



Charles County Department of Health

STRATEGIC PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 2026–2031

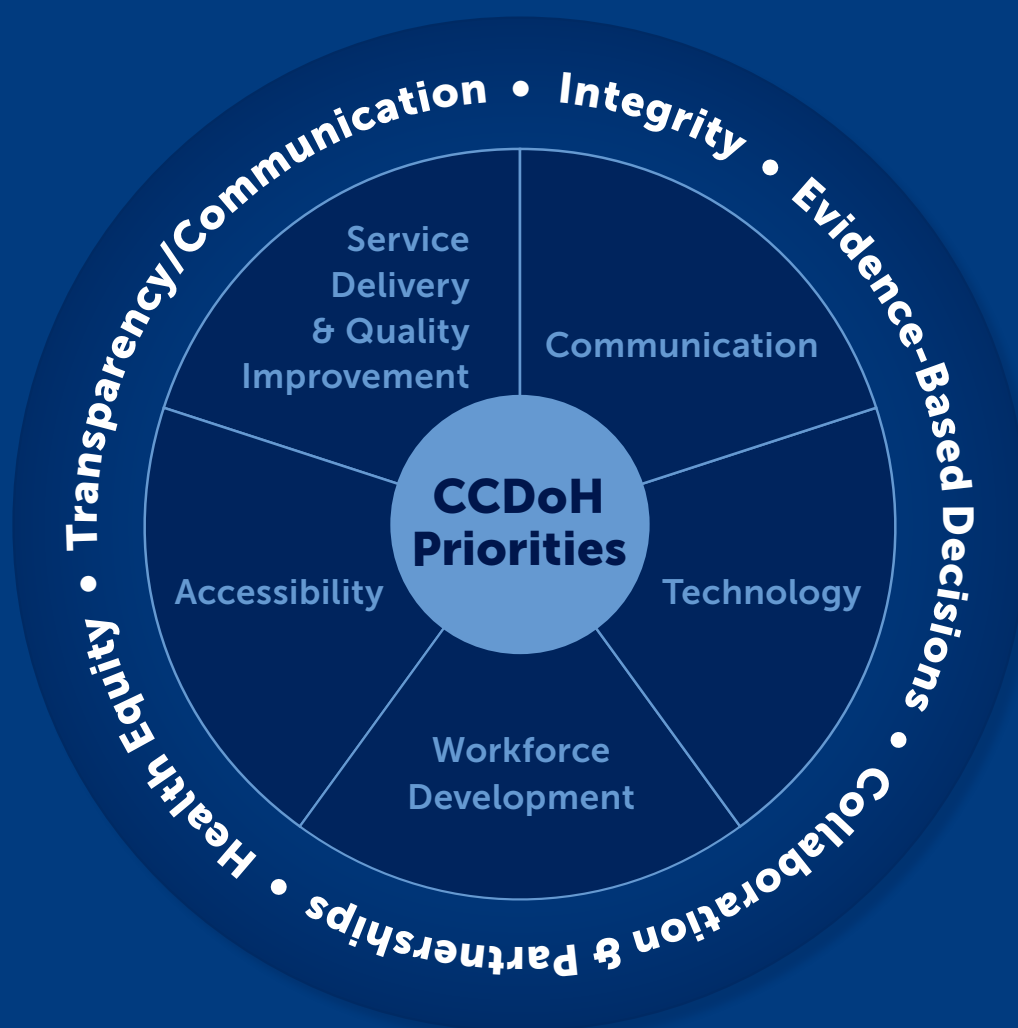


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Executive Summary

This is the executive summary of the Charles County Department of Health (CCDoH) Strategic Plan. The full version can be accessed [here](#).

From the Health Officer

As Health Officer for the Charles County Department of Health (CCDoH), I am pleased to introduce our new Strategic Plan, which sets our course for the next five years. Guided by the core public health functions of assessment, policy development and assurance, this plan builds upon the Future of Public Health framework and reflects our foundational values of integrity, evidence-based decision-making, collaboration, health equity and transparency.

Our strategic planning journey began with retreats and surveys engaging community members, employees and stakeholders. We asked those individuals to review and prioritize health issues and concerns. Using these insights, we established a Strategic Planning Committee that included a representative from the County Commissioners, staff from all divisions and our consultants, KS Consulting Solutions, LLC. This team worked collaboratively to translate these priorities into clear goals, objectives and actionable steps.

Throughout this process, one message was clear: our agency is staffed by a knowledgeable and deeply committed team dedicated to Charles County's well-being. While challenges were identified, so were our strengths, enabling us to create a focused strategy that advances our mission and vision:

MISSION

To protect, promote, and improve the health, safety, and environment of Charles County residents.

VISION

A healthier Charles County.

Looking ahead, CCDoH is well-positioned to build on its strengths by enhancing workforce capacity, securing sustainable funding, strengthening partnerships, and improving communication and service accessibility. We invite you to join us on this journey toward collective learning, healing, and meaningful impact in our community.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Sincerely,



Dianna E. Abney, MD

Overview of Charles County Department of Health



The Charles County Department of Health (CCDoH) is dedicated to protecting, promoting and improving the health, safety and environment of Charles County residents. This mission is fulfilled through a broad range of public health services, health education initiatives, disease prevention programs and efforts to ensure a safe and healthy environment across the county.

In response to ongoing growth and demographic shifts within the county, this strategic planning process presented a timely and valuable opportunity to think strategically about the future of the department. In addition, CCDoH is actively pursuing the [Public Health Accreditation Board \(PHAB\)](#) accreditation, further reinforcing the need for a thoughtful and forward-looking approach.

CCDoH partnered with [KS Solutions Consulting](#), a consulting firm focused on people and planning for organizational development. For many team members, this strategic planning process was a new and meaningful exercise and an opportunity to move beyond day-to-day operations and consider the broader, long-term goals of the organization. A key component of the effort was the collection and in-depth analysis of stakeholder input, which played a central role in shaping the direction and priorities of the final plan.

The planning process also provided space to address both internal and external priorities. Internally, issues such as employee satisfaction and communication were explored, while externally, addressing major community health initiatives were reviewed. The team also collaboratively developed a set of core values to guide the agency's work.

Throughout the process, one message was clear-- the CCDoH is staffed by a knowledgeable, deeply committed team with a strong sense of dedication to the Charles County community. While challenges and barriers to optimal performance were identified, so too were the agency's strengths. These insights informed a clear, actionable strategy designed to advance the department's mission and vision.

With strong team engagement and support, CCDoH is well-positioned to implement this strategic plan and continue to improve on serving the county and its residents.

Stakeholder Data Collection & Analysis

As part of this process, a comprehensive assessment of CCDoH's strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth was conducted by the external consultants.

A mixed-method data collection approach was used to gather diverse perspectives from community members, CCDoH staff, stakeholders and community partners. This process included three stakeholder listening sessions with external partners, two staff listening sessions, and surveys distributed to CCDoH staff, stakeholders, and community members to capture insights into current public health initiatives, service gaps, and areas for improvement.

The assessment revealed that CCDoH is widely regarded as a trusted public health leader, with strong partnerships and impactful programs in areas such as disease prevention, behavioral health, health education, and access to care initiatives. However, several challenges and opportunities for improvement were identified, including workforce capacity limitations, communication challenges, funding uncertainties, service accessibility gaps, and the need for improved community engagement and outreach. The [full report](#) and the [executive summary](#) of the report can be found here.

Identity Statement for CCDoH

We advance our mission of protecting, promoting, and improving the health, safety, and environment of Charles County residents.

We will develop a healthier Charles County.

We serve the people who live and work in Charles County.

We do this through programs and services in the areas of behavioral health, nursing & community health, disease prevention & health promotion, community health & evaluation, disability services and environmental health.

Our strengths are evidence-based health expertise, commitment to the community and strong partnerships.

We are sustainable through state and county funding.

Values of CCDoH

- **Integrity** – We Commit To Uphold The Highest Standards Of Honesty, Ethics And Transparency In All That We Do.
- **Evidence-Based Decisions** – We Work To Integrate Scientific Research, Expertise, And Best Practices To Ensure Our Services Are Effective And Continuously Improving.
- **Collaboration & Partnerships** – We Embrace A Collaborative Approach, Fostering Strong Partnerships Within The Community To Improve Public Health Outcomes.
- **Health Equity** – We Are Committed To Providing Access To Services That Reflect The Needs And Perspectives Of Our Diverse Community.
- **Transparency/Communication** – We Believe In Open Communication, Accessible Information, And Accountability Within The Workplace and In The Community.

CCDoH Strategy

The priority areas and goals are agency-wide and will be operational for 5 years starting July 2025. The objectives are written annually by each division to plan for how they will support the priority areas and goals.

The following strategy will:

- Articulate a clear, action-oriented path forward
- Take into account all stakeholder input
- Reflect the mission and vision of CCDoH
- Harness organizational resources skillfully and collaboratively
- Be financially grounded

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Modernize Technology



Internal & External Communications



Accessibility of Services



Workforce Development & Culture



Service Delivery & Continuous Quality Improvement

Goals

The image depicts the structure for the strategy and planning.

Strategic Priorities

Organization wide, constant over the full 5 years of the plan

Goals

Organization wide, constant over the full 5 years of the plan

Objectives

By division for 12-18 months, new objectives each year

Work Plans w/ Tactics

By position or small team, developed annually

Priority Area 1: Modernize Technology

Rationale: To effectively meet the growing and diverse needs of the community, to operate efficiently, and to be positioned for innovation and resilience.

Goals:

- Identify and implement new or upgraded technologies to support efficiency and innovation across departments and programs.
- Build staff capacity by enhancing skills and knowledge required to effectively integrate and utilize technology in daily operations.
- Improve the consumer experience by leveraging technical and digital solutions that increase accessibility, engagement, and satisfaction.

Priority Area 2: Internal and External Communications

Rationale: To improve on mission delivery, building public trust and connection and for better internal operations with greater transparency, coordination and responsiveness.

Goals:

- Enhance cross-departmental collaboration for information sharing and supportive work environment.
- Enhance transparency and strengthen advocacy efforts in community interactions to foster greater trust and strengthen relationships.
- Increase public health awareness and expand outreach efforts to promote healthier communities.

Priority Area 3: Accessibility of Services

Rationale: To eliminate barriers and increase equity in providing services to the community for greater reach and impact while further building community trust and connection.

Goals:

- Improve accessibility of services
- Advance health equity
- Strengthen community engagement

Priority Area 4: Workforce Development & Culture

Rationale: To further develop a skilled, motivated, values-driven workforce who are supported with a positive work culture to attract and retain talent, for organizational sustainability and for high-quality service delivery.

Goals:

- Develop and implement a workforce development plan
- Strengthen organizational leadership
- Hire, build and retain a skilled and satisfied workforce

Priority Area 5: Service Delivery and Continuous Quality Improvement

Rationale: To better meet community needs, adapt to change and drive lasting impact by ensuring that services are maintained, continuously assessed, refined and improved over time.

Goals:

- Enhance and strengthen existing services to ensure greater effectiveness and responsiveness.
- Strengthen community engagement through proactive outreach.
- Establish and implement a consistent customer support standard to improve client satisfaction and service delivery.
- Drive continuous quality improvement across all operations and services.

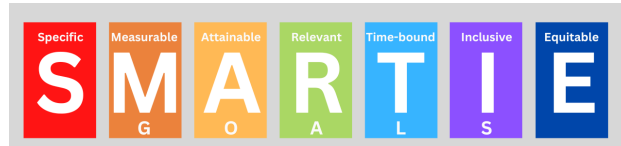
Objectives

The annual objectives by division support the strategic priorities and goals over the 5 year period. Objectives are developed annually by each division to state the role they will take in supporting the goals in that particular year. The objectives build off of the work accomplished in the prior year and are written in the SMARTIE format.

About Objectives

- Objectives are specific, measurable actions or steps that an organization will take to achieve its goals. They break down the goals into actionable tasks. See SMARTIE goals image below.
- Objectives are quantitative and concrete, detailing how progress toward the goal will be measured and achieved.
- Objectives typically have a shorter time frame, often set for one year or less (possibly 18 months).

- You may be familiar with SMART goals, an oldie but goodie. More recently smart people have added in the I for inclusive and the E for equitable. Use the acronym to develop useful and ethical goals.



[The annual objectives by division can be viewed here.](#)

Implementation of the Strategic Plan

There is a great deal of effort that goes into creating a strategic plan. The pitfall in such a process is that the plan is not utilized once completed. In order to ensure this plan is implemented, several tactical steps are being taken:

- Training was held for the Strategic Plan Committee on implementation best practices.
- The plan will be shared with stakeholders, internally and externally to CCDoH.
- Implementation Team will be developed, compiled of various divisions of CCDoH to track and support the strategic plan progress.
 - Planning to use AchieveIT project management software.
- Divisional efforts (CCDoH is made up of multiple divisions)
 - Divisions track progress of their objectives and report on progress quarterly.
 - Work plans created and utilized by the staff, templates and instructions shared by the consultant.
 - Meet regularly with their team for updates and support.
 - Prepare new objectives in the 4th quarter of each year for the following year.
- Continued availability of the consultant for check-ins, resource sharing, and problem-solving.

Questions or Further Inquiry

If you have any questions, please contact Linda Warren at PIO
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