

Our County Department of Health

2012-2015

Strategic Plan

May, 2012

Our DOH's Strategic Plan was completed with consulting services provided by the New York Council of Nonprofits with funding provided by the New York State Association of County Health Officials through a grant from the National Association of City and County Health Officials as part of an accreditation support initiative.

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I. Executive Summary

The following summarizes the core components of Our County Department of Health (Our DOH)'s Strategic Plan.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Our County Department of Health is to protect health, reduce environmental risks, prevent disease, and promote access to care and a healthy lifestyle for people of all ages.

Vision Statement

Our County Department of Health is the valued leader, partner, and resource in preventing and responding to public health issues that affect the health and well being of our community.

Values: Our Traits are:

- **T**eamwork
- **R**espect
- **A**ccountability
- **I**nnovation
- **T**ransparency
- **S**ervice

Strategic Issues, Goals and Strategies

Organizational Structure and Internal Communications

Goal 1: Our DOH will maintain a valued, engaged, informed, and accountable workforce.

Identified Strategies

- 1.1 Strengthen internal communication systems
- 1.2 Improve teamwork, collaboration, and training across divisions and program areas.
- 1.3 Ensure that the Our DOH retains and develops critical knowledge and has access to needed skills
- 1.4 Foster a positive work environment
- 1.5 Ensure Our DOH's structure, budget, and staffing roles meet Department and Program needs
- 1.6 Work with staff to maximize the positive impact of office space and facilities changes and pro-actively minimize challenges
- 1.7 Continue to identify strategies for quality improvement and be responsive to political and programmatic changes.

External Communications and Collaborations

Goal 2: Our DOH will be a vital resource for health care providers and partners as well as the population at large.

Identified Strategies

- 2.1 Develop a Department wide strategy for leveraging impact of existing partnerships
- 2.2 Expand opportunities for the public to "better know their health department"
- 2.3 Continue to identify strategies for quality improvement and be responsive to political and programmatic changes.

Data and Information Management

Goal 3: Our DOH will maximize the use of data and technology to achieve efficiencies, make decisions, and demonstrate impact.

Identified Strategies

- 3.1 Maximize the use of intra-departmental and County IT to support Our DOH's needs.
- 3.2 Expand use of data analysis to better describe population health issues, to prioritize service issues, and communicate health status to the public.
- 3.3 Prepare to become an accredited Department of Health.
- 3.4 Continue to identify strategies for quality improvement and be responsive to political and programmatic changes.

Accreditation

Goal 4: Our DOH will become an accredited Department of Health.

Identified Strategies

- 4.1 Prepare to become accredited Department of Health.
- 4.2 Educate and engage staff, county officials, and county residents in understanding the value of accreditation, the competencies needed, and any potential impact of accreditation on staff.

II. Message from the Commissioner

- *To be developed*

III. Introduction and Overview

The New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO) secured funding from the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) to provide consulting assistance to four local health departments as part of an accreditation support initiative.

Through this initiative, the Our County Department of Health (Our DOH) was selected to receive consulting support from the New York Council of Nonprofits (NYCON). Our DOH collaborated with consultants from the New York Council of Non-profits (NYCON) to develop and execute a strategic planning process between January and May of 2012, which culminated in the development of Our DOH's new strategic plan. The process included planning and coordination meetings with Our DOH's strategic planning leadership team, division directors and senior staff; development and implementation of online surveys to obtain feedback from division directors, senior staff, the County Board of Health and frontline staff on Our DOH's mission, vision, values, strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats/challenges; two days of workgroup meetings focused on key themes and strategic goals identified from the surveys; and follow-up meetings with Our DOH's strategic planning leadership team, division directors and senior staff to finalize the department's new strategic plan.

The resulting document reflects the strategic issues and priorities identified through the planning process. The new strategic plan will assist Our DOH in organizational priority setting, quality improvement and ultimately preparing the department for pursuit of local health department accreditation. The next steps involved in the process will be developing and implementing specific action plans that focus on operationalizing the strategic actions and objectives identified in the plan so that concrete activities can be monitored and tracked to expand departmental quality improvement efforts.

IV. Department Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

The mission of the Department of Health defines its purposes as described through legislation and understood by the County, staff, and public. The mission statement concisely communicates the overarching purposes that encompass all of the programs, services, and activities undertaken by the department. As part of this strategic planning process, Our County Department of Health modified its mission statement to more succinctly convey the Department's purposes to a public audience.

Revised Mission Statement:

The mission of the Our County Department of Health is to protect health, reduce environmental risks, prevent disease, and promote access to care and a healthy lifestyle for people of all ages.

Vision

A key component of strategic planning is the development of a future vision for the Department. This vision should reflect the agency's intentions, describe the way the organization will look in the future, and help to position the Department to achieve its goals. The strategic plan is then developed to move the agency from its current position toward this vision.

Our DOH's vision statement reflects its leadership and partnering role in the community for identifying public health issues and concerns, developing a plan to address those issues and concerns, and working with the community and providers on collective action to promote health and prevent disease.

New Vision Statement:

Our County Department of Health is the valued leader, partner, and resource in preventing and responding to public health issues that affect the health and well being of our community.

Organizational Values

Value statements go beyond what an organization does and describe the core beliefs that influence the way the organization conducts business. These enduring tenets will be incorporated across the organization in promotional materials, staff orientation and training, and serve as the foundation for making key organizational decisions.

Our DOH drafted value statements as part of this planning process and the following values were agreed upon as key to Our DOH's core purposes and philosophy.

Our DOH's Values

- **T**eamwork
- **R**espect
- **A**ccountability
- **I**nnovation
- **T**ransparency
- **S**ervice

V. Assessment of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

A strategic planning process includes an analysis of an organization's internal strengths, weaknesses, external opportunities and threats. The goal of the planning process is to help the organization use its strengths to seize new opportunities and minimize any potential threats while developing a plan to address its weaknesses so they do not hinder the success of the organization.

Our DOH's planning process included online surveys with division directors, senior staff, Board of Health, and frontline staff. Through these surveys, the following factors were identified as the key internal and external themes influencing the Department.

Internal Strengths

- Workforce knowledge and dedication
- Timely and responsive services
- Good leadership
- Relationships with local partners and schools of public health

Internal Weaknesses

- Fragmented and siloed across divisions
- Internal communication is challenging
- Organizational instability and decreased morale from recent and pending changes
- Human resources management challenges due to reduced staffing
- Limited IT resources do not facilitate efficiency or effectiveness
- Inadequate public awareness of department and services
- Limited capacity for succession planning due to civil service and reduced staffing

External Opportunities

- Use of technology and social media
- Expand grant research and writing
- Expand revenue-generating activities
- Enhance public education and involvement
- Enhance collaborations with community coalitions and other county departments
- Better utilize data to demonstrate need and effectiveness

External Threats

- Further funding cuts could negatively impact effectiveness and reputation
- Growth of unfunded and underfunded state mandates
- Perception that programs or enforcement of regulations are "anti-business"

VI. Strategic Issues, Goals and Strategies

In order to achieve its vision, Our DOH has identified three strategic issues and a number of strategies to address those issues. Each strategy has a series of objectives that will be reviewed and revised periodically as progress is made or circumstances evolve. In addition, these objectives will be used as the basis for further action planning.

Organizational Structure and Internal Communications

Goal 1: Our DOH will maintain a valued, engaged, informed, and accountable workforce.

Identified Strategies

- 1.1 Strengthen internal communication systems
- 1.2 Improve teamwork, collaboration, and training across divisions and program areas.
- 1.3 Ensure that the Our DOH retains and develops critical knowledge and has access to needed skills
- 1.4 Foster a positive work environment
- 1.5 Ensure Our DOH's structure, budget, and staffing roles meet Department and Program needs
- 1.6 Work with staff to maximize the positive impact of office space and facilities changes and pro-actively minimize challenges
- 1.7 Continue to identify strategies for quality improvement and be responsive to political and programmatic changes

External Communications and Collaborations

Goal 2: Our DOH will be a vital resource for health care providers and partners as well as the population at large.

Identified Strategies

- 2.1 Develop a Department wide strategy for leveraging impact of existing partnerships.
- 2.2 Expand opportunities for the public to "better know their health department".
- 2.3 Continue to identify strategies for quality improvement.

Data and Information Management

Goal 3: Our DOH will maximize the use of data and technology to achieve efficiencies, make decisions, and demonstrate impact.

Identified Strategies

- 3.1 Maximize the use of intra-departmental and County IT to support Our DOH's needs.
- 3.2 Expand use of data analysis to better describe population health issues, to prioritize service issues, and communicate health status to the public.
- 3.3 Prepare to become an accredited Department of Health.
- 3.4 Continue to identify strategies for quality improvement

Accreditation

Goal 4: Our DOH will become an accredited Department of Health.

Identified Strategies

- 4.1 Prepare to become accredited Department of Health.
- 4.2 Educate and engage staff, county officials, and county residents in understanding the value of accreditation, the competencies needed, and any potential impact of accreditation on staff.

Organizational Structure and Internal Communications

Goal 1: Our DOH will maintain a valued, engaged, informed, and accountable workforce to provide quality services to our community.

Strategy	Objectives	Start Date	Accomplishments in 2012
1.1 Strengthen internal communication systems.	1.1.1 Develop a more strategic approach to meetings by ensuring that all meetings have a chair, an agenda, and accountability for actions/reporting.	2012	
	1.1.2 Communicate significant administrative and program news to staff in a timely fashion through a newsletter.	2012	
	1.1.3 Establish routine opportunities for staff to meet with the Commissioner and senior leadership to learn more about, and become better advocates for, the Our DOH vision and plan for the year.	2012	
	1.1.4 Re-evaluate and strengthen communication systems across office locations.	2012	
	1.1.5 Establish protocols to streamline internal communications and prioritizations.	2013	
	1.1.6 Elicit feedback from staff about progress made in implementing the strategic plan annually.	2013	
	1.1.7 Engage and communicate with staff about the progress made in implementing the strategic plan semi-annually.	2013	
	1.1.8 Provide a mechanism to share with staff how the work of the Board of Health supports the work of the Our DOH.	2012	
1.2 Improve teamwork, collaboration, and training across divisions and program areas.	1.2.1 Develop strategies to minimize divisional silos.	2013	
	1.2.2 Develop a plan to enable programs to share updates and highlights.	2012	
	1.2.3 Expand opportunities for cross-program training and communication (i.e. PODS).	2013	
	1.2.4 Enhance cross-division and intra-departmental referrals.	2013	
	1.2.5 Provide support to supervisors to encourage collaborative projects and use of shared staff resources.	2013	
1.3 Ensure that the Our DOH retains and develops critical knowledge and and has access to needed	1.3.1 Develop a plan to expand cross-training and succession planning particularly for critical positions.	2013	
	1.3.2 Explore opportunities to establish temporary or consultant positions for grant writing and new program opportunities.	2013	

Organizational Structure and Internal Communications

Goal 1: Our DOH will maintain a valued, engaged, informed, and accountable workforce to provide quality services to our community.

Strategy	Objectives	Start Date	Accomplishments in 2012
skills.	1.3.3 Conduct periodic assessment of staff training needs (ex: via Columbia Regional Public Health Training Center).	2012	
1.4 Foster a positive work environment.	1.4.1 Establish opportunities to recognize staff achievements and contributions.	2012	
	1.4.2 Foster collegial activities among staff.	2012	
	1.4.3 Continue to support and recognize workplace wellness.	2012	
1.5 Ensure Our DOH structure, budget, and staffing roles meet Department and Program needs.	1.5.1 Educate supervisors about differences between job group responsibilities.	2013	
	1.5.2 Conduct periodic assessments of existing staffing levels and staff functions across divisions via workgroups to assess duplication and capacity needs.	2012	
	1.5.3 Identify strategies to pool and cross train staff.	2012	
	1.5.4 Explore opportunities for staff to generate revenue through fees and other revenue producing initiatives.	2013	
1.6 Work with staff to maximize the positive impact of office space and facilities changes and pro-actively minimize challenges	1.6.1 When concrete information is available, leadership will communicate the criteria and rationale for decision-making.	2012	
	1.6.2 Engage staff in a planning process to optimize the impact of staff relocations.	2012	
1.7 Continue to identify strategies for quality improvement and be responsive to political and programmatic changes.	1.7.1 Reassess impact of changes made in accordance with this section of the plan.	2013	
	1.7.2 Keep abreast of changing needs policies and procedures at the local, state, and federal level.	2012	

External Communications and Collaborations

Goal 2: Our DOH will be a vital resource for health care providers and partners as well as the population at large.

Strategy	Objectives	Start Date	Accomplishments in 2012
2.1 Develop a Department wide strategy for leveraging impact of existing partnerships	2.1.1 Develop an inventory/resource list of partners and contacts to use cross-departmentally	2013	
	2.1.2 Provide opportunities for staff to discuss and brainstorm how to strengthen partnerships	2012	
	2.1.3 Continue to educate partners about the Department’s shifting role from provider to consultant and expert.	2012	
	2.1.4 Better engage community partners in assessing resources and developing, monitoring, and evaluating the CHA (and eventually the CHIP).	2013	
	2.1.5 Assess community partners efforts in addressing gaps and barriers identified by the CHA and CHIP.	2013	
2.2 Expand opportunities for the public to “better know their health department”.	2.2.1 Identify new opportunities to communicate and partner with the community.	2012	
	2.2.2 Enhance use of social media to highlight Department activities and engage the community.	2012	
	2.2.3 Enhance use of website to share with the public information about the relationship between Our DOH activities, programs, and outcomes and how these relate to the department’s mission, values, and vision.	2013	
	2.2.4 Identify real and virtual opportunities for the public to experience a “day with the health department” (i.e. follow us on a restaurant inspection, display case in county building- “this is what we do” (photos, etc.).	2013	
	2.2.5 Identify opportunities to engage County officials in learning more about the work of the Department.	2012	
	2.2.6 Enhance communication with private medical doctors, hospitals, and other community partners.	2012	
	2.2.7 Continue to connect local strategies to broader global issues and concerns	2012	
2.3 Continue to identify strategies for quality improvement and be responsive to political and programmatic changes.	2.3.1 Reassess impact of changes made in accordance with this section of the plan.	2013	
	2.3.2 Communicate with and engage the community in responding to changing needs policies and procedures at the local, state, and federal level.	2013	

Data, Technology, and Information Management			
Goal 3: Our DOH will maximize the use of data and technology to achieve efficiencies, make decisions, and demonstrate impact.			
Strategy	Objectives	Start Date	Accomplishments in 2012
3.1 Maximize the use of intra-departmental and County IT to support Our DOH's needs.	3.1.1 Clarify and communicate the roles of in-house IT support and County IT support.	2013	
	3.1.2 Increase Department-wide support for IT trainings; keep pace with evolving technology; and ensure functionality	2013	
	3.1.3 Ensure that all technology decisions consider staff and program specific needs and productivity within existing budget	2012	
	3.1.4 Identify technology solutions to better interface with and improve efficiency in meeting NYS mandates.	2012	
	3.1.5 Identify a strategy to capture the real time lost in the data entry/ management (double databases) process to better advocate for new systems/ policies at the state and county levels	2013	
	3.1.6 Continue to identify IT initiatives that could improve staff productivity and efficiency	2012	
3.2 Expand use of data analysis to better describe population health issues, to prioritize services, and to communicate health status to the public.	3.2.1 Expand use of GIS mapping to describe population health issues	2013	
	3.2.2 Continue to enhance how CHA data is conveyed and communicated to the public to facilitate understanding and engagement	2013	
	3.2.3 Ensure the CHA process is comprehensive and representative of diverse community health priorities	2013	
3.3 Continue to identify strategies for quality improvement and be responsive to political and programmatic changes.	3.3.1 Reassess impact of changes made in accordance with this section of the plan	2013	
	3.3.1 Keep abreast of changing technologies that enable us to remain innovative and accountable to the changing needs policies and procedures at the local, state, and federal level.		

Accreditation Goal 4: Our DOH will become an accredited Department of Health.			
Strategy	Objectives	Start Date	Accomplishments in 2012
4.1 Prepare to become accredited DOH.	4.1.1 Continue to Monitor NYSDOH progress in pursuing accreditation, strategies utilized and lessons learned.	2012	
	4.1.2 Identify key staff necessary to meet accreditation requirements.	2013	
	4.1.3 Review the documentation requirements for the measures.	2013	
	4.1.4 Begin/refine work on the pre-requisites including the Community Health Assessment, Community Health Improvement Plan, and strategic plan.	2013	
	4.1.5 Prepare documentation required to apply for accreditation.	2013-2014	
4.2 Educate and engage staff, county officials, and county residents in understanding the value of accreditation, the competencies needed, and any potential impact of accreditation on staff.	4.2.1 To be determined.	2013	