

What's the Project?

Allen County Public Health requested Technical Assistance for strategic planning from The Ohio State University's Center for Public Health Practice (CPHP). The objective was to more actively involve the Board of Health in the strategic planning process as well as develop an actionable plan to address the strengths and opportunities identified through preparation for the national public health accreditation process.

Why Was it Selected?

Building on our 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, we needed to develop a strategic plan to address the challenges of changes in funding streams, community needs and expectations, and of sustaining accreditation-compliant infrastructure.

Desired outcomes of the Board engagement included identifying a common framework for describing the agency's role in the community and a tool to assess and prioritize current and potential services. Other goals for the project included reviewing our mission, vision and values as well as the strategic pillars for the agency.

What We Did

The planning process began with a Board engagement piece that included on-line learning, surveys, and facilitated discussion.

The Strategic Planning Team participated in a TA webinar about strategic planning. All staff and Board members provided input through a SOAR/C* assessment survey. Two full-day planning sessions were facilitated by CPHP staff. The Team also met for several partial day sessions to finalize the 3-year strategic plan for the agency.

Lessons Learned

- Small group discussions for each Strategic Pillar seemed more engaging to staff than working together as a larger group.
- Staff enjoyed working with employees they usually don't work with.
- Open dialogue was encouraged and appreciated. Having an outside facilitator helped keep the dialogue open and on-track.
- Board members felt their strategic planning meetings were a good use of their time and appreciated the inclusiveness of the process.

What Happened

Positive outcomes from ACPH's 2019-2022 strategic planning process include:

- The 2019-2022 Strategic Plan is more action-oriented than previous versions and feels more attainable, with about half of the objectives as the 2014-2019 Strategic Plan/Addendum.
- ACPH will have new products and plans at the completion of the objectives.
- Timelines feel more realistic for completion.
- A more inclusive process for implementing and reporting on progress was built into the strategic planning process, with specific positions and/or teams identified as the lead contact for each objective and a tracking matrix designed during the planning process.

Project Participants



Project completed by Allen County Strategic Planning Team: Brandon Fischer, Bill Kelly, Tami Gough, Matt Elling, Sally Dray, Monica Harnish, Staci Schmenk, Karen Niese, Kathy Luhn, Chris Shrider, Michell Holmes, Cassie Hambleton.

Allen County Board of Health members (not pictured): Wilfred Ellis, Eric Kerner, Janis Carse, Marva Cowan, Scott Shutt, Ross Kauffman, Pratap Balusu.

*SOAR/C = Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results/Challenges

Poster Format adapted with appreciation from MN Department of Health