

Public Health and Safety Division

Strategic Plan



Annual Update
November 2014



Healthy People. Healthy Communities.

Department of Public Health & Human Services

Introduction

The Mission of the Public Health and Safety Division is to improve and protect the health of Montanans by creating conditions for healthy living. The 2013—2018 strategic plan contains seven Key Results Areas with specific strategies and objectives for achieving this Mission. This report highlights successes, progress and challenges in the first year since implementation of the plan.

KRA 1: Policy Development and Enforcement

Successes and Progress:

- Administrative Rules of Montana outlining communicable disease reporting and response were updated to reflect current recommendations. Updates included the addition and deletion of selected conditions to reflect national recommendations as well as the adoption of current national guidelines outlining control measures.
- Administrative Rules of Montana governing retail food regulations were updated through the adoption of the 2013 Food and Drug Administration's Food Code. This significant update modernizes our approach to food safety and is the first update of retail food rules since 2000.
- The Montana Administrative Rules that define the designation criteria for trauma systems were updated for the first time in 8 years. The updates were made to match current medical standards of care and practice guidelines.
- During the 2015 Montana Legislative Session, the Division is proposing statute changes that would facilitate updating school vaccination requirements. The updates would bring Montana into alignment with recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, improve vaccination rates and better protect the state's school-aged population.
- The Division has played an active role, working with the Montana Commissioner of Securities and Insurance office to define performance standards for Patient Centered Medical Homes.
- Montana Administrative Rules for Newborn Screening were updated to include screening for critical congenital heart disease.

Challenges:

- Occupational health continues to be an area where public health policy could help to improve the health of workers in Montana.
- Montana's high rate of motor vehicle death remains a public health issue that could be improved through policy interventions.

KRA 2: Disease and Injury Prevention and Control, and Health Promotion

Successes and Progress:

- Collaborative work with the Governor's office on releasing and implementing the State Health Improvement Plan
- A coordinated focus on decreasing the number of pregnant women who use tobacco has resulted in 61 Quit Line enrollments from pregnant women since January 2014.

Successes and Progress Cont:

- Since the launch of online enrollment to the Montana Quit Line in January 2014, there have been 412 Montanans enrolled into the new online program.
- A strategic plan for Chronic Disease Prevention is being implemented to address the leading causes of chronic disease in a way that uses resources efficiently and targets settings such as healthcare, worksites and schools to improve health and prevent the leading causes of death and disability in the state.
- The PHSD has been able to expand the implementation of programs such as Asthma Home Visiting (6 sites), Diabetes Prevention (18 sites), and Arthritis Exercise (30 sites) across the state to reach more Montanans.

Challenges being addressed:

- The existing health disparities among American Indians in Montana will continue to be addressed through more coordinated efforts throughout DPHHS, and by improving interventions and outreach to American Indian communities and Tribal health departments.
- Increasing the use of blood lead screening in high risk populations and educating providers.

KRA 3: Health Services, Particularly Clinical Preventive Services

Successes and Progress:

- The PHSD has improved the use of tele-health technologies across the state to provide the Diabetes Prevention Program and acute stroke consultation in rural communities.
- Electronic Medical Records are being used in many health systems across the state. The PHSD is working with many of these health systems to make sure the data contained in them is high-quality, and that it is being used to improve the health of their patients.

Challenges:

- The PHSD has an internal workgroup examining ways to work with health systems to improve the health of their client population through the use of electronic medical records.
- Continued collaboration with Medicaid to increase the delivery of clinical preventive services that improve the health of the population. Specifically working to identify women and children who are eligible for WIC, home visiting or other public health programs.

KRA 4: Assessment and Surveillance

Successes and Progress:

- “Montana Public Health” and “Montana One Health” are two surveillance reports that are released monthly and quarterly, respectively. These reports along with many program reports continue to be written so that the health status, health-related behaviors, disease burdens and environmental health concerns are known.
- Many surveillance and programmatic reports have been developed and disseminated to stakeholders.

Challenges:

- PHSD is standardizing how all surveillance reports are disseminated and made easily accessible to the public.

KRA 5: The Public Health and Health Care System

Successes and Progress:

- In response to the potential for Ebola Virus Disease, the Communicable Disease Epidemiology, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Medical Systems programs are effectively collaborating with the Governor's Joint Command Team to exercise the public health emergency preparedness system with positive results showing Montana's readiness to respond to such events.
- Montana's Public Health Laboratory was the 14th laboratory in the nation that was trained and qualified by the CDC to test for the Ebola Virus .
- The Public Health System Improvement Task Force has begun work on developing Foundational Standards for Public Health in Montana.
- Activities to support local public health have included a standard training for new local board of health members with a guide, and a standard survey administered to all Tribal and local public health leaders.
- The Arthritis data system and the Trauma Registry were all updated to be web-based, helping the Division to house and provide timely and accurate data.

Challenges:

- The PHSD has been working to provide a web-based information system to make allowable data available to the public for querying and reporting. The implementation of this system is taking longer than expected but will greatly increase the availability of data to the public and public health partners.
- The PHAB standards have helped to highlight areas where community engagement can be improved, and the PHSD is working to improve this engagement in the future.

KRA 6: Internal Operations and Workforce Development

Successes and Progress:

- A Workforce Development Plan has been approved and will begin implementation in 2015.
- The University of Washington and the PHSD had 30 scholars from Montana's public health workforce complete the Public Health Management Certificate Program.
- More staff in the PHSD were trained to use Geographic Information System (GIS) to improve how data is used for decision making and analysis.
- The creation and implementation of the HealthStat information system to capture and analyze all of the work plans in the PHSD has provided a means for the Management Team to strategically manage the work being done in the Division.
- The Division applied for national public health accreditation with the Public Health Accreditation Board.

Challenges:

- Full implementation of standardized approaches to tracking and documenting all areas of work continue to be an area for improvement.
- Work will begin in 2015 on developing career ladders within the Division.

KRA 7: Financial Systems and Relationships with Governing Entities

Successes and Progress:

- The PHSD passed all federal, state, and programmatic audits conducted.
- The PHSD is working with a number of non-government organizations and successfully solicited funding for public health programs.
- A standard process has been implemented to begin preparing for the Executive Planning Process in advance, in an effort to more successfully implement policies that promote and protect the public's health.

Challenges:

- None reported.