

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The Arlington Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”) is the Department overseeing the Health Department, Council on Aging, Youth Counseling Center, and the Veterans’ Services Office. HHS also coordinates the activities of the following boards and commissions: Board of Health, Board of Youth Services, Council on Aging, Disability Commission, and the Human Rights Commission. Additionally, the HHS works with the Food Pantry, Widows Trust Fund Commission, Youth Health and Safety Coalition, and the Health and Human Services Charitable Corporation.

The mission of the Department of Health and Human Services is to protect the health of the public and assist residents with accessing basic human needs.



BOARD OF HEALTH

The three member Board of Health meets on a regular basis. At the meetings, environmental health concerns are addressed, public hearings are held, and policy review is performed. The Board of Health met seven times in 2014 and conducted the following hearings: two food code variance requests, four tobacco sales violations, four housing code violations, and four keeping-of-hens permit requests. The Board granted one food code variance request, suspended four tobacco sales permits for seven consecutive days, granted four keeping-of-hens permits, and voted to uphold all orders to correct housing code violations in question.

Additionally, the Board reviewed and voted to amend Regulations Restricting the Sale of Tobacco Products and Nicotine Delivery Products to include a ban on the sale of flavored tobacco and nicotine delivery products. The ban will take effect on March 1, 2015.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Health Department Office is located at 27 Maple Street in the Arlington Senior Center, located behind Town Hall. The Board of Health is required by State statutes and regulations to perform many important and crucial duties relative to the protection of public health and safety, the control of disease, the promotion of safe and sanitary living conditions, and the protection of the environment from damage and pollution. These

mandated requirements are fulfilled by environmental health staff and public health nursing within the Health Department.

Environmental Health Permitting and Inspections

Staff annually permits and regularly inspects restaurants, tobacco retailers, tanning establishments, body art establishments, swimming pools, chicken coops, camps, the ice-skating rink and three bathing beaches. Inspectors from the Department also investigate numerous resident complaints related to any health issue within the community, ranging from trash and dumpster complaints to housing code violations and noise and odor concerns. The environmental health division is comprised of two full time inspectors. The Department also contracts with three food safety consultants to conduct a portion of mandated food establishment inspections.

The Department has worked diligently over the past year to update existing regulations, apply for grants, and conduct mandated inspections. The Department continues to work closely with other Town agencies (police, fire, inspectional services, council on aging, schools, public works, etc.) to address public health issues in the community.

In an effort to meet growing inspectional needs, the Department applied for and was selected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to serve as a host site for their Public Health Associate Program (PHAP). The Program provides a paid public health associate to the health department for a two year period. The public health associate assists the Health Department with a variety of public health issues, including code enforcement and program development.

Tobacco Control

In 2014, the Board voted to amend the Regulations Restricting the Sale of Tobacco Products and Nicotine Delivery Products to include a ban on the sale of flavored tobacco and nicotine delivery products. The ban will take effect on March 1, 2015. In 2014, staff conducted fifty-eight tobacco compliance checks, which resulted in four violations where tobacco was sold to a minor. Said violations resulted in the suspension of each establishment’s tobacco sales permit for seven consecutive days and a fine of \$100. The Department also issued one citation to a food establishment for smoking inside the workplace.

The Department also worked closely with the Arlington Housing Authority to help support efforts to make their five properties (Drake Village, Winslow Towers, Chestnut Manor, Cusack Terrace, and Menotomy Manor) smoke free. The Department applied for and was awarded funding through the Sanborn Foundation to provide smoking cessation support and programs to all interested residents at these properties. The Hous-

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ing Authority plans to implement the smoke free housing initiative in April 2015.

Keeping of Hens

The Health Department is charged with enforcing the Keeping of Hens/Poultry Bylaw. Any resident who wishes to keep hens as pets or for the purposes of home egg production, gardening, or similar purposes must obtain a Permit to Keep Hens from the Board of Health. In 2014, the Department reviewed four applications, issued eight permits and conducted twelve inspections of hen coops/pens.

Swimming Pools

There are 9 semi-public swimming pools in Arlington that are inspected by the Department on an annual basis to ensure compliance with 105 CMR 435.000: Minimum Standards for Swimming Pools (State Sanitary Code: Chapter V). The 8 outdoor swimming pools, located at various apartment buildings in Town and the Winchester Country Club, are inspected in the spring/early summer prior to opening for the season. The Arlington Boys and Girls Club is the only indoor semi-public pool in the Town that is open year round.

Recreational Camps for Children

The Department issued six recreational camp permits in 2014 and inspected each of them to ensure compliance with the minimum housing, health, safety and sanitary protections for children in the care of camps that operate in the Town of Arlington.

Permit Issued	2011	2012	2013	2014
Food	324	345	366	357
Tobacco	28	27	25	20
Waste Hauler	12	14	13	15
Funeral Director	3	4	4	8
Tanning Establishment	2	2	1	1
Public Pool	8	8	8	9
Public Beach	3	3	3	3
Ice Rink	1	1	1	1
Keeping of Hens*	1	4	6	8
Camps	7	3	3	6
Body Art Establishment	1	1	1	1
Body Art Practitioner	2	2	2	2
Bodywork Establishment **	NA	NA	3	0
Bodywork Therapist **	NA	NA	1	0
Total	390	412	435	431

*Keeping of Hens Bylaw was approved at Town Meeting 5/6/2009.

**Bodywork regulations were implemented on 11/1/2013

Inspection Type	2011	2012	2013	2014
Food Establishment	430	565	716	642
Tobacco Compliance Check	0	52	68	58
Housing	152	202	180	205
Demolition Inspection	14	10	11	17
Nuisance Inspection	102	226	256	297
Keeping of Hens*	1	5	9	12
Bodywork Establishment**	NA	NA	20	10
Total	699	1060	1260	1241

*Keeping of Hens Bylaw was approved at Town Meeting 5/6/2009.

**Bodywork regulations were implemented on 11/1/2013



Health compliance officer conducts food inspection.

Food Protection

In accordance with 105 CMR 590.000: Minimum Sanitation Standards for Food Establishments, the Health Department is required, as the regulatory authority, to enforce the provisions of this code. The purpose of this code is to safeguard public health and provide to consumers food that is safe, unadulterated, and honestly presented. This code establishes definitions, sets standards for management and personnel, food operations, and equipment facilities, and provides for food establishment plan review, permit issuance, inspection, employee restriction, and permit suspension.

The Department assigns each food establishment a risk-based category. A food establishment that sells packaged food, such as a convenience store, is considered low risk and is assigned to a category one and is inspected one time per year. A food establishment that serves food to a highly susceptible population, such as a nursing home, is considered high risk and is assigned a category four and is inspected four times per year.

In 2014 the Department issued 202 food establishment permits and conducted 542 routine and follow-up food inspections. Additionally, the Department issued 152 temporary food establishment permits, including the Farmers Market permits, and inspected ninety-seven temporary food vendors, including those at events such as the Feast of the East, Taste of Arlington, Greek Festival, Farmer's Market, Town Day and other various public events throughout the year.

The Department also investigated twenty-three

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

food complaints and held four administrative hearings to discuss food safety. The Board heard testimony from two establishments applying for variances from the 105 CMR 590.000; only one was granted. Fourteen new food establishments opened or changed ownership, including three residential kitchens, and eleven establishments closed.

Type of Food Permit	2011	2012	2013	2014
Food Establishment Permits	173	177	181	187
Mobile Food Permits	6	3	3	3
Residential Kitchen Permits	8	10	11	15
Farmers Market Permits	12	12	13	14
Temporary Event Food Permit	125	143	158	138

Housing

The Department conducted 205 inspections of rental and owner-occupied housing units in 2014 in accordance with 105 Code of Massachusetts Regulations 410.000, Massachusetts Housing Code. When a housing inspection is requested by a resident, an inspector conducts the inspection and may cite a landlord for violations of the housing code. The landlord is then ordered to correct violations and an inspector conducts a final inspection to verify the violations have been corrected. Violations documented in 2014 included: unsanitary living conditions, insufficient heat, water damage, leaking plumbing fixtures, lead paint determinations, and insect and rodent infestations.

The Hoarding Response Team (HRT) investigated eight new hoarding cases and followed up twelve ongoing cases. The HRT is a collaboration between Police, Fire and Health officials. The team consists of two health inspectors, a police officer and a clinical responder. In most cases, the team was able to work with the individuals to bring the homes into compliance without condemning the property. The Department did, however, condemn one property due to uninhabitable conditions. The team conducted nine presentations to other municipalities as well as Boston University, regarding the Health Department's approach to hoarding cases.

The Department continues to work closely with the Council on Aging, Veteran Services, and Minuteman



More than 400 residents received flu shots at Town Day in 2014.

Senior Services to assist senior residents with alternate housing and services, such as cleaning and organizing.

In 2014 the Department conducted seventeen inspections at properties awaiting demolition in order to ensure the health and safety of the site. The inspection requires asbestos removal, pest control, dust control, and other control measures to protect the health of the public.

Public Health Nursing

Influenza and Pneumonia Vaccinations

The Health Department, with the assistance of the Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) volunteers, administered 2,300 vaccinations in 2014, a 7% increase over 2013. The increase is particularly impressive given the increased competition from pharmacies in the area. The vaccination clinics continue to receive positive feedback from residents, who appreciate the convenience and efficiency of the clinics. The clinics also serve as practice for the Department's emergency preparedness plan should the Town be faced with a crisis. The Health Department is thankful to the MRCs, who provided 300 volunteer hours of medical and non-medical support that made the vaccination clinics such a success.

The Health Department continues to coordinate with the University of Massachusetts and Northeastern University to provide nursing students with public health experience. Nursing students assist HHS with a number of activities, including administering flu shots, well being visits with seniors, and outreach and education related to health promotion activities.

Communicable Disease Surveillance

To protect the community against the spread of contagious illnesses, Arlington continued to work with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) in conducting online disease reporting through the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiology Network (MAVEN). State law requires that doctors, hospitals, and laboratories report contagious diseases including, diseases such as tuberculosis, whooping cough, and salmonella. When a doctor diagnoses a resident with a contagious disease, the public health nurse is mandated to conduct an investigation to determine if further control measures are needed. The illness is then recorded and reviewed to identify and respond to any possible disease outbreaks. The online reporting system has streamlined disease investigation and has assisted the MDPH with early detection of contagious disease trends beyond community boundaries.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Communicable Disease Monitored by Public Health Nurse	2011	2012	2013*	2014
Amebiasis	2	0	0	0
Babesiosis	0	1	2	1
Campylobacter Enteritis	17	11	10	14
Chicken pox	0	2	3	7
ClostridiumPerfringens**				1
Cryptosporidiosis	1	1	0	0
Dengue Fever**				3
Enterovirus	0	0	0	2
Giardia	5	4	3	4
Haemophilis Influenzae	2	1	0	0
Hepatitis A	0	0	1	0
Hepatitis B (chronic)	5	14	21	12
Hepatitis B (acute)		1	0	0
Hepatitis C (acute)		1	6	2
Hepatitis C (chronic)	21	30	31	33
Hepatitis E		1	0	0
Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis		1	2	2
Influenza	5	19	60	104
Invasive Bacterial Infection	1	1	1	0
Legionellosis	2	2	3	2
Lyme Disease	3	24	39	41
Malaria	0	0	1	2
Measles	0	0	4	4
Meningitis	1	0	0	0
Mumps	0	0	2	0
Norovirus	0	2	0	1
Novel Coronavirus				1
Pertussis	4	6	2	0
Rubella		1	0	1
Salmonella	5	1	4	6
Shigatoxin	1	0	0	0
Shigellosis	1	1	1	1
Strep pneumonia invasive	2	3	1	4
Group A strep	1	0	0	3
Group B strep	3	3	0	3
Toxoplasmosis		1	3	0
Tuberculosis (active)	5	5	4	1
Tuberculosis contacts	0	6	4	0
Tuberculosis A/B			2	5
Tuberculosis Latent**		34	42	31
Vibrio sp.	1	1	1	0
West Nile Virus	0	1	0	0
Yersiniosis	0	1	0	0
Total	88	180	253	291

* 2013 includes contact, and suspected cases in addition to probable and confirmed cases.

** Tuberculosis Latent added in 2012. Dengue Fever and Clostridium Perfringens added in 2014.

Weights and Measures

To ensure compliance with the Consumer and Merchant Protection Act, the Sealer of Weights and Measures conducts inspections of all scales, scanners, and dispensing equipment. This includes retail stores, gas stations, oil trucks and food establishments. The Sealer responds to all consumer complaints to ensure fairness and accuracy.

As merchants are inspected annually, compliance with standards and accuracy of merchant measuring

devices has increased steadily. The Sealer of Weights and Measures determines the amount of savings by computing the amount of fuel pumped each year from a particular measuring device such as a gas pump.

Since 2010 the Department has been contracting with the Town of Belmont to provide sealing services. This arrangement was developed to address a lack of a sealer of weights in measures in the Town of Belmont.

Device Sealed 2014	Arlington	Belmont
Scales 10 lbs and under	13	5
Scales 100lbs and under	100	60
Gasoline pump meters	143	130
Vehicle tank meters (heating oil trucks)	31	0
Taxi Cab Meters	18	0
Bulk heating oil tank meters	3	0
Bottle and can return dispensers	4	5
Individual Weights	0	144
Other devices	3	0
Total	315	344

ARLINGTON YOUTH COUNSELING CENTER (AYCC) & BOARD OF YOUTH SERVICES



The Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC), a division of Health and Human Services, is a community-based and fully licensed, mental health counseling center. It is the mission of AYCC to promote and support the social and emotional wellbeing of all Arlington's youth and families, regardless of ability to pay. AYCC provides direct individual and family counseling, psychiatric evaluation and consultation, medication treatment, support and prevention groups for targeted populations, and case management to Arlington residents struggling with basic resource needs. AYCC collaborates extensively with other local, youth-serving agencies to remain fully integrated in the community and responsive to its mental and behavioral health needs.

For AYCC, 2014 was marked by continued growth as an agency and increased capabilities to address the social and emotional health needs of children, adolescents and families in the community. To meet the high demand for services, AYCC hired five new fee-for-ser-

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES



Interactive "Feelings Board" at Arlington Town Day

vice clinicians, and brought on two clinical interns for the school year. AYCC's team of 24 clinicians effectively reduced the client wait list to zero by September, and managed to keep it low for the remainder of the year.

Through individual, group and family counseling, AYCC served over 300 children, adolescents and families in 2014, including 185 new clients. In addition, AYCC expanded its school-based counseling services to include all seven of the Arlington elementary schools, the Ottoson Middle School and Arlington High School. Through specialized, school-based groups, including a substance abuse prevention group at the high school, and a social dynamics group at the middle school, AYCC was able to offer support to high risk and vulnerable students who would not otherwise have access to such services. Likewise, through Arlington Public Schools' Project Success program, AYCC provided individual counseling, during the school day, to over 50 elementary school students referred to AYCC by school personnel.

In addition to providing high-quality and increasingly accessible mental health services to Arlington youth and families, AYCC continued to focus on fundraising initiatives and achieving financial sustainability, strengthening community partnerships, providing educational and skills-building opportunities to staff, and securing grants to expand or create new programs to support vulnerable and underserved populations in the community.



Registration tent at the 5th Annual Team Up for AYCC Soccer Tournament

2014 AYCC Highlights

- In collaboration with the Board of Youth Services and other volunteer organizers, AYCC raised over \$35,000 from fundraising events, including the 5th Annual Team Up for AYCC Soccer Tournament, and the 4th Annual Night Out on the Town Gala. Separately, AYCC raised over \$20,000 in donations from generous residents and organizations in the community.
- Through their ongoing support, leadership and advocacy on behalf of AYCC, Senator Ken Donnelly and Representative Sean Garballey were able to secure critical funding from the State to support community-based mental health services at AYCC.
- For the 4th year in a row, AYCC was the beneficiary of High Rock Church's Annual Christmas Benefit Concert. Proceeds from the concert help fund case management services overseen by AYCC and offered to Arlington residents with basic resource needs.
- AYCC received grant funding from a number of local and federal sources, including the Symmes Foundation, CDBG, the Community Health Network Area (CHNA) 17, and Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
- AYCC was awarded \$20,000 from CHNA17 to increase community supports for survivors of domestic violence.
- AYCC completed its third of a three year CHNA17 grant to support intervention and treatment services for substance-involved youth. This year, these services included weekly groups for parents of challenging or substance-abusing teens. Also, as a culminating project for the grant, AYCC clinicians, AHS students, parents and other community members participated in a collaborative art project, creating a data mural depicting the important work and accomplishments of the three-year project.
- In honor of beloved Board of Youth Services member Malachy Shaw Jones, who passed away in August, AYCC established a fund to help subsidize the cost of providing psychiatric evaluation, consultation and medication to AYCC clients. To date, the Malachy Shaw Jones fund has raised over \$7,000.
- Through the First Step Program, AYCC ran weekly groups and offered ongoing support and guidance to survivors of domestic violence.
- AYCC continued to develop the knowledge

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

and clinical expertise of its staff by organizing regular trainings on topics including, Adolescents and Substance Use, Families Dealing with Substance Abuse, Workplace Safety for Clinicians, Suicide Prevention, Sandplay Therapy, and Group Work.

- In collaboration with the Board of Youth Services and other community partners, AYCC organized and participated in a number of community initiatives, including two community discussions on domestic violence, Arlington Town Day, and food and gift drives (Thanksgiving Baskets and Holiday Help programs) for Arlington families in need.



Data Mural reflecting AYCC's efforts to address youth substance use.

COUNCIL ON AGING

The Arlington Council on Aging (COA), a division of the Department of Health & Human Services, primary responsibilities are to identify the needs of Arlington's elder population, and to design, promote, and implement services and programs to address such needs. In addition, the COA coordinates existing services in the community on behalf of the senior, as well as providing various town offices vital information factoring in the needs of the elder population making Arlington a dignified and livable community for its older community members.



The growing number of seniors is a developing challenge for the Town of Arlington. The 2010 federal census counted 9,245 elders (60+) in Arlington which when projected to 2030 suggest that one-third of the projected population of Arlington, or 15,193 residents, will be seniors (Metropolitan Area Planning Council).

The COA staff continues to serve increasing numbers of seniors and their concerned adult children re-

garding financial distress with housing, food, fuel costs, and rising medical related costs. COA staff is concerned with the increasing trend of anxiety and depression among older adults. The COA utilizes the collective staff experience in providing information leading to indirect and direct access to aging resources for seniors, their families, and community organizations in an effort to lead a dignified life in Arlington. Strong relationships exist through collaborations with Arlington's Emergency Services, DPW, and the entities within Health and Human Services. The staff exhausts all resources to address these concerns; however, many needs are often unmet due to limited social services.



Volunteers attend monthly "Coffee and Conversation."

The COA serves as a field-training site for students from UMASS Boston, UMASS Lowell, Northeastern, Simmons College, Wheelock College, and Salem State University.

Transportation within the COA is a very active component of COA's services. The Van operation utilizes a number of resources including volunteers to meet the needs of the seniors in Arlington. As an enterprise fund, the COA Van Transportation is dependent upon generous grants from The Trustees of the Symmes Hospital, CDBG allocations, and small fees collected from riders. Transportation is a critical component of COA's mission as it helps reduce isolation by providing a means to be actively engaged in COA programs and the community. Further, transportation reduces barriers related to access to health care. There are three options seniors have access to: the COA Van, Dial-A-Ride Taxi, and Medical Escort.

Two hundred and fifteen volunteers support the organization, providing 8,847 volunteer hours per year. Their collective participation in key areas such as administrative support, program development, program operations, medical escort, and annual programs such as the Thanksgiving Day Meal delivery and the Holiday Stocking program through the Friends of Arlington COA, is equivalent to 4.86 FTE's with a minimum cost savings to the Town of Arlington of \$70,776 (\$8/hr). COA staff are beyond grateful to the many hands and hours these outstanding volunteers contribute to the mission of the COA. Volunteers are honored for their service at an annual luncheon.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

The Senior Center also hosts Minuteman Senior Services which operates the “Eating Together” Meal site at the Senior Center and provides home-delivered “Meals-on-Wheels.”

COA Highlights for 2014:

- Received a \$30,000 grant from the Elizabeth and George L. Sanborn Foundation for the Treatment and Cure for Cancer, Inc. to provide rides to seniors for cancer treatments.
- Received a \$15,000 grant from the Symmes Hospital Funding for Medical Transportation to supplement the COA Van budget to provide seniors rides to medical appointments.
- Received an \$8,069 mini grant from the Friends of the Arlington Council on Aging to support health and wellness programs, social functions, and emergency financial assistance for the benefit of Arlington Seniors.
- Received an \$8,500 mini grant from Lahey Clinic and Medical Hospital to support health and wellness programs.
- Received a \$3,724 Service Incentive Grant through the Executive Office of Elder Affairs to create, develop and implement programs supporting the Personal and Economic Safety of Arlington seniors. Working with The Greater Boston Legal Service, local and state legislators, and the Arlington Police Department, COA was able to reach over 175 seniors through this program.
- Received a \$4,000 grant through a National Council on Aging initiative called the Aging Mastery Program. This program is a pilot program and the Arlington Council on Aging was one of 19 COAs to receive the grant. This program ran for twelve weeks and the response was tremendous; there was a 90% retention rate.
- Received a \$10,000 grant from Lahey Clinic and Hospital to focus on mental and behavior health for Arlington seniors. The COA will collaborate with the Arlington Police Department and other area agencies.
- Became a host agency for Operation A.B.L.E. which provides training for older adults; the COA has one candidate that works 20 hours/week learning and contributing to the agency efforts.
- Became a host agency for National Senior Network, Inc. which provides training for older adults; the COA has one candidate that works 17 hours/week learning and contributing to the agency efforts.
- COA implemented over 80 programs in 2014
- COA assisted 69 individuals with Fuel Assis-

stance Applications.

- Increased ridership through COA Transportation by 101 individuals, providing 11,538 one way rides.
- Provided over 2,000 units of health services, including podiatry, blood pressure, flu and pneumonia clinics.
- Collaborated with the Arlington Police Department, the Elder Abuse Task Force, and the Arlington Fire Department to deliver Senior “Fire Safe” programs.
- With the support from the Arlington Redevelopment Board, Town Management, and local legislators, the COA was able to secure three private offices for staff clinicians to secure the confidentiality for seniors seeking services.
- Received a small grant from the Friends of Arlington COA to provide emergency transportation when other means were not available.
- Surpassed our goal of increasing new contact with Arlington seniors; served 458 more through Social Work, served 98 new individuals in programs, and increased ridership by 101 new riders in the COA Transportation program.

Community Partnering Efforts

Partnering with municipal and community organizations creates productive relationships and more efficient means to deliver programs and services helping us to meet the mission of the COA. Minuteman Senior Services serves as our Aging Service Access Point (ASAP). COA would be limited in program support and selection without the Arlington Recreation Department (Walk the Rink), Arlington Boys and Girls Club (Arthritis Exercise Class), Retired Men’s Club, & Bateman Catering (Thanksgiving Meal), and the Friends of Arlington Council on Aging. Other new partnerships that provide interns include UMASS Lowell, Northeastern University, Operation A.B.L.E., and National Senior Network.



Senator Donnelly kicks off Walk the Rink Program

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Organizations such as AARP and SHINE provide free tax preparation and health insurance guidance while Rick Fenton and Noreen Murphy continue to donate their time monthly providing free consultation on financial matters and elder law issues respectively.

The COA appreciates the support from the Arlington Schools. The Arlington High School Football team provided free fall cleanup to 26 households, while the Ottoson Middle School, under the LINKS Program, assisted seniors with shoveling and light outside tasks. The Bishop, Brackett, and St. Agnes elementary schools designed and provided Thanksgiving and holiday cards for more than 150 seniors. My Place To Grow entertained seniors at the Senior Center with holiday songs. This multigenerational relationship benefits both seniors and youth in Town.



Middlesex District Attorney Launches Senior Health and Safety Program.

Goals for 2015

- Increase new contacts in all categories by 10%.
- Continue to seek grants to fund creative and dynamic programs which enhance the lives of Arlington seniors.
- Enhance the Senior Center physical plant
- Continue to expand relationships with other municipal departments.

ARLINGTON YOUTH HEALTH AND SAFETY COALITION (AYHSC)

Arlington Youth Health and Safety Coalition (“AYHSC”) is a federally funded community-based coalition working to prevent and reduce substance abuse and other risk behaviors that adversely affect youth in Arlington. AYHSC includes representatives from public sector (police, schools, healthcare, local government) and private agencies (churches, businesses, youth-serving organizations), as well as parents and youth. Employing a public health approach to prevention and intervention, AYHSC focuses on population level change through education, environmental initiatives, policy development, and improving youth access to treatment.

In 2014, after a year-long funding hiatus, AYHSC

received federal funding from the Drug Free Communities Program (DFC), for an additional five year grant cycle. A new AYHSC Director and Coordinator were hired to resume all grant activities. AYHSC also received grant funding from Mount Auburn Hospital (CHNA 17) and the Sanborn Foundation, as well as generous in-kind support from Arlington Public Schools, Arlington Police Department, Department of Health and Human Services, Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC), Arlington Recreation, and Arlington Center for the Arts. AYHSC members and community partners volunteered in the planning, implementation and evaluation of prevention activities, which are highlighted below.

2014 AYHSC Highlights

- Hosted “The Tool Box: Tricks of the Trade for Raising Teenagers,” a community forum with 150 participants featuring Karren Garrity, author of the book about parenting teens.
- Organized “Arlington Town Day Drug Take-Back” to help community members rid their homes of commonly abused medications.
- Collaborated with AYCC on a data mural project depicting three years of grant-funded work identifying and treating substance involved youth.
- Presented results of the 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) to Arlington school committee.
- Conducted two five-week series of *Guiding Good Choices* workshops, a parenting program to improve family management and communication, and reduce risk factors for youth substance abuse.
- Awarded \$10,000 Youth Leadership grant from Community Health Network Area (CHNA 17) to support youth initiatives in preventing substance abuse among their peers.
- Engaged Arlington High School students in designing posters to raise awareness of services provided by AYCC.

VETERANS’ SERVICES

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts began providing services for veterans following the Revolutionary War. In 1861, the legislature formalized Chapter 115 and the establishment of the Department of Veteran Services. By directive, each town is required by to maintain a Veterans’ Service Department to provide benefits to veterans and dependents.

Benefits are available through the state (Chapter 115) and from federal agencies (Veterans’ Administration). State benefits are based on “means tests” and provide financial and medical assistance for veterans and dependents. Additional services for food, shelter,

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

clothing and housing are available. Bonuses and annuities are available to veterans that provided wartime service to our nation. Annuity payments are provided to 100% service connected disabled veterans and Gold Star survivors. Support services are provided for educational benefits, employment benefits and housing services. Support services are also provided for military funerals.



Veterans Services Director presides over Memorial Day Services

In February 2014, the Town hired a new Director of Veterans' Services as a result of the retirement of the previous Director. In addition to the state level benefits discussed above, the Director assists veterans in filing applications seeking federal service connected disability compensation. Assistance is provided to veterans seeking federal pensions for non-service connected pensions. Additionally, Veterans Services provides support and direction to veterans seeking enrollment in the VA Healthcare System.

Commemorative ceremonies were conducted for Memorial Day and Veterans Day. For Memorial Day, Veterans Services decorated over 5,500 veterans' graves at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and St. Paul's Cemetery with flags and also assured the maintenance of the veterans' burial lots.

On July 3, 2014, the Veterans Services' Department dedicated the William L. Reardon, Jr. Veterans Resource Center during a ceremony conducted at the Town Hall. The new resource center allows veterans to access a variety of resources to enhance and develop skills for their personal betterment. The center was dedicated to PVT Reardon who was raised in Arlington and was mortally wounded following the invasion in Normandy during World War II. The Resource Center is located within the Veterans Services' Department in the Town Hall Annex.

In 2014, Veterans Services fielded the following requests: ninety-eight inquiries for Chapter 115 Benefits; twenty-eight new veterans/dependents enrolled in Chapter 115 Benefits; twenty-nine requests for military discharge documents; forty-one inquiries regarding VA Healthcare enrollment; forty-five inquiries regarding federal service connected disability pensions; nine inquires regarding federal Aid and Attendance claims; eleven housing inquiries and eighty-four Administrative requests/inquires.

2014 Veterans Services Highlights

- Dedication of the William L. Reardon, Jr. Veterans Resource Center, which provides veterans access to a variety of resources to enhance and develop skills for their personal betterment.
- Organized Veterans Day parade and held commemorative ceremony to remember the veterans who bravely served our country.
- Decorated more than 5,500 veterans' graves at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and St. Paul's Cemetery with flags for Memorial Day.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC or Commission) was created by Town Meeting in 1993 to advance issues related to the fair and equal treatment of individuals and to create a mechanism for addressing complaints arising out of these issues. The mission of the AHRC is to work individually and collaboratively with other groups in the community to celebrate the ever-changing tapestry of Arlington, and to emphasize, through educational outreach, the danger of intolerance at every level. The Town Manager, School Committee, and the Town Moderator have appointing authority for the thirteen member Commission.

Citizen's forum allows citizens to present issues or concerns relating to equality and fairness at each Commission meeting. In two instances, the Commission has taken action based on citizen concerns:

- In response to a citizen request that the Commission assess the need for a town official to serve as a central clearinghouse for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer (LGBTQ) issues, the Commission established a subcommittee to develop a needs assessment and survey for the town's LGBTQ community.
- In response to a citizen request, the Commission established a joint subcommittee with the Arlington School Committee to investigate allegations of a discriminatory bias in school discipline.

Although the Commission fielded several inquiries from residents, none resulted in a formal complaint. The Commission continues to work with the Arlington Police Department (APD) and the Arlington Public Schools (APS) to learn of, track and, where necessary, address incidents involving graffiti, texting, racist speech, anti-Semitic speech and threats, and racial profiling. The Commission collected the following information regarding hate incidents occurring in Town from citizens and the APD.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Complaints of tagging/Graffiti of hate messages	2
Hate crimes/Incidents forward to Commission from APD	3
Other hate incidents	1
Differential treatment based on protected status	3
Concerns of racial profiling	1
Other	3

2014 AHRC Highlights

- Celebrated the tenth anniversary of Marriage Equality by sponsoring a featurette, which captured moments inside and outside Arlington Town Hall on May 17, 2004, as its doors opened for same-sex couples to apply for marriage licenses.
- Co-sponsored an event featuring the screening of "Miss Representation," a documentary film about the insidious media messages bombarding children and young adults. Over fifty people attended the event and the ensuing discussion, including young people and adults. The Commission co-sponsored the event with the Arlington Public School's Parent Education Forum.
- Continued to provide a liaison to Ottoson Middle School's (OMS) Building Respect Task Force which began in April 2010, in the wake of a hate incident that brought together school leaders, community members, parents, and students to develop a positive response and prevent further acts of prejudice and bullying at OMS. The Commission has been intimately involved with the Task Force since its inception.
- Established relationships between the AHRC and each of Arlington's public schools. Additionally, an AHRC commissioner joined the regular meetings held between representatives from the Diversity Task Force and the APS Superintendent.
- In response to an op-ed in the Arlington Advocate, the Commission wrote a commentary published in May 2014 emphasizing the critical role METCO plays in the Arlington Public Schools.
- Began actively communicating events and activities to the public through Facebook and Twitter as a cost-effective way to expand our public outreach on matters relating to the Commission and to promote events that celebrate the diversity of Arlington.
- Continued to update its website to increase user friendliness and accessibility.
- Continued its co-sponsorship of the Martin

Luther King Celebration.

- Featured an historical timeline of the Commission's twenty years' work at Town Day.
- Collaborated with the Diversity Task Force in the wake of events in Ferguson, MO and New York City.
- Continued to spearhead the Response Coordination Team (RCT), which has developed a protocol to be used in the event of a hate incident or hate crime.

2015 Goals

- Continue to foster the school liaison program
- Establish Commission liaisons for the private schools in town.
- Sponsor dialogues on other issues of interest to Arlington residents.
- Prepare and conduct a Needs Assessment Survey for the LBGTQ community
- Participate in Town Day.
- Increase collaboration with relevant Town groups.
- Increase outreach to other community groups.

COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

In its twenty-first year of service, the Commission on Disability continued to provide information, referral, guidance, and technical assistance to Arlington officials, residents, public and private agencies, and others to ensure that people with physical, sensory, cognitive, mental illnesses, and other disabilities have equal access to town facilities, services, and programs. The Commission when at full membership has nine volunteer commissioners. As mandated by State law, the majority of Commissioners have a disability. The mandate brings an intimate and informed understanding of disabilities to the Commission's agenda and ultimate decisions. The Commission continues to bring awareness to Arlington policy makers and other residents as to the legal rights of people with disabilities, enforcing those rights, and working towards community inclusion to make Arlington a stronger town by capitalizing on the strengths that each person living and working here has to offer.

Commission Activities

- Co-sponsored the sixth annual Diversity Career Fair at Arlington Town Hall. Thirty employers from health care, financial, retail, and non-profit organizations participated in the career fair.
- Installed sixty curb cut ramps.
- Had an information booth at Town Day 2014 to answer questions and provide resources about disability legislation.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

- Reviewed and issued recommendations on several variance requests that had been submitted to the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board.
- Continued to meet with Town Officials to discuss the rights of people with disabilities in order to work towards full community inclusion within the Town of Arlington.
- Purchased six additional assistive listening devices for use at Town Hall meetings.
- Met with the Town's Economic Development Coordinator to identify possible entry access improvements at public accommodations.
- Worked with the True Story Theatre to help promote and identify challenges faced by individuals with visible and invisible disabilities.
- Monitor compliance of the Massachusetts Avenue Corridor Project with disability regulations.
- Work with the True Story Theatre in 2015, with a focus on people with mental illness and other invisible and visible disabilities. In order to make our community more aware and educated about this significant group of people.
- Will continue to identify areas where curb cuts are needed and will work with Town Departments for improvement of snow and ice removal.
- Will summarize rules and responsibilities of the Commission and laws of the Commonwealth that pertain to disability regulations.
- The Commission meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00pm in the conference room of the Housing and Disability Program Office located in Suite 203, 20 Academy St., Arlington (the Senior Center Building). Meetings are open to the public and residents are invited to attend to observe or voice their concerns.

Goals for 2015

- Continue to advocate for a safer driveway, sidewalk surfaces and improved accessible parking spaces at the Senior Center Building.
- In observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act into law on July 26, 1990, the Commission will plan and/or participate in an appropriate event to honor this anniversary during July 2015.
- Continue to advocate for and ensure the rights of Arlington residents living with disabilities.
- Co-sponsor the seventh Annual Diversity Career Fair with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission.

