



Strategic Plan for 2008 – 2010

Approved by the Board of Health on January 30, 2008

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The Yakima Health District recognizes that complacency should never be our standard. Constant evaluation, education and improvement are necessary to have, not only a productive work environment, but also an effective public health system for the people we serve. To this effect, the Yakima Health District is committed to the development, implementation and the continuous improvement of this strategic plan.

Our Mission:

In Partnership with the People of Yakima County, the Public Health District Provides Prevention, Education, and Disease Control Services to Promote, Protect, and Enhance the Health and Safety of all.

Our Values:

- **Collaboration.** Community partnerships have proven to produce well-supported and cost-effective health outcomes by bringing people, resources and organizations together for a common goal.
- **Customer Service and Accountability.** As stewards of the public's trust, we will provide services that are responsive and accountable to the communities needs.
- **Data-driven, Science-based Services.** Effective public health interventions depend on the use of the best and most up-to-date research and information available.
- **Prevention and Promotion.** Strategies that avert disease and promote healthy living and healthy environments lead to long term benefits for everyone.
- **Skilled and Innovative Employees.** A well-trained, dedicated and resourceful workforce is the foundation of our ability to effectively assess and address the health and needs of our community.
- **Social Justice and Diversity.** A healthy community recognizes that everyone's health matters equally, and services and solutions must be accessible, affordable and appropriate for all. Inequity in health can offer a footing for illness to spread throughout the population.

Our Vision: *(currently under evaluation).*

Our Work:

The Health District conducts activities necessary for the preservation of health, prevention of disease, and protection of the public's health. Each division of the Health District, in some capacity, is responsible for activities mandated by Washington Statute and/or Washington Administrative Codes. To that end, the Yakima Health District is responsible for administration and enforcement of public health and environmental health laws of federal, state, and local government.

The work of the Health District is organized around nationally developed core functions and essential services, which are the basis of public health practice. These standards are as follows:

The Three Core Functions of Public Health:

1. **Assessment** – needs assessment. Assess extent of health problems and services. [For example, we may assess that too many children have vaccine preventable diseases.]

2. **Policy Recommendation** – includes community planning and developing public health policies, rules/laws and programs that support public health. [In this example, we might recommend a policy for school exclusion of non-immunized students.]
3. **Assurance** – guarantee that services are available / accessible, that programs are achieving desired outcomes and that service personnel are proficient. This also involves the coordination and non-duplication of services. [We would then assure that immunizations are available, both privately and via community clinics.]

The Ten Essential Services of Public Health:

1. **Monitor Health Status.** We identify and solve community health problems. We conduct community health profiles, vital statistics, and prepare health status reports.
2. **Conduct Epidemiology** (study the incidence, distribution and control of diseases in a population). We diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community. We maintain “epidemiologic surveillance” (tracking of diseases) and access laboratory support for that surveillance.
3. **Conduct Health Promotion and Social Marketing.** We raise awareness, inform, coordinate education, and empower people about health issues, either environmental, personal, or communicable. This also includes addictions (Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drug Abuse prevention).
4. **Mobilize Communities.** We develop community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems. We convene and facilitate community groups to promote health. Community mobilization is a primary prevention.
5. **Recommend Policy.** We develop plans that support individual and community health efforts. Policy begets programs. We support leadership development and health systems planning.
6. **Enforcement of laws and regulations** that protect health and ensure the public safety. Part of our job is to enforce sanitary codes and other health codes to ensure safety of our population from the environment in which they live.
7. **Link people to needed personal health services.** We provide services that increase access to health care. We assure that services are available. Our eventual goal is: “100% access, 0% disparity” by increased access and decreased barriers to health care and promotion.
8. **Assure competent public and personal health care workforce.** We provide education and training for all public health care providers. We provide prevention training for professionals and lay members of the community especially in support of #4 above. We conduct continuous quality improvement.
9. **Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality** of personal and population-based health services. We conduct ongoing evaluation of public health programs.
10. **Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.** We develop and maintain links with academic institutions. Working together, we analyze disease trends and study the economic impact of disease and disease prevention.

Our Goals:

These goals have been identified as being integral to the continuous improvement that can be accomplished for the betterment of the local public health system, the agency, and the public. The actions presented are designed to be as specific as possible for a strategic plan while, at the same time, offering mechanisms for gaining measurable results in improvement in various aspects of our values and our work. The achievements are the actual tasks that were done in relation to those goals and actions.

1. To improve access to funds and begin programs that will bring about more locally directed and developed public health activities.

Actions:

- Explore Funding Sources for Community Needs
 - A. Utilize community assessment data to plan programs and research funding for needed areas established through assessment
 - B. Examine local issues in Communicable Disease and Chronic Disease in order to relay those findings

Action Findings:	Barriers Found:	Outcomes:
Obesity Through assessment, it was found that obesity in the population is growing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obesity in the population is growing and increasing secondary disease incidence and costs to the population. • The establishment of an Anti-obesity program is needed in our area.
Meetings were held and partners were gathered to support a new program aimed at curbing obesity rates in the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners recruited are: the YMCA, Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic, Memorial Hospital, ESD 105, Yakima Pediatrics and the Northwest Community Action Center. (10/29/07 – 11/9/07) • More partners will be established as the program continues
Application was made to the Washington State Dept. of Health for a grant to establish a local anti-obesity program aimed at reducing the rate of obesity in our local population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grant was approved and funding was granted. (11/28/2007)
With past barriers addressed, the program is ready to be established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmatic housekeeping in order to begin the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projected Implementation Date of an Anti-Obesity Program is Jan. 1st, 2008.

2. To improve our response and outreach capabilities to amore diversified and culturally varied population.

Actions:

- A. Add relevant information concerning our services to our website in Spanish.
- B. Add more health literature in languages other than English to our resource room.
- C. Conduct diversity/cultural competency training for health district staff.
- D. Encourage staff to attend accredited classroom courses in order to improve their 2nd language capacity.
- E. Explore more public health partnerships with outside agencies that directly deal with diverse and culturally varied populations in the community.
- F. Work to ensure access for illiterate population.

Action Findings:	Barriers Found:	Outcomes:

3. To raise community awareness concerning various local public health issues and programs.

Actions:

- A. Complete the vision statement and slogan for the health district.
- B. Explore the possibility of establishing a public health column in a local periodical or a public health segment in a radio show or TV spot.
- C. Explore the possibility of establishing Public Service Announcements through various media outlets and our own phone system.
- D. Explore the possibility of becoming more involved in community events and public health promotion during events.

Action Findings:	Barriers Found:	Outcomes:

4. To improve community access to our services at the health district.

Actions:

- A. Explore options to keep our services available during the lunch hour.
- B. Revise the phone system to allow for better service to the community.
- C. Explore the possible expansion of birth and death certificate issuance, license transactions and other monetary transactions to include the Tuesday night schedule.
- D. Explore the possibility of adding debit and credit card services to the front desk.
- E. Add a more extensive listing for the Yakima Health District in the phone books to include departmental numbers.

Action Findings:	Barriers Found:	Outcomes:

5. **To develop staff competencies and evaluate recruiting techniques in order to better train and retain staff and hire more initially competent staff.**

Actions:

- A. Conduct a new hire evaluation to determine what job aspects, opportunities and benefits would appeal to new employees.
- B. Complete updated job descriptions for all employees.
- C. Examine and revise, when necessary, the current evaluation policies and procedures to make potential job and pay growth more accessible.
- D. Explore the possibility of establishing a wellness program for staff.
- E. Explore the possibility of establishing educational stipends for employees in return for a predetermined deliverables to the agency.
- F. Explore the possibility establishing interdisciplinary cross-training for new employees.

Action Findings:	Barriers Found:	Outcomes: