



**County of Santa Clara
Public Health Department**
Strategic Plan
2019 - 2022

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
Background.....	3
About Us.....	3
The Plan.....	4
Plan Development.....	5
Guiding Statements.....	6
Continued Priorities.....	7
Strategic Priority.....	9
Racial & Health Equity.....	9
Policy.....	11
Partnerships.....	13
Technology & Data.....	15
Workforce Development & Engagement.....	17
Alignments & Acknowledgments.....	19

Executive Summary

County of Santa Clara Public Health Department Strategic Plan 2019-2022

Vision: All people thrive in healthy and safe communities

Mission: To protect and improve the health of our community

Values: Excellence, Equity, Diversity and Collaboration, Accountability, and Integrity

This executive summary presents the strategic direction for the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department to protect and improve the health of our community so that all people thrive in healthy and safe communities. This strategic plan strengthens our foundational capabilities to work in new ways to deepen our impact. The Public Health Department will focus its efforts in the following ways:

Racial & Health Equity



- Lead with race to ensure our institutions and systems are not excluding or burdening communities of color, with the goal of eliminating the root causes of unequal health outcomes
- Work to transform systems, structures, and policies that perpetuate inequities and structural racism, strengthen community engagement practices, and enhance departmental capacity and practice to advance racial and health equity.

Policy



- Focus on the development and promotion of public policy that protects the health of the public.
- Develop and implement an upstream policy agenda across sectors, monitor and guide policy in alignment with public health priorities, and develop departmental infrastructure to facilitate coordination of policy efforts.

Partnerships



- A broad range of strong, cross-sector partnerships are essential to achieving collective impact to address health inequities in the County of Santa Clara.
- Develop and support strategic partnerships to leverage assets and mobilize change, and work to integrate public health approaches and programs with the clinical healthcare delivery systems.

Technology & Data



- Accelerate public health action at the local level, by investing in state-of-the-art technology and improving access to quality data to better assess health status and inform public health actions.
- Enhance the breadth, timeliness, and accuracy of data to better understand health status, inform public health strategy, program planning and performance improvement.
- Increase the use of public health data by staff, county partners, policy makers, and other agencies.

Workforce Development & Engagement



- Recruit well-qualified candidates who reflect the diversity of our community, and develop procedures for growth, advancement, and succession planning.
- Develop a culture of recognition, empowerment and engagement.

About Us

The County of Santa Clara Public Health Department's mission is to protect and improve the health of our community. We work to prevent disease and injury, promote healthy lifestyles, create healthy environments, and advocate for policy and systems changes that advance department priorities. We care deeply about our mission and work daily to achieve our vision that all people thrive in healthy and safe communities.

This vision rests largely on factors sometimes not associated with health, like high-quality education, income, wealth, and social structures, because these in turn determine access to safe and healthy housing, neighborhoods, green spaces, transportation, nutritious foods, affordable healthcare, and social and emotional support and inclusion. However, historical legacies, structures, and systems still exclude many groups, especially people of color, from full and equitable access to these fundamental building blocks for health. Meaningful progress will require a shift towards addressing the inequitable allocation of resources and opportunities within and across our communities. This Strategic Plan (2019 to 2022) supports this shift by prompting us to work in new ways and with new partners, while strengthening our foundational capabilities.¹

¹ Foundational capabilities are cross-cutting components that need to be present in local health departments to protect community health and achieve equitable outcomes. See Public Health Leadership Forum, Defining and Constituting Foundational Capabilities and Areas V1. March 2014. https://www.resolve.ngo/docs/articulation-of-foundational-capabilities-and-foundational-areas.v1.may_.pdf



The Plan

The Strategic Plan has three main components, all of which are critical to advancing the department's work towards improving health and narrowing health disparities.

1. The department will **continue existing priorities** in the areas of protecting against communicable diseases and preparing for public health emergencies; preventing chronic disease and injury; providing targeted maternal, child, adolescent, and family health services; utilizing data to inform public health interventions; and communicating the value of public health.
2. The plan also includes **new high-impact goals and strategies** in five priority areas:
 - We will seek to eliminate the root causes of unequal health outcomes through focusing on **Racial and Health Equity**;
 - We will strive to shape **Policy** to support positive health outcomes in the county;
 - We aim to cultivate and strengthen cross-sector **Partnerships** for collective impact on health;
 - We will invest in state-of-the art **Technology** and improve access to **Data** to assess health status in the county and inform public health actions;
 - And we will focus on **Workforce Development and Engagement** to build and inspire a diverse team to take bold, effective action around public health priorities.
3. Finally, the Strategic Plan includes program-specific and population-focused strategic plans. We will **align work across strategic plans** to increase impact and maximize resources.





Plan Development

Department executives, management, and staff throughout the organization engaged in a multi-stage process to develop the Strategic Plan from September 2018 to March 2019. The process was facilitated by the Office of the Director, which supports systems improvement, performance management, planning, and strategic implementation across the organization.

A Core Team of more than thirty staff ensured that the department's programs and services were represented in key conversations and decision making. This team met throughout the process to:

- Recommend revisions to the department's vision, mission, and core values
- Review epidemiologic patterns and trends for health outcomes and the social factors that lead to health inequities
- Conduct an environmental scan of recent reports produced by the department and other local, state and national public health organizations to identify emerging priorities
- Conduct a S.W.O.T. analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) to consider factors that could impact the feasibility and success of goals and strategies
- Identify priority areas, in collaboration with the Executive Team

Upon completion of this work, staff from across the organization participated in three facilitated brainstorming sessions to develop ideas on how to address each priority area. Based on this input, the Core Team drafted goals, objectives, and strategies for each priority area. The draft was further refined by Core Team members with expertise in the priority areas to ensure that the draft captured staff input, was aligned with departmental needs, and had the potential to move the department in a strategic direction.

The Executive Team contributed throughout the process by:

- Reviewing planning documents produced by the Core Team
- Modifying and approving suggested changes to the vision, mission, and core values
- Reviewing, modifying, and approving the draft plan produced by the Core Team



Vision

All people thrive in healthy and safe communities

Mission

To protect and improve the health of our community

Core Values

Excellence	We use data and best practices to ensure high quality services and programs for our community
Equity	We integrate strategies into our work that address injustices and structural inequities to reduce health disparities
Diversity & Collaboration	We honor diversity, inclusion, and community collaboration in all that we do
Accountability	We demonstrate the effectiveness of our work and share progress with our community
Integrity	We build trust through open, honest, and transparent communication and by staying true to our commitments

Continued Priorities

Given their importance to improving the health of all people in Santa Clara County, the following priorities represent areas in which the Department currently works and will continue to focus through 2022. The Department will:



Protect all people in Santa Clara County from the threat of **infectious diseases and public health emergencies** by:

- Monitoring, investigating, controlling, and preventing the spread of all infectious diseases of public health importance and disease outbreaks
- Improving the capacity of public health staff and partners to plan, respond, mitigate, and recover from public health threats and disasters



Prevent chronic diseases in Santa Clara County and address related risk factors by:

- Promoting safe and physically active communities
- Improving healthy food and beverage environments
- Bridging health care systems and community linkages to prevent the onset and to improve the management of chronic conditions
- Expanding tobacco-free communities
- Focusing on violence as a preventable public health issue
- Advancing policy, systems, and environmental changes to prevent chronic diseases



Rely on data and learning to improve health throughout Santa Clara County by:

- Planning and implementing county-wide health assessments and specialized studies
- Planning and evaluating health improvement projects
- Monitoring interventions to help solve health problems
- Collecting data regarding health measures and conducting epidemiologic analysis to identify needs, prioritize public health interventions, and promote system and policy changes
- Using available data to improve existing health programs and services

Provide targeted maternal, child, and family health services to ensure the long-term health of county residents by:

- Providing public health nursing services, health education, and care coordination to:
 - children and youth in foster care
 - medically fragile children and youth
 - families and caregivers of substance-exposed and other medically high risk infants
 - infants, pregnant women, and postpartum women facing high-risk medical or social situations
 - seniors with complex medical problems
- Preventing, screening for, diagnosing, and treating lead poisoning in children and youth
- Addressing oral health needs and common risk factors for oral diseases



Communicate the value of Public Health to partners and people in Santa Clara County by:

- Instituting traditional and new media activities to reach priority populations with public health information
- Increasing the visibility of and support for the department through digital operations, outreach coordination, and branding



Address racial and health equity to eliminate health disparities by:

- Incorporating evidence-based principles of racial and health equity and social justice into all Department activities, policies, and programs
- Cultivating and increasing meaningful, diverse, and strategic partnerships and collaborations across the department to advance health and racial equity



Racial & Health Equity

Goal: Eliminate the root causes of unequal health outcomes

We have made great strides in health over the last century, but these advances in health have not benefited everyone. There are drastic and persistent differences in the health of various population groups, particularly among racial and ethnic groups. These unequal health outcomes are rooted **not** in individual behavior, but in the systems and structures that design institutional and environmental factors. Public Health leads with race because racial inequities persist in every system across the country, and local government and its partners must play a role to ensure our institutions and systems are not excluding or burdening communities of color.



May 1, 2018 East San Jose families march on May Day to demand justice for the historical and present day disinvestment in their communities.

Strategic Priority

Objective 1: Transform systems, structures, and policies that perpetuate inequities and structural racism

Strategy 1.1: Develop and implement plans to build a shared understanding of the root causes of unequal health outcomes and the value of racial equity across Public Health, and as a model for the Health and Hospital System and the County

Strategy 1.2: Develop and enhance partnerships with organizations and government agencies to identify and address racially inequitable conditions

Strategy 1.3: Provide technical assistance to organizations and government agencies to proactively consider race and health impacts across policies, programs and practices

Objective 2: Strengthen community engagement practices in collaboration with organizations and individuals to support Public Health and partner efforts that accelerate racial equity, justice and fairness in our communities

Strategy 2.1: In partnership with organizations and individuals, co-develop guiding principles that prepare Public Health employees to support meaningful community engagement (organizations and individuals)

Strategy 2.2: Provide technical assistance to assure all areas of the Public Health Department implement/apply principles for community engagement

Strategy 2.3: Organize the work of the Public Health Department to ensure community voices are at the forefront of all decision-making that directly impacts them

Objective 3: Enhance departmental capacity and practice towards the advancement of racial and health equity

Strategy 3.1: Develop and implement a plan to improve the quality, collection, analysis, narrative and dissemination of qualitative and quantitative data for advancing racial and health equity

Strategy 3.2: Increase Public Health Department staff's commitment and capability to consider race and health impacts within policies, programs, practices and communications

Strategy 3.3: Ensure Public Health Department programs address race and health impacts across policies, programs, and practices

Strategy 3.4: Increase Public Health Department staff's capacity and confidence to have conversations about racial and health equity

Strategy 3.5: Embed Cultural Humility principles into departmental operations

Policy

Goal: Shape the policy arena to support positive health outcomes in the county

Governmental health agencies have a responsibility to protect the health of the public, and a critical way to achieve this goal is through development and promotion of appropriate public policy. Public Health works to advance policy by following the Public Health Essential Services, to develop policies and policy recommendations by building upon data and responding to community values, to inform the public and policy makers on data and recommendations, to work together with community residents to develop consensus on needed actions and promotion of solutions, and to measure the impacts of policies on populations to ensure equitable health benefits are achieved. To be effective in this area, Public Health will focus on strengthening the Public Health Professionals Core Competency for Policy Development Skills among the workforce.



Strategic Priority

Objective 1: Develop and implement an upstream policy agenda across sectors that prioritizes effective and equitable policies at the local, state, and federal levels to positively impact health

Strategy 1.1: Identify policy priority areas and the role of the department in advancing each area

Strategy 1.2: Develop and execute an operational plan to implement the policy agenda

Strategy 1.3: Institutionalize evaluation and continuous learning mechanisms to ensure an agile, effective policy agenda

Objective 2: Monitor and guide local, state, and federal policy in alignment with public health priorities

Strategy 2.1: Develop a coordinated tracking system to monitor local, state, and federal policy, including associated criteria and timelines

Strategy 2.2: Align and coordinate strategies for advancing legislation with other jurisdictions

Strategy 2.3: Determine specific roles in advancing key legislation in line with policy priorities within the department and with partners outside the public sector, including community

Objective 3: Develop departmental infrastructure for coordination of policy efforts

Strategy 3.1: Recruit and hire for a position to lead departmental policy efforts, support the development of departmental infrastructure and priorities, and manage internal and external coordination of policy efforts

Strategy 3.2: Create a multi-channel communication approach to message policy priorities, emerging issues, opportunities for learning, and specific team roles to appropriate department staff

Strategy 3.3: Institute a cross-departmental working group to coordinate existing and ongoing policy efforts and build department infrastructure

Strategy 3.4: Develop and recruit for policy expertise and skills across branches to support the policy agenda and priorities, identify critical gaps in policies, and engage community and other partners

Partnerships

Goal: Cultivate and strengthen cross-sector partnerships for collective impact on health

Achieving racial and health equity requires broad, cross-sector partnerships to effectively address the full array of complex factors impacting the health of populations. Such partnerships can include entities such as local health care systems, other government agencies and departments, private sector organizations, academia, community-based organizations, local leaders and individuals. Strategic partners who share a common vision are key to successfully addressing inequities that impact health through collective impact.



Strategic Priority

Objective 1: Develop and support strategic partnerships with community and grassroots, private sector, academic, philanthropic, governmental, and other entities to leverage and expand expertise and resources

Strategy 1.1: Establish a cross-departmental working group to strengthen, mobilize and monitor engagement of new and existing partners, both traditional and non-traditional

Strategy 1.2: Develop new strategic partnerships with external organizations to maximize and expand resources aimed at mobilizing collective impact

Strategy 1.3: Build and evaluate grassroots and multi-sector coalitions in public health priority areas to coordinate strategies, leverage assets, and mobilize change

Strategy 1.4: Maximize collective impact of new and existing strategic partnerships by establishing a department-wide partner database that prioritizes racial and health equity goals

Objective 2: Integrate public health values with clinical health care delivery systems

Strategy 2.1: Strengthen integration with VMC to improve coordination of services and referral of clients to public health programs, community resources, and other supportive services

Strategy 2.2: Build alliances and partnerships with external health systems to strengthen services and improve health outcomes



Technology & Data

Goal: Invest in state-of-the art technology and improve access to data to assess health status in the county and inform public health actions

Advances in technology and increases in the availability and diversity of data in electronic formats offer enormous opportunity for improving public health action at the local level. These improvements will support more rapid access to data, enhance identification of emerging health needs, improve data quality, and provide new avenues for communication of health priorities. In addition, methods and tools for collection and communication of the viewpoints of community members are also expanding, offering avenues for engagement of those who too often do not have a way to participate in decisions that impact their health. Maximizing the benefit of these advances for public health will require broader investments in systems and equipping the public health workforce with the skills and insights to use them effectively.



Objective 1: Enhance the breadth, timeliness, and accuracy of data to better understand current health status and inform public health strategy and policy change countywide

Strategy 1.1: Replace the department's case management and surveillance system to improve capacity around systems integration, data quality, and reporting capabilities

Strategy 1.2: Enable electronic data exchange between the department and public and private sector clinical and non-clinical systems that serve those who live and work in Santa Clara County

Strategic Priority

Objective 2: Enhance the breadth, timeliness, and accuracy of data for internal program planning and performance improvement

Strategy 2.1: Invest in other software and tools, including a performance management system, to enable all staff to collect, access, and use data for decision-making, improving performance and quality, and communicating progress

Strategy 2.2: Collaborate with state agencies and other county public health departments to improve state surveillance and data systems

Strategy 2.3: Enhance the use of quality improvement tools to create a culture of problem-solving across the organization

Objective 3: Develop staff capacity to use evidence and data to make decisions, improve performance and quality, and communicate progress

Strategy 3.1: Assess staff competencies around the use of technology, qualitative and quantitative data collection, and data analysis for decision-making, improving performance and quality, and communicating progress

Strategy 3.2: Ensure that existing staff have access to the training, tools, and technologies available to use data to make decisions, improve performance and quality, and communicate progress

Strategy 3.3: Align job specifications, recruitment, and hiring processes with the skills necessary to access, use, and analyze data for program planning and performance improvement

Objective 4: Increase the use of public health data and recommendations by county partners, policymakers, and other county agencies

Strategy 4.1: Identify strategic partners and key audiences for utilization of public health data and recommendations

Strategy 4.2: Assess partner/audience needs for public health data and recommendations

Strategy 4.3: Analyze data to assess the health status of those who live and work in Santa Clara County to provide recommendations for lowering disease rates and reducing health and social inequities

Strategy 4.4: Improve department staff's capacity to be ambassadors to connect partners and audiences to public health data and recommendations

Strategy 4.5: Identify optimal ways to package and disseminate public health data and recommendations

Workforce Development & Engagement

Goal: Build and inspire a diverse team to take bold, effective action around public health priorities

Critical to the success of public health is the adoption of a culture that supports, encourages, and invests in the development of public health professionals. As the public health workforce changes due to various factors, there will be a need for an educated workforce with an emphasis on expanding staff knowledge, skills, abilities; enhancing individual and organizational performance; increasing employee satisfaction; and supporting a culture of quality improvement, all of which must be anchored in the agency's vision, mission, values, and strategic direction.



Strategic Priority

Objective 1: Recruit well-qualified candidates who reflect the diversity of our community and develop internal procedures for succession planning

Strategy 1.1: Collaborate with high schools, community colleges, and schools of medicine, nursing, and public health to strengthen and diversify the public health pipeline

Strategy 1.2: Develop a cross-departmental working group to improve recruitment processes to expand the pool of qualified candidates, including candidates from communities we serve; increase diversity at all levels of the department; and resolve pain points in the hiring process

Strategy 1.3: Provide departmental guidelines, tools, and support for staff around succession planning

Strategy 1.4: Review, update, or create job codes to better align with workforce needs and responsibilities

Objective 2: Retain and develop staff by providing them with the tools and opportunities they need to grow and advance professionally

Strategy 2.1: Update and expand onboarding and employee orientation systems to incorporate best practices

Strategy 2.2: Explore barriers to and opportunities for more widespread adoption of flexible work schedules

Strategy 2.3: Develop a professional development and support system for managers that will promote inspirational leadership, effective management, and staff engagement and growth

Strategy 2.4: Develop a comprehensive system of professional development for staff that will promote continuous learning around Strategic Plan priorities

Objective 3: Build and sustain a work culture where staff are acknowledged, empowered, and engaged

Strategy 3.1: Collect information to diagnose underlying issues around staff engagement and track trends over time

Strategy 3.2: Implement a workplace culture framework, tools, and support system to promote risk-taking, agency, engagement, and resiliency

Strategy 3.3: Develop mechanisms for executives and managers to improve alignment, build stronger relationships, communicate proactively around decisions and priorities, and encourage resiliency and agency within the constraints of the county environment

Alignments & Acknowledgments

Chronic Disease Prevention Strategic Plan: This plan guides expansion of core prevention work to address heart disease, cancer, diabetes and other leading causes of death. High impact, equity-focused strategies include enhanced coordination of clinical and community-based prevention; promotion of city-level policies to create healthier environments; and collaborative approaches to aging in place and climate change resilience.

Santa Clara County Health and Hospital System Roadmap: The Road Map centers on improving patient health outcomes while strengthening customer experience. It explicitly focuses on reducing redundancies, delays and cost of care.

Getting to Zero Plan: Despite low HIV incidence compared to the national average, new diagnoses continue to rise among sub-populations countywide, leading to worsening disparities affecting people of color and sexual and gender minorities. This plan aims to achieve zero new HIV cases, HIV-related deaths and stigma, using collective impact to increase access to preventive medication, promote evidence-based STD screening practices and improve linkages to care for those living with HIV.

Oral Health Strategic Plan: This plan aims to increase access to and utilization of high-quality, culturally-appropriate oral health preventive services for all county residents with an eye to combating persistent disparities by race and socio-economic status. Focus areas over the next four years include access to dental services, oral health education, dental-medical service integration, workforce expansion, policy and data.

Maternal, Child & Adolescent Health (MCAH) Strategic Planning Process: The MCAH Branch is currently undergoing a strategic planning process to set priorities for the next five years in order to address core needs of the MCAH population in the County. These needs include equitable access to prenatal care, delivery of culturally-appropriate post-partum care, and improved outcomes for African American newborns and mothers.

Alexis D'Agostino
Alison Sikola
Amber Siddle-Manas
Analilia Garcia
Anandi Sujeer
Angelica Diaz
Bonnie Broderick
Brandon Bonin
Britt Ehrhardt
Charisse Feldman
Christine Rutherford-Stuart
Elinor Stetson
Jacquelyn Nash

Jennifer Yeh
Jimmy Silveira
Kevin Schenk
Lidia Doniz
Louise Hill
Mandeep Sidhu
Marcela Vasquez
Marianna Moles
Michele Seaton
Naveen Sangwan
NgocV Le
Nicole Coxe
Nidia Garcia

Norah Ojeda
Pamela Stoddard
Patrick Anderson
Rebecca Quenelle
Rhoda Blankenship
Rhonda McClinton-Brown
Rocio Luna
Sarah Barragan
Suellen Haggerty
Teddy Daligga
Tiffany Fuh
Veena Raghavan