



# NAUGATUCK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020

Adopted: 11/10/2015



*OPTIMAL HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OUR COMMUNITIES*

Ansonia • Beacon Falls • Derby • Naugatuck • Seymour • Shelton

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

November 10, 2015



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is with great pleasure and satisfaction that I present the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan for the Naugatuck Valley Health District. This plan builds on the successes of earlier strategic plans dating back to the year 2000. Our ongoing strategic planning process is intended to serve as a roadmap for carrying out mandates and essential services as the health district continues its work on strengthening our capacity to serve the community.

Formed in 1972, the Naugatuck Valley Health District has been an effective example of public health shared services across six municipalities over these many years, however, there is always room for improvement. A product of true collaboration between the staff and the Board of Directors, with representatives from all our member towns, this strategic plan reflects the spirit of our collective commitment to working together for our common priorities. The plan provides a common understanding of the district's mission, vision, values, goals, and objectives.

The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan results from a deliberate decision-making process dedicated to a journey with priorities that focus on enhanced communications, quality improvement, and a competent workforce while assuring sound use of fiscal resources and sustainability. We believe our staff and board members are eager to meet the challenge of carrying out this strategic plan.

In conclusion, I extend appreciation to all those involved in the development of this strategic plan, especially to Jim Fairfield-Sonn for his skillful facilitation. I look forward to continuing our work together in its implementation going forward.

With Kind Regards,

Karen N. Spargo  
Director of Health

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### STRATEGIC PLAN TASK FORCE:

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOARD OF HEALTH):

Thomas Clifford (Ansonia)  
Michael Marganski (Ansonia)  
Eileen Witek (Derby)  
Seth Bronko (Naugatuck)  
Edie Sletner (Naugatuck)  
Rosalie Averill (Seymour)  
Diane Marangelo (Shelton)

### FACILITATOR

James Fairfield-Sonn, PhD

## INTRODUCTION

### About the District

The Naugatuck Valley Health District (NVHD) was founded in 1972 as a collaborative effort to provide public health functions to the residents of the towns of Ansonia, Derby, Seymour, and Shelton. Beacon Falls and Naugatuck were included in this voluntary effort in 1980 and 1985, respectively. The NVHD is an independent governmental entity formed under the CT General Statutes. One of twenty health districts in the state of Connecticut, it was the third district to be formed. The NVHD serves a population of approximately 127,273 residents. The district is governed by a Board of Directors (Board of Health), comprised of representatives appointed by the towns served by the district.

### Background

Since 1999, Naugatuck Valley Health District has actively employed an ongoing strategic planning process to map its future course. There have been four completed strategic planning cycles as follows: 2000-2002, 2002-2005, 2006-2009, and 2010-2014. Each plan builds on the lessons learned from prior plans. The plans are an integral component of how the district operates as an organization.

The 2010-2014 Strategic Plan was crafted in 2009. Primary focus areas included the following: 1) Refining the delivery of quality public health services; 2) Attracting, training, and retaining leadership, management, and a workforce of the highest caliber; 3) Embracing, incorporating, and enhancing technologies, communication tools, and messages; 4) Strengthening relationships with partners and community; and 5) Exploring and addressing organizational structure and resources. This new organizational strategic plan was written in a climate of fiscal constraint resulting from an era that is showing slow but consistent recovery from the earlier economic downturn. It is focused on positioning the district to meet the challenges and opportunities of an aging workforce, climate change, emerging infectious diseases, increasing gaps in health equity, and technological advances, among others.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Naugatuck Valley Health District Strategic Plan is to:

1. Affirm a shared vision, mission, and core values that serve as guiding principles for our stakeholders.
2. Establish clearly defined priorities, goals, objectives, and strategies for the district in a realistic time frame suitable to the district's capacity for implementation.
3. Provide a guide for making informed decisions that balance allocation of resources with the pursuit of priorities and strategies.

4. Effectively communicate priorities and strategies to our staff, board, member municipalities, partners, and community.
5. Identify a base from which to measure progress and evaluate the need for change when required.
6. Provide a process to continually improve organizational focus, efficiency, and effectiveness.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Naugatuck Valley Health District began planning for its 2015-2020 Strategic Plan in January 2015. A Strategic Planning Task Force, consisting of equal representation of members of staff and board, guided and coordinated the process led by an external facilitator. Deliberations were conducted by three groups consisting of the staff, board, and Strategic Planning Task Force. Chief Elected Officials of our member municipalities were kept abreast of the process through monthly reports and minutes of board meetings provided by the Director of Health. A timeline of the key activities specific to the strategic planning process follows:

**January-April 2015.** The three key groups collected and reviewed existing data as part of its Environmental Scan. Health assessment data, behavioral risk factor surveys, community health improvement plan data, program reports, annual reports, performance management data, financial data, and other external and internal documents were reviewed specific to local public health.

**January-April 2015.** A review of the final Annual Report for the 2010-2014 Strategic Plan and progress made towards accomplishing objectives was conducted by the Strategic Plan Task Force and Management Team and reviewed at an All Staff meeting and Board of Directors meeting.

**January-April 2015.** Three health department surveys informed the strategic plan process. A customer survey was developed and conducted. It focused on where residents receive their public health information and potential programs of interest. It was distributed to the general public through the NVHD website and Facebook. WIC and Community Health clients completed surveys during their visits. Environmental Health clients completed surveys at our reception desks and in the field distributed by sanitarian inspectors. Program information and evaluation data were collected through the Access to Care Workgroup of the Community Health Improvement Plan Coalition. The Access to Care Workgroup completed a round of community focus groups with a report issued December 2014 that was considered in the strategic planning data scan. Finally, a survey was conducted of food establishment owners to receive their feedback on the NVHD process for the food establishment rating system.

**February 2015.** Refresher presentations were provided to all three groups on the purpose of strategic planning, key concepts, and a summary review of the 2010-2014 strategic planning process.

**March 2015.** The staff, board, and Strategic Plan Task Force worked through two rounds of discussions each focused on the current Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the organization. Input was sought on national accreditation issues of Information Management, Workforce Development, Communications including Branding, and Financial Sustainability. Input into the SWOT analysis and PHAB issue analysis were captured in summary documents for later reference.

**March-April 2015.** The three groups deliberated on the Vision, Mission Statement, and Values Statement. The Vision remained the same from the previous strategic plan. However, some refinements were made to the Mission Statement and the Values Statement.

**April-May 2015.** Building on earlier deliberations, the three groups identified a number of potential Strategic Initiatives and Associated Goals. The Strategic Planning Task Force reviewed, refined, and finalized five Strategic Priorities (Initiatives) and Associated Goals.

**June 2015.** The Strategic Plan Task Force provided a summary of the initial strategic planning process to the Board for review and the summary was provided at an All Staff meeting.

**June-September 2015.** The Management Team developed objectives and strategies to address the five Strategic Priorities (Initiatives) and shared draft plans with the three groups for further input. The Strategic Plan Task Force met in September for a review with edits of the draft strategic plan and work plan.

**November 2015.** The Board adopted the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. It was shared with the staff and made available to the public on the NVHD website.



## MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE PLAN

The Naugatuck Valley Health District Strategic Plan is organized using the framework of components as follows:

### **Vision**

A future view of an ideal state that the Naugatuck Valley Health District is aspiring to achieve.

### **Mission**

Answers what is the purpose of Naugatuck Valley Health District while capturing what is distinct about the district and also addresses stakeholder expectations.

### **Core Values and Beliefs**

Uncompromised guiding principles of the Naugatuck Valley Health District.

### **Environmental Scan**

The collection and analysis of data leading to identification of issues, ideas or other factors that emerge from the information with real or potential impact to Naugatuck Valley Health District.

### **SWOT**

The analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (challenges) that may impact the Naugatuck Valley Health District.

### **Five Strategic Priorities and Corresponding Goals**

Strategic priorities and goals based on trends identified in the SWOT and environmental scan, including the district's competencies, define what Naugatuck Valley Health District is striving to achieve with this Strategic Plan.

### **Plan of Work**

The plan of work contains strategic priorities, goals, and objectives with measurable time-framed targets, assigned responsibilities, and process and outcome indicators.

### **Annual Progress Reports**

Monitoring reports track progress in accomplishing strategies and objectives including revisions to the strategic plan based on the evaluation process.



## MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

### OUR VISION

Optimal health and quality of life for our communities.

### OUR MISSION

The Naugatuck Valley Health District, as the official local public health agency for its partner communities, is committed to improving the quality of life for all it serves through the promotion of health, prevention of disease, and by assuring a safe and clean environment.

### OUR CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

1. Professionalism

We will treat all our community members, clients, partners, and colleagues in a respectful, ethical, and fair manner.

2. Knowledge

We will utilize the most current evidence-based information in all our work and embrace ongoing workforce and leadership development.

3. Integrity

We will be truthful, honest, fair, and hold ourselves to the highest standards while being fully accountable for our decisions and actions.

4. Dedication

We will work to demonstrate our commitment to the Naugatuck Valley Health District and to the public health of the communities we serve.

5. Teamwork

We will support each other in the spirit of collaboration and cooperation for the public good.



## SUMMARY OF THE SWOT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

As part of the environmental scan, worksheets from *Developing a Local Health Department Strategic Plan: A How-To Guide* prepared for NACCHO by the Illinois Public Health Institute were completed as an outline for assessing data needs and determining the value of the information. Using the sheets as guidance, a data scan summary was compiled and reviewed by the Strategic Plan Task Force over the course of their meetings. The Strategic Plan Task Force and the Management Team reviewed and evaluated the 2010-2014 Strategic Plan results to inform the development of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, and in turn they reported out to the staff and board.

A broad customer/stakeholder survey was developed to receive feedback on awareness of the district, services, and preferred channels for communications. To reach a range of stakeholders, the survey was made available on our website with a language translator, our WIC families were queried, customers coming to the district were asked to participate, and sanitarian staff distributed the surveys in the field. This project led to a quality improvement project. A graduate student conducted a survey of food service establishment owners to receive feedback on food protection services provided to them by the district sanitarians. Finally, focus groups on access to care for reproductive health issues conducted with young families and teens were completed immediately prior to the strategic plan process. All three of these efforts to include stakeholders became an integral part of the environmental data can that informed the decision making by the board and staff when setting the strategic priorities. The environmental scan activities occurred between January and May 2015.

The SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) was conducted by an external facilitator. The facilitator addressed infrastructure considerations of information management, workforce development, communication, and financial sustainability. These considerations were captured in the development of strategic priorities. The SWOT process is outlined in detail in the Appendices of this report. The results of these efforts were synthesized into five trends that informed the priority areas as outlined in the following chart.

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal Attributes of the organization	Strengths	Weaknesses
External Attributes of the environment	Opportunities	Threats

## CONVERGENCE OF KEY TRENDS, COMPETENCIES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

TRENDS	COMPETENCIES	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
Technological advances abound	Policy development/program planning skills  Financial planning and management skills  Analytical/assessment skills	To utilize current and emerging technologies to improve the effectiveness of our data, information management, and evaluation systems
Demographic shifts in the workforce redefine participation	Leadership and systems thinking skills	To build capacity in the organization through proactive recruiting and relevant training and development efforts
Social media and emerging networks enable communication in new ways	Communication skills	To raise the Agency's visibility as a means to increase the community's awareness of the District's roles, responsibilities, and services
Scarce resources require administrative sophistication	Financial planning and management skills	To develop a long-term financial plan to enhance management of current assets and to seek new sources of revenue
Proactive evidence-based public health programs are more desirable than reactive responses	Public health science skills  Analytical/assessment skills	To maintain high-quality mandated services and to implement evidence-based programs based on community needs assessments

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, ASSOCIATED GOALS, AND RATIONALE

### Rationale

It is of equal importance that district staff, board members, public health partners, and the community understand the rationale or significance for each of the priorities identified in the Strategic Plan. A brief overview of the significance of each strategic priority area with corresponding goals follows:

#### Strategic Priority 1:

**To utilize current and emerging technologies to improve the effectiveness of our data, information management, and evaluation systems.**

*Accurate and timely information and data enable effective public health and administrative decisions. To collect and analyze data effectively, the district must upgrade and utilize technology that organizes, processes, and protects information appropriately. Enhanced technology also provides the opportunity to streamline field and office work, generate timely and accurate reports, and link information to a broader community network focused on greater satisfaction for our residents.*

Goal 1: To upgrade, improve, and utilize technology to allow the staff to work more effectively.

Goal 2: To enhance information management in program evaluation (e.g., tracking goals and activities).

#### Strategic Priority 2:

**To build capacity in the organization through proactive recruiting and relevant training and development efforts.**

*The district is only as strong as its workforce. A highly trained, diverse and dedicated staff of skilled professionals is essential to the district's ability to successfully achieve its mission and navigate the challenges facing the delivery of public health services. Continued movement toward adaptive leadership practices that value teamwork, training, and shared responsibilities will prepare the next generation of board and staff members. Multi-level succession planning maps a proactive approach to workforce development.*

Goal 1: Succession planning and active recruiting for the board.

Goal 2: Succession planning for the staff.

### Strategic Priority 3:

#### **To raise the Agency's visibility as a means to increase the community's awareness of the District's roles, responsibilities, and services.**

*A thoughtful and flexible communication strategy can be the anchor of an interconnected health district. Staff and Board members must be engaged to generate a common understanding of the communication platforms that are available, the messages that are generated, and the impact that they have. The strategy is to wisely harness technology in a dynamic environment and to communicate public health messages that advance the mission of the district. By its very nature, the public health brand is challenging, however, the district will strive to increase community awareness of the organization, its roles, responsibilities, and services.*

Goal 1: To get messages out to folks in the community about services being offered.

Goal 2: To expand the use of communication media beyond print and use more Social Media platforms, including but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter.

### Strategic Priority 4:

#### **To develop a long-term financial plan to enhance management of current assets and to seek new sources of revenue.**

*The seeking and leveraging of resources plays a critical role in the evolution of the health district and its ability to successfully attain its mission. Innovation, flexible structuring, and creative partnering can influence program development positively when applied strategically. Trends related to health care reform and possible transitional sources of revenue for population based services provide a potential opportunity to enhance financial funding for service delivery within the mission of the district. The development of a long-term financial plan will provide the framework to strengthen the district's infrastructure and manage assets over an extended period of time beyond any one single fiscal year.*

Goal 1: To develop a long-term financial plan to enhance management of assets.

Goal 2: To explore and expand on ways to participate in Commercial Insurance and Medicaid.

Strategic Priority 5:

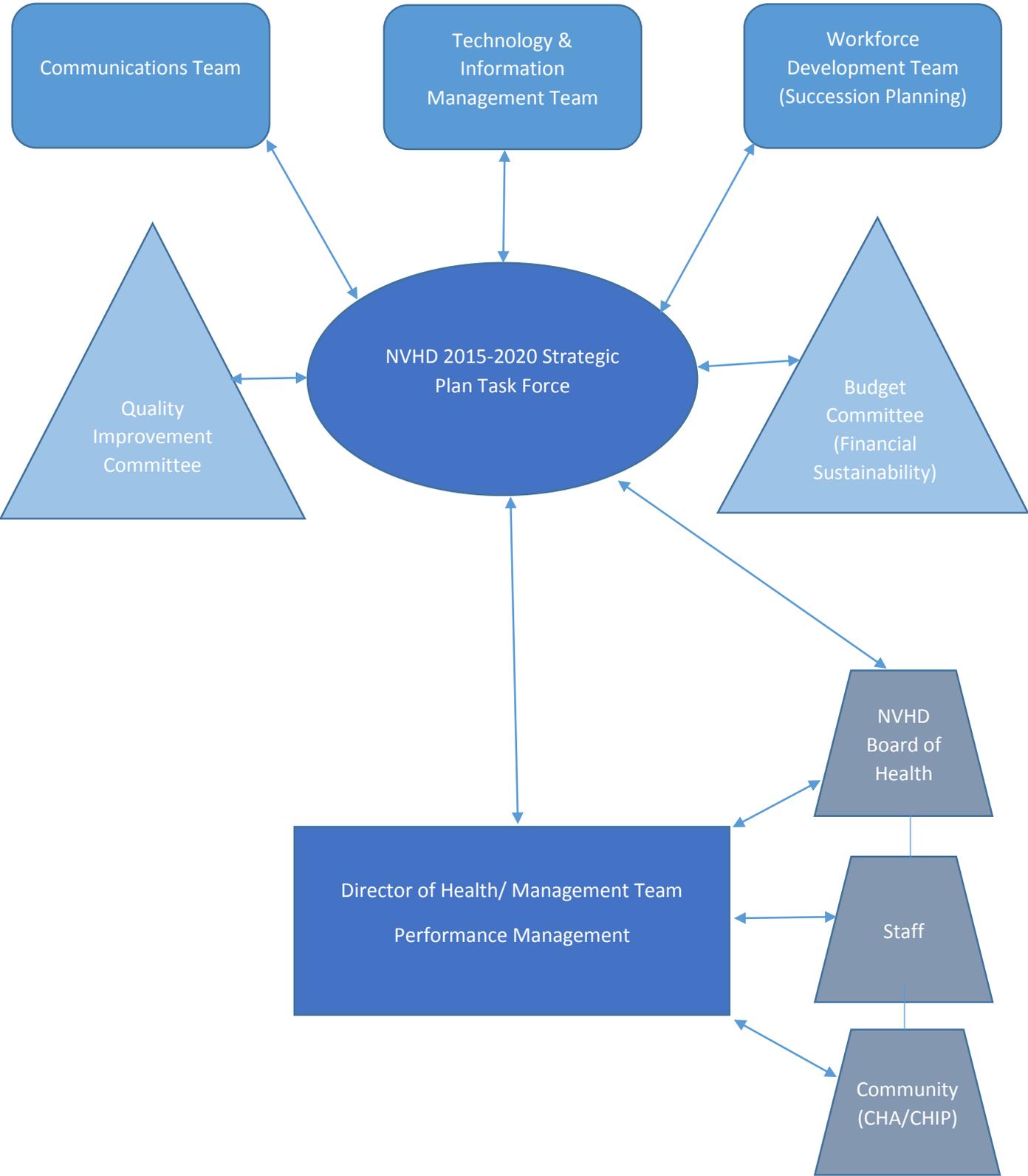
**To maintain high-quality mandated services and to implement evidence-based programs based on community needs assessments.**

*Local public health programs are focused on the delivery of NVHD's mission to improve the quality of life for all our residents through the promotion of health, prevention of disease and by assuring a safe and clean environment. While enhancing delivery of mandated services, the district will continue to assess local public health needs and foster the implementation of fully relevant programs and cost-effective services which address targeted public health issues that lead to community health improvement. The district will continue to institutionalize concepts of quality improvement, performance management and evaluation for effective public health outcomes that improve population health.*

Goal 1: To become more proactive than reactive.



NVHD 2015-2020 Strategic Plan Organizational Structure



## PUTTING THE PLAN INTO ACTION

The illustration above depicts the organizational structure designed to support the NVHD 2015-2020 Strategic Plan process with its numerous priorities, goals, and objectives. This organizational structure assures that the necessary resources are in place to successfully accomplish the strategic plan. The Director of Health is responsible for the coordination of the Strategic Plan Task Force, comprised of board and staff Management Team Members. Internally, workgroups to support the strategic priorities are identified as follows: Workforce Development Team, Communications Team, Technology and Information Management Team, and the Budget Committee (Financial Sustainability). The Management Team, in coordination with the Quality Improvement Team, assures implementation, monitoring, and tracking of strategic plan and performance management targets reporting back to the Strategic Plan Task Force. The strategic plan task force reports out to the board, and the Management Team reports out to the staff. Externally, the Naugatuck Valley Health District collaborates with the Valley Indicators Project (facilitated by the Valley Community Foundation) and the Community Health Improvement Plan committees as external stakeholders and community partners to carry out the community health assessment and community health improvement plan initiatives.

Strategic plan committees or teams and their responsibilities include the following:

**Technology and Information Management Team.** The purpose of this team is to develop and implement an agency technology plan including information management with upgrades and enhancements to allow the staff to work more effectively.

**Communications Team (branding).** The purpose of this team is to heighten awareness of the district and public health including branding, and strengthen external agency communication and collaboration with partners and the public.

**Budget Committee (Financial Sustainability).** The Budget Committee is a standing committee of the Board that works closely with key district management staff. It has responsibility for preparation and presentation of the budget. The Budget Committee systematically reviews and evaluates district resources and infrastructure to support public health programs. The purpose of this committee related to the strategic plan is to develop a long term financial plan to enhance management of assets and to explore potential new sources of revenue.

**Workforce Development Team.** The purpose of this team is to assess, strengthen and monitor the NVHD workforce related to necessary competencies to accomplish its mission. An educated and skilled workforce is essential to providing high quality public health services. Staff who are confident in their ability to accomplish their job responsibilities are more likely to experience job satisfaction, with the potential to increase productivity, quality of work, and staff retention. The Director of Health will coordinate with the Board Chairman to assure succession planning activities specific to the board that enable smooth transition of key staff and board members.

**Quality Improvement Committee.** The purpose of this committee is to provide context and framework for quality improvement activities specific to the Naugatuck Valley Health District by systematically evaluating and improving the quality of programs, processes, and services to achieve a high level of efficiency, effectiveness, and customer satisfaction. To achieve this culture of continuous improvement, quality improvement (QI) efforts target the strategic organization, department, division, program, and project levels of the district.

**Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Committees (CHIP).** The Valley Indicators Project facilitated by the Valley Community Foundation includes a collaborative health assessment workgroup focused on activities related to health data and risk factors. The Community Health Improvement Plan Committee consists of health district and community partners who are working on evidence-based activities focused on improving the health of the community.

### STRATEGIC PLAN OVERSIGHT, MONITORING, TRACKING AND EVALUATION

The purpose of monitoring and tracking the Naugatuck Valley Health District's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan is to provide a formal, systematic process to evaluate whether progress is being made toward achieving the strategic priorities of the organization. This is accomplished by analyzing process outcomes and/or measurable objectives and targets to identify successes and key areas for improvement, including emerging trends that may impact the district, and recommending revisions based on evaluation of the information collected.

The Director of Health is responsible for assuring that the strategic plan is part of a larger strategic management system, including performance measures, that is evaluated by the Management Team at least quarterly and by the Strategic Plan Task Force at least twice a year to determine progress in achieving goals, objectives and targets. Meetings are documented in minutes. The Director of Health provides a written annual report that assesses progress towards meeting goals and objectives. The Strategic Plan Task Force reports out to the Board of Directors and the Management Team reports out to the staff at least annually, providing an opportunity for feedback. During these evaluation periods, the strategic plan may be revised and/or the plan of work may be revised and updated by the Strategic Plan Task Force.

Several of the projects are new initiatives of the district. Those projects require the development of a written plan with measurable goals and objectives to be developed within the first year of the plan accordingly.

## FRAMEWORK FOR THE PLAN OF WORK

The Plan of Work for the Strategic Plan of the Naugatuck Valley Health District is organized using the framework as follows:

1. **Strategic Priorities.** Long-term, broad, continuous statements that provide guideposts to achieving the district's vision and mission.
2. **Goal.** General functional statements expressing an intended effect that align with the strategic priorities.
3. **Objectives.** Annual statements that are specific, measurable, attainable, responsible, and time bound. These are outcome statements expressing a result in the organization.
4. **Activities.** Tasks necessary to complete a given project.
5. **Responsibility.** Identifies the lead person or team/committee with responsibility for coordinating the objective.
6. **Timeline.** Identifies the projected due date for each objective in order to assure the strategic plan stays on track.
7. **Baseline.** A measure at the starting point.
8. **Targets.** A measure at the end point of what the district wants to achieve.
9. **Score.** Quantifies and communicates the status of the strategic plan to stakeholders. A score of 0 indicates the objective has not been started, while a score of .5 means the objective has progressed but is incomplete, and a score of 1 indicates the objective has been successfully met.

## WORK PLAN IMPLEMENTATION: YEAR 1 STRATEGY

The overarching strategy for phase I of the work plan is to develop a plan for Strategic Priorities 1-4 with measurable objectives, action steps with a timeline, baseline, and targets. Overall, the first year is focused on short-term objectives accomplished by forming teams that develop a measurable work plan for their respective priority areas. Although the health district has experience in each of the priority areas, the formation of teams to develop plans allows for evaluation of current efforts while providing an opportunity to map out activities that lead to infrastructure (communication, branding, workforce development, financial sustainability, and data and information management) and program improvements in the district. Phase II of the work plan will focus on implementation of the plans including baselines, targets, and status evaluation.

Strategic priority one focuses on the development of a technology plan that addresses software with supporting technology to strengthen the health district's data and information management, enhances public health programs and reporting, and increases customer service. A grant has been identified to secure an electronic information

management system to track and evaluate 100% of the goals and activities for the community health improvement plan, performance management system, quality improvement activities, and the strategic plan.

Strategic priority two is to develop succession plans for the Board and staff, including an emergency succession plan that addresses the day-to-day operations of the organization. Strategic priority 3 is to develop a communication plan for the district that includes measurable objectives and activities to brand and increase awareness of the district. The communications plan is to include a social marketing strategy that employs multiple platforms to reach diverse populations. Finally, strategic priority 4 focuses on a long-term financial plan to enhance management of the district's assets.

Strategic priority 5 links back to the Community Health Improvement Plan and the quality improvement activities. This priority area reflects measurable objectives as they are developed and evaluated over the life of the plan with a focus on the delivery of mandated services and evidence-based and best practice programs.





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