

Building a Healthier Community Together

HHS Strategic Plan | 2020 Review

2020 was marked by HHS's herculean response to the first global pandemic in over a century and underscored the Department's profound call to service. We reimagined services and worked together in new ways to serve the public, especially the most vulnerable among us. The pandemic also stretched many staffers to the limit and put a spotlight on processes in need of reflection and modernization—issues we must address as COVID-19 abates.

As 2020 ends, we are listing our accomplishments and insights. Both have been shaped by the lessons from 2019 and this year's pandemic.

Background

In 2019, Placer County Health and Human Services launched its *Building a Healthier Community Together* department-wide strategic plan. The three-year plan includes four priorities:

1. Provide leadership on community issues
2. Deliver effective and integrated HHS services
3. Attract and retain the next generation workforce
4. Promote financial sustainability

Each priority has associated projects and teams to see those projects through. Each team is led by sponsors, Executive Committee¹ member responsible for moving projects forward.

For detail on priorities and projects, visit www.placer.ca.gov/HHSPan.

Accomplishments

Priority	Accomplishments
Provide Leadership on Community Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HHS led the County's response to COVID-19 by tracking disease spread, securing testing resources, supporting quarantine and isolation, helping residents and businesses make sense of guidance, planning for vaccine distribution, and more.• HHS expanded homeless housing options, closing on four properties—three in South Placer, one in Eastern Placer—capable of housing over 30 people struggling with homelessness.
Deliver Effective and Integrated HHS Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HHS launched 211 Placer to provide information and referral services to residents and respond to COVID-19 inquiries.• The Department deepened relationships with various community stakeholders to strengthen veterans' services—and will continue this work.• HHS shaped the design of the future HHS Center in Auburn, including performance specifications of the common lobby.• The Department leveraged technological advancements to collaborate securely with each other and expand virtual services—everything from telepsychiatry to digital signatures.

¹ Members include: Dr. Rob Oldham, Amanda Sharp, Amy R. Ellis, Greg Geisler, Jason Phillippe, Jennifer Cook, Joe Arsenith, Katie Combs Prichard, Marie Osborne, Raúl Martínez, Twylla Abrahamson, and Vicki Grenier

<p>Attract and Retain the Next Generation Workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2019, HHS called for more telecommuting options and worked with HR to inform a concept that was quickly executed once the pandemic hit. • The Department launched a mentorship program. During its inaugural year, 100 staff are taking part and building relationships that will benefit them and their divisions. • HHS developed a Stay Interview process to promote employee satisfaction and will launch in 2021 with a subset of staff.
<p>Promote Financial Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HHS developed plans to maintain key aspects of Whole Person Care and will adjust, as needed, in 2021. • To strengthen the budget and projections process, HHS implemented Workday and Board reporting training and deployed a standard set of reports. • To facilitate a rapid response to emerging fiscal issues, HHS created real-time financial reports and expanded access to include managers. • The Department developed customized training materials for divisions and programs to make financial reporting relevant and clear. • Operating divisions continue to vet and pursue new funding opportunities to maintain and enhance services in ways that are cost-effective.

Key Insights

Our strategic plan affirms our values and strategies, and the synergies between HHS priorities and Placer County's Critical Success Factors. Below are key insights to inform our work in 2021.

1. **While COVID-19 pushed us to continue supporting our clients in whatever way possible—either physically distant or virtually, the pandemic led to two primary challenges:**
 - a. Some staff experienced burnout which contributed to some departures.
 - b. While service support functions—human resources, finance, and information technology—have been instrumental throughout 2020, they were tested to quickly hire temporary staff or procure resources needed for HHS to respond effectively.

HHS leadership will convene with relevant stakeholders to reflect on these challenges before charting a course of action.

2. **Strategic projects have largely corresponded to one priority area.** Moving forward, HHS will prioritize projects that crosscut priorities, are relevant to the moment, have the potential for greatest impact, and position us favorably for the future.
3. **Some projects and strategic discussion points were paused in 2020.** The Executive Committee will further integrate strategic reflection and planning into recurring leadership meetings as it looks ahead to a strategic refresh in late 2021. HHS will also continue to assess externalities, including, but not limited to, behavioral health payment reform.
4. **The strategic plan framework not only stitches the HHS's divisions together, some staff appreciate that it provides them with a sense of where department is headed.** HHS will continue linking its 100+ programs to its mission, values, and priorities.