



Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Wicomico County
Health Department**

Wicomico County Health Department Strategic Plan 2017-2022

Updated September 2021



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wicomico County Health Department began updating its Strategic Plan in January 2017 in response to the Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC) having identified chronic disease and behavioral health as its priority areas. The LHIC is led by the Health Officer of Wicomico County and provides a forum for nonprofit hospitals, community based organizations and other stakeholders to analyze and prioritize community health needs.

In a rapidly changing world, health departments need to keep pace by continually assessing their processes in order to adapt to emerging issues and unanticipated changes in priorities. This plan, used in association with continuous quality improvement, will guide the work of the Department, ensuring effectiveness and efficiency. Improvement will be monitored by the Performance Management Plan through the examination of data, business processes, and review of employee satisfaction. As we implement many new goals, objectives, and strategies, we will continue to work with our stakeholders, coalitions, and partners already identified, as well as new ones, to achieve our vision: ***Healthy people in healthy communities.***

Lori Brewster, MS, APRN/BC, LCADC

STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM

Lisa Anderson, Community Health Services Director

Lori Brewster, Health Officer

James Cockey, MD, Deputy Health Officer

Tammy Griffin, Prevention and Health Communications

Jennifer Halter, Behavioral Health Director

Michelle Hardy, Local Behavioral Health Authority Director

Jodi Holland, Case Management Programs Director

Cathey Insley, Management Associate

Jennifer Johnson, PIO

James Lees, Management of Information Systems Director

Lisa Renegar, Health Planner

Michael Taylor, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Specialist

Brandy Wink, Director of Administration

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Planning began with a half day retreat for the Strategic Planning Team. The team is composed of individuals from various levels and departments throughout the Agency: senior management staff, supervisory staff, and non-supervisory staff. The team also includes members of the Quality Improvement Council. Following a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) strategic priorities and goals were developed. The Strategic Planning Team continued its work to develop an Implementation Plan for each Strategic Priority. Input on the preliminary draft was solicited from Health Department staff through a survey. Once suggestions and edits were incorporated, additional comments were requested from the LHIC, our governing entities, and other community stakeholders.

STRATEGIC PLANNING TIMELINE

2016	Need to revise the Strategic Plan was identified.
January 9, 2017	Strategic Planning Team meets for half day retreat to conduct SWOT analysis and revise Mission, Vision & Guiding Principles, Strategic Priorities, Goals & Objectives.
January 13, 2017	Health Planner & Deputy Health Officer meet to incorporate results of January 9 into Plan.
January 24, 2017	Mission, Vision & Guiding Principles Feedback Survey sent to all Health Department staff.
February 3, 2017	Mission, Vision & Guiding Principles reviewed with LHIC, during regular LHIC meeting time. LHIC members present complete the Feedback Survey.
February 3, 2017	Mission, Vision & Guiding Principles Feedback Survey results received from Health Department staff.
February 6, 2017	Health Planner & Deputy Health Officer meet to develop Implementation Plan.
February 7, 2017	Draft of Strategic Plan distributed to Senior Management.
February 9, 2017	Mission, Vision & Guiding Principles Feedback survey sent to LHIC to solicit input from members not present at

	the February 3, 2017 meeting.
February 17, 2017	Mission, Vision & Guiding Principles Feedback Survey results received from LHIC members.
February 28, 2017	Senior Management review the Strategic Plan draft and the results of the Mission, Vision & Guiding Principles Feedback Survey from staff and LHIC.
March 1, 2017	Health Planner & Deputy Health Officer revise Plan based on Senior Management input.
March 17, 2017	Strategic Plan draft distributed to staff and LHIC for input.
March 30, 2017	Strategic Plan feedback received from staff and LHIC.
April 25, 2017	Strategic Plan draft revised based on input received from staff and LHIC.
May 1, 2017	Draft of Strategic Plan distributed to governing entities.
May 24, 2017	Governing entities approve plan as written.
June 19, 2017 - July 14, 2017	Request for public comment on the draft strategic plan. News Release issued a variety of ways (i.e. website, social media and newspaper) informing public how to access plan and provide input. Plan and survey available on the Health Department's website. Plan and survey also available in hard copies at each Health Department location.
July 14, 2017	Public comment period closed. Feedback indicated to support the draft Strategic Plan as written.
July 14, 2017	Final version of the Strategic Plan is approved and published.
December 4, 2018	FY 2018 Annual Report and SP review.
August 20, 2019	FY 2019 Annual Report and SP review.
August 28, 2020	FY 2020 Annual Report and SP review.
July 15, 2021	FY 2021 Annual Report and SP review.

MISSION, VISION, & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Mission

Wicomico County Health Department's mission is to maximize the health and wellness of all members of the community through collaborative efforts.

Vision

Healthy People in Healthy Communities.

Guiding Principles

Maximize health status through prevention, education, clinical, monitoring, advocacy and regulatory services

Initiate programs in response to identified needs

Strengthen the physical, behavioral and environmental health of all citizens of Wicomico County

Address social determinants of health

Commitment to all populations while striving for health equity

Purpose of the Plan

Strategic planning is a process by which an organization assesses how it is doing, figures out where it wants to go, and charts a path to get from here to there.

The following are key objectives that were considered when developing the Wicomico County Health Department's Strategic Plan.

- **Maintain Accreditation:** Wicomico County Health Department (WiCHD) became an accredited health department by the National Public Health Accreditation Board in March 2016. The Strategic Plan is one requirement of accreditation. It aligns with other important assessment, planning, and evaluation work such as a community health improvement plan, performance management plan, communication and marketing plans, and program work plans. Accreditation work continues to advance the performance and quality of WiCHD programs and services.
- **Focus on Accountability:** This plan outlines our goals, objectives and strategies for the next five years providing a clear focus for our staff, Board of Health and community partners.
- **Promoting Innovation:** You will find in this strategic plan a thoughtful process in strengthening local public health through innovative thinking, embracing policy development, developing nontraditional partner relationships, and securing department capacity in order to achieve healthier communities.
- **Effective Use of Resources:** The plan focuses on a continual process to evaluate effectiveness and efficiencies of programs and service delivery which is in the forefront in light of current funding obstacles.
- **Engage Workforce:** Establishing an organizational culture of continuous learning and quality improvement guided by research and best practices that are identified not only by staff but also by partners and customers is a priority for WiCHD. This plan outlines strategies to continue to maintain a competent and capable workforce.

Addressing Emerging Trends

It is important for an organization to identify what the state of the world is today and what challenges we are currently facing.

According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, recent stressors on public health are driving many local governments to pioneer a new Public Health 3.0 model in which leaders serve as Chief Health Strategists, collaborating across multiple sectors and leveraging data and resources to address social, environmental, and economic conditions that affect health and health equity. In order to effectively lead the health of the community, it requires a shift in thinking to a multi-collaborative health approach focusing on community resources and supporting policy and resource environment change to achieve health outcomes. Public Health 3.0 is a model to be considered when addressing emerging trends in public health such as health equity.

The table below describes some of the emerging issues affecting health outcomes that were considered when developing this plan.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Quality of the services provided to the patients.2. Experienced staff3. Case management skills4. Community partners5. Reputation in the community6. IT development/investment7. Stable senior management leadership8. Strong collaboration between majority of programs/services9. Visibility in the community	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Staff morale2. Lack of mentoring/coaching of supervisory staff/succession planning3. Physical separation of programs/staff4. Consistency of staff requirements5. WAN connection6. Lack of knowledge of resources7. Community engagement8. Physical building issues9. Service delivery in rural areas

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Willingness to try new services 11. Self assessment and quality and performance improvement 12. Dedicated staff 13. Insurance billing knowledge 14. Ability to advocate for patient and program needs 15. Ability to maximize resources 16. Branding 17. Accreditation achievement and efforts 18. Integration achievement and efforts 19. Creative initiatives and leadership of Senior Management 20. Communication at all levels 21. Leadership respected statewide 22. All hazards emergency operations plan 23. Cultural competency efforts 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Increased capacity for program evaluation
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OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contracting with private providers, Insurers and primary care for case management 2. Funding of services – contracting with private payers 3. Integration of services/programs 4. Collaboration & partnering across jurisdictions 5. Developing model programs 6. Community health assessment 7. Increase service capacity and delivery in the community 8. Developing the support of stakeholders to assist in 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Being a hybrid organization – grants and fee for service (FFS) 2. Lack of ability to issue employee incentives 3. Health care reform (fear of the unknown) 4. Aging workforce 5. Economic challenges 6. Provider shortages 7. Provider competition 8. Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) staff turnover 9. Slow response from DHMH when changes are

reaching the unmet needs in the community

- 9. Medicare waiver/global budgeting
- 10. Emerging technology to streamline processes
- 11. State Innovation Model

made

- 10. Public health infrastructure funding
- 11. Unfunded mandates
- 12. High overhead for service provision makes it difficult to compete with private sector
- 13. Lack of funding and restrictions on how funding is to be utilized
- 14. Population served can be difficult and has high noncompliance rate
- 15. Failure to address capital needs related to buildings and vehicles lead to larger financial outlay
- 16. Transition to and sustaining FFS programs
- 17. Recruitment challenges
- 18. State rules decrease flexibility
- 19. Dual governing entities
- 20. Legal changes that impact population health
- 21. Emerging infections and other health issues

SWOT ANALYSIS

Prevailing themes:

- The Health Department's ability to maximize resources can be matched with opportunities in emerging technologies as well as opportunities to contract with private providers, insurers and primary care for case management;
- The Health Department's ability to maximize resources can help address funding threats and economic challenges;
- The Health Department's strong collaboration between programs/services can be matched with opportunities to integrate services and programs;
- The opportunity to increase service capability can be matched to the Health Department's willingness to try new services;
- The Health Department's strength of IT development and investment can be enhanced by opportunities with emerging technology to streamline processes;
- The opportunity of the Medicare Waiver/global budgeting can be maximized by the Health Department's strong community partnerships;
- The Health Department's strength of completing a self-assessment and quality and performance improvement can be matched to improve weaknesses in staff morale, recruitment, retention, mentoring/coaching of supervisory staff, and succession planning;
- The physical building needs of the Seth H. Hurdle Center are currently being addressed by the Health Department's leadership through collaborations and partnerships with Wicomico County government;

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Improve community health and wellness by focusing on priority areas identified with the Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC): cancer, diabetes and behavioral health. Increasing access to care will be addressed in both priority areas.
2. Provide, maintain, develop and ensure quality public health services.
3. Adopt business practices that increase financial stability.
4. Build and grow partnerships that will facilitate improved communication and expand public health and wellness awareness.
5. Recruit and retain a competent and diverse workforce.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Strategic Priority #1: Improve community health and wellness by focusing on priority areas identified with the Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC): cancer, diabetes and behavioral health. Increasing access to care will be addressed in both priority areas.

Strategic Goal #1: Continually implement, track and update the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

Objectives

1. Complete annual review of LHIC membership to assess missing sectors needed to address identified priority areas: cancer, diabetes and behavioral health.
2. Collect and review CHIP data semi-annually with the LHIC for input on implementation and updates/revisions.
3. Update CHIP annually, using program data, evidence-based practices, and input from the LHIC.

Strategic Priority #2: Ensure quality public health services.

Strategic Goal #1: Maintain national accreditation.

Objectives

1. Apply for reaccreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) by January 2022.
2. Complete the 2022 Community Health Assessment by June 2022.
3. Continually develop and refine the agency's performance management system.
4. Maintain the agency's Quality Council with ongoing quality improvement projects.

Strategic Goal #2: Maintain collaboration with the community and partners to identify and address gaps in provision of quality services.

Objectives

1. Identify gaps in services in the community, soliciting input from stakeholders.
2. Develop plans to address gaps.
3. Publicize changes in programs.
4. Evaluate new program outcomes.

Strategic Priority #3: Adopt business practices that will increase financial stability.

Strategic Goal #1: Evaluate and optimize use of resources to effectively meet the organization's financial needs.

Objectives

1. Track all WiCHD grants/budgets by monthly review of all financial reports.
2. Conduct quarterly budget analysis meetings with program staff.
3. Continue reviewing revenue reports to review staff productivity monthly.
4. Provide training to staff that have budget duties as part of their position.

Strategic Priority #4: Build and grow partnerships that will facilitate improved communication and expand public health and wellness awareness.

Strategic Goal #4: Identify opportunities for community and stakeholder engagement.

Objectives

1. Continue to implement communications plan daily.
2. Maintain media accessibility daily.
3. Identify opportunities to solicit community input annually.
4. Identify all current and potential stakeholders annually.
5. Incorporate identified stakeholders in planning processes annually.

Strategic Priority #5: Recruit and retain a competent and diverse workforce.

Strategic Goal #5: Strengthen workforce competency, capacity and satisfaction.

Objectives

1. Continue providing onboarding with new staff for orientation to the agency at least 3 times per year.
2. Assess staff performance semi-annually.
3. Implement workforce development plan and update every two years.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Strategic Priority #1: Improve community health and wellness by focusing on priority areas identified with the Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC): chronic disease and behavioral health. Increasing access to care will be addressed in both priority areas.

Strategic Goal #1: Continually implement, track and update the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

Objective 1: Complete annual review of LHIC membership to assess missing sectors needed to address identified priority areas: cancer, diabetes and behavioral health.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Annually review current LHIC roster and attendance to determine current membership and missing sectors.	Health Planner & LHIC	Annually
Provide outreach to missing sectors to join LHIC.	Health Planner & LHIC	Ongoing

Objective 2: Collect and review CHIP data semi-annually with the LHIC for input on implementation and updates/revisions.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Collect performance evaluation data from programs in the CHIP and present to LHIC semi-annually.	Health Planner & Priority area subcommittees	Every February and August

Objective 3: Update CHIP annually, using program data, evidence-based practices, and input from the LHIC.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Work with LHIC and program representatives to determine updates needed in CHIP.	Health Planner & LHIC	Every August

Strategic Priority #2: Ensure quality public health services.

Strategic Goal #1: Maintain national accreditation.

Objective 1: Apply for reaccreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) by January 2022.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
WiCHD staff submit application and documentation required by PHAB.	PHAB Reaccreditation Team	January 2022

Objective 2: Complete the 2022 Community Health Assessment by June 2022.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Work with consultant and CHNA partners to develop updated community health needs assessment.	CHNA Partners and LHIC	June 2022

Objective 3: Continually develop and refine the agency's performance management system.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Continue working with each division in the agency to review and adjust performance	Quality Council, Senior Managers	June 2022

measures and determine if there is a need for a QI project.		
<i>Objective 4: Maintain the agency's Quality Council with ongoing quality improvement projects.</i>		
Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Implement process for project identification, selection and documentation.	Quality Council, Senior Managers, Supervisors, WiCHD Staff	June 2022
Strategic Goal #2: Maintain collaboration with community partners to identify and address gaps in provision of quality services.		
<i>Objective 1: Identify gaps in services in the community, soliciting input from stakeholders.</i>		
Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Conduct needs assessments.	LBHA, Prevention, SBWC, Fiscal Department, Community Health & STI/Dental Task Forces	Ongoing
<i>Objective 2: Develop plans to address gaps.</i>		
Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Analyze needs assessment data to develop action plans.	LHIC, LBHA, Prevention, SBWC, Fiscal Department, Community Health & STI/Dental Task Forces	Ongoing
<i>Objective 3: Publicize changes in programs.</i>		
Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Distribute information on changes to programs to increase Department's visibility in the	PIO & Program Staff	Ongoing

community.		
<i>Objective 4: Evaluate new program outcomes.</i>		
Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Review data associated with action plans.	Senior Management Staff, LHIC & Program Staff	Ongoing

Strategic Priority #3: Adopt business practices that will increase financial stability

Strategic Goal #1: Evaluate and optimize use of resources to effectively meet the organization's financial needs.

Objective 1: Track all WiCHD grants/budgets by monthly review of all financial reports.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Use FMIS (Financial Management Information System) reports to review expenses and revenue.	Administrator & Program Staff	Monthly

Objective 2: Conduct quarterly budget analysis meetings with program staff.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Analyze projected revenue or deficits and develop a plan of action if necessary.	Administrator, Program Staff & Senior Management Staff	Quarterly

Objective 3: Continue reviewing revenue reports to review staff productivity monthly.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
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Review fee for service programs monthly to monitor staff performance and revenue.	Administrator, Fiscal Staff & Program Supervisors	Monthly
<i>Objective 4: Provide training to staff that have budget duties as part of their position.</i>		
Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Provide 1:1 training with new employees that have budget duties in their job description.	Administrator, Fiscal Staff & Program Staff	Ongoing

Strategic Priority #4: Build and grow partnerships that will facilitate improved communication and expand public health and wellness awareness.

Strategic Goal #1: Identify opportunities for community and stakeholder engagement.

Objective 1: Continue to implement communications plan daily.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Monitor all agency/media communications.	PIO	Ongoing
Ensure compliance with the Plan by continuously monitoring.	Program Supervisors	Ongoing

Objective 2: Maintain media accessibility daily.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Continue existing processes for tracking media requests and contacts.	PIO & Program Staff	Ongoing

Objective 3: Identify opportunities to solicit community input annually.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Ensure community input is collected during development of CHA and future CHIP's.	Health Planner	Ongoing

Objective 4: Identify all current and potential stakeholders annually.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Review LHIC and subcommittee membership.	Health Planner & LHIC	Annually

Objective 5: Incorporate identified stakeholders in planning processes annually.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Conduct needs assessments to solicit stakeholder input.	Health Planner & LHIC	Annually

Strategic Priority #5: Recruit and retain a competent and diverse workforce.

Strategic Goal #1: Strengthen workforce competency, capacity, and satisfaction.

Objective 1: Continue providing onboarding with new staff for orientation to the agency at least 3 times per year.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Schedule half-day orientation session with new employees and representatives from each department.	Personnel. Senior Management, Supervisors and WiCHD Staff	3 times/year

Objective 2: Assess staff performance semi-annually.

Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Conduct performance evaluations on all staff.	All supervisors	Semi-annually
<i>Objective 3: Implement Workforce Development Plan and update every 2 years.</i>		
Key Actions	Person/Group Responsible	Timeline
Create and implement a Workforce Development Committee charged with implementing and revising the Workforce Development Plan.	Personnel, Senior Management Staff, Supervisor and WiCHD Staff	June 2022

Strategic Plan Evaluation and Revisions

Wicomico County Health Department completes a Strategic Plan every five years. During that five year cycle, at the close of each fiscal year, WiCHD publishes an *Annual Report*, which reports the progress of our agency’s strategic plan. Reporting includes progress for each of the strategic priorities. The report is a public document and shared with the community and partners. It is also posted on the agency’s website to assure availability to staff, stakeholders and the public. During the five year cycle, at the close of each fiscal year, the strategic plan is assessed for any needed revisions.

Links to Other WiCHD Plans

This Strategic Plan has strong ties to other WiCHD plans. To support Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) strategies, Strategic Priority #1 includes a goal to continually implement, track and update the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Strategic Priority #2 has specific objectives for a performance management system as well

as references to the Quality Improvement Plan. Strategic Priority #4 links to the agency's Risk and Communications Plan. Strategic Priority #5 links to the agency's Workforce Development Plan.