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**Milestones**

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**Grants**

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**Events**

**Governor Martin O'Malley Joined Nation's Drug Czar, Health and Law Enforcement**
On May 10, Governor Martin O’Malley convened a roundtable discussion on Maryland’s new Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, signed into law by the Governor that morning. He was joined at the event by Gil Kerlikowske, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Dozens of representatives of the medical, pharmaceutical and law enforcement communities also took part.

The Governor convened the discussion at the laboratory of the National Institute on Drug Abuse on the Johns Hopkins Bayview Campus. The laboratory, known as the Intramural Research Laboratory, is a major federal center for research on the causes and prevention of drug abuse.

"Public safety is among our most solemn obligations as public servants, and preventing the abuse of prescription drugs – the fastest growing drug problem in Maryland – is a big part of our strategy to protect Maryland families," said Governor O’Malley. "Thousands of Marylanders every year are suffering from the scourge of addiction. Our new program will link public health and public safety systems to share information and provide the knowledge that is essential to the health and well-being of the people of our state."

The new system will focus on potentially addictive prescription drugs. Electronically linking the medical and pharmaceutical communities will enable professionals to track use of prescription drugs and recognize trends indicating abuse. This will make it clear if a patient is engaging in "doctor shopping" and shed light on "pill mills," through which drugs are accumulated and sold illegally. When probable cause arises pointing to illegal use of certain prescription drugs, law enforcement will, with a subpoena, be able to draw on information from the system and follow up with appropriate criminal investigations.

Prescription drug abuse is the fastest growing drug problem in Maryland. Illegal diversion of prescription drugs takes a heavy toll on the public health and safety in the state.

- Between 2007 and 2010, treatment admissions related to abuse of prescription opiates in Maryland increased 106 percent.
- Between 2007 and 2010, poison control calls related to oxycodone increased 250 percent.
- In 2010, 55 percent of all intoxication deaths in Maryland involved a prescription opiate.

The new law creating the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program calls for the creation of a multi-disciplinary Advisory Board on Prescription Drug Monitoring to make recommendations on the design and implementation of the program, including regulations, legislation, and sources of funding. The Board includes state health officials, physicians, pharmacists, law enforcement, and patients, and will report annually on the impact of the program.
Advocates, Agencies Collaborate on Crime Victims' Blueprint

Following up on the successful Crime Victims' Town Hall Meetings that were held last summer and fall, GOCCP convened a Workgroup on May 23 in the Joint Committee Hearing Room of the Legislative Services Building in Annapolis. Sixty professionals from victims' service and advocacy groups from across Maryland, as well as representatives from the Court system and State agencies met to discuss how Maryland can best serve crime victims and their families.

The Crime Victims' Blueprint Workgroup discussed issues and ideas stemming from the testimony presented at the four Town Halls meeting in 2010. At those sessions, crime victims, family members, and representatives of service providers testified regarding their positive and negative experiences throughout the criminal justice process. The Town Hall sessions were held in Columbia, Salisbury, Silver Spring and Frederick.

The resulting testimony from those sessions was compiled and analyzed by GOCCP and the following priority areas were identified for further research: Domestic Violence, Child Sexual Assault, Sexual Assault, Stalking/Cyber Stalking, Homicide, Drunk Driving, Human Trafficking, First Responders, Restitution, Sex Offenders, and Geographical Distribution of Services.

The Workgroup members reviewed the information gathered and organized by GOCCP. This feedback and discussion will be added to Voices for Victims: A Statewide Blueprint for Action. This report will be released this fall as the O'Malley-Brown Administration's continues its mission to improve public safety and services for crime victims and their families.

Breaking New Ground in work on Disproportionate Minority Contact

GOCCP was proud to sponsor its first conference on Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC), on June 13 at the Baltimore Convention Center. Co-sponsored by the Family League of Baltimore, the event was attended by more than 350 people from across the state.

Disproportionate Minority Contact occurs when a racial or ethnic group's representation at any point in the criminal justice system exceeds its representation in the general population. It occurs throughout the criminal justice process, ranging from arrest to sentencing and detention, and poses different challenges all along the way.

GOCCP's conference set a precedent by bringing together representatives from law enforcement, prosecution, corrections, child welfare, education, and mental health to discuss how DMC affects the community, and to share insights and ideas that could be developed to make the criminal justice system more equitable.

Besides equitability, there are broader social implications. Studies have shown that treating all youth equally in the criminal justice system, including finding alternatives to incarceration, leads to less recidivism and more productive outcomes for the youth. In turn, neighborhoods are safer and community life is improved for other residents. All of this leads to more efficient and effective government systems, allowing scarce public resources to be diverted to more productive uses.
GOCCP's DMC meeting was actually a pre-conference leading up to a separate conference that occurred the following two days. This meeting, Outreach to Special Populations Across Child Serving Systems, was sponsored by the University of Maryland’s System of Care Training Institutes.

This summer, GOCCP is conducting a follow-up survey to participants of the DMC conference to assess how the conference addressed their needs, and how GOCCP can better meet those needs at a future DMC conference.

22nd Annual Governor's Victim Assistance Awards and Memorial Services

Almost 40 individuals and organizations were honored for service to victims at the Governor’s Victim Assistance Awards Luncheon held on April 29. The Awards Luncheon is held annually by the Maryland State Board of Victim Services to honor individuals and agencies in the public and private sectors who have demonstrated outstanding performance in serving Maryland’s crime victims.

At the event, DPSCS Secretary Gary Maynard was honored with the Virginia Mahoney Award, which recognizes an outstanding government leader who has set the standard for excellence and professionalism in the field of victim services.

Margery Patten received the Henry Gleim Award, which recognizes outstanding services to crime victims and those who work to serve them. Ms. Patten is a tireless advocate for victims’ rights and a volunteer at the Maryland Victim’s Resource Center.

Speaking to the honorees and guests, Lt. Governor Anthony Brown thanked this year’s honorees for their work to help victims in Maryland. He spoke to an audience of more than 250 domestic violence and victim advocates, law enforcement personnel, and other public safety professionals about the O’Malley-Brown Administration’s commitment to improving public safety and increasing support for victims of crime.

Earlier in April, as part of National Crime Victims Rights Week, four memorial services were held for the murdered and missing victims of crime in Maryland. These services took place on April 10 in Baltimore, Waldorf, Centreville and Westminster.

Milestones
Maryland's Homicide Rate Is At An All-Time Low

In 2010, Maryland experienced the lowest murder rate since the Maryland UCR program was adopted in 1975.

The number of juvenile victims of homicides was reduced by 14% in Baltimore City and 23% statewide. The total number of juvenile homicides in 2010 (31) was the lowest number ever reported in Maryland.

DNA hits resulted in the arrests of 290 murderers, rapists, robbers and burglars since 2007.

Cross-border collaboration through the Violence Prevention Initiative allowed the Division of Parole and Probation to share live arrest data with the District of Columbia and Virginia. In 2010, Maryland received 2,434 electronic arrest hit notices from its partner probation agencies in Virginia and the District of Columbia.

Major enhancements to the Computer Aided Dispatch/Records Management System were approved in 2010 and are now underway to create a unified CAD/RMS system for all State law enforcement agencies. The system will integrate criminal justice data from partners across the state, including courts.

Led by Lt. Governor Brown, and under the direction of a newly issued Governor’s Executive Order, the Maryland Domestic Violence Health Care Screening and Response Initiative expanded the number of hospitals that provide help and resources to victims of domestic abuse.

In 2010, Maryland continued its crime reductions throughout the state and its regions.

The Eastern Region of Maryland achieved reductions in robbery (-8.8%), aggravated assault (-15.1%), burglaries (-6.8%), larceny/theft (-3.4%), and motor vehicle theft (-10.3%), as well as a 12.2% reduction in violent crime, a 4.6% reduction in property crime and a 5.7% reduction in total crime.

The Metro Region of Maryland achieved reductions in murder (-6.2%), robbery (-8.8%), aggravated assault (-2.6%), burglary (-2.1%), larceny/theft (-4.7%), and motor vehicle theft (-7.7%), as well as a 4.6% reduction in violent crime, a 4.6% reduction in property crime, and a 4.6% reduction in total crime.

The Southern Region of Maryland achieved reductions in robbery (-5.4%), and aggravated assault (-3.8%), as well as a 3.9% reduction in violent crime.

The Western Region of Maryland achieved reductions in murder (-33.3%), and aggravated assault (-8.1%), as well as a 2.8% reduction in violent crime.
Grants Awarded

GOCCP began fiscal year 2012 by releasing millions of dollars worth of grants to law enforcement agencies and service providers throughout Maryland. The grants provide for a range of services, from sex offender registration to community service; all of them advance the O’Malley-Brown administration emphasis on security integration, information sharing and collaboration among local and state agencies.

The CSAFE-VPI program is a perfect example of this concept at work. This year, the Collaborative Supervision and Focused Enforcement-Violence Prevention Initiative (CSAFE-VPI) received grants totaling $2.3 million. The funds went to 28 local agencies linked with the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) and the Division of Parole and Probation (DPP). Live, accurate and timely data about offenders is provided to each partner agency as crime patterns unfold. This innovative approach allows federal, state, and local agencies to collaborate and strategize on crime reduction with particular emphasis on removal of the most violent repeat offenders.

Safe Streets funding for Salisbury ($324,623) and Annapolis ($295,855) is another good example of security integration. Both cities use Safe Streets grants to work more closely with other agencies, including the State’s Attorney’s office. This collaboration, along with enhanced technology have resulted in sharp decreases in crime since the Safe Streets program began three years ago.

Other grants awarded this summer include $728,910 to Maryland’s 23 Counties and Baltimore City under the Sex Offender Compliance and Enforcement (SOCEM) program in Maryland. Those funds help local agencies with personnel and equipment costs to closely monitor the most serious offenders, and ensure that other offenders comply with registration laws.

Programs aimed at Maryland’s young people also received support. 24 law enforcement and social service agencies received grants totaling just over $1.5 million under the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant program. This program works with juveniles to hold them accountable for their acts and reduce recidivism.

A total of $613,723 has been distributed in state grants for the Community Service Grant Program (CSGP), which is designed to provide the Judiciary with meaningful diversionary sentencing options for adult non-violent offenders. Ten projects in nine counties and Baltimore City are receiving CSGP grants to place these offenders into practical unpaid work assignments, which must be completed in a specified number of hours and within defined geographic limits.

This just a sampling of some of the resources GOCCP has provided to state and local law enforcement and service providers. New grants are posted regularly on the GOCCP web page - http://www.goccp.maryland.gov/. GOCCP’s social media sites, Twitter (@goccp), and Facebook, (goccpmd) are continually updated with grants opportunities, reports, new
stories and policy developments that will be of interest to those involved in the work of crime control and prevention.