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A Healthier Montana: The State Health Improvement Plan

What is the State Health Improvement Plan, or SHIP?

The SHIP identifies and tracks progress on the state's top public health priorities, as defined through a collaborative process with stakeholders throughout Montana. It aims to protect and improve the health of every Montanan through evidence-based action and community engagement.

How was the SHIP developed?

The State Health Improvement Coalition used the State Health Assessment to identify priority areas, strategies, and objectives to improve the health of every Montanan. Prior to publication, the SHIP was presented to multiple stakeholders and partner groups for feedback and was shared for public comment.

How is the SHIP structured?

The SHIP identifies five priority areas to improve the health of Montanans. Each priority area identifies goals, objectives, evidence-based strategies, and key partners to help us achieve a healthier Montana. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) affect all priority areas; strategies to address ACEs are incorporated throughout the SHIP.

Behavioral Health	Chronic Disease Prevention & Self-Management	Motor Vehicle Crashes	Healthy Mothers, Babies, and Youth
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Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Why is the SHIP important?

- The SHIP gathers partners from different sectors to improve shared priorities.
- The SHIP addresses the fact that health starts in our homes, schools, and communities. The environments in which we live, learn, work, and play affect everyone's health and wellbeing.
- Each SHIP priority area includes objectives and strategies to make sure all Montanans have equal opportunity to make choices that lead to good health for them and their families.
- The SHIP is evaluated every year, which includes updated data on objectives or metrics that monitor the health of Montanans over time.

A Healthier Montana Network

Working Groups

- Working groups focus on action items that address SHIP priority areas.
- Working group members attend regular meetings to achieve their goal
- Working groups have tackled topics like obesity prevention, car seat safety, data analysis, and resource sharing.

Communities of Practice

- Communities of Practice are open to all stakeholders in Montana that work to address a priority area.
- Quarterly meetings provide updates from other stakeholders, networking, data and other resources, and create new working groups.

Coalition Members

- Coalition members are leaders in their organizations who focus on aligning efforts and collaborating with the SHIP.
- Members meet annually to evaluate and provide guidance for the SHIP and play a key role in the development of the next cycle of planning.

Public Health System Improvement Task Force

- Task Force members are appointed by the Director of the Department of Public Health and Human Services to monitor, advise on, and assess progress towards statewide system improvement efforts.
- Members serve as the core of the State Health Improvement Coalition and are ultimately responsible for the completion of annual reviews and 5-year updates to the SHIP.

View the State Health Assessment and State Health Improvement Plan at the [A Healthier Montana](#) website, including resources such as annual reports, newsletters, and presentations from partners and stakeholders.



How do I use the SHIP?

- Join the email list at [A Healthier Montana](#) to receive regular updates, resources, and information, as well as invitations to get involved.
- Engage with your local or tribal health department in the Community Health Improvement Plan process. Many local and tribal health departments, hospitals, and other organizations lead efforts to identify health issues, make plans, and take action steps to improve the health in their communities.
- Conduct a crosswalk analysis comparing your organization’s strategic plan or other community plan to the SHIP. Invite the State Health Improvement Coordinator to talk about the SHIP with your group or organization to help identify areas of overlap.
- Find conversations that relate to the SHIP priority areas in your community. How can you team up with partners in your area to work on them?
- Design a plan, grant application, or activity with the SHIP in mind or use the SHIP in your current planning.
- Ask local government, businesses, schools, non-profits, and other groups to align their efforts with the priority areas in the SHIP and to include the SHIP in their planning documents and policies.
- Review action items in the SHIP and contact the State Health Improvement Coordinator to inquire about starting an ad hoc working group focused on a specific task.
- Create space for data analysis, sharing, and communication, such as through webinars and updates to the SHIP, as needed.

Timeline	
Every 5 years	A new SHA and SHIP are published.
Annually	The SHIP is evaluated with a stakeholder participation. An annual report is published with evaluation findings, updated data, and action steps for the next year.
Quarterly	Communities of Practice meet for each priority area.
Bi-monthly	Newsletters with updates, resources, and upcoming events (like webinars and trainings) are sent via the email mailing list.
Monthly	Ad hoc volunteer working groups take action on specific areas of interest.

A Healthier Montana Logic Model



Inputs	Activities	Outcomes	Short-Term Objectives	Long-Term Objectives
State Health Improvement Coalition	Convene the State Health Improvement Coalition	A common agenda for change to address Montana's public health priorities	Use the SHIP to drive improvements in health	Population health improvement tracked by SHIP
PHHS Block Grant Funding	Publish a new SHA and SHIP every 5 years	Collect and report data consistently on state's shared public health priorities		
Community Members	Evaluate and share an annual report	Achieve open and continuous dialogue about existence and utility of the SHIP	Increase understanding of how to participate in SHIP	
A Healthier Montana Website	Facilitate quarterly Community of Practice meetings	Improve quality of partnerships across sectors, groups, communities, and organizations		
Healthy People 2030	Host working groups	Improve awareness of the landscape of public health activities in Montana		
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)	Help individuals and groups use the SHIP			
Local and Tribal Health Assessments and Improvement Plans	Serve as a resource about equal health opportunity for all Montanans and how where we live, work, and play impacts health			
Hospital Health Needs Assessments and Implementation Plans	Maintain A Healthier Montana website			
	Present at partner and stakeholder conferences			
	Support partner communications			
	Convene stakeholders around Montana's public health priorities and coordinate activities			