

Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit Interim Strategic Plan



The Rebuild Year:
STRONGER. HEALTHIER. HAPPIER.

June 2022 - June 2023

Acknowledgements

The Interim Strategic Plan (ISP) will be instrumental in moving Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit (HNHU) forward for the next 12 months and will serve as a launching pad for exciting initiatives in the upcoming full Strategic Plan to be released in 2023. This work could not have been accomplished without the wonderful initiative and engagement of the entire HNHU Team.

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey, filled in notes on the flip charts, participated in focus groups, contributed to co-interpretation, completed an action items matrix, and/or who engaged in valuable and constructive conversations about this process in any other way. Thank you to all team members who cheered this process on and who helped to push this ISP to fruition.



Background

The work of local Public Health Units has been critical to Ontario's SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic response. It has been over two years since the first case of COVID-19 infection was confirmed in the Haldimand and Norfolk Health Unit (HNHU)'s jurisdiction on March 26, 2020. Even prior to the identification of the first case, HNHU has been working diligently to manage the pandemic response locally and to protect the health of the community, while also protecting the local health system. Amongst other tasks, HNHU has led case, contact, and outbreak management, the vaccination program, behaviour change initiatives, and local protective measures. HNHU's response to the COVID-19 pandemic further required the essential work of data analysis and epidemiological assessments, communications, stakeholder engagement, human resources, and information technology supports.

Highlight of Accomplishments for HNHU as of May 31, 2022

Through collaborative efforts, both internally and externally, HNHU and community partners have swiftly responded to the ever-changing COVID-19 pandemic, with team members regularly adjusting to unfamiliar pandemic work. The HNHU Team, which consists of staff in all program areas, Program Managers, the Director of Public Health, the General Manager of Health and Social Services, and the Medical Officer of Health, along with our partners, have demonstrated an incredible commitment to serving and protecting the Haldimand and Norfolk communities.

266

**Outbreaks
managed**

8,869

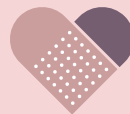
**Total lab
confirmed cases**

>66,500

**COVID-19
calls answered**

212,262

**Total doses
administered**



Moving Towards Recovery

The prolonged and intense efforts put into COVID-19 pandemic response meant HNHU had to suspend or drastically reduce many of its public health programs and services required under the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS). With increasing COVID-19 vaccination rates and shifting COVID-19 case management guidelines signaling a move toward early recovery from the pandemic, the spring of 2022 presented as an opportune time to reassess and to undertake early pandemic recovery planning for HNHU. With this in mind, HNHU resumed planning for recovery and business continuity.

It was identified that one of the priorities coming out of the pandemic was for HNHU to develop a new strategic plan as HNHU's last strategic plan was from 2016-2020. The development of a strategic plan will take a great deal of time, engagement from partners and an external consultant. As a result, it was recommended that an interim strategic plan (ISP) be developed to help guide the work of HNHU through the next 12 months, before the development of a new strategic plan. The ISP will act as a bridge for success in the more comprehensive strategic planning process. An ISP working group made of Planning & Evaluation Team members, the Director of Public Health, and two Program Managers was tasked with developing an ISP (referred to as the ISP Team going forward in this document).



The Process

The Interim Strategic Plan (ISP) used a multi-phased and iterative data collection and interpretation process to engage the entire HNHU Team (Figure 1). First, an informal scan of recovery plans in other health units across Ontario and supporting literature from provincial public health authorities was conducted. This informed the development of a preliminary structure to guide the ISP data collection at HNHU. The data collection process included an engagement plan to allow everyone a chance to provide input into the ISP. For detailed methodological information, please refer to HNHU ISP Methods and Findings Report.

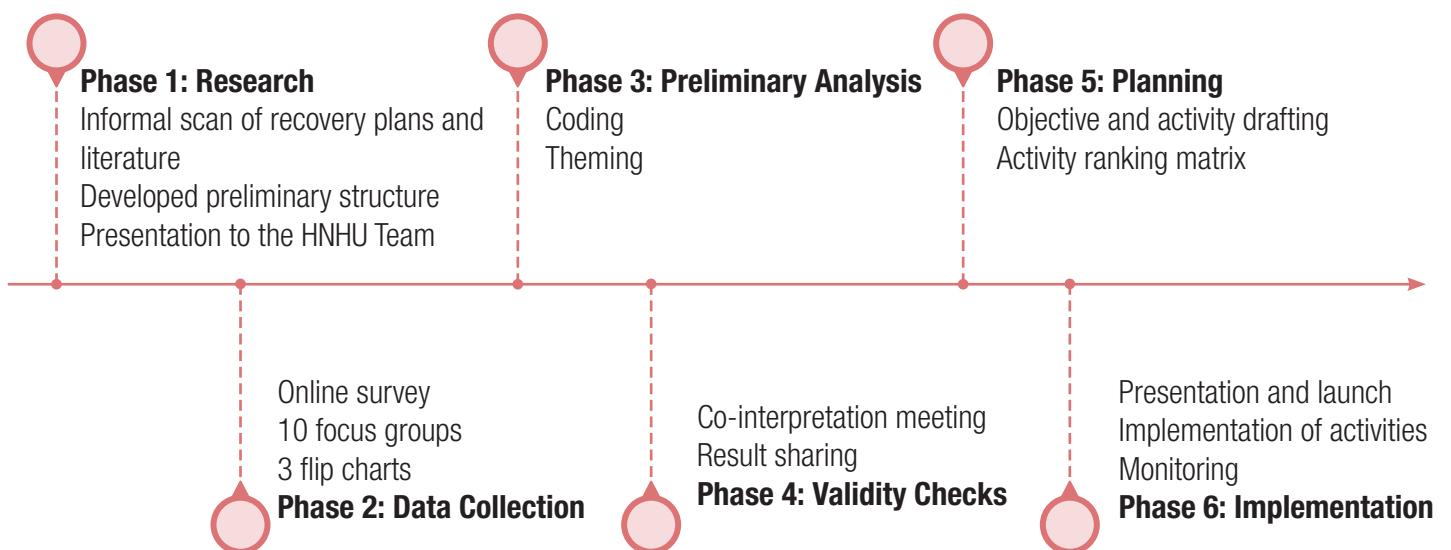


Figure 1. Timeline of activities involved in the development of HNHU ISP.

Data collection resulted in a robust mixed-methods dataset that included flip chart responses from all three HNHU physical office spaces, 63 survey responses from across all HNHU program teams (average completion time: 59 minutes), 10 focus groups with a total of 71 participants (39 unique individuals), 1 co-interpretation session with 9 participants, and 9 participants who completed action item matrices. Twelve themes emerged from this data with like items grouped together. These key themes were a launching pad for the ISP to develop over-arching priorities that will provide direction for HNHU over the next 12 months (Figure 2)

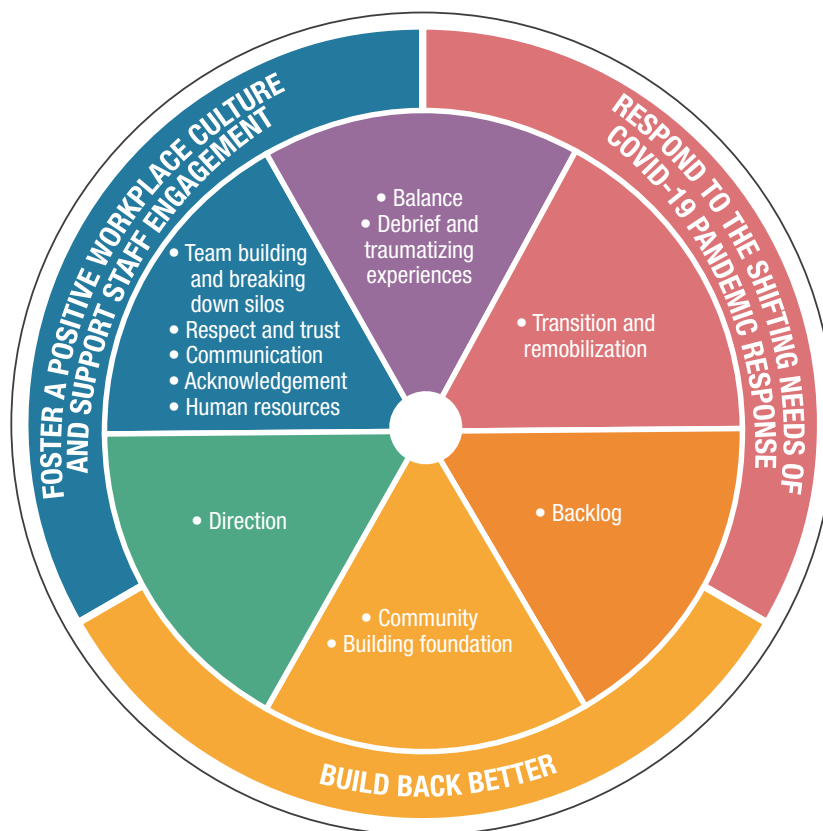


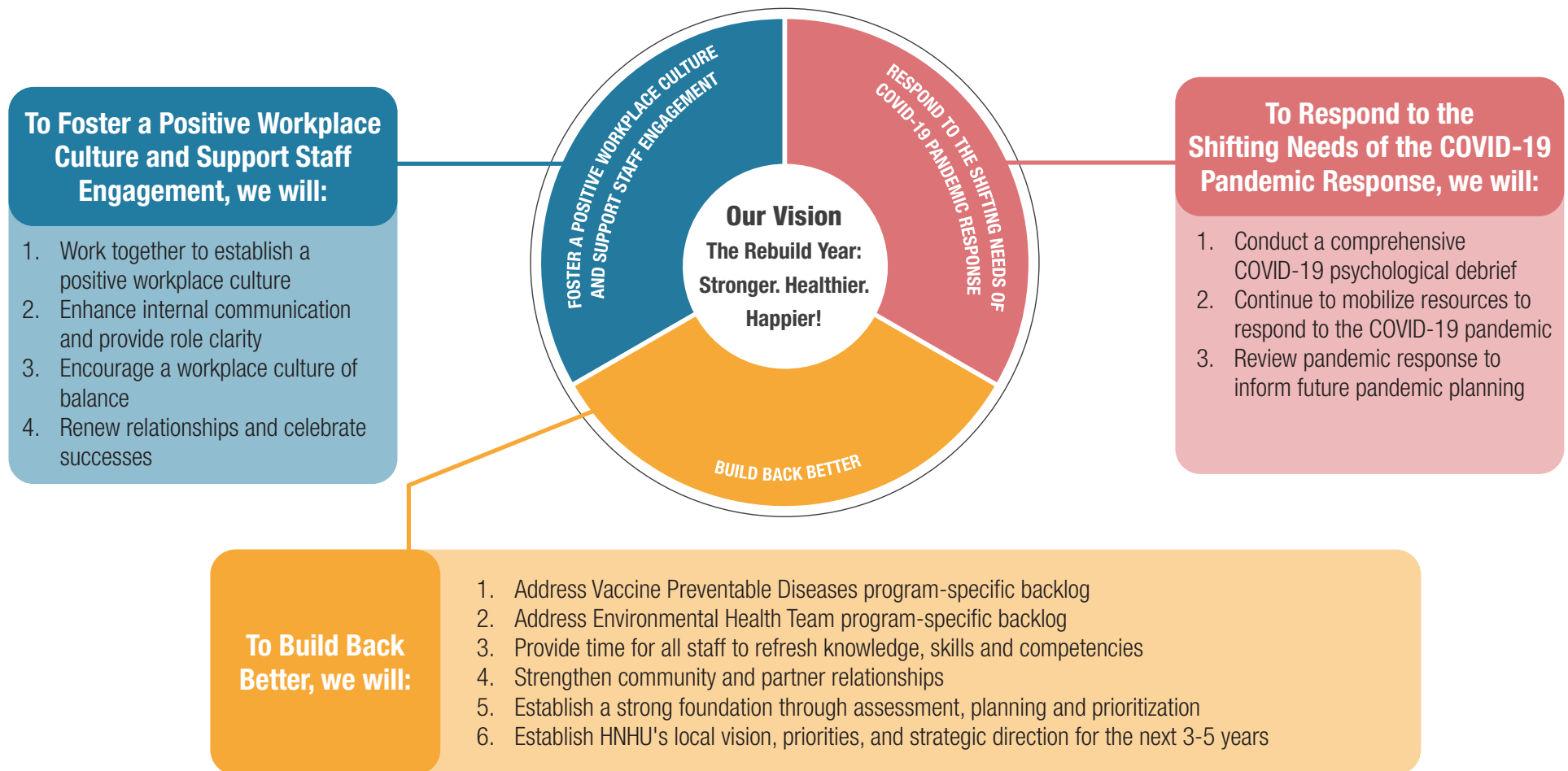
Figure 2. Model of results from the data collection process.

Through the interim strategic planning process, HNHU has created an actionable plan to guide us in rebuilding our programs and services and setting us up for success as we enter recovery stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the next 12 months, the HNHU Team will focus our efforts and resources in three priority areas:

- Respond to the Shifting Needs of COVID-19 Pandemic Response
- Build Back Better
- Foster a Positive Workplace Culture and Support Staff Engagement

As HNHU builds toward a stronger future of public health locally, the health of the community within and beyond HNHU's walls is integral to measures of success. These priorities demonstrate how HNHU can balance the competing pressures of response and recovery, while simultaneously ensuring that HNHU Team members are provided the necessary supports to collectively rest and recuperate from their work during the pandemic. This approach allows for HNHU team members to build capacity and familiarity as staff move toward their regular public health roles. To ensure accountability and transparency, the ISP includes a work plan, with objectives and measurable activities.

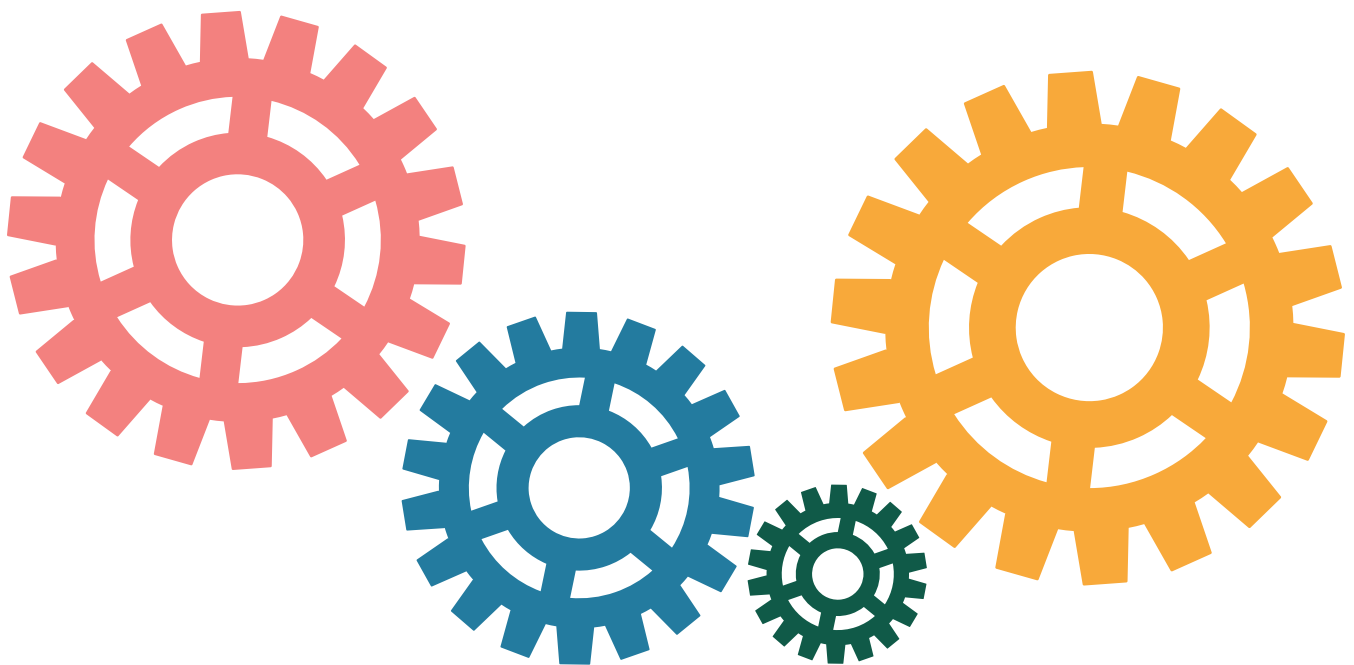
The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit Interim Strategic Plan (June 2022 – June 2023)



Respond to the Shifting Needs of the COVID-19 Pandemic Response

There are four phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. The COVID-19 pandemic has been characterized by uncertainty, with ever-changing demands on public health resources. It is also noteworthy that potential successive waves of new COVID-19 variants may pose a threat to pandemic recovery planning. HNHU recognizes that we will need to have the flexibility to be adaptable and shift between the phases of emergency management, as necessary. While HNHU continues to protect the community from COVID-19 transmission, we recognize the impacts that the prolonged response has had on the HNHU team. Wellbeing, recovery and healing for the HNHU Team are of utmost importance in moving forward.

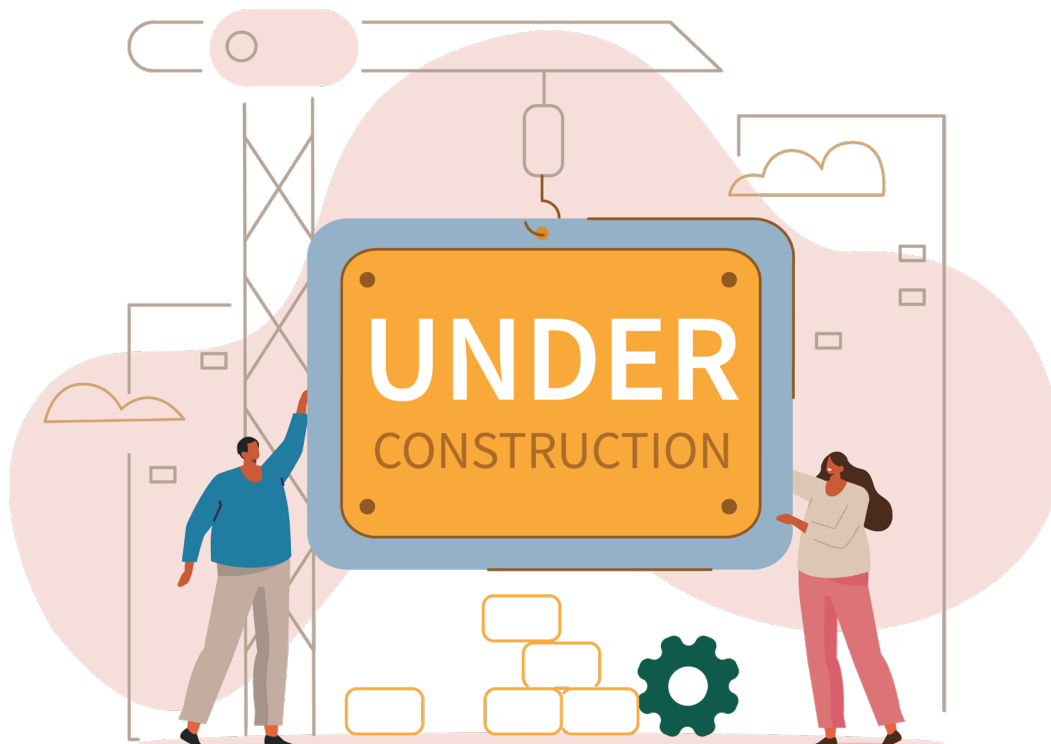
- **Objective 1:** HNHU will provide a comprehensive COVID-19 debrief on the psychological impacts of the pandemic response for all staff who wish to participate by December 31, 2022
- **Objective 2:** HNHU will continue to mobilize resources that help protect the community from COVID-19 transmission through ongoing surveillance, case and outbreak management, communication, education and COVID-19 immunization
- **Objective 3:** HNHU will review its COVID-19 pandemic response to inform future infectious disease and pandemic response planning by March 31, 2023



Build Back Better

The COVID-19 pandemic response has derailed most of HNHU's plans for the past two years. Backlog exists for some programs that need to be addressed to protect the health of our communities. For other programs that were paused or reduced over the pandemic, this resulted in missed opportunities for health promotion and protection or exacerbated health inequities. As HNHU enters recovery phases, we have a unique opportunity to reassess what matters most to the community, key stakeholders and the organization as we move forward. It provides HNHU with the opportunity to re-examine what work we have been doing and how we have been doing it so that we can set ourselves up for success and improve for the future.

- **Objective 1:** Address program level backlogs in the VPD program (childhood immunization): All students in birth cohorts 2004 - 2010 are offered required school immunizations by June 2023
- **Objective 2:** Address program level backlogs in the Environmental Health Team program: By Dec 31 of 2022, 25% of total small drinking water systems (SDWS) are up to date with having a risk assessment completed and directive issued
- **Objective 3:** The HNHU Team is provided time to develop and refresh knowledge, skills, and competencies for their roles during recovery
- **Objective 4:** HNHU will strengthen our community presence through increased interactions with members of the public, renewing and enhancing relationships with community partners and enhanced web presence
- **Objective 5:** HNHU will establish a strong foundation through assessment, planning and prioritization
- **Objective 6:** HNHU will establish its local vision, priorities and strategic direction for the next 3-5 years by June 2023



Foster a Positive Workplace Culture and Support Staff Engagement

The COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing and our prolonged and intense response to it has had significant impacts on the HNHU Team. Recovery must take into consideration the well-being of the HNHU Team and the culture of the organization. HNHU recognizes that in order to enter into any recovery stage of the pandemic and to effectively serve our communities we need to prioritize creating a positive workplace culture and support staff engagement at all levels. HNHU acknowledges that fostering a positive workplace culture and supporting team engagement will require ongoing commitment, beyond 12 months, however the strategies in the ISP are the first steps HNHU will take to help us enhance organizational wellbeing.

- **Objective 1:** The HNHU team will work together to establish a positive workplace culture
- **Objective 2:** The HNHU Team will reinstate and/or develop processes to enhance positive internal communications and provide role clarity
- **Objective 3:** The HNHU team will encourage a workplace culture of balance
- **Objective 4:** HNHU Team members have an opportunity to renew relationships with colleagues and celebrate successes





