



2023-2028 NEW HAMPSHIRE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN



Our Vision

All people in New Hampshire have equitable opportunity to flourish and achieve optimal mental, physical, social, spiritual, and emotional wellness.

The data underlying this work represents the experience of communities residing in N'dakinna, which is the traditional ancestral homeland of the Abenaki, Pennacook and Wabanaki Peoples past and present. We acknowledge and honor with gratitude the land and waterways and the alnobak (people) who have stewarded N'dakinna throughout the generations.

(Acknowledgement language provided by the New Hampshire Indigenous Collaborative Collective.)

This document represents the core components of the 2023 New Hampshire State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) based on the 2022 State Health Assessment (SHA) and developed by the State Health Assessment and Improvement Advisory Council (the Council). The Council's membership spans a broad range of expertise, including housing, education, corrections, disability, municipal government, behavioral health, healthcare, public health, insurance, and policy.

The Council grounded its assessment and planning work in the understanding that health and wellness are defined differently by every person, and that this work must prioritize addressing the inequities that prevent some communities from experiencing the best health possible. Our work was organized into the following four domains.

- > Access to Opportunity
- > Community

- > Health Status and Outcomes
- > Social Connectedness

The SHIP presented in this document is intended to serve as a cross-sector roadmap where any partner can find an opportunity to align their work with this collective effort to improve how people in New Hampshire experience health and wellness.

COMMUNITIES CREATE MEANING

The Council committed to developing a SHIP led by community voices and focused on breaking down the inequities that lead to disparities. The Council mobilized efforts to ensure communities across the state - especially those communities whose experiences are often masked by statewide numbers - could give deeper meaning to the more traditional assessment data. A first phase of community engagement collected electronic survey responses from more than 1,000 people across the state. A second, more refined phase of work was championed by peer leaders from the following communities, which were prioritized as being historically disadvantaged and underrepresented in statewide assessments:

- > **Black, Indigenous, and persons of color**
- > **New Americans: refugees and immigrants**
- > **Deaf and hard of hearing**
- > **Blind and low-vision**
- > **Families impacted by incarceration**
- > **LGBTQIA+**
- > **Experiencing housing insecurity**

During these engagement phases, and across all domains of health and wellness, community members reported cost and availability of supports as primary obstacles to achieving their best health. However, many community members face compounded challenges as a result of their identity. Below are some of the cross-sectional perspectives shared by members of the communities listed above. A full summary of these findings can be found on NHLivesWell.org.

> *In alignment with the equity focus of the Council's vision, these themes served as the foundation for the SHIP priorities and strategies.*

Sense of belonging

- "Belonging" means feeling wholly accepted and welcomed by a community. Historical "othering" weakens belonging.
- Positive connections with peers and community members is crucial.
- Individual wellness is greatly influenced by the health of family members.

Inclusive systems of care

- Inconsistent access to information or services offered in someone's first language reduces autonomy and negatively impacts the quality of their experience.
- Stigma causes fear and leads to delays seeking care and support.
- Not enough programs and providers are equipped to offer culturally- or identity-specific services.

Pathways to opportunity

- Supporting child development and education is impacted when information is not offered in a preferred language.
- Language limits employment opportunities.
- Fear of disclosing one's legal status limits housing and employment.
- Discrimination creates unsafe environments to learn, earn, and live.

PARTNER-ALIGNED PLANNING

Four cross-sector domain workgroups convened to create the priorities intended for the SHIP. Each developed a statement to frame the priorities and strategies of focus. Each statement below reflects what people in New Hampshire would experience if the SHIP is successfully implemented.



ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

Every person living in New Hampshire has what they need to meet their basic needs - such as safe housing, and enough food to eat.



COMMUNITY

All people are surrounded by healthy built and natural environments and live in a community with supports and services that adapt to meet their current and changing needs.



HEALTH STATUS & OUTCOMES

Every person has equitable access to affordable, effective, high-quality resources and services delivered by sustainable systems.



SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

All people feel a sense of community and belonging because our state celebrates all types of diversity; communities are engaged to eliminate isolation and build personal resilience.

The following pages reflect the priorities identified by the SHIP workgroups, with additional refinement by the Council.

PARTNER-ALIGNED PLANNING

The priorities, strategies, and action items elevated by the SHIP workgroups are intended to be implemented with the following universal conditions:

- **Center approaches that eliminate inequities and reduce disparities.**
- **Leverage innovative cross-sector partnerships.**
- **Incorporate innovative or novel approaches to deliver services, when possible.**
- **Grounded by data that fully and accurately reflects the communities being served.**



People take advantage of opportunities to reach their full potential because their basic needs are met.

- Remove barriers limiting access to safe, affordable, disaster-resilient shelter.
- Expand infrastructure and programs that promote financial independence and self-sufficiency.
- Expand efforts to improve nutrition security and promote healthy dietary patterns.



Nurturing environments enhance health and wellness across the lifespan.

- Expand foundational resources for families to support their children's social and emotional development.
- Expand programming to offer lifelong learning and enrichment.
- Reduce exposure to environmental contaminants.
- Reduce barriers that limit access to State Parks and other natural resources.
- Reduce geographic barriers that limit individuals' ability to access their preferred resources.



Culturally-appropriate and trauma-informed care, supports, and services are equitably accessible across the state.

- Expand access to comprehensive, affordable insurance coverage.
- Increase the affordability of healthcare services.
- Increase accessibility to a continuum of behavioral health services, from screening to wraparound recovery supports.
- Expand closed-loop systems that reduce administrative redundancies.
- Expand access to quality prenatal, labor and delivery, and postpartum care.
- Conduct universal, age-appropriate screenings to identify early interventions.
- Ensure a well-trained workforce prepared to meet the cross-cultural needs of communities.



People feel a sense of belonging and are empowered to thrive.

- Ensure community spaces and resources are accessible to all people.
- Build communities where people can age safely in their home and their community.
- Ensure decision-making is representative of all dimensions of diversity within a community.
- Leverage connections between community members to strengthen resilience.

ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY



Enhance infrastructure that create conditions for all people to take advantage of opportunities to thrive.

Where can we begin to address inequity in NH?

**data sources are hyperlinked*

19.0%

of Black or African American individuals live in poverty (statewide, 7.0%)

32.4%

of Sullivan County households spend more than 30% of their monthly income on housing costs (statewide, 30.5%)

10.2%

of Coos County is food insecure (statewide, 6.8%)



Visit the [Access to Opportunity](#) page on [NHLivesWell.org](#) to learn more about important inequities across NH.

Optimizing health and wellness looks different for each person, but every person needs foundational supports to live well. When an individual is able to; obtain a quality education, earn a livable wage, reside in safe housing, achieve financial stability, and access adequate nutrition and affordable health care, they are empowered to thrive.

Priority improvement strategies and examples of action items

- Remove barriers limiting access to safe, affordable, disaster-resilient shelter.
 - Expand programs that reduce financial barriers to secure housing.
 - Increase housing stock that meets all accessibility needs.
- Expand infrastructure and programs that promote financial independence and self-sufficiency.
 - Strengthen access to information via reliable, high-speed internet
 - Increase employment opportunities offering a liveable wage.
 - Expand opportunities to affordably gain advanced skills.
 - Promote efforts to create centralized resource directories.
- Expand efforts to improve nutrition security and promote healthy dietary patterns.
 - Expand food and nutrition assistance resources.
 - Reduce geographic barriers limiting access to healthy, affordable food.

COMMUNITY



Nurturing environments enhance health and wellness across the lifespan.

Where can we begin to address inequity in NH?

**data sources are hyperlinked*

16%

of Hispanic 4th graders with reading proficiency (statewide, 38%)

5%

elevated blood lead levels in children under 6 in Carroll County (statewide, 3%)

0.1%

in Sullivan County use public transit to travel to work (statewide, 0.7%)



Visit the Community page on [NHLivesWell.org](https://www.nhliveswell.org) to learn more about important inequities across NH.

Nurturing environments foster learning and development, protect people from environmental contaminants and offer accessible resources. When people are immersed in healthy social and physical environments, they are better able to make meaningful contributions to their community - either individually, or as part of a group.

Priority improvement strategies and examples of action items

- Reduce exposure to environmental contaminants.
 - Increase resources available to mitigate and remediate environmental contamination.
 - Require lead, air, and water testing at time of purchase for homes considered at risk.
 - Add questions about environmental exposures to standard screenings.
 - Regulate private drinking water wells.
 - Increase access to capillary blood lead testing.
- Reduce geographic barriers that limit individuals' ability to access their preferred resources.
 - Expand availability of safe, accessible alternative travel pathways (e.g. sidewalks, bike lanes).
 - Increase access to on-demand public transportation in rural communities.
- Expand resources to bolster caregivers' capacity to support their children's social and emotional development.
 - Expand resources to support strong family relationships
- Expand programming to offer lifelong learning and enrichment.
 - Increase the use of the "Community Schools Model."
 - Expand adult learning opportunities and modalities.
 - Expand high-quality early education options.
- Reduce barriers that limit access to State Parks and other natural resources.

HEALTH STATUS & OUTCOMES



Culturally-appropriate and trauma-informed care, supports, and services are equitably accessible across the state.

Where can we begin to address inequity in NH?

**data sources are hyperlinked*

82.1%

people who are multiracial have a dedicated health care provider (statewide, 90.9%)

34.6

drug overdose deaths, per 100,000 in Strafford County (statewide, 27.0)

22.4

male suicide mortality rate per 100,000, age-adjusted (statewide female rate, 5.4)

27.9%

of people making less than \$25,000 report being in physical distress 14 or more days per month (statewide 9.6%)

Equitable access to a full range of care, supports, and services is critical to support every individual in achieving optimal health and wellness. Access means being able to receive care that is affordable, high quality, comprehensive, inclusive and delivered by a person-centered, well-trained workforce.

Priority improvement strategies and examples of action items

- Expand access to comprehensive, affordable insurance coverage (health, dental, vision, behavioral, etc.)
- Increase the affordability of healthcare services.
 - Expand community-based prevention and chronic disease self-management resources.
 - Reduce barriers that limit someone's ability to make healthy choices.
- Increase accessibility to a continuum of behavioral health services, from screening to wraparound recovery supports.
- Expand closed-loop systems that reduce administrative redundancies.
- Expand access to quality prenatal, labor and delivery, and postpartum care.
- Conduct universal, age-appropriate screenings to identify early interventions (e.g., developmental, trauma, behavioral, cancer, cognitive, etc.)
 - Increase awareness of screenings and home-based monitoring activities.
 - Expand pathways that connect people to resources that support needs identified by screenings.
- Ensure a well-trained workforce prepared to meet the cross-cultural needs of communities.
 - Expand number of providers with specialized training to provide faith-specific, gender-affirming, etc., care.
 - Promote training and education that prepares professionals to engage with marginalized communities.
 - Grow the workforce pipeline to ensure cultural representation in the workforce.

See what community members said about inclusive systems of care at [NHLivesWell.org](https://www.nhliveswell.org)!

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS



People feel a sense of belonging in their community and are empowered to thrive.

Strong social ties are central to building individual and community resilience.


Those social ties are strengthened when engagement with the community is promoted by physical, communication, and systemic accessibility efforts.

Where can we begin to address inequity in NH?

**data sources are hyperlinked*

56%
voting-age citizens, age 18-29, who voted in last presidential election (statewide, 69%)

30%
people 65+ who volunteered in the past 12 months (all 16+, 37%)

 [Read more about Social Connectedness in NH here!](#)

Priority improvement strategies and examples of action items

- Ensure decision-making is representative of all dimensions of diversity within a community.
 - Reduce barriers that limit voter participation, such as education and awareness.
 - Expand efforts to ensure governing bodies represent the cultural diversity of their communities.
 - Promote efforts that enhance the skills and confidence of community members to participate in decision-making and governance.
 - Expand the means by which community members can contribute to shaping policy.
 - Build the capacity of governing bodies to incorporate the needs of marginalized communities in policy-making.
 - Connect data across systems so it is more easily accessed and utilized for decision-making.
 - Build the capacity of systems to capture data that fully and accurately describes the communities they serve.
- Ensure community spaces and resources are accessible to all people.
 - Improve real-time access to information that is available in a community members' preferred language and literacy level.
 - Increase the inclusion of people with different physical and intellectual abilities in community planning.
- Expand resources that empower people to age healthfully and safely in their community of choice.
 - Strengthen the systems of care that support people to age in their community.
- Leverage connections between community members to strengthen resilience.
 - Expand programming that reduces social isolation.
 - Promote opportunities for communities to gather and build understanding and acceptance.
 - Create a statewide volunteerism campaign.
 - Expand efforts to reduce stigma and promote the benefits of accessing community supports and assistance.

SHARED DIRECTION



The vision of the State Health Improvement Plan - to create a place where everyone lives well - will be realized through the collective action of partners across sectors. This framework creates a comprehensive, inclusive plan in which any group working to effect positive change in New Hampshire might see their interests reflected.



GRATITUDE

Thank you to the many community members and organizations who participated in this work by contributing their time, expertise, and lived experiences in order to create this document.

This 2023-2028 State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) is a map of the many roads and avenues partners across the state might take to help advance the health and wellness of all people living in New Hampshire.

The SHIP belongs to every individual, community, agency, and system that has a vested interest in making New Hampshire a place where everyone can achieve their full potential. The priorities and strategies reflected in this document require community- and sector-informed action. By mobilizing the collective action of diverse partners, the SHIP is well-positioned to inform the implementation of culturally-, geographically-, and community-appropriate strategies to break down the inequities that block people from achieving their best health and wellness.

For more information on how to get involved as a SHIP partner to help ensure everyone in New Hampshire has an opportunity to live well, email NHLivesWell@dhhs.nh.gov.



Institute for Health Policy and Practice

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