

Kent City Health Department 2021-2025 Strategic Plan



Approved: March 9, 2021

Updated: March 10, 2021

LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

Strategic plans are crucial to achieving organizational goals. Our goals for the next five years are ambitious and challenging; they will bring the pain of growth. Our department will rely on this plan to prioritize our projects, manage them, and establish an agreement on intended outcomes. This living document will help make sure we are targeted with our use of limited resources to help attain these important objectives. The strategic plan is like a beacon of light: it helps direct our energies and efforts so employees and stakeholders are working on common goals. We intend to complete our accreditation journey and then work on maintaining this achievement. We want to strengthen and grow our workforce so we are better able to meet the needs of our community. We also want to build on the relationships which were forged to new strengths during the COVID-19 pandemic. Partnering with other agencies will not only provide synergy to meet our goals, but will provide us with insightful perspectives which will make our work more meaningful. The strategic plan provides a foundation which will support our endeavors over the next five years.

Joan C. Seidel, Kent City Health Commissioner



AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Kent City Health Department staff provides numerous public health-related services and programs to the citizens of Kent, Ohio.

Environmental Health

Our staff provides services related to annual inspecting of restaurants, retail food establishments, multi-unit housing complexes, vending machines, schools, public swimming pools and spas, and tattoo and body piercing establishments. The environmental health division also oversees the city's mosquito control program and investigates nuisance complaints such as solid waste.

Vital Statistics

Kent City Health Department is responsible for Portage County's vital statistics records, including birth and death certificates.

Health Education, Prevention, and Wellness

The health department connects Kent residents to medical services, sponsors a monthly childhood immunization clinic, creates and distributes monthly health fact sheets, and runs a tobacco control and prevention program.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of the Kent City Health Department Strategic Plan is to clearly establish goals, objectives, and strategies that align with the mission, vision, and core values of our agency. This includes effective communication of the goals to our partners and the community and provides a base from which progress can be measured and tracked.

Mission

To improve the overall health of the community by preventing disease and injury, promoting health and wellness, and connecting Kent City residents to public health services.

Vision

Empowered people, safer environments, and healthier communities.

Core Values

- Health Equity
- Community
- Integrity
- Collaboration
- Education

Strategic Priorities

Priority 1: Obtain and Maintain National Public Health Accreditation

Public health accreditation is a mandate for all health departments in the state of Ohio, but it is also an important step in the process to being a more dependable community resource. Accreditation requires health departments to perform a self-audit of all of the programs, projects, and components that make a health department what it is – a knowledgeable, dependable, and high-functioning health entity.

Priority 2: Improve Current Programs, Expand to New Areas, and Improve Public Accessibility to Health Department Programs and Services

Kent City Health Department has a strong set of programs that have been bolstered by more consistent quality improvement and performance management techniques. A Health Commissioner with a nursing background and an active Medical Director present the possibility of expanding the current services. To tie together all of the programming efforts, KCHD will also increase public awareness of health department efforts to be a consistent, trustworthy public health resource.

Priority 3: Expand Working Relationships and Assess Workplace Culture

Assuring the Kent City Health Department is a respected, recognized source of information and a thoughtful partner is an important component to expanding department reach and improving communication. Public health works best when multiple organizations are working together to meet a common goal. Having a competent workforce and healthy office culture is also a critical component to department excellence.

The Strategic Planning Process

The health department utilized a four-step approach to completing the strategic plan. The process began in January 2020 and concluded in March 2021. A summary of activities related to the steps can be found below:

Phase 1 – Articulate Mission, Vision, and Core

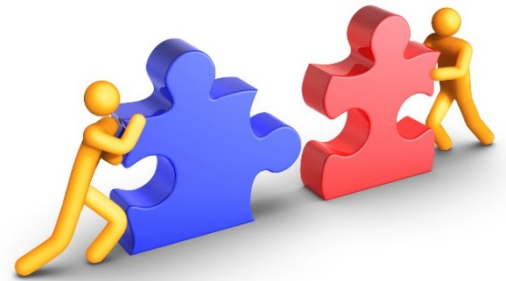
Values: Kent City Health Department staff consisting of the Health Commissioner, Chief Sanitarian, and Accreditation Coordinator met to review mission and vision statements and determine a set of core values. The staff examined other mission and vision statements from other health departments. In January 2020, the Board of Health review and approved the health department’s mission, vision, and core values for the new strategic plan.

Phase 2 – Assess the Situation: Like the first strategic plan, the health department used a SWOT (Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities – Threats) analysis to determine staff and Board of Health opinions on internal and external environments. The staff and Board of Health did separate SWOT analyses and then reviewed responses for each. A summary of themes can be found on pages.

Phase 3 – Selecting Strategic Priorities: Following the review of SWOT analysis, the Board of Health divided into sub-groups to review strategic priorities. The Board of Health has a wide array of background knowledge including nursing, pharmaceuticals, higher education, and research. Discussions included data and information from the Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan.

Phase 4 – Drafting the Plan: The Medical Director was tasked with putting together the specific goals and objective associated with each strategic priority. In order to align with accreditation requirements each priority would have a set of goals, objectives and actions with each goal, designated leader(s) with each goal, and a proposed timeline. Goals are separated into short-term (within one year of plan implementation) and long-term (more than one year within plan implementation).

Phase 5 – Writing and Finalizing the Plan: The Accreditation Coordinator, Medical Director, and Health Commissioner began putting the plan together in February 2021. The Board of Health reviewed and approved the plan in March 2021.



Staff SWOT Analysis (2020)

<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivated, dedicated, and flexible staff that has adapted to many changes • Staff is very knowledgeable of public health laws and regulations • Strong environmental health programs • Supportive Board of Health • Improved reputation within the city of Kent • Current services offered are strong • Strong, swift COVID-19 response • Social media outreach is improving • Well-compensated by the city of Kent • Strong leadership from the Health Commissioner • Improving relationship with the community • Involvement in professional organizations • Sanitarians are paid well and have a strong reputation within the community • High quantity of work performed by small staff • Staff has developed into more of a team; working well together to complete tasks 	<p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources remain limited • Information technology is slow to respond • Changed location • Communications with the county health district • Reduced budget in 2021 • Data analysis is not consistent or tracked well • COVID-19 taking priority over other programs • New Health Commissioner is still adapting to role • Some policies are not in writing, not reviewed frequently enough, not followed, change suddenly • Lack of community involvement • Accommodating to city council demands • Communication from leadership to employees • Lack of team decision-making • No employee cell phones • Lack of workforce development opportunities • Lack of employee recognition activities • Lack of wellness events for staff • Board members are heavily affiliated with Kent State – not representative of the community • Lack of parking at new location • Low immunization rates • Lack of involvement in Community Health Improvement Initiatives
<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding and education opportunities • Volunteers and internships • Collaborations with other health agencies and city departments • New location allows the health department to be more available to the community • Leverage COVID-19 work to create more partnerships and relationships • Increase revenue through online vital statistics • Increase social media involvement • Health Commissioner with a nursing background provides more options to have own clinic • Enhance technology • Expand relationship with PARTA • Hire additional staff (Epidemiologist, sanitarian, nurse) • Utilization of performance management software • Support other higher education programs and not just the Master’s in Public Health track • Allow all staff opinions to be including before making final decisions • Run clinical services through AxxessPointe 	<p><u>Threats</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 pandemic stretching resources • Public perception • Potential merging with the county health district • Small staff leads to staff burnout • Ongoing accreditation • Other agencies poaching staff • State orders, mandates, and audits • Personal opinions of leadership seem to drive the total department response • Unrealistic expectations from leadership and the Board of Health • Accreditation deadline • Poor reporting and responsiveness from county health district with regard to communicable disease, nursing, and preparedness • Lack of continuity plan if staff becomes ill with COVID-19; delegation of work

Board of Health SWOT Analysis (2020)

<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different work experience backgrounds; different ages of Board members • Dedicated, responsive Board members • Understanding of fiduciary responsibility • Connections to a variety of regional healthcare systems • Strong professional relationship with Kent State University • Strong professional relationship with other city departments • Prioritization of a proactive public health presence, including health education opportunities • Resilient staff • Low staff turnover • New health department location provides easy access to the community and downtown Kent • A willingness to identify weaknesses with the department and find solutions in a more effective manner • Strong nursing possibilities with Health Commissioner's background 	<p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of members • Lack of community involvement and public engagement • Limited interactions with other Boards of Health • Limited exposure to daily health department operations • Lack of new BOH member on-boarding plan • Limited fiscal resources for health education and other community opportunities • Lack of leadership succession plan • Lack of ongoing professional development plan • Staff burnout • Poor relationship with the county health district • Disconnect from other Board members • Lack of dedicated projects with other city departments (ex. Declaration of racism as a public health crisis)
<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community outreach • Leveraging more connections with Kent State University, such as hiring nurses, creating an MOU for nursing student assistance, hire faculty as ad hoc epidemiologist, continue academic health department • Leverage connections with University Hospitals, CVS, Kent City Schools, and other Boards of Health • Participation in more community events • Cross-training staff for other positions • Bringing vital statistics online for the community • Continue staff development opportunities • Using social media for non-COVID-19 materials • Recruit new and diverse Board of Health members • Develop focus groups to meet with the community to evaluate needs 	<p><u>Threats</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interference with county health district and University Hospitals physician conflicted positions • Continued pressure from county health district to absorb the health department • Poor reporting and responsiveness from nursing contract with county health district including delayed communicable disease and preparedness reports • Changing community public health resources • Lack of public health funding • Challenges relative to the continued COVID-19 pandemic, including strains on agency resources • Inability to reach science-denying individuals and spread of misinformation • Lack of racial equity • Continued drug and alcohol abuse • Community perception of public health as serving only low-income population • Negative stigma of using public health services • Lack of consistent nursing or epidemiological coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic

Priorities, Goals, and Objectives

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: OBTAIN AND MAINTAIN NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION					
Goal 1.1: Complete PHAB Accreditation Process					
Objectives	Vision/Value Alignment	Action Steps and Strategies	Timeline	Metric	Lead
Kent City Health Department will obtain national public health accreditation status through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB)	1,5,6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upload required documentation into e-PHAB per ACAR requirements Have KCHD staff and Board of Health assist where pertinent Breakdown components required to complete responses 	Ongoing	Accredited by PHAB	Accreditation Coordinator to lead
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: EVALUATE AND IMPROVE CURRENT PROGRAMS, EXPAND TO NEW AREAS, AND IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY TO HEALTH DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES					
<p>Kent City Health Department has a strong set of programs that have been bolstered by more consistent quality improvement and performance management techniques. A Health Commissioner with a nursing background and an active Medical Director present the possibility of expanding the current services. To tie together all of the programming efforts, KCHD will also increase public awareness of health department efforts to be a consistent, trustworthy public health resource.</p>					
Goal 2.1: Develop Nursing Services					
Objectives	Vision/Value Alignment	Action Steps and Strategies	Timeline	Metric	Lead
Objective 2.1.1 Kent City Health Department will optimize the delivery of nursing services to maximize health benefits for the Kent community by providing convenient, quality, comprehensive care.	1,2,6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a work group including KCHD leadership and outside consultant if needed Identify scope of nursing services to be delivered including regulatory requirements, billing, and revenue options Explore potential partnerships and models of service delivery for optimal value 	2021	Report out to Board of Health in Fall 2021	Health Commissioner and Medical Director to lead

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the current nursing program, community needs, and identify areas for improvement 	May-Jun. 2021		
Goal 2.2: Develop Epidemiological Services					
<p>Objective 2.1.2 Develop the epidemiology program to guide public health service delivery for the Kent community</p> <p>KCHD will use epidemiological assessment of communicable and chronic disease in the community to inform health promotion and prevention services</p>	1,2,6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a work group with KCHD leadership and outside experts as needed Identify the scope of work, including data sources, analysis, and reporting expectations Explore potential partnerships with academic, public health, and/or health care agencies Evaluate the current epidemiology services to identify gaps in data Assure alignment with Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan 	<p>Mar-Apr. 2021</p> <p>May-Jun. 2021</p>	Report out to Board of Health in Fall 2021	Health Commissioner or Board of Health to Lead
Goal 2.3: Transition Vital Statistics to an Online Platform					
<p>Objective 2.1.3 Vital statistics process will be accessible for the community online</p>	1,2,4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a workgroup including KCHD staff and relevant city personnel Establish project plan and timeline Select and pilot an online platform, including conducting internal testing and troubleshooting Focus on vital statistics as a revenue stream 	Feb. 2021	Percent of vital statistics work done online Evaluate every six months	Registrar to lead
Goal 2.4: Increase Community Outreach					
<p>Objective 2.1.4 Leverage connections from COVID-19 work to assure the health department is</p>	1,4,6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key community organizations Establish regular contact/engagement with selected community organizations Attend open community meetings 	Ongoing	Evaluate social media growth at the	Health Commissioner to lead

recognized as a strong source for community health leadership and expertise		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include selected organizations in KCHD communications 		end of every month Attend one open meeting per month	
Objective 2.2.4 Continue tobacco compliance checks and store audits per city ordinances	1,4,6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the ODH Tobacco Control and Prevention Grant, 	Annually	Store audit report and compliance check report	Accreditation Coordinator to lead
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: EXPAND WORKING RELATIONSHIPS AND ASSESS WORKPLACE CULTURE					
Assuring the Kent City Health Department is a respected, recognized source of information and a thoughtful partner is an important component to expanding department reach and improving communication. Public health works best when multiple organizations are working together to meet a common goal. Having a competent workforce and healthy office culture is also a critical component to department excellence.					
Goal 3.1: Expand and Strengthen Relationships with Other City and Health Departments					
Objectives	Vision/Value Alignment	Action Steps and Strategies	Timeline	Metrics	Lead
Objective 3.1.1 KCHD will be an essential partner and resource in city/Portage county policy and program decisions, bringing a health equity and <i>Health in All Policies</i> approach to leadership	1,3,4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key city and county departments • Establish regular contact/engagement with selected departments • Attend open meetings • Include city/county departments in selected KCHD communications 	Ongoing	Attend one open meeting per month with the intent of discussing health equity	Health Commissioner to lead
Goal 3.2: Implement an Assessment of Workplace Culture					
Objective 3.2.1 KCHD will explicitly prioritize a culture of professional excellence	3,5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a workplace culture survey tool and engage with an outside consultant if needed • Implement a survey of workplace culture 	2022	Qualitative survey results and subsequent actions based on results	Board of Health and/or outside consultant to lead

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Board of Health and responsible KCHD staff with response and plan 			
Goal 3.3: Implement a Staff Performance Evaluation and Response Tool					
Objective 3.3.1 KCHD will establish formal, ongoing staff evaluations linked to incentives and accountability	1,5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review performance evaluation tools used by other city/government departments • Identify a performance evaluation tool and schedule for implementation • Align performance evaluation with job descriptions • Include self-evaluation to facilitate discussion between employee and supervisor • Establish a structure for incentives and accountability • Establish a schedule for implementation of new process 	Mar. 2021	Employee satisfaction surveys, employee retention rate	Health Commissioner to lead