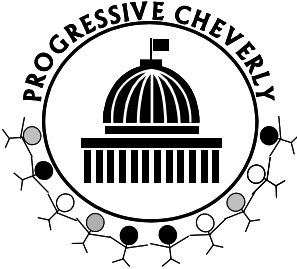


# Progressive Cheverly

[progressivecheverly.org](http://progressivecheverly.org)



5609 Forest Road  
Cheverly, MD 20785

October 23, 2011  
Mrs. Pamela B. Creekmur  
Acting Health Officer  
Prince George County Health Department  
1701 McCormick Drive  
Suite 200  
Largo, Maryland 20774  
Attention: Acting Health Officer

Subject: Prince George's County Health Improvement Plan 2011 to 2014

Dear Ms. Pamela B. Creekmur,

Progressive Cheverly, a grassroots organization based in Cheverly, Maryland, appreciates the opportunity to submit the following comments on the proposed Prince George's County Health Improvement Plan 2011 to 2014.

We feel the plan is an important first step toward addressing the health needs of our county residents. We strongly thank you for making this commitment to addressing some of the critical health issues that has plagued our county for some time. Overall, we generally support the proposed Health Improvement Plan. However, we have a number of concerns that we feel, if addressed, would improve this Plan.

First, we felt that although the list of proposed activities is quite expansive, more thought needs to be given to establishing realistic priorities within the time frame set for this plan and then outlining how these priorities will be implemented. It appears to be more of a laundry list than carefully thought out priorities based on the most important needs and where the Department has been successful. It would be better if there was detailed information in this Plan on what framework will be put in place in order to ensure specific goals are achieved or implemented. The priorities and strategies listed at the end of the Plan under County-Specific Priorities appear to be the most important in terms of overall direction for the Department of Health. It was not clear how the priorities in first section of Plan are integrated with the County-Specific Priorities.

Second, the proposed health improvement plan does not include how the Health Department plans to work with community groups, the private health care sector, and other health and social service-related agencies within the county. We urge the health department to work with other stakeholders to get input and ideas on what should be implemented to address the county's health needs. Citizen involvement is very critical and important to improving the healthcare needs of our county residents.

Third, the Health Plan did not sufficiently address mental health issues. Mental health (or Behavioral Health) is a major issue for some county residents and is a major public health issue; there should have been more emphasis on how the health department would address these issues. Also, homicide, adolescent health, and suicide, which are all public health issues, were not properly linked and developing a strategy to link them to school health should be addressed. Also, homicide wasn't identified and should be listed at priority 6 in the proposed plan. Additionally, there needs to be more consideration given to strategies focused on prevention.

Lastly, with the development of the new County Stat program, we would like to see the Health Improvement Plan include a statement, perhaps under the County-Specific Priorities, that acknowledge the development of this program and the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of the Department in meeting certain specified goals and making this data available to the public. We know the County Stat is just getting started and that there would need to be an agreement on which goals would be included, but this would be a major step forward in encouraging greater transparency in measuring the effectiveness of all County agencies including the Health Department.

Prince George's County Health Department is moving in the right direction in addressing the health care needs for county residents. The proposed Plan represents a step forward in laying the groundwork to improve the overall health care status of its residents. The Prince George's County Health Department must keep the momentum moving forward as it addresses the widespread health disparities in the County.

We look forward to working with you as you further refine this plan and seek community input in terms of implementation.

Sincerely,

Patrice Guillory (pguillory08@gmail.com) and Leon Harris  
(leon.harris1980@gmail.com), Co-Chairs of the Progressive Cheverly Health Committee