



*Promoting and protecting the health of Iowans*

**Strategic Operational Plan  
Fiscal Year 2014 – Fiscal Year 2016**

**Updated August 2015**

## A Message from the IDPH Director

Three years ago, the IDPH Executive Team began meeting to create a vision for the future of the department. The intent of this visioning was to consider the many changes occurring in health and healthcare in America, and to consider the implications for public health agencies in Iowa. Important to this effort was aligning with the Governor's goals to improve efficiency and reduce the cost of government and lead Iowa to becoming the healthiest state in the nation. As a part of this process, hard questions were asked, trends were examined, and needs were considered. The result of this work was the development of our IDPH Strategic Operational Plan.

As a result of the plan's development, we've begun important work; for example, we're evaluating our direct care services to better understand health reform's impact on these programs. We've begun discussions with policymakers to increase our funding flexibilities in the face of declining budgets. We've begun implementation of a performance standard which will directly link organizational performance to quality improvement. We're better understanding our data collection systems and data dissemination processes to ensure they are both efficient and optimizing our ability to describe the public's health.

The IDPH Strategic Operational Plan was not intended to be a stagnant expression of one point-in-time. It was intended to be the foundation upon which future reflection and adjustments could be built. In that spirit, the IDPH Executive Team has spent the past several months exploring what, if any, adjustments should be made to the foundational Strategic Operational Plan.

The result is this revised document. It continues to reflect a movement toward an integrated flow of programs and services, all of which build upon a vision of Healthy Iowans Living in Healthy Communities and keeps us on the path to becoming the healthiest state in the nation. In particular, our goals to strengthen core services (Goal 1) and to cultivate an organizational culture of quality improvement (Goal 4) reflect our commitment to providing the services Iowans need to be healthy in the most cost-effective manner.

This document will continue to be examined, tested, and when necessary, revised and updated to address the changing environment in which public health operates. The services we provide, the funding with which we operate, and the faces which carry out the work of public health will inevitably change with each year, but our mission will remain the same.

I am proud to present the updated Iowa Department of Public Health Strategic Operational Plan, a reflection of our department's vision for the future with a commitment to the continued strengthening of our ties with local public health and other critical public and private partners.

Sincerely,

Gerd Clabaugh  
Director, Iowa Dept. of Public Health  
August 20, 2015

# IDPH Strategic Framework

## MISSION

IDPH's purpose; core services; what we do

Promote & Protect the Health of Iowans

Education/Information  
Epidemiology  
Health Statistics  
Population-Focused  
Regulation

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

how we improve what we do

Strengthen IDPH's infrastructure of core services  
Invest in the right people with the right skills  
Improve IDPH's ability to manage, analyze, & act on data  
Cultivate an organizational culture of quality improvement

## PROGRAM

how we're organized; multiple activities/projects that are related and working toward the same goal or result

Core: Critical services IDPH must provide; Unique to IDPH - in authority, skill sets, solutions; Best interest of the public good - suited as function of gov't, source of reliable data, or monitoring quality; Broad population impact - significant consequences, evaluation of data; Responsive to current environment & health needs

## TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS

- Promote Healthy Living
- Prevent Injuries & Violence
- Protect Against Environmental Hazards
- Prevent Epidemics & the Spread of Disease
- Strengthen the Public Health Infrastructure
- Prepare for, Respond to, & Recover from Public Health Emergencies



# IDPH Strategic Vision, Mission, & Guiding Principles

## VISION

Healthy Iowans living in healthy communities

## MISSION

Promoting and protecting the health of Iowans

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We strive for **INNOVATION** and **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT** in our activities to promote and protect the health of Iowans.

Our activities reflect a **POPULATION HEALTH** approach that considers the **MULTIPLE DETERMINANTS** of health.

With a collective sense of **SOCIAL JUSTICE**, our activities reflect understanding and acceptance of **DIVERSITY** among Iowans.

We encourage **COLLABORATION** in our activities and in our decision making so that we respond more effectively to emerging issues and assure we provide the highest **QUALITY** of services.

We recognize the value of a healthy **COMMUNITY** in developing healthy Iowans. We encourage our employees, Iowa's communities, and individual Iowans to work together as **PARTNERS** to build a healthy Iowa.

We use **EVIDENCE** to plan and evaluate our activities to assure our **RESULTS** continue to improve the health of Iowans.

# Environmental Scan

Various external and internal factors affect the work we do. Each factor presents both a challenge we need to address and an opportunity we can use to focus and strengthen our role in promoting and protecting the health of Iowans. For example, while reductions in federal funding will make it challenging to provide many of the services we have historically offered, they also give us the opportunity to strengthen existing partnerships with community organizations and to build new relationships that focus on population health.

## External Factors Affecting Our Work

- State and federal budgetary constraints/reduction and/or redirection of funding.
- Funding from state and federal sources is often inflexible and often not aligned with needs, resulting in funding of lower priority activities at the expense of critical activities.
- Increased reliance on administrative art to assure the capacity to respond to mid-level health crises while maintaining normal operations: federal grant obligations cannot be put aside when an emergent event takes time and resources. Implications of the Affordable Care Act: Health system<sup>1</sup> changes and integration; what value can public health add?
- Changing local public health structure – shrinking workforce/capacity, organizational changes, foundational capabilities, and accreditation.
- Shift from providing clinical care to strengthening population level services and systems.
- Changing technology and communication styles.
- Need for more and better data to monitor progress and to drive decision making; decision-makers lack sufficient information to make important choices about their community's health.
- Need to identify and focus on the services that are critical to Iowans' health.
- Customer/client/public expectations; disparate needs (e.g., rural versus urban).
- Local staff turnover/retirements.
- Population changes: diversity, age, education, income.
- Health behaviors and disease trends.

## Internal Factors Affecting Our Work

- Communication and coordination across programs.
- Dedicated/knowledgeable workforce.
- Staff turnover/retirements.
- Changes in skill sets necessary to do our work – capacity to provide support to partners.
- Ongoing need to improve our efficiency and effectiveness.
- Staff confidence in department leadership, planning, operations, and management.
- Using technology effectively or having access to needed technology.
- Need for more and better data to monitor progress and to drive decision making; decision-makers lack sufficient information to make important choices.

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<sup>1</sup> *Health system* as defined by the Institute of Medicine Committee on Public Health Strategies to Improve Health: "Governmental public health, medical care, and other actors that have the ability to influence health."

# IDPH Strategic Priorities

## Goal 1

Strengthen IDPH's infrastructure of core services to promote and protect the health of Iowans in accordance with *Healthy Iowans*, Iowa's state health improvement plan.

## Objectives

1. Increase the percentage of employees who know the IDPH vision and mission.
2. Increase the percentage of employees who know how their work fits into the IDPH plan.
3. Increase the percentage of programs that have been evaluated for alignment with changes in the health delivery system.
4. Increase the percentage of programs that have assessed state, federal, and other investments in code-required activities.

## Strategies

1. Identify and communicate needs related to sustaining core services.
2. Review programs and services to align with changes in the health delivery system.
3. Seek and align funding to support core services.

Action	Lead	Date Due
1. Communicate with staff and stakeholders about the IDPH strategic plan.	Director & Division Directors	Ongoing
2. Complete additional actuarial studies with IDPH programs.	Division Directors & Bureau Chiefs	July 2016
3. Communicate with staff and stakeholders about IDPH needs and priorities.	Director & Division Directors	Ongoing
4. Review and document use of indirect funds.	Director & Division Directors	June 2016
5. Encourage & support flexibility in how IDPH uses funds & educate stakeholders on why flexibility is necessary.	Director & Division Directors	Ongoing
6. Identify & implement additional funding strategies that align with and support core services.	All divisions, bureaus, and programs.	Ongoing
7. Assess state, federal, and other investments in code-required activities.	Division Directors & Bureau Chiefs	July 2016

## Goal 2

Invest in the right people with the right skills to promote & protect the health of lowans.

### Objectives

1. Increase the percentage of supervisors that rate the employee performance planning process as useful.
2. Increase the percentage of programs for which a list of needed skills is documented.
3. Reduce the gaps in needed skill sets.
4. Increase the percentage of employees that answer agree/strongly agree to employee survey question: "IDPH has the right people with the right skills to do its work."

### Strategies

1. Enable supervisors to better evaluate and manage performance.
2. Assess and document future skill set needs to identify and reduce gaps.

Action	Lead	Date Due
1. Use a performance evaluation QI team to recommend strategies to improve the IDPH employee performance planning and evaluation process.	Planning Services Bureau	Ongoing
2. Assess options related to organizational structure, use of roles, and managing span of control.	Director & Division Directors	July 2016
3. Conduct customized performance management trainings for supervisors.	Division Directors & Bureau Chiefs	Beginning July 2015
4. Determine an assessment process and assess needed and existing skills.	Division Directors & Bureau Chiefs	August 2015
5. Create a workforce plan to direct hiring, development, retention, and succession planning actions to close gaps between current and future skill sets.	Division Directors & Bureau Chiefs	July 2016

### Goal 3

Improve the ability to manage, analyze, and act on data to improve operations and health outcomes.

#### Objectives

1. Increase the percentage of core services with dashboard metrics that can show measureable improvement.
2. Develop a department wide data management blueprint.
3. Increase the percentage of blueprint activities with a schedule for implementation.

#### Strategies

1. Identify/develop and implement a framework, policies, and processes for a department-wide data management program (Data Management Blueprint).
2. Identify and implement metrics to improve operations and health outcomes.

Action	Lead	Date Due
1. Identify and implement best-practices in managing data (e.g., from other states and organizations).	Director & Division Directors	August 2015
2. Identify existing and future barriers to managing and analyzing data.	Director & Division Directors	August 2015
3. Identify and document the risks/benefits of centralized data collection, management, and reporting.	Data Management Committee	July 2016
4. Develop an IDPH core services dashboard.	Planning Services Bureau	July 2016

## Goal 4

Cultivate an organizational culture of quality improvement (QI).

### Objectives

1. Increase the percentage of IDPH staff with exposure to QI in the last year.
2. Increase the percentage of IDPH staff with QI responsibilities in performance plans.
3. Increase the percentage of IDPH staff that answer agree/strongly agree to employee survey question: "We have good processes for doing our work."
4. Increase the percentage of IDPH staff that answer agree/strongly agree to employee survey question: "I have influence in improving my work processes."

### Strategies

1. Identify/develop a framework, policies, and processes for a department wide QI program.
2. Conduct department-wide QI activities.

Action	Lead	Date Due
1. Assess resource needs for implementing a QI program.	Director & Division Directors	July 2016
2. Identify/develop a framework for a department wide QI program.	Planning Services Bureau	July 2016
3. Include QI goals/activities in division directors' and bureau chiefs' performance plans.	Planning Services Bureau	July 2016
4. Identify and apply criteria for conducting department-wide QI projects.	Planning Services Bureau	July 2016