



Advocacy Agenda 2022

The Healthy St. Mary's Partnership (HSMP), in coordination with its members and organizational partners, works with key decision-makers to shape public policy to address the local health priorities of St. Mary's County, Maryland. Those include improving behavioral health outcomes, reducing the burden of chronic disease, reducing environmental health impacts, and addressing the impacts of violence, injury and trauma within the community.

Advocacy is a powerful tool. The beauty of our democratic system is that all citizens have the right to advocate. As a constituent, you are an indispensable part of our system, and your advocacy is an important mechanism to influence policy-makers. Being an advocate can have far-reaching positive impacts on the health of our community by providing policymakers with the information they need to make decisions and, in turn, influencing legislation.

The following policy items have been selected by the action teams of the Healthy St. Mary's Partnership and approved by its Steering Committee as focus areas for 2022. This Advocacy Agenda will be evaluated alongside the local health improvement plan, Healthy St. Mary's 2026 to ensure it continues to reflect the needs of the community and goals of the Healthy St. Mary's Partnership.

Behavioral Health

HB293/SB241 - Establishing a trust fund to maintain 9-8-8 as the universal behavioral crisis hotline and to coordinate behavioral health crisis response services in the state.

HB 56 - Commission on Student Behavioral Health and Mental Health Treatment, which would establish a commission to study, evaluate, update, and revise guidelines for student behavioral health and mental health treatment and practices.

Chronic Disease

Advocating for public/private partnerships to increase opportunities for recreational facilities

Violence, Injury, & Trauma

SB94/HB48 - Creates a Maryland Suicide Fatality Review Committee with the purpose of identifying and addressing factors contributing to suicide deaths and facilitating system changes to prevent suicide deaths.

Environmental Health

HB179 - Requiring the Department of Housing and Community Development, in conjunction with several other state departments, to produce a Food Environment Report for each county/legislative district