



# Southwest Health and Human Services Strategic Plan

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2020-2024



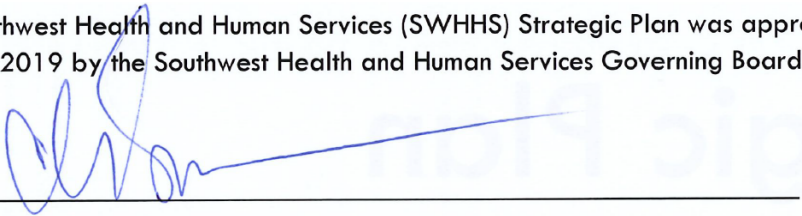
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## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
SOAR Analysis.....	2
Mission, Vision and Values Statements.....	4
Strategic Priorities.....	7
Implementation and Communication of Plan.....	8
Linkages.....	8
Utilization of the Strategic Plan.....	8
Appendix A.....	1

Southwest Health and Human Services (SWHHS) Strategic Plan was approved and adopted on December 18, 2019 by the Southwest Health and Human Services Governing Board.



SWHHS Governance Board Chair, Commissioner Charlie Sanow

This document will be reviewed annually at a SWHHS Board Meeting. An annual report will assess progress towards the goals and objectives set and show how targets are monitored.

## Introduction

Southwest Health and Human Services (SWHHS) serves Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood, and Rock counties in southwestern Minnesota under a joint-powers agreement. Within this overarching organizational structure, SWHHS provides all six counties with financial assistance, child support, social services, and public health services.

Board members and staff engaged in strategic planning in order to envision and articulate the way forward to a more fully integrated organization, equipped to meet the current and emerging health and human services needs of the communities served. The strategic plan intends to align and guide the work of the staff and Board, as well as communicate to stakeholders the purpose, desired outcomes, and strategies of the agency's work.

In August 2019, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Nursing Consultant Linda Bauck-Todd, met with a planning team comprised of a SWHHS Board member and staff representatives to conduct a strategic planning event. In preparation, a smaller planning team met to assess strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) with staff and community partners and discuss the role of strategic planning amid other related planning efforts- such as Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

The strategic plan includes these elements:

- Situation assessment (building on ideas already generated in the SOAR discussions);
- Mission (checking understanding and clarifying, if needed, of the SWHHS mission);
- 3-5 year vision (Description of desired outcomes); and
- 1-2 year strategies (initial approaches to accomplish the vision)

The strategic planning team included:

Board Member:

-Charlie Sanow, Lyon County Commissioner\*

Executive Team:

- Beth Wilms, Director of Health & Human Services\*      - Carol Biren, Public Health Division Director\*

Supervisors:

- Ann Orren, Community Public Health Supervisor\*      - Gail Bielen, Licensing Supervisor

Staff:

- Amy Johnson, Social Worker, Children's Services      - Michelle Salfer, PH Program Specialist\*  
- Chris Cauwels, Network Systems Administrator\*      - Scott Winter, Foster Care Licensor  
- Dawn Popowski, Social Worker, Adults-MH\*      - Tara VanderSteen, Child Support Officer  
- Lisa DeBoer, Fiscal Officer\*      - Wendy Crawford, Eligibility Worker

\*Indicated small planning team membership

## SOAR Analysis

In May and June 2019, SWHHS staff were asked to participate in a SOAR analysis to get input on organizational strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results. Data was gathered through input sessions and a survey through Survey Monkey. Community partners were also invited to SOAR sessions to provide input. The outcomes of this analysis were utilized during the "vision" discussion of the strategic planning retreat. A snapshot of the brainstorm sessions is listed below.

## Staff Input

### Strengths:

<b>Internal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Teamwork</li><li>▪ Flexibility</li><li>▪ Communication</li><li>▪ Staff</li></ul>	<b>External</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Programs/prevention programs/grants</li><li>▪ Partnerships/Relationships</li><li>▪ Customer-focused</li></ul>
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### Opportunities:

<b>Internal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Training</li><li>▪ Communication</li><li>▪ Wages/benefits/retention</li><li>▪ Flexibility/consistency</li><li>▪ Caseloads/workloads</li><li>▪ Funding</li></ul>	<b>External</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Marketing/communication</li><li>▪ Improve/expand services/programs</li><li>▪ Community presence</li><li>▪ Prevention programming/community education</li><li>▪ Merit</li></ul>
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### Aspirations:

<b>Internal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Staff morale would improve</li><li>▪ Communication would be more consistent/accurate</li><li>▪ We would have manageable workloads</li><li>▪ We would have a comprehensive benefits package (wages, insurance, etc.)</li></ul>	<b>External</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Regular interaction with community partners</li><li>▪ Community education, less stigma</li><li>▪ Excellent customer service</li></ul>
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### Results:

<b>Internal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Wages/Benefits/Merit</li><li>▪ Communication</li><li>▪ Staff Retention</li></ul>	<b>External</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Communication/Marketing/Outreach</li><li>▪ Merit</li><li>▪ Customer Service/One-Stop-Shop</li></ul>
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## Community Input

### Strengths:

1. Staff
2. Grant work/service expansion
3. Collaboration and Partnership

### Opportunities:

1. Increase outreach
2. Expand services/programs
3. Implement a 2Gen Approach

### Aspirations:

1. Programs, new and existing, would meet the needs of our communities and would be funded appropriately.

2. The community would be educated on trending topics or health-related information utilizing local data.
3. Staff would have the training and tools needed to do their jobs well.
4. Local, state and federal funding streams would meet the needs of the community and would be simplified.

#### Results:

##### *Marketing Plan/Campaign*

- Intentional collaboration with community partners
- Strengthen our online presence
- Provide specialty training for staff so they can share programs/service information with the community
- Rebrand the agency
- Utilize social media, newspaper, and any other sources the community will see (monthly “did you know”)
- Improve the community’s knowledge of what we do (maybe increasing utilization of some services)

##### *No Wrong Door approach*

- Provide assessments to meet the needs of the entire family
- Map community resources
- Build partner relationships
- Disrupt the system!

#### Based on the August 2019 discussion, the following external trends were identified:

- Increasing mental health needs
- The Board’s perception of the population – concerns about funding
- Political priorities
- Negative narratives about clients receiving services
- Chemical use in the population – puts children in crisis
- Trends of new chemicals being used
- Less time is taken to understand the “why” – for example, why should we fund \_\_\_\_\_ client?
- Rural population declining, increasing age of the population and shifting needs

## Mission, Vision and Values Statements

The Southwest Health and Human Services Board adopted the SWHHS mission statement in January 2013.

During the Strategic Planning session, the group discussed the current mission statement and provided thoughts on both the current mission and values.

### Mission

*Southwest Health and Human Services is a multi-county agency committed to strengthening individuals, families, and communities by providing quality services in a respectful, caring, and cost-effective manner.*

- The group thought that it would be good to develop a single vision statement to accompany a document stating the mission/vision/organizational values.

- It was decided that any discussion and modification to the mission statement and values would happen in the future and not at today's meeting – likely in the next year or two.
- The mission statement should represent all six counties.
- Consider the concepts of equity and diversity in the mission statement (or perhaps as values).
- There is a need to talk about the “why” (from the Ted Talk [https://www.ted.com/talks/simon\\_sinek\\_how\\_great\\_leaders\\_inspire\\_action?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action?language=en))
- The mission drives values.
- The mission statement should be clear and concise.
- Staff should be able to state the mission statement.

## Guiding Principles/Values

Along with the mission, values describe how the organization operates; they are the underlying assumptions of the work. Our shared values guide our actions and how we interact with our colleagues, clients, and community partners. Southwest Health and Human Services went through a comprehensive Values Activity in October and November 2016 to identify their core values, and these six emerged.

### Respect

We treat people with dignity and consideration, and we listen openly to integrate a variety of perspectives and create environments that foster trust.

### Honesty

We are truthful and responsible in our interactions with the public and each other. We demonstrate compassion, acceptance, and will safeguard dignity and confidentiality.

### Trust

We are people of character and integrity who keep our word and honor our commitments, resulting in a safe environment for staff and clients.

### Communication

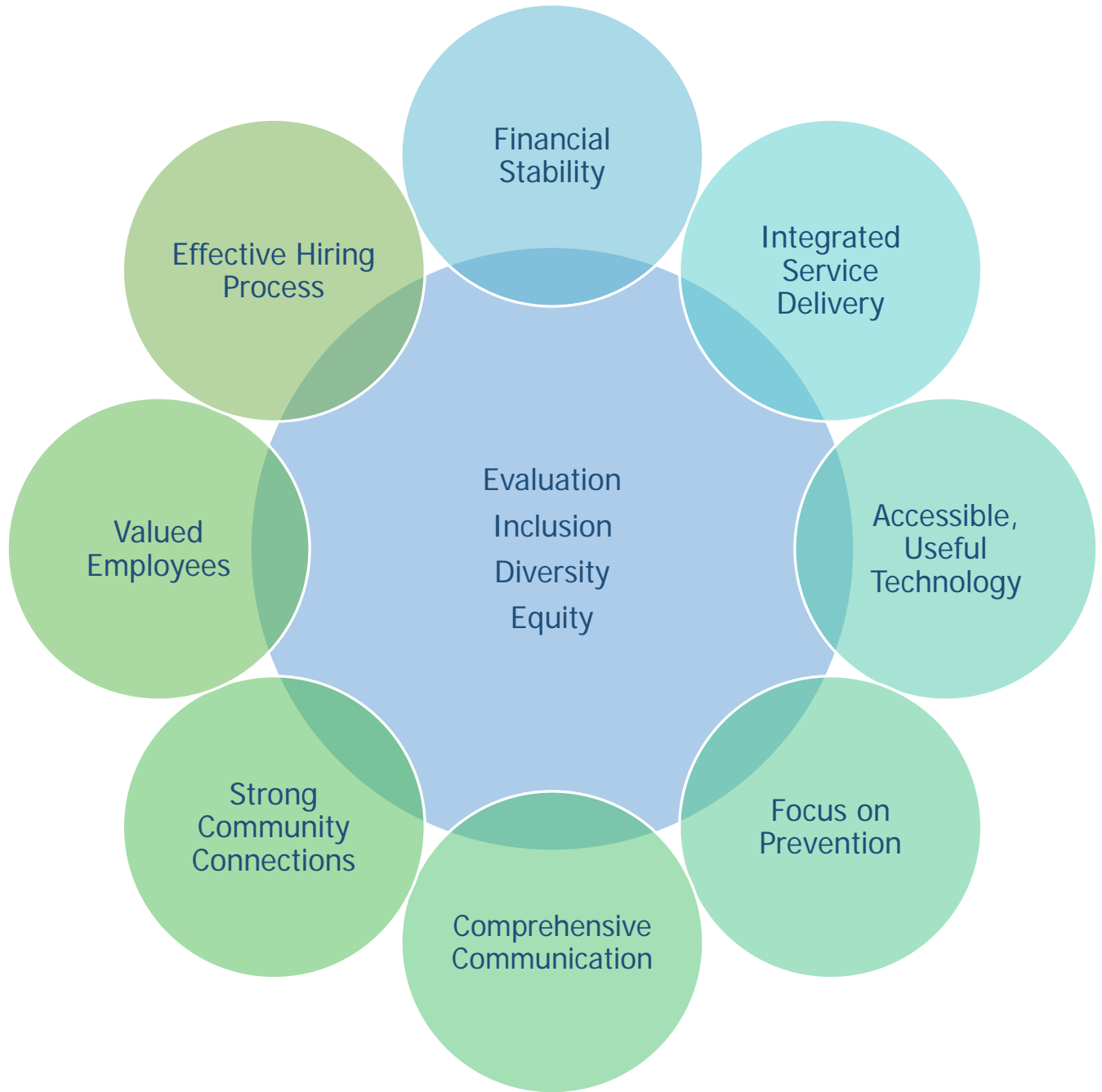
We engage in timely, responsive, effective, and open information sharing to improve our work and maintain our reputation as a trusted source for program and service delivery.

### Teamwork

We are committed to common goals based on open and honest communication while showing concern and support for each other.

### Flexibility

We are an organization willing to learn, create innovative ideas, and adapt to the ever-changing environment while striving for a healthy work-life balance.



## Vision

The participants drafted vision elements for SWHHS, responding individually to the question, what does SWHHS envision within the organization as a result of the work in the next 3 – 5 years? They then identified and named the major elements of the vision. The lists below include the vision element name and a description of the elements that the team worked on during several planning meetings after the Strategic Planning day. Four overarching ideas were identified for the vision:

- Evaluation/data measurement: active performance management
- Inclusion
- Equity
- Diversity

## Vision Elements

Eight vision elements, with descriptions, are listed below and were developed with the themes of diversity, equity, and inclusion in mind. The phrase strong, healthy and safe communities was extracted from the brainstormed ideas to be used as some overall outcome ideas for the visioning process.

### *Valued Employees:*

SWHHS is an employer of choice by having satisfied staff and a positive workplace. All levels of the agency are committed to its mission and have a trusting working relationship where employees feel valued and appreciated. Agency flexibility and promoting wellness allows for a positive atmosphere and a healthy work-life balance.

### *Focus on Prevention:*

Focusing on preventative measures will enhance the well-being of the individual, family, and community while decreasing future societal and financial costs.

### *Inclusive Hiring Process:*

Our staff should be representative of the population we serve. We will strive for our process to be simplified and inclusive to remove barriers to provide the best quality services to the people we serve.

### *Strong Community Connections:*

SWHHS will strive to be a leader in our community by providing outreach, program development, and creating collaborative partnerships throughout the region. A firm understanding of community resources will maximize and improve partnerships to better serve our communities.

### *Financial Stability:*

We will fully utilize all available funds while actively seeking additional revenues to meet the needs of the community. Financial stability allows our agency to enhance services.

### *Comprehensive Communication:*

Consistent and thorough communication utilizing multiple channels informs and builds strong relationships, both internally among staff and externally with those we serve and collaborating partners.

### *Accessible and Useful Technology:*

Fully utilizing the technology that we have available will create efficiencies for staff and clients we serve. Because of our large geographic area, maximizing our connections with the communities we serve is imperative.

### *Integrated Service Delivery:*

Tools will be provided to staff that will incorporate integration of agency resources and the latest programmatic information with data focused and proven strategies.

## Strategic Priorities

Participants were asked to brainstorm the following question: "What steps/actions need to take place in order to make the vision elements become a reality. The ideas are listed below. The group then themed and titled the ideas to develop strategies.

An overarching concept for the strategies is: Review long term goals periodically (evaluation)

1. Develop Consistent and Intentional Internal and External Communications
2. Maximize Agency Revenue



3. Enhance Staff Satisfaction and Retention and Streamline Hiring Process
4. Improve Efficacy of Programs and Services

See Appendix A for the action plans and implementation updates.

## Implementation and Communication of Plan

The 2020-2024 strategic plan represents an ongoing process of setting priorities, reflecting on what is being learned, and taking realistic steps forward. The strategic plan provides the organizational guideposts for SWHHS staff, partners and board members to discuss and determine where to focus time and resources. At the broadest level, the implementation of the five-year strategic plan occurs through the development and monitoring of the annual work plan. The executive team manages this process and oversees communication with agency staff and the SWHHS Governing Board.

## Linkages

The *Minnesota Local Public Health Assessment and Planning Process* links the SWHHS Strategic Plan with the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) and Quality Improvement Plan. One of the strategies identified during the SWHHS strategic planning process was Improve Efficacy of Programs and Services. As a part of the implementation of the 2020-2024 CHIP, mental health is being addressed throughout the agency. Mental health was identified as one of the top health concerns for the six-county region during the 2019 Community Health Assessment process. The Quality Improvement (QI) Plan links directly to the strategic plan as Quality Improvement is integrated throughout the plan, as it is an important piece of creating a successful performance management system.

## Utilization of the Strategic Plan

Strategic Planning teams will be created to help the agency meet the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. Each Strategic Planning team will create their own action plan and implement and track their progress towards the goals of the plan. As part of the Quality Improvement process of the agency, each team will provide updates on a regular basis to the Executive Team and/or Quality Council, who monitors the plans and implements quality improvement plans where needed. We will incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion and evaluation in all levels of this plan. Continuous evaluation of agency processes will streamline and create efficiencies in service delivery.

## Appendix A

### Strategic Planning Worksheet: Action Planning

**SMART Objectives** are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, **T**imely.

<b>Strategic Priority #1: Develop Consistent and Intentional Internal and External Communications</b>				
<b>Goal:</b> Increase modes and quality of internal and external communication to improve knowledge and understanding of agency programs, initiatives, plans, outputs, and activities.				
<b>Objective 1.1</b> By December 31, 2024, implement strategies to improve internal communication.			<b>Benchmark and Method of Measuring Success:</b> Integration team has been developed.	
<b>Action Steps (Deliverables) with Time Frame</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Lead Person/Team</b>	<b>Status with Dates</b>
Develop an integration team.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020	Staff time	Director appointed	
Utilize current technology options for better communications and service delivery.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020, on-going	Staff time, potential tech costs	IT	
<b>Objective 1.2</b> By December 31, 2024, implement strategies to improve external communication.			<b>Benchmark and Method of Measuring Success:</b> Position is hired. Communication plan is implemented.	
<b>Action Steps (Deliverables) with Time Frame</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Lead Person/Team</b>	<b>Status with Dates</b>
Hire a position to fill the gaps in strategy, legislative work, DEI, framing communications and public information.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2020	Current Planner position is open and in 2020 budget	Executive Team/ Strategic Planning Team	
Review, revise as needed and implement SWHHS Communications Plan.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2021	Staff time	“revised planner position”/ communications team	

Utilize current technology options for better communications and service delivery.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020, on-going	Staff time, potential tech costs	IT	
<b>Objective 1.3</b> By December 31, 2024, evaluate mission, vision, branding based on current guiding principles/values.			<b>Benchmark and Method of Measuring Success:</b> Incorporated into communication plan.	
<b>Action Steps (Deliverables) with Time Frame</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Lead Person/Team</b>	<b>Status with Dates</b>
Evaluate mission, vision, and branding based on current guiding principles/values.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2022	Staff time	Strategic Planning Team/ "previous planner position"	

<b>Strategic Priority #2: Maximize Agency Revenue</b>				
<b>Goal:</b> SWHHS will improve its funding capacity to meet current and future needs of health and human services programs and services.				
<b>Objective 2.1</b> By December 31, 2024, maximize current funding streams.			<b>Benchmark and Method of Measuring Success:</b> Evaluation process is developed and implemented.	
<b>Action Steps (Deliverables) with Time Frame</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Lead Person/Team</b>	<b>Status with Dates</b>
Increase all employee's knowledge and understanding of program and agency finances.	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2020	Staff time	Fiscal Manager	
Maximize program funding through 100% time reporting for Public Health and Human Service.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020, on-going	Staff time	Focus	
Assess and improve/capture of billable time to maximize revenue.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020, on-going	Staff time	Focus	

<b>Objective 2.2</b> By December 31, 2024, assess current services and maximize funding streams.			<b>Benchmark and Method of Measuring Success:</b> Evaluation process is developed and implemented.	
<b>Action Steps (Deliverables) with Time Frame</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Lead Person/Team</b>	<b>Status with Dates</b>
Seek out non-traditional funding.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020, on-going	Staff time	“previous planner position”/Focus/Director/Board	
Tailor and/or enhance services to the needs of the community.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020, on-going	Staff time	Focus	

<b>Strategic Priority #3: Enhance Staff Satisfaction and Retention and Streamline Hiring Process</b>				
<b>Goal:</b> Enhance staff morale, increase retention, streamline the hiring process, and promote positive customer service.				
<b>Objective 3.1</b> By December 31, 2024, complete a comprehensive evaluation of the current hiring system for options that include diversity, equity, and inclusion.			<b>Benchmark and Method of Measuring Success:</b> Complete evaluation of the hiring system.	
<b>Action Steps (Deliverables) with Time Frame</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Lead Person/Team</b>	<b>Status with Dates</b>
Develop a committee to evaluate our current hiring system for options that include diversity, equity, and inclusion along with simplifying the system.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020	Staff time	Director/HR	
<b>Objective 3.2</b> By December 31, 2024, enhance our workforce development plan (WFDP).			<b>Benchmark and Method of Measuring Success:</b> Review & complete WFDP.	
<b>Action Steps (Deliverables) with Time Frame</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Lead Person/Team</b>	<b>Status with Dates</b>
Develop committee to enhance WFDP.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2021	Staff time	Director appointed	
Look at ways to plan, structure, and track training in a cost-effective way.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2022	Staff time, training costs	HR/Executive Team/IT	

<b>Objective 3.3</b> By December 31, 2024, develop diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) plan.			<b>Benchmark and Method of Measuring Success:</b> DEI committee determined.	
<b>Action Steps (Deliverables) with Time Frame</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Lead Person/Team</b>	<b>Status with Dates</b>
Develop a committee to look at ways to integrate DEI in our work and current and new policies set by our board.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020	Staff time, training	Director Appointed	
<b>Objective 3.4</b> By December 31, 2024, a comprehensive review of benefits and personnel policy implementation.			<b>Benchmark and Method of Measuring Success:</b> Completed review.	
<b>Action Steps (Deliverables) with Time Frame</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Lead Person/Team</b>	<b>Status with Dates</b>
Evaluate and develop baseline supervisory guidelines with options for unit specific needs.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2022	Staff time	Focus Sub-committee	
Review and implement best practices for increasing staff morale.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020	Staff time	Focus Sub-committee/staff subcommittee	

<b>Strategic Priority #4: Improve Efficacy of Programs and Services</b>				
<b>Goal: To advocate for, evaluate and support prevention and holistic services across our 6-county region.</b>				
<b>Objective 4.1</b> By December 31, 2024, evaluate current programming/services and expand where applicable.			<b>Benchmark and Method of Measuring Success:</b> Integration team will determine.	
<b>Action Steps (Deliverables) with Time Frame</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Lead Person/Team</b>	<b>Status with Dates</b>
Tailor and/or enhance services to the needs of the community.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020	Staff time	Focus	
Explore grant funds to support further growth in prevention and early intervention programs.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020	Staff time	Focus	

Develop integration team.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020	Staff time	Director appointed	
Utilize current technology options for better communications and service delivery.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020	Staff time, potential tech costs	IT	
<b>Objective 4.2</b> By December 31, 2024, collaborate with community partners to integrate and remove gaps in services. (No Wrong Door)			<b>Benchmark and Method of Measuring Success:</b> Community systems are integrated to meet client driven needs.	
<b>Action Steps (Deliverables) with Time Frame</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Lead Person/Team</b>	<b>Status with Dates</b>
Participate in community strategic planning around “No Wrong Door”.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020	Staff time	PH Program Specialist	
Utilize current technology options for better communications and service delivery.	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020 to on-going	Staff time, potentially tech apps	PH Program Specialist & IT	