

Steuben County Public Health

2023-2025 Strategic Plan



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Steuben County NY

Prepared June 2023 with assistance from Pivotal Rural Health Network

Introduction and Background

Steuben County Public Health, assisted by the Pivotal Rural Health Network, convened all leadership and staff in two strategic planning sessions to develop a strategic plan for 2023-2025. In preparation for the sessions, six surveys were conducted:

1. Governing Entity Engagement
2. Employee Engagement
3. Technology and Communications
4. Quality Improvement Culture
5. Core Competencies
6. External Communications (including external input into SWOT)

A summary of all survey feedback was prepared by a consultant (appendix 1). This was followed by two consultant-facilitated work sessions to create the strategic plan. In session one, an environmental assessment of external factors impacting the health department was developed (appendix 2). Using that assessment as a basis for opportunities and threats, a SWOT analysis was created and prioritized. Lastly, the prior strategic plan was reviewed to prepare for developing the new plan. In session two, strategic priorities, objectives, and actions were created, and timelines and owners were assigned. The strategic plan was then reviewed against mission, vision, and values to determine if revisions were needed. The team concluded that no changes were necessary. The Governing Entity was able to give input through the survey, and individuals were invited to participate in the planning process.

Review and Monitoring

Steuben County Public Health Leadership will monitor the plan using the quality improvement dashboard to track progress. Progress will be reviewed biannually at the Quality Improvement meeting.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

Steuben County Public Health will protect and promote the health and well-being of our community through education, collaboration, and prevention efforts.

Vision

Healthy people, strong families, and vibrant communities.

Values

- Quality
- Empowerment
- Responsiveness

SWOT Analysis: Review of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Steuben County Public Health (SCPH) staff completed individual SWOT analyses and prioritized the items in bold.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Function well as a team/helpful to each other	Lack of staff/capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • volume of work • keeping up with changes in technology/ data/programs
Strong work ethic	Space limitations
Energy/Enthusiasm	Lack of communication as a department
Resilient	Community confusion between Special Children’s Services and the Department of Social Services
Breadth of knowledge/educational background	Poor internet signal/WiFi
Flexibility	New employee training
Willingness to communicate/make changes	
Mix of new and seasoned staff	
Ability to have fun while working hard	
Support/Resources through Pivotal	
Helpful retirees	
Opportunities	Threats
Telehealth	Workforce shortage
State Infrastructure Funding	Misinformation/disinformation, primarily through social media/potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to impact
Re-engage/rebuild community partnerships post-pandemic	Lack of funding
Leverage new partnerships formed during the pandemic (e.g., school districts)	Government leaders with differing opinions influencing public health decisions
Expanded in-person outreach	Every public health issue viewed as having a political slant
Reinvent the department post-pandemic	Negative perception of the public health department
Social media for expanding reach/reaching a younger demographic	Another pandemic or global health threat
Refocus/start new programming	Changing science
Explore work efficiencies of using AI	Transportation/size of county
	Climate change/changing energy sector
	Provider Capacity



**Steuben County Public Health
Strategy Map 2023-2025**



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: REENGAGE AND EXPAND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS TO STRENGTHEN SERVICE DELIVERY			
PRIORITY OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE LEAD	TIMELINE
A. Leveraging existing partnerships for community health improvement initiatives. Measure: Maintain the number of partners engaged in these initiatives.	I. Collaborate with local school districts to implement programming around CHIP initiative obesity reduction and/or other CHIP initiatives	Director, Educator All staff	June 2024
	II. Provide partners with subject matter expertise or linkage to other sources regarding requests for health-related information	All Staff	June 2023, then ongoing
B. Establish new partnerships that help close healthcare gaps Measure: Actively working with at least one new partnership to address an identified healthcare gap	I. Review data and determine gaps where a new partnership may be beneficial	Program specific staff	Dec 2023
	II. Identify and conduct outreach to potential partner agencies to establish a new partnership	Program specific staff	Jun 2024
	III. With the partner, based on the initiative chosen, develop and execute actions to close the gap	Program specific staff	Jun 2025
C. Promote a positive perception of public health through expanding in-person outreach Measure: Improvement in effectiveness and	I. Attend public-facing health fairs and events	Program specific staff	July 2023, then ongoing
	II. Reestablish local news presence	Educator	Oct 2023, then ongoing
	III. Develop and implement a marketing and social media campaign to educate and create positive awareness about public health and the LHD	Educator/ Fellow	June 2024

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usefulness of communications measures in the External Communications survey.			

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: ATTRACT AND RETAIN QUALIFIED STAFF TO DELIVER EFFECTIVE AND HIGH-QUALITY SERVICES			
PRIORITY OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE LEAD	TIMELINE
A. Increase employee satisfaction through identifying and implementing non-pay related incentives Measure: Baseline satisfaction measure to be set from the employee engagement survey or the work/life balance survey; a target will be set once the baseline is established.	I. Survey/focus group to understand what employees find valuable in maintaining work/life balance	Educator/ QI Committee	August 2023
	II. Educate employees on existing incentives/perks that they may not be aware of	Director	Nov 2023
	III. Implement at least one idea from the results of the survey	Director/ QI Committee	Jan 2024
	IV. Utilize available monies via the infrastructure grant to support attracting/retaining qualified staff	Accountant	July 2023 and ongoing
B. Attract and retain new talent using creative initiatives	I. Implement newly developed new employee orientation and training	Educator/ Orientation team	June 2023, then ongoing
	II. Explore a collaboration with Pivotal Counties to identify and hire a head hunter for hard-to-recruit positions	Director	Dec 2023

Measure: Retention of x% to be determined once the initial baseline is established.	III. Develop and implement a marketing/social media campaign to educate and create positive awareness about public health careers	Educator/ Fellow	June 2024
	IV. Continue to network and communicate with local colleges for interns / graduating seniors	Director	June 2023, then ongoing
C. Strengthen cross-departmental communication and information sharing Measure: Baseline measure to be set through an employee engagement survey or the work/life balance survey; a target will be set once the baseline is established.	I. Identify internal information-sharing and communication opportunities	Educator	Aug 2023
	II. Implement cross-departmental protocols for information sharing	Director	Sept 2023
	III. Reestablish forums for sharing program information and updates	Director	Sept 2023
	V. Create a process to share work successes and accolades	EI Service Coordinator/QI	Sept 2023

Appendix 1 - Survey Assessment Executive Summary

Themes that emerged from a more detailed summary of the surveys included:

Staffing/Capacity

Steuben County Public Health has significant scope, exacerbated by the pandemic, that has impacted the capacity of employees to do their jobs, expand their knowledge, or take on new initiatives.

Communication

Communication opportunities were a theme both internal and external to Steuben County Public Health. Considerations for the strategic plan:

- Review opportunities to increase communication of Steuben County Public Health priorities, initiatives, and goals, as well as routine information dissemination to the staff
- Reconsider communication to the community in a post-pandemic environment, including what information would be most helpful and how best to deliver it with limited resources.

Technology

Themes in the technology survey included the need for more training due to the volume of programs/new programs to be learned and how to use existing technology more efficiently and effectively by maximizing functionality.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

While most staff felt at least knowledgeable about recognizing diversity and applying principles of DEI in public health, they were less comfortable with contributing to, achieving, and sustaining a diverse, inclusive, and competent public health workforce, reducing systemic and structural barriers, implementing organization policies, programs, and services to achieve health justice, and advocating for health equity and social and environmental justice.

Public Health Competencies

Staff felt they needed to be better versed in most of the public health competencies in this survey. Some of these responses may have been job-based, as all respondents may not be responsible for all the survey categories. Scores were also impacted by the

tenure of staff and the survey timing. Many new staff joined the LHD during COVID when there was little focus on building competency, but they have begun closing those gaps since the survey was completed.

Multiple Areas of Focus

There was a consistent theme throughout the external surveys regarding the many significant, complex issues facing Public Health Departments and competing for resources and time: Opioids, Mental Health, COVID, future Pandemics, Poverty, etc.

Polarized Community Opinion

As is occurring across the country, the Steuben County community has deeply divided opinions on COVID, vaccines, and the politicization of healthcare issues in general. This is likely to continue and worsen through the upcoming election season.

Appendix 2 – Environmental Assessment

The environmental assessment reviews and prioritizes factors in the environment that may impact the work of Steuben County Public Health over the next three years. Items in bold were identified as priorities.

Market Factors (demographic, economic, etc.)
Inflation/Economy/Increased Poverty
Rural county with wide geography requires intent and effort to reach the whole community
Unemployment/Social benefits are generous – no incentive to work
Aging population
Worker shortage (internal) – burden on existing staff/unable to launch new initiatives
Cultural differences brought in by businesses and tourism
Segmented communities in the county (religious, social/lifestyle, anti-government)
Transportation – access to public transportation, need to travel out of town for stores
Industry Factors
Public Health Worker shortage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health system incentives to attract workers are adversely impacting LHD ability to recruit/retain • Difficult to attract qualified workers in all health department roles • OT/PT provider shortage
Increase in diverse population
Telehealth – need for reliable internet; opportunities to manage time more effectively
Medical Debt
Lack of capacity for supporting consumers through medical care and system navigation
Political and Regulatory Factors
Differences of opinions/views between elected officials – impact the decisions/work of the LHD
Too many different rules across all levels of government (local, state, federal)
State budget impact – withholding of Medicaid \$\$
Marijuana Regulations – stores opening/usage increasing; impact on drug use
Grant funding may not align with community needs
Other (e.g., technology, social media)
Social media
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the spread of misinformation/disinformation • new trends/access to what is popular/expanded reach to people
Artificial Intelligence (AI) Influence – pros and cons
New software systems imposed on programs – complicated/labor Intensive