developed at the Vision Meeting to write a vision statement for a healthy Garrett County. The Health Planning Council adopted the following vision statement on September 28, 2006:

Our vision of a healthy Garrett County is one where:

- All individuals are empowered to accept personal responsibility for their own health, as well as that of their family and their community through a holistic approach to wellness and respect for self and others;
- Individuals of all ages have access to education and resources to make healthy choices for a lifetime;
- All individuals have access to facilities and an active community design including a healthy environment;
- All have a commitment to the continual evaluation and quality improvement of health outcomes, the community health system and supporting infrastructure.

Community Assessments

Following the Vision Meeting, the Core Support Team suggested potential committee members and chair persons for the four MAPP assessment subcommittees – Community Themes and Strengths Assessment, Local Public Health System Assessment, Community Health Status Assessment, and Forces of Change. The subcommittee members were contacted and the subcommittees met as necessary from November 2006 to July 2007 to develop a list of challenges and opportunities for each assessment area. At the end of the process, the committees reported their results and recommendations to the MAPP Committee. These committee recommendations became the first step in the next MAPP phase, Strategic Issues Identification.

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment Subcommittee

The Community Themes and Strengths Assessment Subcommittee consisted of 14 members and was chaired by Pam Nelson, Vice President of Community Services and Family Development at Garrett County Community Action Committee. The subcommittee met monthly between November 2006 and May 2007 with the goal of developing a deep understanding of what issues residents feel are important.

Three methods were used to complete the assessment – a survey, focus groups, and community asset mapping. First, utilizing MAPP resources, the committee developed a survey containing 21 questions representing broad health indicators, including social, economic, environmental, and medical issues. Quality of life was also assessed by the survey. A total of 4,422 surveys were distributed by members of the committee to various locations in the community, including work places, assistance programs, senior centers, health department programs, churches, and libraries. The survey generated a 32% return rate with 1,427 returned.

Secondly, nine focus groups were held throughout the community. Each focus group followed a similar format and the discussion focused on the same broad indicators of health used in the survey.

Finally, the subcommittee considered the results from a community asset map that was provided by the Partnership for Children and Families, Inc.

Table 1 lists the key findings from the community data collection.

Table 1: Key findings from community survey, focus groups, and previously determined community assets

Strengths:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe community • Good place to raise a family
Concerns:
<i>Health</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High rates of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and obesity
<i>Health Care System</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of transportation resources • Lack of after-hours and/or urgent care • Lack of physicians, specialists, and mental health care • High cost of prescription drugs • Need for greater education about available services
<i>Community</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of high-paying jobs and affordable housing • Increased levels of tourism • Air and water quality • High rates of child abuse and domestic violence
<i>Legislative</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of health insurance for middle-income earners • High rate of malpractice insurance premiums

In summary, the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment Subcommittee recommended that the following concerns be reviewed in the next MAPP phase:

- Access to health care resources through improved access to public transportation
- Recruitment of employers to the area to offer higher paying jobs
- Assistance programs with housing and insurance for middle income families
- Education and advertisement regarding preventive care and the leading health problems in our community
- Continue with the after hours or urgent care facilities. Try to recruit additional physician specialists.

Local Public Health System Assessment Subcommittee

The Local Public Health System Assessment Subcommittee consisted of 15 members and was chaired by Bob Stephens, Director of Behavioral and Family Health at the Garrett County Health Department. The subcommittee met monthly between November 2006 and May 2007 with the goal of understanding and analyzing all organizations and entities that contribute to the delivery of public health in Garrett County.

To conduct the assessment, the committee used the “Local Public Health Performance Assessment”, Version 1.0 developed by the Centers for Disease Control

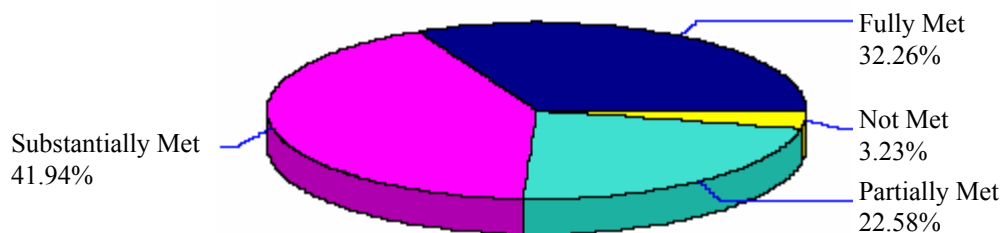
and Prevention (CDC), American Public Health Foundation, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, National Association of County and City Health Officials, National Association of Local Boards of Health, National Network of Public Health Institutes and the Public Health Foundation. The assessment instrument focused on all aspects of the local public health system, including all public, private, and volunteer entities, as well as individual and informal associations. This instrument consisted of ten sections, one for each Essential Public Health Service (listed in Table 2), which were further subdivided into several different indicators. The committee reviewed two Essential Public Health Services during each meeting and scored them to determine Garrett County’s current status as compared to the CDC’s optimal benchmarks.

Table 2

<i>The Essential Public Health Services</i>
1. Monitor health status to identify community health problems.
2. Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.
3. Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.
4. Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
5. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.
6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
7. Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
8. Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce.
9. Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.
10. Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

The assessment tool allowed the committee to identify the many and various aspects of the local public health system, including, but not limited to, civic groups, hospitals, faith organizations, doctors, and elected officials. The tool also allowed for the assessment of performance based on expectations from the Essential Public Health Services (EPHS). Overall, approximately 75% of all of Garrett County’s public health services reviewed qualified as either fully or substantially meeting expectations (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Percentage of Performance Scores Meeting Model Standards



Analyzing the EPHS more closely, the highest scoring Service is Garrett County’s ability to Diagnose and Investigate Health Problems, which scored 91.75 out of 100, with three of its four subcategories fully meeting expectations. Conversely, the weakest EPHS is the community’s ability to Research for New Insights and Innovative Solutions with a score of 52.20 out of 100. Table 3 displays the scores for each of the EPHS. Overall, Garrett County’s performance scores for each of the 10 Essential Public Health Services are relatively high and did not expose any glaring deficiencies in the system. However, many of the categories do leave room for improvement.

Table 3: Summary of Garrett County’s performance scores by Essential Public Health Service (EPHS)

Essential Public Health Service	Local Score
EPHS 1: Monitor Health Status	53.45
EPHS 2: Diagnose and Investigate Health Problems	91.75
EPHS 3: Inform, Educate, and Empower People	73.00
EPHS 4: Mobilize Community Partnerships	76.02
EPHS 5: Develop Policies and Plans	73.16
EPHS 6: Enforce Laws and Regulations	69.26
EPHS 7: Link People to Needed Personal Health Services	65.65
EPHS 8: Assure a Competent Workforce	66.02
EPHS 9: Evaluate Effectiveness, Accessibility, and Quality	75.37
EPHS 10: Research for New Insights and Innovative Solutions	52.20
Average Total Performance Score	69.59

In summary, the Local Public Health Assessment Subcommittee recommended that the following issues be considered as strategic issues:

- Monitor health status to identify community health problems
- Link people to needed personal health services
- Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce
- Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health.

Community Health Status Assessment Subcommittee

The Garrett County Health Status Assessment Committee consisted of 15 members and was chaired by Susan Athey-Oxford, President of Garrett County Partnership for Children and Families, Inc. The subcommittee met monthly between November 2006 and July 2007 with the purpose of identifying community health priorities and quality of life issues in Garrett County.

Subcommittee members gathered data related to the following eleven categories: 1) demographic characteristics; 2) socioeconomic characteristics; 3) health resource availability; 4) quality of life; 5) behavioral risk factors; 6) environmental health; 7) social and mental health; 8) maternal and child health; 9) death, illness, and injury; 10) infectious disease; and 11) sentinel events. To collect the data, individual expertise of the subcommittee members was utilized and the results from two of the categories were

presented each month. Committee members drew the data from a variety of sources, including, Vital Statistics, Garrett County Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (2005), Maryland Adolescent Survey (2004), 2000 Census, Unified Crime Report (2005), as well as state and local databases and previous health assessments or reports.

To summarize, Garrett County has relatively high rates of child poverty, domestic violence, disengaged youth, adults without a high school diploma, as well as a lack of licensed child care providers when compared to the 24 jurisdictions of Maryland. Conversely, Garrett County ranks comparatively well to other Maryland jurisdictions with high rates of healthy babies, children ready for kindergarten, children successful in school, safe communities, and stable families.

Based on the compilation of data, the Community Health Status Subcommittee identified seven key findings to be considered during the strategic issues phase. These were as follows:

- Health Resource Availability - Ongoing emphasis on provision and delivery of health programs and health services for uninsured and under-insured. Ensure accessibility, affordability, and availability.
- Demographics - Recognize and prepare for demographic shifts with regard to our aging population, our slowly increasing immigrant population, and our seasonal population.
- Maternal and Child Health - Maintain the trends towards positive outcomes in maternal and child health. Continue to work towards decreasing births to teens, both first time births and repeat births.
- Behavioral Health – Promote preventive health education to address disparities between state and county rates of smoking, spit tobacco use, and underage drinking.
- Social and Mental Health – Further explore the availability of resources for crisis situations with regard to mental health, domestic violence, and substance abuse.
- Environmental Health – Be proactive in preparing for the environmental challenges that come with development and industry (e.g. clean air, clean water, adequate water & sewer systems).
- Promote the delivery of preventive health services such as child lead testing and adult immunization among health care providers. Promote communication among health care providers from varying organizations or groups with regard to disease reporting.

Forces of Change Assessment Subcommittee

The Forces of Change Subcommittee consisted of 19 members and was chaired by Denise Liston, R.N., Vice President of Clinical and Support Services at Garrett County Memorial Hospital. The subcommittee met between November 2006 and January 2007. This workgroup focused on identifying impending changes that affect the context in which Garrett County and its public health system operate. The forces that

were discussed were divided among four broad categories – legislative, technological, economic, and social issues – and are either currently affecting the health of the community or threaten to do so in the future. Table 4 outlines forces of change that were identified by the subcommittee.

Table 4: Key Forces of Change Identified for Garrett County

Forces of Change
Social Changes
1. Obesity
2. Increase in drug activity
3. Teen sexuality, STDs
4. Growing Hispanic and Latino population
5. Increasing elderly population
6. Preventive health care
7. Balance of work and family for physicians
8. Overuse of Emergency Department
Economic Changes
1. Growth vs. no growth
2. Low cost prescriptions
3. Employee health coverage for small businesses
4. Malpractice premiums
5. Transportation
6. Fuel costs
Technology Changes
1. Internet
2. Medical equipment; EMR/EPM
3. Standards of care; equal access
Environmental Changes
1. Storm water management
2. Housing costs
3. Sewage capacity
4. Pandemic illness
5. Water table
6. Global warming

The committee also made the following recommendations as a result of their assessment process:

- Educate residents about the need to be proactive and preventive in regard to their health and health-care needs.
- Anticipate further growth of our county including its effect on small businesses and our environment
- Legislative reform regarding malpractice premiums, prescription costs, and insurance co-ops or assistance for middle income earners
- Offer more public transportation and energy assistance for residents.

Strategic Issue Identification

Upon completion of the four community assessments, the full MAPP Committee reconvened on September 24, 2007 to identify strategic issues that emerged from the visioning and committee assessment process. Strategic issues are those fundamental policy choices or critical challenges that must be addressed for a community to achieve its vision. Strategic issue identification is important because these issues are critical challenges that must be addressed by Garrett County in order to both expand the success of its local public health system and to achieve its vision of a healthy community.

Dr. Henry Taylor, Senior Associate in the Interdepartmental Program in Applied Public Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, facilitated this phase of the assessment. To begin, the results and recommendations from each of the previous MAPP subcommittee assessments were reviewed. Then, committee members were asked to rate the priority of each recommendation, which allowed the group to determine the eight most important recommendations. They were as follows:

1. Ensure accessibility, affordability, and availability of healthcare;
2. Further explore the availability of resources for behavioral health crises (mental health, domestic violence, and substance abuse);
3. Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce;
4. Emphasize the provision and delivery of health programs and health services for the uninsured and under-insured;
5. Link people to needed personal health services;
6. Be proactive in preparing for the environmental challenges that come with development and industry (e.g. clean air, clean water, adequate water and sewer systems);
7. Recognize and prepare for demographic shifts with regard to our aging population, our slowly increasing immigrant population, and our seasonal population;
8. Educate residents about the need to be proactive and preventive in regard to their health and healthcare needs.

Next, the group brainstormed critical questions they felt needed to be addressed to achieve a healthy Garrett County. Using the nominal group process (a structured idea-gathering strategy that sets goals, identifies problems, and obtains group suggestions), 81 questions were generated, discussed, and prioritized. This process was meant to solidify the most important issues and provide a shared group understanding of these issues.

The top 36 questions that emerged from the nominal group process were then further analyzed through the use of the online survey tool, Survey Monkey. MAPP participants were asked to complete the survey and rank the questions according to their importance, likely impact, and potential for MAPP to address the issue. The responses to the survey were then analyzed by Dr. Taylor based upon its potential

impact and feasibility. These results were then discussed at a meeting on November 26, 2007. Table 5 identifies the questions that participants ranked as having the highest combinations of potential impact and feasibility, making them the most likely to achieve success in Garrett County.

Table 5: Questions ranked by online survey

Question	Impact	Feasibility
<i>Very High Impact and Very High Feasibility</i>		
How can people be motivated to lead a healthy lifestyle by exercising more and eating sensibly in order to avoid obesity, diabetes, etc?	8.71	7.38
How can we ensure adequate emergency medical services?	7.75	6.95
How is the community going to recruit replacements for the aging population of physicians?	7.81	6.68
How do we impact teens to understand the ramifications of activities that are “cool” or pleasurable, such as drugs, sex, or smoking?	7.62	6.43
<i>Very High Impact and High Feasibility</i>		
How can we get people to take more responsibility for their health?	8.71	6.05
How can we provide affordable health and prescription drug coverage to everyone who needs it?	7.76	6.10
How can we support the education and training of future public health and health care professionals, so we have enough to meet the health care needs of the community?	7.67	6.24
How can we curb the increasing level of illegal drug activity in Garrett County?	7.71	5.90
<i>High Impact and Very High Feasibility</i>		
How do we educate the general public about the services the county currently provides?	7.29	7.43
Does the general public know what public health services are available?	7.05	7.00
How do we educate the community on the importance of dental care?	6.81	6.48
What can we do to entice more people to become involved in the emergency medical services system?	7.14	6.29

Finally, the MAPP group had a facilitated discussion that led to the prioritization of four broad issue areas. Table 6 identifies these four issues and their associated results.

Table 6: Finalized strategic issues and their associated results.

Issue Areas	Results
Fragile Systems	Strengthen and support those components of our public health system that are fragile because of funding, workforce capacity, demographic shifts, etc.
Healthy Lifestyles	Empower, educate, and motivate Garrett County residents to lead a healthy lifestyle and prevent harmful behaviors such as substance abuse and domestic violence.
Vulnerable Populations	Achieve and maintain optimal health and independence for vulnerable populations (aging, disabled, economically disadvantaged, mentally ill).
Environmental Health	Ensure healthy living and working conditions for Garrett county residents by protecting and increasing our natural and built resources as our population grows.

Formulation of Goals and Strategies

During this phase, MAPP participants formulated goals and specific strategies for each of the strategic issues identified in the previous phase. These goals and strategies are to provide a connection between the current reality and the vision. The goals answer the question “What do we want to achieve by addressing this strategic issue? And the strategies answer the questions “How do we want to achieve it and what action is needed?”

To develop the strategies, small groups of three to five were once again formed based on interest and expertise in the issue areas. The small groups met one to two times each and formulated goals and strategies using a similar template for each issue area. The recommendations, current status and resources, and action plan ideas for each issue area follow.

Fragile Systems

FRAGILE SYSTEMS

Result: Strengthen and support those components of our public health system that are fragile because of funding, workforce capacity, demographic shifts, etc.

Mental Health Services		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes and Ideas
Continue to maintain our current level of mental health services and psychiatrists.	<i>Core Services Agency</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MHAC to monitor • Encourage local physician offices to develop a relationship with psychiatrist
Expand transportation services for clients to and from appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>People Movers</i> • <i>Lighthouse Transportation</i> • Pilot project with Mental Health and DHMH to provide transportation or telephone consults on days when school is delayed or closed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local transportation systems (such as taxi service or designated bus stops throughout day) in high population centers. • Expand public transportation to evening hours
Establish Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) with local employers and the health department to increase funding sources	GCHD currently provides EAP for 3 businesses.	Promote EAP services with targeted businesses and county government
Provide more specialty services	GCHD is part of a telepsychiatry pilot project	Telepsychiatry for pediatric and geriatric patients.
Encourage mental health recovery	Mental Health clinicians are receiving training in the “recovery model.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage self-help groups. • Modify the mental health system to encourage recovery

FRAGILE SYSTEMS

Result: Strengthen and support those components of our public health system that are fragile because of funding, workforce capacity, demographic shifts, etc.

Home Health Services		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes and Ideas
Examine options to maintain current home health program	Operation costs are increasing due to higher salary and travel costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support federal Medicare legislation that provides for additional reimbursement of home health services in rural areas. • Develop new business model for providing home health services
Continue to develop technical options to expand service availability, such as telehealth	<i>Telehealth program at Health Department and Univ. of MD</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate telehealth into home health program. • Expand telehealth's information utility to be useful for local health care providers.
Educate residents about the range of home health services that are available	<i>Home Health Advisory Committee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the <i>Quick Guide to Garrett County Resources</i> available to all residents
Develop strategies to continue to educate health care providers about the range of home health services that are available	Social workers and physicians currently set up home health services <i>Quick Guide to Garrett County Resources</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and distribute home health reports utilization rates, outcomes, etc. and regularly distribute to area health care providers.

FRAGILE SYSTEMS

Result: Strengthen and support those components of our public health system that are fragile because of funding, workforce capacity, demographic shifts, etc.

Workforce Development		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes and Ideas
Develop recruitment and retention programs for new physicians and mid-level providers	<i>Internet recruitment (3R Net)</i> Mid-level providers have been used to ease the shortage of MDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Mtn. Laurel Medical Center to help draw physicians to area with federal loan assistance • Advertise in Pittsburgh Magazine • J-1 Visa Program
Expand educational and training opportunities for current and future health care professionals	Nursing program under development at Garrett college	Utilize Garrett College for healthcare professional programs
Advocate in the legislature to promote lower malpractice premiums, caps for lawsuits, universal health insurance coverage, and other issues that are unique to our rural area	Currently have the support for Western Maryland Delegation	
Develop workforce training programs by allowing multi-agency training, mileage reimbursement, and flexible training schedules	<i>AHEC</i>	Healthcare professional training and continuing education
Develop partnerships with nearby institutions of higher education to : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide internships for students • Recruit graduates • Create continuing education programs for existing staff. 	<i>AHEC</i> <i>WVU</i> <i>Garrett College</i> <i>FSU</i>	
Look proactively at the changing demographics of the work force and prepare accordingly (Ex.		Expand courses and programs offered at Garrett College

affordable housing, language classes)		
Develop incentives to attract recent graduates to rural MD, esp. health care shortage areas	Rural Health Association and Rural Maryland Council has this as a priority	Promote Western MD AHEC programs geared to middle and high school students to increase awareness of medical careers.

Prescription Services		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes and Ideas
Research options to maintain current prescription program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medbank funding has decreased • United Way provides \$15k/yr. for emergency short term prescription for low income persons 	Encourage doctors and pharmacists to use discount programs available at chain and locally owned pharmacies
Research new options for prescription assistance such as co-ops or indigent drug programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way funding • Local pharmacies provide discounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FQHC programs • 403 Federal drug pricing program

FRAGILE SYSTEMS

Result: Strengthen and support those components of our public health system that are fragile because of funding, workforce capacity, demographic shifts, etc.

Emergency Medical Services		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes and Ideas
Research options to maintain our current EMS personnel	Aging volunteer base	Support funding for EMS training and personnel to ensure competent and sufficient workforce
Recruit new EMS personnel and staff to decrease the call and volunteer time required to maintain full staffing	Recently initiated a few paid EMS positions for medics and techs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enlist the support of the Bd. Of Ed. And Garrett College • Support expansion of paid EMS positions through fundraising and billing

Dental Health Services		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes and Ideas
Educate the public about the importance of preventive dental care in order to reduce treatment costs	Prevention has not been a priority <i>Local dentists as guest speakers in high school health classes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper ads and PSA's to discuss need for prevention • Steps articles
Increase the continuum of dental care throughout the county	<i>Children's Dental Health month promotion activities</i>	Explore feasibility of providing targeted dental services in Northern portion of county
Increase the availability of emergency dental care	GCHD takes emergencies on Fridays when other offices are closed.	Work with ED physician to help arrange timely follow-up
Encourage private dentists to participate in the MD Dental Association's Donated Dental Services Program	One new dentist is part of this plan.	Develop a local charity care dental network (in progress)

Healthy Lifestyles

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Result: Empower, educate, and motivate Garrett County residents to lead a healthy lifestyle and prevent harmful behaviors such as substance abuse and domestic violence.

Physical Activity and Nutrition		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes & Ideas
Mobilize resources to encourage environmental improvements that support physical activity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycle and pedestrian paths • Adequate sidewalks • Bicycle Lanes • Bicycle Racks • Community parks & playgrounds 	<i>Project Open Space Garrett County Recreational Trails Task Force</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote networking between municipalities to share successful applications for environmental improvements. • Explore again the potential for a Parks & Recreation Dept.
Develop community-wide educational campaign to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-help groups, • physical activity counseling, • risk factor screening and education, • community health fairs/screenings and other community events • media 	<i>Aim-Hi website Steps to Better Health news magazine</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will Clower classes • Campaign specific to sodas / energy drinks / sugar drinks • Support Mt. Laurel in development of Community Activity Guide
Develop and support new community-wide policies that make healthy choices more accessible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable health clubs • Outdoor activity groups/clubs (such as mountain biking, rock climbing, kayaking/canoeing, cross country skiing, roller-blading) 	<i>Mayors & Town Councils Existing clubs/groups like Boy Scouts, Yough Paddling Club, Queen City Striders</i>	Public / Private partnerships

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent locals day discounts at whitewater course, ski area, etc. 		
<p>Support school policies that make healthy choices more accessible, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Nutrition • Making PE classes longer or having students be more active during class • Non-competitive daily physical activity through recess and outdoor play (even on bad weather days) • Healthy fundraisers 	<p><i>Steps to Better Health Committee</i></p>	
<p>Support and promote worksite nutrition and physical activity programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy vending machine options • Payroll deduction for health club membership 	<p><i>GCHD Health Education</i> <i>GCMH HealthWorks</i></p>	
<p>Promote the consumption of locally grown foods by supporting programs such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmer's markets • Public agencies buying and serving local food products • 4H youth markets • Community supported agriculture 	<p><i>Cooperative Extension</i></p>	

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Result: Empower, educate, and motivate Garrett County residents to lead a healthy lifestyle and prevent harmful behaviors such as substance abuse and domestic violence.

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Prevention		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes & Ideas
Support evidence-based environmental strategies to reduce the acceptance of substance abuse among adults and youth (Ex. counter-advertising, restrictions on use in public places, alcohol server training, compliance checks)	<i>TIPS training</i> <i>Alcohol and tobacco compliance checks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to Your Kids Campaign • Campaign to address parental norm that “alcohol is ok, drugs are not” • Support the Drug Free Communities Model
Target direct interventions to children whose parents are in drug treatment or incarcerated.	<i>DAAC Strategic Plan</i>	Substance Abuse Program flag intake records of kids whose parents are incarcerated so that adolescent counselor can monitor.
Develop a standard procedure for obtaining and providing outpatient, medically assisted, drug detox for addicted persons.	<i>DAAC Strategic Plan</i>	Develop a local workgroup with MDs and Behavioral Health staff
Increase the array of addiction treatment services available in the community (For example, a drug court, residential detox, buprenorphine therapy, transportation consideration).	<i>DAAC Strategic Plan</i>	Pursue grant funding when appropriate
Support current law enforcement efforts to curb illegal drug activity in Garrett County.	<i>Winners Program</i>	
Expand educational efforts to prevent illegal and inappropriate prescription drug use	<i>Drug and Alcohol Council</i>	Update school health curricula regularly to address prevention in light of most current drug trends

Strengthen and support existing evidence-based strategies or programs to prevent youth tobacco initiation.	<i>Project TNT, LifeSkills, TEG</i>	
Develop peer-to-peer strategies to positively influence student norms about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.	<i>SADD STEAM</i>	Focus groups to assess student perception of effective strategies
Foster and support activities and organizations that provide healthy alternatives to substance abuse and violence	<i>Community Planning Groups Scouts 4H Church youth groups Sports leagues</i>	

Prevention of Domestic Violence

Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes & Ideas
Maintain and expand domestic violence services to address self-sufficiency, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transitional and permanent housing, • employment assistance, • transportation, • child care, and • access to health care. 	<i>Dove Center – 24 hour shelter Domestic Violence Coalition Fundraising campaign ongoing for new facility. Anticipated date to purchase facility is Dec. 2008.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dove Center purchase vehicle for client transportation. • In-house child care center.
Expand outreach to the general public to increase awareness of domestic violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage men and boys • Change societal messages that perpetuate violence 	<i>Dove Center Public Awareness Committee</i>	
Train health care providers to screen, identify, treat and refer domestic violence victims. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish specially trained personnel in hospital 	<i>Dove Center Garrett Co. Memorial Hospital – Grand Rounds</i>	Ensure efforts to continue Sexual Assault Response Team, including Forensic Nurse Examiners

Vulnerable Populations

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Result: Achieve and maintain optimal health and independence for vulnerable populations.

Ageing Population		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes and Ideas
Educate the senior citizen population about support programs available to them so they can <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) remain in their homes for as long as possible, and 2) remain independent as long as possible 	<i>Area Agency on Aging Programs- Meals on Wheels, Senior Centers / Meal Sites, health insurance counseling and advocacy Adult Evaluation Review Services Mt. Glade Medical Adult Day Care Home Health</i>	Increase support services for in-home care and chore aids
Prepare for the increased demand for end-stage health care as Baby Boomers age. (i.e. Hospice, Alzheimers care, nursing home and retirement facility space)	<i>Hospice Home Health Nursing Homes Hospital Community Action –Housing, Garrett Transit, AAA</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide continuum of resources for aging with a needs assessment and 1-on-1 contact • Increase senior assisted living apartments to help provide in-between care
Provide opportunities and education for and about preventive health care for older adults (i.e. adult immunization, healthy eating, physical activity, routine health care, medication safety)	<i>Senior Centers Health Department Health Care Providers-</i>	Work with Area Agency on Aging
Develop a resource directory for senior citizens and the disabled population	<i>Community Action Appalachian Crossroads Senior Centers BBQ news magazine</i>	

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Result: Achieve and maintain optimal health and independence for vulnerable populations.

Disabled Population		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes and Ideas
Support services that inform consumers and caregivers about availability and appropriate use of services, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Respite care ○ Appalachian Crossroads ○ GCHD – AERS, HFGC, WIC ○ PCF – Infants and Toddlers ○ Bd. Of Ed. ○ Abilities Network 	<i>Western MD online Resource Directory</i>	Family voucher programs for housing for families with disabilities
Increase support services to those with disabilities	<i>Mt. Glade Medical Adult Day Care Appalachian Crossroads</i>	Expand transportation services for those with disabilities
Continue efforts to implement ADA recommended and/or required environmental changes (handicap ramps, parking, wider aisles in stores, etc.)	<i>Garrett Organization for the Handicapped Appalachian Parent Association</i>	Form study group; to make recommendations to Health Planning Council

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Result: Achieve and maintain optimal health and independence for vulnerable populations.

Economically Disadvantaged Population		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan
Maintain an ongoing emphasis on the provision and delivery of health programs and services for uninsured and under-insured.	<i>Mtn. Laurel Medical Center</i>	Improve utilization of the Mtn. Laurel Medical Center for the uninsured
Increase support for, awareness of, and access to housing assistance programs	<i>Community Action Habitat for Humanity</i>	
Develop health insurance co-ops or low premium options for uninsured and under-insured		Expand employment with benefit options
Expand current public transportation options	<i>Community Action</i>	Expand transportation options especially after hours and weekends
Support and expand outreach and enrollment efforts for income-eligible programs	<i>Social Services Income Maintenance Program Adult Evaluation Review Services</i>	
Simplify enrollment forms for assistance programs	<i>Community Action Health Department</i>	
Improve system integration by using collaborative grant writing within agencies to develop programs to help fill the gap in existing health care services	<i>GC Partnership Health Department Community Action Other community agencies</i>	

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Result: Achieve and maintain optimal health and independence for vulnerable populations.

Mentally Ill/ Substance Abuse Population		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan
Maintain and expand current mental health services available	<i>GCHD Behavioral Health Department of Social Services Core Service Agency</i>	Expand array of services
Educate the community regarding mental health services available and reduce the stigma associated with using the services	<i>Health Department Garrett County Memorial Hospital-ED FQHC Core Service Agency</i>	Promote screening programs for emotional wellness beginning in early childhood through adulthood
Improve inter-agency cooperation and referral programs	<i>Department of Social Services Health Department</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations for Head Start, Early Head Start and health department • Promote learning readiness
Create new programs for emergency mental health /crisis counseling	<i>Garrett County Memorial Hospital GCHD Behavioral Health Local physicians</i>	
Develop a Meals on Wheels mental health outreach program		Train current Meals on Wheels staff to recognize potential mental health problems in the clients they serve

Environment

THE ENVIRONMENT

Result: Ensure healthy living and working conditions for Garrett County residents by protecting and increasing our natural and built resources as our population grows.

Safe Homes		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes & Ideas
Protect water quality	<i>Cooperative Extension MD Dept. of Environment (MDE) MD Dept. of Agriculture</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public awareness campaign to promote strategies to protect surface water systems (disposal of hazardous materials, use of pesticides and fertilizers, etc.)
Protect drinking water quality	<i>Health Dept. Garrett County Sanitary District</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure wells are abandoned when public water supply lines are extended or when a homeowner drills a new well • Increase awareness about the importance of homeowners with private wells having the water supply tested periodically
Protect outdoor air quality	<i>Health Dept. MDE</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with MDE and other counties to draft regulations for outdoor wood boilers
Manage quality of indoor air by reducing exposures to those agents that adversely impact health (formaldehyde, radon, mold, asthma triggers)	<i>Asthma Coalition – spirometer testing Health Dept.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public awareness campaign about reducing exposures in the home • Provide information on basic screening or testing • Advocate for state standards for indoor air quality

Ensure homeowners are aware of importance of maintaining private sewage disposal systems	<i>Health Dept.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase public awareness regarding the importance of pumping septic tanks and conserving water to increase the expected life of the sewage disposal system
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Growth and Development		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes & Ideas
Public education on water conservation to reduce demands on aquifers and reduce demands for wastewater disposal	<i>MDE Capacity Management Plans</i>	Enhance working relationship between municipal and county utilities, GC Health Dept., and Planning Office to ensure that wastewater and water capacities are being met
Coordinate transportation improvements with community walkability improvements	Traffic Advisory Committee	Advocate that political subdivisions invest Community Development Block Grant funds to retrofit unwalkable neighborhoods with sidewalks or walking trails
Encourage Smart Growth	<i>Garrett County Office of Planning and Land Development</i>	Incentives to businesses that locate within high or medium density districts. Work with MD Dept. of Planning

THE ENVIRONMENT

Result: Ensure healthy living and working conditions for Garrett County residents by protecting and increasing our natural and built resources as our population grows.

Preservation, Protection & Conservation		
Recommendations	Current Status/Resources	Action Plan Notes & Ideas
Develop comprehensive public education campaign to promote environmental preservation, protection, and conservation.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote use of cleaner sources of energy, such as solar, natural gas, clean coal, efficient wind, and geothermal. • Promote development of Green Homes, including Energy Star appliances. • Increase the public awareness of naturally occurring and responsible methods of disposing of or reusing/recycling trash.
Advocate for stiffer effluent and air emission laws in the U.S. to substantially reduce the carryover of toxic chemicals to MD		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase public awareness of existing monitoring reports of local air quality. • Encourage establishment of additional air quality monitoring stations in Garrett County.
Explore incentives to encourage property owners to install septic de-nitrification units on existing septic systems.	Bay Restoration funds available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform property owners with failing sewage disposal systems about how to apply for the available Bay Restoration money.
Manage quality of outside controlled air burning.	<i>Health Dept.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure requirements are being met when permits are issued. • Increase public awareness about importance of obtaining permit.
Promote development of a system for household hazardous waste disposal.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public education about the hazards of substances and the importance of disposing of them properly.

Evaluation

This strategic plan is based on the MAPP strategic approach to community health improvement. By bringing focus to four major health concerns through advocacy, funding and capacity-building efforts, it is expected that there will be an increased level of collaboration, coordination, and complementary efforts in Garrett County in these areas. While it is not under the control of the Garrett County Health Planning Council which recommendations are actually implemented by other organizations, if a significant number of recommendations are put into action, Garrett County should see progress towards the identified results:

- A strengthened public health system and workforce.
- Residents who are empowered, educated, and motivated to lead healthier lifestyles
- Optimal health and independence for vulnerable populations
- Healthier living and working conditions through protection of natural resources and improvement of built resources.

Process Evaluations

The Garrett County Health Planning Council will track the actions that have been taken toward implementing the MAPP plan. This includes what advocacy work they have done, who they have reached, and what the response has been. It also includes what projects they have recommended for funding and which have received funding. Finally, the Health Planning Council will collect information on what other organizations have done in these areas.

Program Evaluations

When specific recommendations are undertaken by partner organizations, program evaluation will occur internally and include tracking actions, services provided, clients reached, quality of services and identifiable results.

Outcome Evaluations

Outcome indicators will be monitored by the Garrett County Health Planning Council as part of their annual Health Status Report. Which indicators in the 3-5 year range will be useful depends on which recommendations are implemented. Long term indicators are generally applicable for assessing our achievement of the results stated. The long term indicators are from *Healthy People 2010*. Additional indicators should be added as action plans are implemented.

Evaluation

Result	Outcome Indicators (3-5 years)	Outcome Indicators (Long-Term)
<p>Fragile Systems: Strengthen and support those components of our public health system that are fragile because of funding, workforce capacity, demographic shifts, etc.</p>	<p># of new specialty services (mental health) # of new funding streams # of new health care professionals recruited # of new partnerships to promote workforce development # of new EMS personnel trained # of collaborative grants/programs developed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the proportion of persons who have access to rapidly responding pre-hospital emergency medical services • Increase the proportion of children and adolescents under age 19 at or below 200% of Federal poverty level who received preventive dental service • Increase the percentage of adults, children and adolescents with mental disorders who receive treatment • Increase the proportion of local public health agencies that provide continuing education to develop competency in essential public health services
<p>Healthy Lifestyle: Empower, educate, and motivate Garrett County residents to lead a healthy lifestyle and prevent harmful behaviors such as substance abuse and domestic violence.</p>	<p># of new bike/walk paths developed # of institutions adopting new policies # of new farmer's markets, community gardens, etc. # of new addiction treatment options # of youth receiving education / services # of new evidence-based strategies # of health care providers trained in assessments/referrals (AOD treatment, domestic violence)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the proportion of children, adolescents, and adults who are at a healthy weight • Increase the proportion of worksites offering employer-sponsored physical activity and fitness programs • Increase the proportion of trips made by bicycling • Increase the age and proportion of adolescents who remain alcohol and drug free. • Increase the proportion of adolescents who disapprove of substance abuse • Reduce deaths and injuries caused by

		<p>alcohol and drug-related motor vehicle crashes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce use of illicit substances • Reduce physical assault • Reduce the annual rate of rape or attempted rape • Reduce sexual assault other than rape
<p>Vulnerable Populations: Achieve and maintain optimal health and independence for vulnerable populations.</p>	<p># of new services for seniors # of new services for disabled # of new services for mental health clients # of Mt. Laurel Medical Center clients # of local businesses adding or expanding health insurance # of collaborative grants/programs developed # of new public transportation options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the proportion of persons with health insurance • Increase the proportion of persons who have a specific source of ongoing care • Increase the proportion of persons with long-term care needs who have access to the continuum of long-term care services • Increase the proportion of adults with disabilities reporting satisfaction with life • Increase the proportion of health and wellness treatment programs and facilities that provide full access for people with disabilities • Reduce the proportion of occupied housing units that are substandard
<p>Environment: Ensure healthy living and working conditions for Garrett County residents by protecting and increasing our natural and built resources as our population grows</p>	<p># of new bike/walk paths # of “Green Homes” # of new air quality monitoring stations # of businesses newly participating in worksite recycling efforts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the proportion of persons exposed to air that does not meet the U.S. EPA health-based standards for harmful air pollutants • Increase the proportion of persons served by community water systems who receive a supply of drinking water that meets the regulations of the Safe Drinking Water Act • Increase recycling of municipal solid waste • Reduce indoor allergen levels

Garrett County Health Planning Council
Strategic Plan
2008-2012

Go to www.garretthealth.org to learn more.