TOO OFTEN, THE NEEDS OF MEN ARE OVERLOOKED IN THE HEALTHCARE PROCESS

With traditional healthcare strategies focused on the outcomes of women, males often know less about their health, make fewer healthcare visits, and die from the leading causes of death at higher rates than women.

The Clayton County Board of Health (CCBOH) is changing that. Welcome to the “Locker Room,” a point of entry for male healthcare services. The Locker Room provides access to clinical services in a professional, male-friendly environment. Upon entry, men are connected with a “Health Coach,” a health educator who will provide them with useful male health promotion materials and direct them to various CCBOH services. From there, men can access male reproductive healthcare services, as well as screening and treatment for common health issues such as obesity, hypertension, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, and sexually-transmitted infections (STIs). Referrals can be provided to address depression and prostate/colon cancer.

Our Locker Room is designed to provide an engaging, relaxed, and inviting atmosphere for men who may be new to or unfamiliar with Board of Health services. From the Locker Room, men are able to access a number of services, including:

- Health education and male reproductive health services
- Height, weight, and body-mass index (BMI) assessments
- Blood pressure, thyroid, heart, and lung assessments
- Instruction on self examination for testicular cancer
- Male breast exams
- Abdomen and extremity assessments
- Genital and rectal examinations
- Colorectal cancer screenings (for individuals over 40 years of age)
- Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) screenings
- HIV testing and counseling services

Through a combination of clinical services, health education, and community outreach, the Locker Room works to break down the barriers that typically prevent men from seeking medical treatment, such as pride, lack of knowledge, poor habits, high-risk behaviors, prevailing attitudes toward male health, and the absence of health resources geared toward men. Through the program, the CCBOH hopes men realize that their “Health is Not a Game.”
MEN PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE OVERALL HEALTH OF COMMUNITIES.

Families often depend on men to serve as providers, protectors, and teachers. In general, however, American men are sicker and die younger than American women. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), women lived on average one year longer than men in 1920. In the 21st century, men on average die five to seven years earlier and at higher rates than women.

From birth, males are faced with a number of challenges that lower life expectancy, particularly African American males. African American males continue to lead in the area of negative health indicators and outcomes.

IN CLAYTON COUNTY:

- The infant mortality rate (IMR) for boys (9.3/1,000 live births) is 8% higher than the IMR for girls (8.6/1,000 live births).
- Two-thirds of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) victims are boys.
- Men die at higher rates than women for all major causes of death, including cardiovascular diseases, cancers, motor vehicle crashes, suicide, HIV/AIDS, and homicide.
- The chance of being a homicide victim is 13% higher for African American males (24.6/100,000) than white males (21.3/100,000).
- Among 15-24 year olds, boys were more likely than girls to commit suicide.

Many men can get excited about home improvement projects or fixing their car, but when it comes to regular maintenance of their bodies, many men aren’t as enthusiastic. There are many reasons for this.

- Societal and institutional barriers often stand in the way of men receiving proper healthcare.
- In many ways, popular culture rewards men for engaging in high-risk behavior.
- Traditionally, men are taught not to complain or seek treatment for various ailments, injuries, and health problems.
- While many hospitals and medical institutions have services sensitive to the needs of female health, there are few programs that provide services in a male-friendly environment.
- Men often feel forgotten by traditional healthcare providers. As a result, men are only half as likely as women to visit the doctor for preventive services, causing preventable health problems to spiral out of control.

“With so many risk factors out there that can negatively impact a man’s health, it is important that men do everything they can to take control of their physical and mental well-being. It is also important that there are programs available to help eliminate the barriers that may prevent men from achieving optimal health. That is the ultimate purpose of the Locker Room.”

- Dr. Alpha Fowler Bryan, Clayton County District Health Director

Clayton County, GA Death Rate (per 100,000 persons)¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause and Rate 2004-2008</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All causes</td>
<td>540.0</td>
<td>482.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Cardiovascular Diseases</td>
<td>168.7</td>
<td>149.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancers</td>
<td>111.3</td>
<td>105.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Vehicle Crashes</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Online Analytical and Statistical Information System (OASIS), Georgia Department of Public Health, Office of Health Indicators for Planning (OHIP)

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WHY IS MALE HEALTH IMPORTANT?

claytoncountypublichealth.org  facebook.com/CCBOH  twitter.com/CCBOH

A Healthier Clayton in One Generation.
Vision:
That all men, regardless of age, race, or background are given the tools to achieve optimal health.

Mission:
To strengthen our community and improve the lives of families by improving the health of our men and teaching them that their "Health is Not a Game."

Core Values
- Men need and deserve access to healthcare as much as women and children do.
- Through education and the creation of health services that speak directly to men, we can break down the barriers that prevent men from seeking medical guidance.
- Healthy men can be the standard bearers for their families, and thus, are important to the health of the community.
- Men who take their health seriously are more likely to influence positive health outcomes for their spouses and children.

Assumptions
- Men, and the healthcare needs of men are often ignored, unaddressed by traditional programs, or overshadowed by health services provided to women and children.
- Research on male-specific diseases is under-funded.
- Men make half as many visits to the doctor for annual exams and preventive services as women do.
- More than half those in the U.S. without health insurance are men.
- Men die at higher rates than women of heart disease, cancer, injuries, stroke, HIV/AIDS, suicide, and other problems.

Activities
- Male health education services
- Clinical services administered to men in a relaxed, male-focused environment.
- Men given access to a "health coach," who serves a patient navigator for Board of Health services.
- Treatment and referral services for common male health issues, such as inactivity, mental health, hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, prostate/cancer, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and HIV/AIDS.
- Community outreach to young men through evidenced-based curricula and STI prevention programs administered through the Locker Room program.
- Follow up services to address the "total health" of men over a long period of time.

Short Term Outcomes
- Men become more comfortable visiting healthcare providers for acute care and treatment of illnesses.
- Individuals' overall health is improved, mitigating potential emergency healthcare costs.
- Men receive screening and treatment for diseases that would have otherwise gone undetected.
- Men take a more active role in their healthcare, thus assuming more responsibility for their personal health.
- Men begin taking more trips to the doctor, making healthier lifestyle choices, and participating in fewer high-risk behaviors, such as unprotected sex and sex with multiple partners.
- Adolescent males learn personal responsibility and how the results of their actions impact the lives of others.
- Men begin to treat the cause of their health problems, rather than just the symptoms.

Long-Term Outcomes
- Male attitudes toward healthcare become more positive.
- More men make personal health a lifetime goal rather than a temporary goal.
- Families benefit from having more health-conscious male role models.
- Men become more vigilant about their health and the health of their families, decreasing the risk for neglect and domestic violence.
- The mortality rates for men are decreased. Men live longer and are able to be more active contributors to their families and community.
- Local rates of STIs, HIV, and AIDS are lowered.
- Lower rates of teen pregnancy.
- Fewer men die from cancers, cardiovascular diseases, and other preventable conditions.
- Decreased visits to the Emergency Room and lower debt burdens on community hospitals.
THE STATE OF MALE HEALTH IS NOT JUST A CLAYTON COUNTY CONCERN, IT IS A NATIONAL CONCERN.

Here is what we know (according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention):

- Men make half as many visits to the doctor for annual exams and preventive services as women.
- Men die at higher rates than women from the top 10 causes of death, which include heart disease, cancer, injuries, stroke, HIV/AIDS, and suicide.
- Of those without health insurance in the United States, 54.4 percent are men.
- Men are the victims of more than 92 percent of workplace deaths.
- The male fetus is at greater risk of miscarriage and stillbirth.
- Testosterone is linked to elevations of LDL, the bad cholesterol, and declines of HDL, the good cholesterol.
- Men have fewer infection-fighting T-cells and are thought to have weaker immune systems than women.
- Research on male-specific diseases in underfunded,

Just as women and children need health advocates, males need them as well. The Clayton County Board of Health (CCBOH) relies on relationships with community partners (faith, civic, social, and government leaders) to share information about CCBOH programs and services with the community. You can be a valuable resource in helping us reach and engage males by 1) Promoting CCBOH programs and services within the community; 2) Leveraging your influence to spread health promotion messages; and 3) Providing resources, when possible, to support the work of the Locker Room.

“Helping men lead healthier personal and reproductive lives is vital to the health of Clayton County. Organizations dedicated to prompting the work of the Locker Room will be recognized as CCBOH Community Partners. With your support, not only will the men of Clayton County benefit, but the greater community will benefit from more health conscious husbands, fathers, and family members.”

- Jevon Gibson, Former Program Director, CCBOH Office of Coordinated Youth Services

THE LOCKER ROOM INFORMATION REQUEST CARD

If you would like to receive more information regarding the Locker Room or any other Clayton County Board of Health initiatives, please detach this form, fill it out, and mail it to: Clayton County Board of Health, Attn: The Locker Room, 1117 Battle Creek Road, Jonesboro, GA 30236.

Name/Title: ________________________________
Organization: ________________________________
Phone number: ________________________________
Email address: ________________________________
Address: ______________________________________

Reason(s) for interest in the Locker Room

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

With your cooperation and effort, the CCBOH will increase the number of males in Clayton County receiving quality health services, ultimately ensuring a “Healthier Clayton in One Generation.” For more information about how to become a partner, contact the Clayton County Board of Health at (678) 479-2214.