



We focus on improving internal systems and processes in the Vermont Department of Health's Strategic Plan. By successfully implementing the Plan's objectives, we will better support efforts to improve the health status of Vermonters, as outlined in Healthy Vermonters 2020 and the State Health Improvement Plan.

Many dedicated public health professionals from across the department provided input for the development of the Strategic Plan. Their assessment of strengths and improvement opportunities (Appendix A), coupled with lessons learned during our department's preparations for becoming an accredited public health department, led to the strategic directions and objectives reflected in this Plan.

To facilitate successful implementation, processes described in the department's Quality Improvement Plan will be used. These include development of annual work plans, monitoring of progress made through use of a Strategic Plan Scorecard, and oversight of progress made by the department's Performance Management Committee.

Annual progress reports will document results.



July 2014

# Strategic Plan Summary

## Mission

To protect and promote the best health for all Vermonters.

## Vision

Healthy Vermonters living in healthy communities.

## Goals



## Our values

<b>Performance-based</b>	We learn from our previous efforts and use performance measures and data to focus future activities
<b>Equitable</b>	We promote practices that minimize health disparities
<b>Accountable</b>	We are responsive and transparent in our actions and our communication
<b>Professional</b>	We encourage staff to pursue professional growth
<b>Collaborative</b>	We partner with others to work on shared goals
<b>Innovative</b>	We encourage creativity while staying aligned with the evidence base

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## Goal 1: Effective and integrated public health programs

### ***Strategic Direction 1: Engage public health partners in efforts to improve State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) priority outcomes.***

- 1.1.1 Beginning in 2014, health improvement activities of public health partners will be incorporated into the annual SHIP progress report.
- 1.1.2 By 2015, an overview of SHIP priorities will be incorporated into all public presentations aimed at informing others about the Health Department.
- 1.1.3 By 2017, at least two evidenced-based strategies that will impact multiple SHIP priorities will be implemented statewide.

### ***Strategic Direction 2: Integrate academic partners, clinical care and public health to enhance population prevention efforts.***

- 1.2.1 By 2016, the role of public health in relation to health reform, including regional Accountable Care Organizations, patient centered medical homes, and Accountable Care Communities will be defined.
- 1.2.2 By 2017, a formal affiliation agreement with at least one institution of higher learning will be executed.

### ***Strategic Direction 3: Expand use of performance management framework.***

- 1.3.1 Beginning in 2015, the department will complete at least 10 Agency Improvement Model (AIM) projects annually.
- 1.3.2 By 2015, 95% of the department's Healthy Vermonters 2020 scorecards will include program performance measures, current data and stories behind the curve.
- 1.3.3 By 2016, 95% of the department's Healthy Vermonters 2020 scorecards will include the most recent population indicator data, stories behind the curve and documentation of at least three department recommended evidence-based strategies.

## **Goal 2: Communities with the capacity to respond to public health needs**

### ***Strategic Direction 1: Increase capacity of communities to support disease prevention and health promotion.***

- 2.1.1 Beginning in 2014, district offices will be regular participants on at least 85% of hospital led Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan stakeholder groups.
- 2.1.2 By 2016, at least one community agency per district will participate annually in department trainings aimed at improving SHIP priority outcomes.
- 2.1.3 By 2017, department programs will make mini-grant funds available to district offices to support prevention team implementation of SHIP priorities.
- 2.1.4 By 2017, all division strategic plans will include at least one objective about communication between central office and district offices.

### ***Strategic Direction 2: Empower stakeholders to contribute to the public health agenda.***

- 2.2.1 By 2016, the Strategic Prevention Framework will be utilized across divisions as a model for community engagement.
- 2.2.2 Upon completion of the department's website redesign, an electronic mechanism for consumers to submit feedback to the department will be easily accessible.
- 2.2.3 Beginning in 2015, programs providing direct service will conduct customer satisfaction surveys at least every three years.
- 2.2.4 Beginning in 2016, the department will conduct an assessment every five years to gather input from public health partners to learn about strengths, improvement opportunities and priorities for the department.
- 2.2.5 By 2017, the department will utilize this public health partner input to guide decisions regarding funding policies related to community infrastructure for implementing disease prevention and health promotion initiatives.

## **Goal 3: Internal systems that provide consistent and responsive support**

### ***Strategic Direction 1: Develop and share resources to encourage consistent documentation and adherence to internal processes.***

- 3.1.1 By 2016, a health department records management plan will be finalized.
- 3.1.2 By 2017, 90% of each division's core protocols, guidelines and procedures will be current.

### ***Strategic Direction 2: Streamline the process to collect, manage, analyze, present and share data.***

- 3.2.1 By 2016, a plan that describes processes for collection, management, analysis, presentation and sharing of data will be finalized.

- 3.2.2 By 2018, 90% of data reports and briefs will demonstrate adherence to the written plan.
- 3.2.3 By 2016, a department-wide data request tracking procedure will be implemented.
- 3.2.4 By 2017, a web-based system to evaluate public health efforts of funded communities will be implemented.
- 3.2.5 By 2016, a list of department data sets that could be posted on the department's website for analysis by outside entities will be identified.
- 3.2.6 By 2018, at least 50% of identified department data sets will be publicly available on the department's website.

***Strategic Direction 3: Develop coordinated, sustainable evaluation capacity across the department.***

- 3.3.1 By 2016, a department-wide program evaluation plan will be finalized.
- 3.3.2 By 2016, all department grant applications will include an evaluation plan, with 10% of grant funds committed to evaluation.
- 3.3.3 By 2017, applicable Healthy Vermonters 2020 priorities will be included in programmatic evaluation plans.

***Strategic Direction 4: Facilitate cross-division sharing of effective internal processes.***

- 3.4.1 By 2016, the process for requesting information technology services will be documented.
- 3.4.2 By 2017, 90% of prioritized key business practices will be documented.

***Strategic Direction 5: Financial systems will inform program decisions, support organizational change, and maintain excellence in internal controls and operations.***

- 3.5.1 In 2015, electronic payment options to department customers will begin to be offered.
- 3.5.2 Use of performance budgeting in the department's annual budget request will be expanded.
- 3.5.3 By 2016, improved quarterly financial reports with timely, accurate and useful information to support program decision-making will be provided to division directors.

## **Goal 4: A competent and valued workforce that is supported in promoting and protecting the public's health**

***Strategic Direction 1: Assess staff competency across the department.***

- 4.1.1 By 2015, revised public health core competencies will be identified and adopted department-wide.
- 4.1.2 Beginning in 2015, and then every three years following, a self-assessment will be performed to analyze strengths and measure gaps in competencies of employees both at the division level and across all divisions of the department.

***Strategic Direction 2: Expand the variety of workforce development opportunities for staff, including online education, internal and external trainings.***

- 4.2.1 Beginning in 2014, formal training opportunities for staff will be developed utilizing expertise of department staff.
- 4.2.2 By 2016, all divisions will implement use of individual development plans.
- 4.2.3 By 2016, implement mentorship opportunities and ongoing discussion groups on various public health competencies.

***Strategic Direction 3: Implement an ongoing communication plan for workforce development opportunities.***

- 4.3.1 Beginning in 2014, the AHS Training Registration Management System (TRMS) will be consistently used by all divisions to enter and track training opportunities.
- 4.3.2 By 2015, all trainings entered into TRMS will be linked to core competencies.
- 4.3.3 By 2015, a master training calendar will be created.

## **Goal 5: A public health system that is understood and valued by Vermonters**

***Strategic Direction 1: Define the Health Department's brand – how our work is identified and viewed by Vermonters, and the qualities we are associated with.***

- 5.1.1 By 2015, guidance for community partners on appropriate use of the Health Department's brand will be documented.
- 5.1.2 By 2016, the Health Department's brand will be updated, based on research with division staff and stakeholders.

***Strategic Direction 2: Expand capacity of staff to effectively communicate public health messages with various populations.***

- 5.2.1 By 2016, tools and resources to help staff communicate effectively will be developed.
- 5.2.2 By 2016, communication training opportunities will be developed and made available to Health Department staff.

***Strategic Direction 3: Support development of effective communication and marketing strategies.***

- 5.3.1 Beginning in 2014, the number of personal stories and testimonials shared to communicate public health efforts will increase annually.
- 5.3.2 Beginning in 2015, all programs developing communication and marketing strategies will do so based on national or local research.

## Goal 6: Health equity for all Vermonters

### ***Strategic Direction 1: Reduce health disparities in communities that experience a disproportionate burden of disease.***

- 6.1.1 By 2015, 90% of new grant applications and renewals presented at the department's Grant Review Committee will include a plan to address health disparities, when applicable.
- 6.1.2 By 2016, a plan that includes strategies and guidance to reduce barriers to health equity will be finalized.
- 6.1.3 By 2017, 75% of reports and briefs published by the department will incorporate analysis of data to evaluate the impact of programming on health disparities.

### ***Strategic Direction 2: Recruit and retain qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds.***

- 6.2.1 By 2015, hiring practices that are designed to recruit and retain qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds will be integrated into department processes.
- 6.2.2 By 2016, all department staff will complete on-line cultural competency training within 60 days of hire.

### ***Strategic Direction 3: Translate documents for people with limited English proficiency.***

- 6.3.1 By 2015, the department's website will contain information on how to access translated materials and interpreter services.
  - 6.3.2 By 2017, 90% of the materials needing translation, as identified by the department's translation committee, will be translated.
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## Appendix A

### ***Department strengths and opportunities for improvement***

In preparation for development of our strategic plan, staff from across the department participated in an assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis). The themes that emerged through this process are reflected in the strategic directions and objectives listed on the previous pages of this plan.

The following is a summary of identified themes:

#### ***Strengths***

- Staff is dedicated, motivated and knowledgeable.
- Our department is a leader in the use of evidence base and data.
- District Office staff provide strong linkages to communities.
- Our department earned national public health accreditation status in 2014.

#### ***Opportunities for improvement***

- Develop stronger linkages with academic settings and wellness components of health reform.
- Increase internal efficiencies through documentation of processes and protocols.
- Utilize revised public health core competencies to support professional development of staff.
- Improve understanding of public health by Vermonters through use of evidence-based communication practices.