

**MINUTES**  
**PARTNERSHIP FOR ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE (PATH)**  
**March 28, 2023**  
**11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**  
**Birthing Center Classroom**  
**LewisGale Montgomery Hospital**

Welcome, Introductions, and lunch

Thank you to Devin Lapuasa and HCA Lewis Gale Montgomery for hosting our meeting and providing a delicious lunch!

**Molly Roberts, MPH**

Community Benefits Manager, Planning and Community Development Carilion Clinic

**Results of the 2021 Community Health Assessment**

- Molly presented the 2021 CHA results. She touched on the steps moving forward (planning, implementation, evaluation). They found the top needs in NRV included: the lack of access to mental health services, socioeconomic factors including poverty/low income as well as the lack of affordable/safe housing and transportation, and health behaviors (culture, lack of access). Some of the percentages she shared included:
  - 68.7% of the population is underserved in mental health
  - 22% increase of drug overdose rates in SWVA (2019 to 2020)
  - 16.64% of the area's population live below the federal poverty level
  - 24.22% of households are cost-burdened (when families spend more than 30% of their income on housing)
  - 5.58% of households are without a motor vehicle
  - 35.7% of census maps contain food deserts
- She shared action items Carilion has implemented as a result of this CHA including offering Office Based Opioid Treatment (OBOT) clinic support, pharmacy community outreach, working with Unite Virginia, and expanding their community health workforce. Looking toward the future, they are gearing up for the 2024 CHA as well as Medicaid unwinding.

**Pam Ray, PATH Co-Convener**

Population Health Community Coordinator, New River Health District

**Actionable steps for PATH**

- Unite US/VA: user groups, integration w/ VA 211
- Encourage Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work with VA Community Health Workers groups
- Look at data from Well-being In the Nation (WIN) <http://www.winmeasures.org>
- Narrow down CHA findings into an actionable CHIP for PATH to assist in
- Break PATH down into subgroups to address community issues (examples: mental health, language barriers, insurance/pharmaceutical compliance, advocacy, maternal-child health, etc.). Harvey Barker suggested using workgroups to maximize efficiency and limit the workload on a single individual. PATH has successfully used workgroups with report-outs in the past. Please reach out to Pam or other steering committee members if you are interested in participating in or leading a workgroup!
- Looping in primary care groups/hospitalists with PATH and Unite VA/VA211 is a key to good collaboration and referrals internally and externally.

## **Key Topics in the NRV**

- Pam shared information on a VCU research project RECOVER: Researching COVID to Enhance Recovery. RECOVER is a nationwide NIH-funded project to help understand the long-term effects of COVID on the health and wellness of children (0-25) and their families. They are working on breaking down barriers and increasing trust about research particularly in minoritized and rural communities.
- Community health rankings were released March 28.
- The VDH Cares Portal is live and is seeking input from users.
- The American Lung Association gave Virginia an F. Discuss was held regarding the high tobacco/vape use in schools/young kids, the newly implemented cigarette tax in Montgomery County, and the lack of insurance coverage for nicotine cessation tools. The UVA Cancer Center shared they have smoking cessation resources and talked about rural pharmacies offering cessation tools in the future.
- With the new changes regarding MAT (Medication-assisted Treatment) services, anyone with a DEA can now prescribe. PCPs are encouraged to get involved in MAT to alleviate the pressures that local clinics are facing.
- Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority: funding available, Regional Commission organizing the region on how to collaborate to request and divide the funds.
- Healthy Roots has a newly developed charter, and it will be shared once approved by the governing body. A PATH representative will be part of the governing body.
- Carilion will be starting the next round of Community Health Assessments in 2024. Planning has started now--Molly and her team will reach out to key stakeholders. Having more community stakeholders involved may help getting community focused questions included in the surveys and focus groups. Stay tuned!

## **PATHWays Sharing**

- Margo Walter with National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) spoke about the outreach they do which includes providing support, education, and advocacy pertaining to mental health. Margo spoke about their new NAMI 101 presentation that introduces community partners to their services.
- Rhonda Seltz spoke about Enroll VA Grant as well as Medicaid unwinding. She also updated the group on a 'tailgate' she is working on that would consist of providers traveling to housing projects and trailer parks to bring services to those affected by transportation issues.
- Holly Lesko is looking for high-impact opportunities within the district to address what localities are seeking, in order to make a plan and take action.
- Laura York shared that the Virginia Tech Institute for Policy and Governance is hosting a Spring Open House on March 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Justine Clifton shared the NRV Disability Resource Center is holding an [Open House](#) on April 6<sup>th</sup>, at the Disability Resource Center's new location: 106 Wadsworth St. Radford.
- Andi Golusky, Executive Director New River Valley Cares, announced April is Child Abuse Awareness month and encouraged participation with posting pinwheels in front of office buildings. She also announced the Spring Family Fun Festivals coming up that will be focusing on resources and kids.
  - 401 W. Main St. [Radford April 6](#) from 3-6:30pm
  - 1 Taylor Ave. [Giles, April 13](#) from 3-6pm
  - Jackson Park [Pulaski, April 20](#) from 3:30-6:30pm
  - 201 W. Main St. Ste. B1 [Christiansburg April 21](#) from 3-6:30pm
- Lauren Blakemore shared that the VT YMCA will be hosting [Healthy Kids Day](#) at the Lancaster House (403 Washington St. SW Blacksburg) on April 29 10am-3pm with a Fun Run at 9am.

- Tina King, Executive Director NRV Agency on Aging, shared information on the Aging Community Leadership Team meeting set for May 10 from 9am-12pm at the Pulaski County Innovation Center where they will discuss topics pertaining to issues with housing and transportation as well as health, wellness, and safety. She also announced Virginia's Farm Market Fresh for Older Adults vouchers will be available for those 60+ (qualify with self-declared income), but we currently do not have any certified farmers/growers in our area that can accept vouchers; the program starts June 1.
- Ashley Hash shared that the most recent community grant cycle meeting has just happened, but those interested will have an opportunity to attend the meeting for eligibility for the fall cycle.

If you would like copies of the presentation on the Community Health Assessment by Molly Roberts, please reach out to her directly at [mjroberts@carilionclinic.org](mailto:mjroberts@carilionclinic.org).

Future meetings:

Entire group--July and October

Steering Committee--late May/early June