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COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

July 25, 2016

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, NY 14202

RE: Bi-annual report on Initiatives for a Stronger Community

Dear Honorable Members:

Please find attached the 2016 bi-annual report for Initiatives for a Stronger Community. The report covers January 2016 through June 2016 and demonstrates some considerable progress towards completion of many initiatives.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the findings of this report with your Health and Human Services Committee at your convenience.

Should your Honorable Body require further information, I encourage you to contact Deputy County Executive, Maria Whyte. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

MCP/mw



MEMORANDUM COUNTY OF ERIE DEPT. OF HEALTH

TO: Mark C. Poloncarz, Erie County Executive
Maria Whyte, Deputy County Executive
Erie County Legislature

FROM: Benjamin Q. Swanekamp, Executive Assistant-Health

DATE: July 22, 2016

RE: Initiatives for Stronger Community-2016 Q1 & Q2 Biannual Reports

In June 2016, departmental staff provided periodic reports on the 49 initiatives comprising Initiatives for a Stronger Community for the time period between January-June 2016. This memo will summarize the reports and highlight the successes already achieved as well as any areas of concern.

Please refer to the attached spreadsheet for a complete listing of the initiatives and the status of each. A full compilation of the reports is also available for your review.

Completed Initiatives

To date, 15 initiatives have been completed, representing over 20% of the total. Completed initiatives are: convene pay equity roundtable, re-establish the Welfare Advisory Board, strengthen partnership between CPS and schools, publish annual community resource guide for youth programs, collaborate with stakeholders in improve Kinship Process, co-locate a mental health counselor and a CASAC in CPS, complete a chronic neglect study, increase participation in SNAP program to prevent hunger, Mr. Fitness Active Aging Video Clips, establish a New Americans Advisory Council, establish an assisted enroller program for public benefit programs, improve the coordination and delivery of care for mentally ill individuals in contact with the criminal justice system, establish professional support teams to help those discharged from psychiatric inpatient facilities and implement a Health Home-jail pilot.

In Progress Initiatives

33 of 49 initiatives are in progress, representing 67% of the total. There are initiatives in progress in all four sections. Eleven of the in-progress initiatives are at least 75% complete so the total number of completed initiatives in on track to increase by January 2017. These include initiatives like 1.7 pay equity certification on county contracts, 3.6 Increase the availability of fall prevention programming, 4.16 comprehensive outreach plan to better reach the disabled population.

See the attached spreadsheet for notes on individual projects including notes by initiative supervisors.

Initiatives Not Yet Begun

Only one initiative has yet begun (2.5) and this is due to a loss of previously available state funding.



Areas of Concern

There are no areas of concern to report at this time.

Conclusion

Of the 49 initiatives, a total of 48 (98%) are completed or underway. Substantial progress has been made the plan was launched and even more progress is expected by the next reports in January 2017.

Many of the initiatives in this project will be ongoing efforts. Even after reaching full, 100% implementation, work will continue. To reflect the ongoing nature of these initiatives, departments will be tasked to periodically report on their progress.

Excitingly, data is now coming back to the county to reflect on the success of some ongoing and completed initiatives. One outstanding example is initiative 2.1 “Expand Partnerships with Say YES to Education to Enhance Child-Well Being for Buffalo Students”. Since the inception of this initiative, graduation rates have increased by 12% and attendance has improved by 4%. Expansion of this initiative into refugee communities may yield further results.

Initiative Number	Initiative Name	Lead Department	Partners	Resources Secured	Notes	Reports Received?	Overall Status
1.1	PIVOT Pilot Programs with the Child Care Resource Network and the Amherst Chamber of Commerce Strengthen Connections Between ECIDA and Existing Workforce Development System	ECDSS	Amherst Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Buffalo	Amherst Chamber of Commerce was not able to provide the identified resources.	The current status of the project is in the development stage. Erie County has completed all of the identifiable goals and objectives of the project; however the Amherst Chamber of Commerce has been working on developing and securing employers that will be interested in partnering with the initiative.	Yes	Erie County has completed all of the identifiable goals and objectives of the initiative. However the Amherst Chamber of Commerce has been working on developing and securing employers that will be interested in partnering with the initiative. 35% complete.
1.2		ECIDA	WIB, WDC, ECIDA		Project is ongoing and will continue to be. This initiative requires speaking directly with employers and making them aware of advantages to hiring a person with a disability including tax incentives and increase in business. I continue to work with WNY Employment Consortium, Supported employment agencies, the Workforce Employment Partners group and ACCES-VR doing presentations and meeting employers. We will be hosting a career fair and mentoring day during disability awareness month.	No.	75% complete.
1.3	Educate Employers on the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities	ECCOD	ECEOO, Personnel Department, BNP, ACCESS-VR, WNY Employment Consortium, WNY Independent Living	No		Yes	10%
1.4	Develop Employment Opportunities for Individuals returning from State Prison	ECDMH	NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, Reentry Task Force, Spectrum Human Services, Cneter for Employment Opportunities, WDC, ECC, Mental Health Peer Connection	Yes, 100% from NVS DCJS	The Employment Subcommittee will report at the June Task Force meeting with recommendations to further evaluate community resources to improve employment opportunities and increase additional access points.	Yes	90% complete.

1.5	Issue Executive Order - Reducing Barriers to employment for people with criminal records	County Executive's Office	Personne, Purchasing, ECPD, Central Police Services, ECCEO, Center for Employment Opportunities		The Department of Law is drafting a local law and resolution for this initiative. Once the Local Law has been approved, the County can move forward with securing a contract with a fingerprinting agency for all of our prospective employees and current employees, previously not subject to NY Social Services Law Article 11, Section 488 et al, seeking positions that provide "Custodian" services as defined in the Protection of People with Special Needs Act (NY Social Services Law Article 11, Section 488 et al.	Yes.	80% Complete.
1.6	Convene Pay Equity Round Table	Erie County Commission on the Status of Women	ECOSS, Erie County Workforce Development, the WNY Women's Foundation, Veterans One-Stop Center, American Association of Unlversity Women, Junior League of Buffalo, Women's Business Center at Canisius, Planned Parenthood WNY	Yes.	The project is in operation. Initial review of pay equity data being performed for the ECIDA. The projected review completion date is July 15, 2016. A report will be issued to ECIDA by July 21, 2016. Personnel will continue to require additional interview for non-competitive appointments to insure a broad pool.	Yes	100% Complete, and successful.
1.7	Implement Executive Order #13: Pay Equity Certification on County Contracts	ECCEO	Erie County Attorney's Office, Division of Purchase, and all County Departments ECUSS, ECPA, ECVSA, ECOD, UNITED WAY or Buffalo and Erie County, People Inc, Arvest Posts, Buffalo Erie County Public libraries, NAACP	Yes. 80% secured from EC DEEO.		Yes	80% Complete. Target date for Pay Equity review on County contracts is Fall 2016.
1.8	Issue Executive Order Expanding Civil Service Outreach to Include a broader population	Department of Personnel and ECCEO		No.		Yes.	80% complete. Mindy will continue to plug away. 25% complete. Grant applications are in the hands of eligible property owners.
1.9	Rental Rehabilitation Program	ECDEP	Erie County DCBG Consortium, United State Department of Housing and Urban Development	\$138,000 pending from CDBG -2015 grant application to HUD	3 rental rehab projects completed as of 1/15/16.	Yes.	15% complete. Expected completion May 15th 2017.
1.10	New Rental Housing Incentive Program	ECDEP	TBD Non-profits.	\$75,000 pending from 2015 HOME Investment Partnership grant application submitted to HUD.	Awaiting receipt of grant	Yes.	25% complete.
1.11	Erie County Fair Housing Law	ECDEP	Town of Hamburg, Housing Opportunities Made Equal	Funding not required.	Draft law has been prepared by HOME and is under review by DEP and Law Department.	No.	100% Complete. Target date for review is August 2017.
1.12	Re-Establish the Welfare Advisory Board as a Poverty Committee.		Various County Departments	N/A	Complete and meeting.	Yes	Increased by 12% since inception (2014) - attendance improved by different variations (2015 -4%)100% Complete
2.1	Expand partnership with Say Yes Education to enhance child well-being for Buffalo Schools	ECOSS	Buffalo Public Schools, Say Yes Buffalo, Catholic Charities	Additional funding for all Buffalo Public Schools has been secured.	School-Based Preventive Services currently present in 40 Buffalo Public Schools - presently serving 166 families	Yes	Complete

2.7	Collaborate with stake-holders to improve kinship process	ECOSS	Family Court, Voluntary Agencies, Casey Family Programs and Attorney's for Children and Parents	N/A	Several bills were selected as a priority to push in 2016. Of the priority bills, one bill was passed by both houses of the State Legislature. One bill was approved in a previous session in an amended form.	Yes	100%
2.8	Lobby New York State for CPS Reform	Office of the County Executive	New York Public Welfare Association and New York State Association of Counties	N/A	Through these screenings the co-located team from Mid Erie has identified 280 families with cause for further assessment and of these 229 have been referred for a thorough and complete clinical assessment. Without this collaboration it is fair to say that many of these individuals would not have been identified and referred for further assessment and if recommended by the community provider an opportunity for appropriate treatment.	Yes	50% complete. Comm. 14E-16 Page 7 of 10
2.9	Co-locate a Mental Health Counselor and a CASAC in CPS	ECDMH and ECDS	Mid-Erie Counseling and Treatment Services, NYS OCFS	100% Secured through Preventive Dollars funding.	Study complete.	Yes	This service is ongoing and therefore will continue beyond the "project completion date", but once utilization is at or near full utilization its implementation will be considered to be completed. 100% Complete
2.10	Complete a Chronic Neglect Study and Incorporate Finding into Child Welfare Response	ECDS	UB School of Social Work	Funds from 2014 Budget.	Many community partners have made a significant time commitment to this initiative as well as sharing knowledge and resources.	Yes	collaborative efforts with community agencies and the schools in an effort to decrease the incidence of chronic neglect. 100% Complete
2.11	Develop and deliver an education curriculum to teach Children and their families how to have "Healthy Families and Healthy Relationships"	ECPA	ECDS, Erie County Coalition Against Family Violence, Child & Family Services, Crisis Services, Family Justice Center & Hispanics United	Not yet. Currently no identified funding source.	An additional restaurant has been added since January and we are currently formulating a plan to recruit food trucks	Yes	40% Complete.
3.10	Reinvigorate and Expand Healthy Choices Food Initiative	ECDOH	WNY Chapter NYS Restaurant Association, UB/SUCB School of Dietetics, Local Restaurants, Local Health Plans	40% of the funding has been secured from community partners.	Purchases of vegetables and fruits has been fairly good in one store and fair in the other. From our surveys done at the promotional event; most people have said that they liked having the fresh food and vegetable option available. The impact has been positive, but not large.	Yes	50% complete. This project is ongoing and we will continue to add sites until interest wans or technology makes the program obsolete
3.2	Provide and Promote Healthier Food in Neighborhoods underserved by major supermarket chains	ECDOH	P2 collaborative, Oshel foundation.	50% of funding secured.		Yes	40% complete. Still seeking 2 more locations.

3.3	Increase Participation in SNAP Program to Prevent Hunger	ECDSS	Food Bank of WNY, Local Food Pantries	100% Secured from DSS/Food Bank of WNY and Food Pantry Staff	The Food Bank of WNY has expanded their network of Erie County food pantries from 11 to 18 to be trained on the MyBenefits website, so they are able to directly assist clients with applying for SNAP benefits.	Yes	100% Complete. The initiative has impacted 18 community food pantries, in their ability to further assist clients in obtaining SNAP benefits directly to their community.
3.4	Expansion of Stay-Fit Dining Program	ECDSS/SV	Senior and community centers, refugee community stakeholders, community activities, Meals on Wheels of WNY, Ken-Ton Meals on Wheels, the Town of Amherst, Senior Services Advisory Board Members	100% secured.	Preservation Pub (Pride center) successfully opened in April serving the LGBTQ community. Eden site approved through Legislature and MOW of WNY agreed to serve the site, targeted to open early August (waiting for renovations to be completed). Town of Marilla and People Inc. (Marigold Manor Grand Island) have expressed interest in opening dining site.	Yes	60% Complete.
3.5	Increase the availability of reimbursable chronic disease self-management and diabetes self-management classes	ECDSS/SV	Niagara County Office for the Aging, Catholic Charities, Health Foundation of Western and Central New York, P2 Collaborative, UWBEC, Erie and Niagara County Senior Centers	Yes, 100% secured from Title III.	Appropriation for accreditation completed and submitted May 2016. All 10 perennial have MOU's and all sites have four sessions per year scheduled.	Yes	85% complete.
3.6	Increase the availability of fall prevention programming in Erie County	ECDSS/SV	BCBS, Independent Health; Univera, local senior centers, the Erie County Step Up to Stop Falls Coalition	Yes, 100% secured from CSE grant	Trainings successfully completed program is going well. Mr. Fitness presented at Preservation Pub possible start fitness program at their New Site.	Yes	75% complete. Expected completion 3rd quarter 2016.
3.7	Erie County Million Hearts Campaign	ECDOH	US DHHS, Catholic Health, Local Health Plans	70% Secured from community partners.	Initial surveys are complete, and heart disease mortality zip code maps have been developed.	Yes	70% complete, ongoing through the end of 2016.
3.8	Mr. Fitness Active Aging Video Clips	ECDSS/SV	Stall Geriatrics, TBD Senior Centers	Yes, 100% secured from Title III B.	Editing of Videos complete and have been released on social media	Yes	100% Complete.
3.44	Food Policy Council of Buffalo and Erie County	EDCOH	Erie County Board of Health, Healthy Kids Healthy Communities, BNMC, SUNY UB, D'Youville, CCE, School Districts, Local Farmers, WNY Restaurant Association, local waste hauler, Buffalo City Council, Erie County Departments, Buffalo Office of New Americans	No. Part time support from Councilman Rivera's Office and BNMC keep the project going.	\$50,000 for salary and fringers part time as well as office/supports including phone, computer access, etc. This is still a need if the Food Policy Council is to progress substantially. BNMC has currently agreed to provide staff support on a limited basis to ensure coordination of efforts short term.	Yes.	90%. Council has been formed and formalized as a subcommittee of the Erie County Board of Health.
4.1	Establish a New Americans Advisory Council	Office of the County Executive		N/A	Board has held several meetings now. Surveys completed and are being assembled.	Yes	100%
4.2	Assess service access for individuals with limited english proficiency	Office of the County Executive	County Departments, Resettlement Agencies	N/A	NYS Civil Service examinations require English proficiency.	No.	50%.
4.3	Increase languages spoken by employees to reflect language diversity in community	Personnel Department	ECSS and Resettlement Agencies			No.	50% complete. Ongoing project.

4.4	Implement Microenterprise Child Care for Refugee Communities	ECOSS	CCRN, Buffalo State College Business Development Center, Journey's End, Jewish Family Services	was awarded to support the expansion of the program. DSS continues to work with CCRN to support current enrollees and look for funding opportunities.	Plans are being developed to continue this program. Most of the target individuals for this project are on Medicaid, and are ineligible for this Medicare funded program.	Yes	Remains at 55% of funds seeking additional funding to expand program.
4.5	Implement a consumer-directed home care program for old adult caregivers and immigrants in urban settings	ECDSS/SV	Local Refugee Resettlement Agencies	Previously identified funding source is no longer available.	Early successes have already been highlighted by Monroe County and at a conference in Albany.	No.	5% complete 50% of 10 contracts are signed with faith-based organizations and program are up and running.
4.6	Assist Faith-based communities in rural Erie County to start and maintain older adult group respite programs	ECDSS/SV	Faith-Based Organizations	100% secured from Community Services for the Elderly	100% complete for implementation. Currently in ongoing phase.	Yes.	100% Complete. 10 Interns enrolled in the project. Assisted enrollee program implemented in 11 community based sites, including libraries and other organizations in the rural areas.
4.7	Establish an assisted enrollee program for public benefit programs	ECDSS	BECP, Faith-Based Organizations, Food Bank of WNY	Interns and community sites identified and selected.		Yes	50% complete
4.8	Assist Older Adults to Access Buffalo Senior Centers and Stay-Fix congregate dining sites	ECDSS/SV	Buffalo CarShare; Salvation Army	\$9,000	Next milestone will be relocation to 5 bed residence. Consultant selected. An authorizing resolution will be clocked in for 2/18/16.	Yes.	90% Complete. With the move to the larger facility it would be expected that this will be established in early fall 2016 and therefore, complete. We may leave it "open" for a period in 2017 to allow for follow up to achieve increased utilization.
4.9	Establish a short-term community based peer respite using a "Living Room" Model	ECDMH	Having Options Made Easy, BPC, Behavioral Health Service providers, NYSOMH	Yes. 100% from NYSOMH		Yes	15% Complete. Expected completion August 30th 2016.
4.10	Pursue the expansion of broadband internet access	ECDEP	Erie County Legislature, ECIDA	100% Secured through 2016 budget	CIT training is progressing. YTD 5 additional Probation Officers have been trained, as well as members of the Amherst PD. The Conditional Release program continues to grow: 29 applications have been considered year to date, and there are currently 8 former inmates participating and receiving counseling for mental health and substance abuse issues. There are already 5 applications pending for the next board meeting.	No.	100% complete with initial trainings. Going forward there will always be a need to train local police in Crisis Intervention Teams. Additional programs are being rolled out to aid in the diversion of mentally ill individuals from the prison system including Vivitrol.
4.11	Improve the coordination and delivery of care for mentally ill individuals in contact with the criminal justice system	ECPD and ECDMH	Law enforcement agencies, Crisis Services, Mental Health Providers, the Courts, ECSS, NYSOCIS	We have obtained the \$100,000 technical assistance grant to enhance jail diversion offered by OMH (through the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program). We are hoping for additional monies from a SAMSHA grant collaboration between ECDMH and ECSSO	The next milestone for this project is to have full occupancy.	Yes	73% complete. NYS has awarded 20 additional beds.
4.12	Reduce Housing-Related Problems for those with behavioural health issues	ECDMH	BPC, ECDMH, Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers, NYSOMH	Yes. 100% from NYSOMH		Yes.	

4.13	Establish professional/peer mobile support teams to help those discharged from psychiatric inpatient facilities transition to community-based services	ECDMH	Suicide Prevention and Crisis Services, ECMC, Mental Health Peer Connection, BPC, NYSOMH	Yes. 100% from NYSOMH	Of the 32 engaged cases that were closed From January 1 – June 12, 2016: 27 successfully linked with treatment (84%); 30% were not arrested during their stay with MTS (94%); 22 did not present at the ED and/or get re-admitted (69%); For the 10 who did present at an ED and/or were re-admitted, 7 of them were still securely linked to treatment.	Yes.	100% complete. Will be kept "open" to allow for some on going interventions to improve utilization and effectiveness
4.14	Implement a health home-jail pilot	ECDMH	Conference of Local Mental Hygiene Directors, Erie County Sheriff's Office, Area Health Homes All Erie County Health and Human Services Departments, Personnel Department, Contract Agencies	100%, no additional funding required.	The Health Home/jail match tool has assisted the Health Homes in locating individuals that they previously were unable to engage in services. ECDMH FMH referrals are assisting at risk individuals in obtaining care management services if they are not already connected to a Health Home. Care management intervention will provide additional supports to the person in the community and facilitate engagement in necessary services and hopefully mitigate criminal activity. Health Home/jail Match will be a continuous project.	Yes.	Project is 100 % complete. The Jail Match/Health Home tool is run three times per week and sent to the Health Homes. Match tool identifies individuals that are currently in the Holding Center/Correctional Facility Informing the Health Home (HH) of arrest.
4.15	Training programs on benefits allotted to veterans	ECVSA	Senior Services Advisory Board, Erie County Long Term-Care Council, Erie County's EISP Case Management Contract Agencies, the WNY Evidence-based Wellness Council	80% secured.	Late start due to transition of ECVSA Director.	Yes.	Plan of Action Prepared. 10%.
4.16	Comprehensive outreach plan to better reach the again and disabled population in Erie County	ECD/SSV	Warriors, WNY Heroes, Olmsted Center for Sight, National Federation for the Blind, WNY Independent Living, NYS Commission for the Blind	Yes, 100%.	Letters have been written to some businesses that have not allowed a service animal enter the facility, so some education has been done.	Yes.	75% complete. Ongoing project. Working within community to make businesses and aware of rights of service animals and their handlers.
4.17	Service Animal Awareness Campaign	ECOD		No			
4.18	Establish a data clearinghouse for Erie County Human Services	DISS	All Health and Human Services Departments	100%	Currently upgrading Drupal to include Open Data module to allow public to better access data.	No.	40% complete. DISS is working with pertinent departments to build database for the site.