

HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**

2016-2020

BUILDING HEALTHY, VIBRANT, CARING  
COMMUNITIES FOR ALL





# Table of Contents

A Message from the Acting Medical Officer of Health, Manager of Public Health and General Manager of Health & Social Services of Norfolk County . . . . .	4
A Message from the Board of Health and Health & Social Services Advisory Committee. . . . .	5
Strategic Plan at a Glance . . . . .	6
Why Does Public Health Matter to Me? . . . . .	8
Why is Public Health Important? . . . . .	10
The Area We Serve . . . . .	11
Our Context . . . . .	13
Our Working Principles . . . . .	13
Our Strategic Planning Process . . . . .	14
Our Vision, Mission and Values . . . . .	15
Our Health Unit's Strategic Priorities for 2016-2020: . . . . .	16
Communication . . . . .	17
Healthy, Supportive Environments . . . . .	18
Organizational Strength . . . . .	19
Quality and Performance . . . . .	20
References . . . . .	22

# A Message from the Acting Medical Officer of Health, Manager of Public Health and General Manager of Health & Social Services of Norfolk County

At the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit (HNHU), our work is guided by the three pillars of public health: to protect the health of the public, to promote the health and well-being of the public and to prevent disease and harm. Our work supports our vision of healthy vibrant and caring communities for everyone and informs the choices we make fulfilling our mandate.

The HNHU has developed a new strategic plan. While it does not comprehensively cover every aspect of our work, it does focus attention on key areas we believe will have the greatest need and impact over the next five years.

While developing this new plan, there was careful consideration of our mandated requirements under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. There was an even greater focus on what we, as an organization, need to do to build toward the future we desire for our communities.

Through this process, we:

- Identified the areas of work that need our greatest attention in the next five years
- Set goals so our organization focuses its work and maximizes its impact
- Developed strategies to achieve these goals; and,
- Set targets so we can measure our progress and report our success.

Building healthy, vibrant, caring communities for all is an exciting and daunting ambition that we boldly accept. We believe every person matters and we understand different communities have different needs. We do our best to recognize the health needs, abilities, challenges and strengths of individuals and communities, and seek to remove barriers and provide supports to help everyone be as healthy as possible.

This hope is shared by many in this community and we cannot achieve these goals alone. We are grateful to all those who contributed their time and perspective to our planning. Their voices helped to shape our plan. We continue to need the help and support of partners and citizens to bring our shared vision to life. As we look to the next five years, we are confident this strategic plan will guide the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit in offering quality, equitable programs and services that optimize the public's health. We look forward to collaborating with our communities and partners as, together, we create a healthier tomorrow for all.

Sincerely,



**Dr. Malcolm Lock**  
Acting Medical Officer of Health  
Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit



**Jill Steen**  
Manager, Public Health  
Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit



**Marlene Miranda**  
General Manager,  
Health & Social Services,  
Norfolk County



# A Message from the Board of Health and Health & Social Services Advisory Committee

Dear friends,

How can we make it more likely that the citizens of Haldimand and Norfolk counties will enjoy their best health? This is a question many professionals in our healthcare system – including the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit (HNHU) – strive to answer each day.

The staff of the HNHU work to improve the health of our citizens through prevention, promotion and protection. Whether supporting a public awareness campaign, working with youth volunteers, inspecting restaurants, offering immunization clinics, or collecting local information about what makes people healthier, the HNHU is there to support those who live and work in Haldimand and Norfolk.

From the outset, the HNHU wanted their strategic planning journey to be grounded in the voice of our community. They developed a strong consultation process that engaged more than 175 people in planning. We extend our thanks and gratitude to the HNHU's staff, management team, volunteers, community partners, Board of Health and Health & Social Services Advisory Committee, school boards, school principals, representatives from the health sector, municipal staffs and County Councillors who contributed so generously. Your voice is reflected here, and this strategic plan is stronger because of your input.

The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit has created a bold strategic plan that will help build a future where all of our citizens live their best health. Making this dream a reality means our people and communities must unite our abilities and strengths to help others as they need to be helped. And we must do this while efficiently using our resources to make our community stronger. It is a tall order! As a Board of Health and Health & Social Services Advisory Committee, we know our community's needs often outpace our resources. Yet, the HNHU is hopeful that, through cooperation and focused expertise, it can make a positive difference in the lives of many and move toward our vision of optimal health for everyone. Please join us in making this vision a reality!

This new strategic plan was reviewed by the Health & Social Services Committee and Board of Health. It was approved and endorsed on March 22, 2016.



**Charlie Luke**  
Mayor, Norfolk County  
Chair, Board of Health



**Tony Dalimonte**  
Councillor, Haldimand County  
Chair, Health & Social Services Advisory Committee



## Strategic Plan at a Glance

### Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit Strategic Plan 2016 - 2020

#### OUR VISION

Healthy, vibrant, caring communities for all



#### OUR MISSION

The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit boldly advocates for public health through quality prevention, promotion, and protection programs and services.



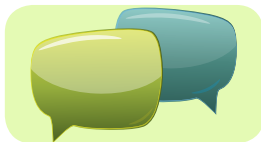
#### CORE VALUES

**I**ntegrity  
**C**ollaboration  
**A**ccountability  
**R**espect  
**E**quity



#### PRIORITIES

##### COMMUNICATION



##### HEALTHY, SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

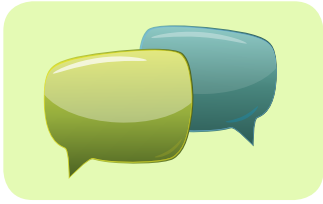


##### ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH



##### QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE





## COMMUNICATION

**Goal** – We will increase the profile and understanding of public health.

### Strategies

1. Enhance the Health Unit's internal communication.
2. Create a plan to communicate the purpose and value of public health.
3. Support staff, volunteers and key decision-makers to be ambassadors for public health.
4. Engage with and embrace social media.

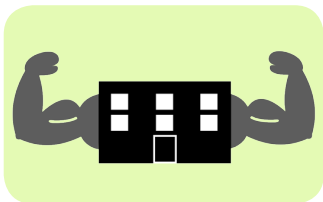


## HEALTHY, SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

**Goal** – We will advocate for, and support the development of, environments that encourage and facilitate health.

### Strategies

1. Influence our built environments to support health.
2. Create healthier spaces, especially for children and youth.
3. Support and advocate for the development of healthy public policies.



## ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH

**Goal** – We will be an effective organization where employees feel valued and engaged.

### Strategies

1. Foster a workplace culture that engages, supports and empowers employees to reach their full potential.
2. Recruit and retain highly skilled, dedicated staff.
3. Develop a comprehensive succession plan.
4. Explore and review the strengths and challenges of the current governance model.



## QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE

**Goal** – We will ensure quality and efficiency in all programs and services.

### Strategies

1. Build a culture of continuous quality improvement.
2. Utilize a planning and prioritization framework.
3. Develop a strong performance management system.



## Why Does Public Health Matter to Me?

Public health has a long history of supporting populations in an effort to strive towards optimal health. Though often confused with publicly funded health care, the two are not synonymous. Publicly funded health care is a responsive approach to health where hospitals, physicians, dentists and others care directly for the health needs of individuals and families. Public health adopts a more proactive approach, focusing on a wider view of the health of our entire population by promoting and protecting wellbeing, and preventing disease and injury. In public health, all members of the community share in the benefits and costs of good health for everyone.<sup>1</sup>





**The goals of public health include:**

- Improving and maintaining the health status of the population
- Reducing disparities in health status
- Preparing for and responding to outbreaks and emergencies
- Enhancing the sustainability of the health-care system.

**We achieve these goals through interconnected functions that focus our work and by 'upstream' thinking, considering the social determinants of health in a wider perspective:**

- **Disease and injury prevention** – Promoting good health and preventing injuries and infectious diseases.
- **Emergency preparedness and response** – Controlling threats and reducing the impact to the public's health by being prepared for and responding to hazards caused by nature, technology and the direct action or inaction of people.
- **Health promotion** – Working with partners, individuals and the entire community to optimize health through public policy, community-based initiatives, and public participation, including a focus on the social and environmental determinants of health and health equity.
- **Health protection** – Assuring food and water safety, controlling disease, and protecting from environmental threats.
- **Health surveillance** – Early recognition of outbreaks, disease trends and appropriate early interventions.
- **Population health assessment** – Understanding the population's health so as to establish priorities.

Public health is about the overall health of all members of our community across the lifespan. As a public health unit, we use innovation, collaboration, evidence-informed practice, and our experience and expertise to continuously improve and deliver need-fulfilling programs and services that support the optimal health of all.

While public health is often an invisible actor in our communities, what we do each day touches the lives of individuals, families and entire communities. It reaches deep into the community and generates improved health outcomes.

***Public health is about the overall  
health of all members of our  
community across the lifespan.***



## Why is Public Health Important?

*"We all want good health for ourselves, our families, friends and neighbours. To achieve this, the Health Unit works to improve the conditions and behaviours that affect health so that all members of the community are able to lead healthier lives. Our upstream focus, working to address underlying factors and prevent disease and injury before they occur, not only improves the quality and length of people's lives, but also provides a tremendous return on investment in the form of savings to taxpayers from reduced future costs to the health care system."*

- Dr. Malcolm Lock, Medical Officer of Health -

### The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit protects and promotes health by:

#### Raising Awareness and Educating the Public

##### EXAMPLES

- Prenatal education
- Alcohol awareness campaigns
- Food safety certification course

#### Delivering Services and Programs

##### EXAMPLES

- Dental screening in schools
- Sexually transmitted infections testing
- Immunization clinics

#### Conducting Inspections and Investigations

##### EXAMPLES

- Restaurant inspections
- Public pool inspections
- Long-term care home inspections and outbreak management

#### Creating and Supporting Healthy Policies and Environments

##### EXAMPLES

- Smoke-free outdoor spaces
- Menu planning support for child care centres
- Active and safe routes to school

#### Planning for the Future

##### EXAMPLES

- Engaging youth in public health
- Emergency preparedness
- Collection and analysis of local health data



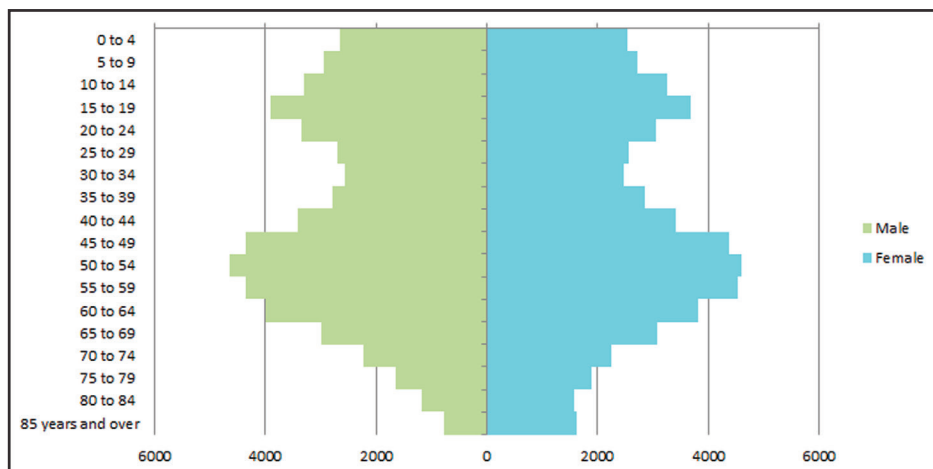
# The Area We Serve

Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit provides public health programs, including promotion and prevention services, to people living in Haldimand and Norfolk counties.



The counties of Haldimand and Norfolk are located between Brant County to the north and Lake Erie to the south, covering an area of 2895 km<sup>2</sup>. Surrounding areas include Elgin County to the west, Hamilton to the east and Niagara Region to the south-east. There are 108,050 people living in Haldimand and Norfolk<sup>2</sup>. Currently, a higher proportion are persons aged 45-59 years; the median age is 44.9 years. Between 2000 and 2020, the population of Haldimand and Norfolk is projected to grow by 5.8%. The number of older adults (aged 55 and older) will increase by 73.2%, while the number of children and youth (aged 0-19 years) and middle aged adults (aged 35-54 years) will decrease by 20.8%.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 1: Population of Haldimand and Norfolk, by Age Group and Sex, 2011<sup>4</sup>:



*The economy is varied, including agriculture, industry, manufacturing and tourism.<sup>5</sup> Most people are employed in trades, transport and equipment operations, and sales and service occupations.<sup>6</sup>*

## Key facts about the area the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit serves:

- Haldimand and Norfolk counties are rural communities that also include small urban centres.
- The economy is varied, including agriculture, industry, manufacturing and tourism.<sup>5</sup> Most people are employed in trades, transport and equipment operations, and sales and service occupations.<sup>6</sup>
- The average income among individuals (before and after taxes) is lower compared to Ontario.<sup>7</sup>
- 7.8% of the population is unemployed.<sup>8</sup>
- Single parent families make up 13.1% of the population, which is lower compared to Ontario.<sup>9</sup>
- 10.2% of the population are immigrants.<sup>10</sup>
- Over 50% of persons aged 15 years or older have high school education or less.<sup>11</sup>
- In 2011, 7.8% or 8,230 people live in poverty.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2011, 8.6% or 1,905 children and youth (17 years of age and younger) live in poverty.<sup>13</sup>
- 9,239 children and youth participated in 72 Student Nutrition Programs across Haldimand and Norfolk from April 2015 to March 2016.<sup>14</sup>
- The average monthly caseload at Ontario Works is 1,140.<sup>15</sup>
- The average wait time for social house is at least one year, with the exception of single applicants under the age of 65 years.<sup>16</sup>
- Most people (89%) in our area speak English as their first language.<sup>17</sup>

## Our Context

### We are rural health

- Rural populations have different health needs. We recognize the uniqueness of rural life, and how our economics, environment, demographics and culture affect our health status. We are committed to understanding, building and using this frame of reference to develop need-fulfilling programs and services.

### We are connected to our community

- We have built strong relationships in our communities, and work to strengthen these bonds and forge new relationships. Our daily work intersects with many – local dentists, doctors, hospitals, seniors' homes, schools, municipal staff, child care centres, restaurants, farms, community coalitions, service providers, and local citizens. We work together to build healthier communities for all.

### Demographic shifts

- As a public health unit, we are aware of changes in our population and external environment, and adjust our internal processes, programs and services to meet the health needs of our communities.

## Our Working Principles

### We see the community as a whole

- While we interact with individuals every day, the focus of public health is on the health of our population as a whole. We use policy development, research, advocacy and direct health interventions to protect and promote health, and prevent disease and injury.

### We use evidence-informed practices

- We ensure our programs and services are designed and guided by the best available information – that we access relevant research, are skilled to evaluate it and know what it means for our communities. With this lens, we are committed to continuously improving what we do and providing quality public health.

### We work 'upstream'

- Our work looks at the precursors of poor health so as to avoid more costly treatments and interventions later. We seek to prevent disease before it happens by examining the economic, social and environmental factors linked to the public's health. We identify the root causes of problems and work backwards to create preventative interventions. This 'upstream' approach supports decisions that have the greatest impact on health for all, for today and for tomorrow.

### We work across the life span

- Public health does not focus on a single stage of life. We work to improve the health of entire communities at all stages of life: children, youth, adults, and seniors. We identify and minimize the risks that affect people, and support people and communities to live their healthiest life from beginning to end.





## Our Strategic Planning Process

Throughout its planning, the Health Unit was mindful of these guiding questions:

- What does our community need? What can we reasonably do to address these needs?
- What will we focus on in the next five years? What will our goals be?
- How will we achieve these goals?
- How will we know we are successful?

Planning included the following phases:

### Phase One: Prepare and Consult

A strong framework was developed to ensure the voice of diverse stakeholders informed planning. More than 175 people participated, including staff and management, volunteers, County councilors and municipal staff, community coalitions, service agencies, child care centres, emergency services, school boards and principals, and other agencies within the health sector.

### Phase Two: Plan for our Future

Members of the HNHU's staff, senior management, Health & Social Services Advisory Committee and Board of Health gathered to plan. Discussions were mindful of the communities' current and emerging needs, the directions and priorities of County partners, the wider health and social systems in which we work, and our organizational resources and capacity. We defined priorities, goals and strategies for the HNHU to focus on in the next five years.

### Phase Three: Writing our Plan

The discussions and decisions of the retreats came together into a cohesive plan for the HNHU's future. The new plan was reviewed by members of the Strategic Planning Committee, and reviewed and endorsed by the Health & Social Services Advisory Committee and Board of Health.

### Phase Four: Launching our New Strategic Plan

We are pleased with our new strategic plan and excited to put it into action! The HNHU will do this by:

- Implementing our strategies and monitoring progress
- Ensuring day-to-day operations are focused on our mandate and goals
- Communicating with stakeholders so the public and our partners know who we are, what we are doing and how we are making a difference.

**We are confident this plan reflects the voice of our communities and stakeholders. We believe the road map established here will lead us to a strong and engaged future, and will help the HNHU to build healthy, vibrant, caring communities for everyone.**



## Our Vision, Mission and Values

An organization's vision, mission and values are essential guiding elements. The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit's vision is our statement of the future – how our communities will be different because of the work we do. It is a statement of our desired impact, the results we want to achieve. The HNHU's mission is a statement of who we are – our purpose as an organization, our role in bringing our vision to life. Finally, the HNHU's values are the timeless principles of our organization that define who we are. Together, our vision, mission and values form the foundation of our organization – reminding of who we are, what we do and what we hope to achieve.

### Our Vision

Healthy, vibrant, caring communities for all.

### Our Mission

The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit boldly advocates for public health through quality prevention, promotion, and protection programs and services.

### Our Values

- **Integrity**
  - ✓ We demonstrate high ethical and professional standards in our work and relationships by being principled in our approach and responsible in our actions.
- **Collaboration**
  - ✓ We foster and nurture partnerships internally with staff, and externally with individuals, organizations and communities. We develop and leverage partnerships to maximize resources and achieve shared goals.
- **Accountability**
  - ✓ We manage the resources entrusted to us with competency, efficiency and transparency. We strive to balance our communities' health needs with limited resources, aligning priorities with our mandate. We measure progress and report results to demonstrate our value to the public's health and the public's purse.
- **Respect**
  - ✓ We focus on people. We treat all persons – community members, employees, colleagues, and partners – with dignity, courtesy, and understanding.
- **Equity**
  - ✓ We recognize and value the different abilities, health needs, resources and experiences of each person, and strive to reduce barriers so all people can achieve their optimal health.

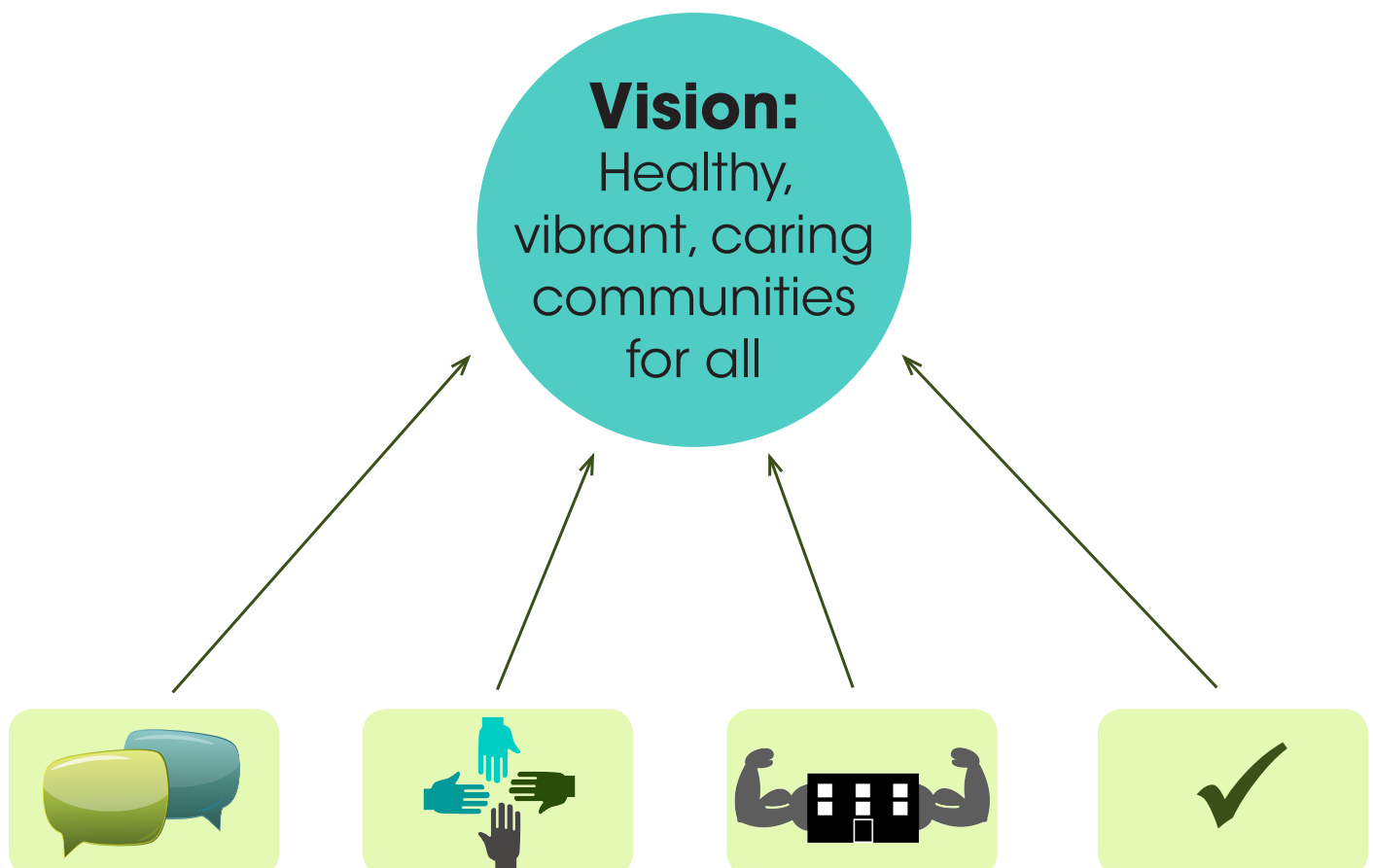
**Together, our values form the acronym "I CARE"**. However, it is more than an acronym. It is the motto of our work and our intrinsic motivation. We believe in the work we do and work hard to support the public's health because we care about the well-being of our citizens and communities.

# Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit's Strategic Priorities for 2016-2020

Through its planning, the HNHU has created a road map to guide us in building healthy, vibrant caring communities for all. In the next five years, we will deliver our mandate and focus our efforts and investments in four strategic priorities:

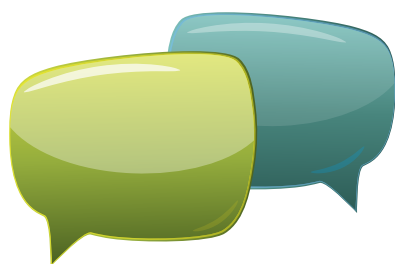
- **Communication** – To increase the profile and understanding of public health.
- **Healthy, Supportive Environments** – To advocate for, and support the development of, environments that encourage and facilitate health.
- **Organizational Strength** – To be an effective organization where employees feel valued and engaged.
- **Quality and Performance** – To ensure quality and efficiency in all programs and services.

These priorities are grounded in feedback we received from stakeholders, as well as our shared perspectives on emerging trends and community needs, the priorities of County partners, the directions and goals of the health and social systems in which we work, our capacity and resources as an organization, and our mandate as an organization. These four strategic directions will drive HNHU's work for the next five years.





## STRATEGIC PRIORITY: COMMUNICATION



Communication is central to public health. Community members, partners and other stakeholders need to be well-informed through proactive communication with clear messaging delivered by traditional communication mediums and emerging social networking tools.

Communication is also essential to support collaboration across our organization. Effective communication is about effective listening and two-way conversation – both internally and externally – as well as being present to one another and being connected with and involved in our communities.

**Goal Statement** – The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit will increase the profile and understanding of public health.

**Strategies** – To achieve this goal, we will:

1. Enhance the HNHU's internal communication.
2. Create a plan to communicate the purpose and value of public health.
3. Support staff, volunteers and key decision-makers to be ambassadors for public health.
4. Engage with and embrace social media.

### Impact

The HNHU's ability to communicate who we are, what we do, how to access our programs and services, and the value we provide to the public is vital to our success.

Our communities will see us engage and communicate through:

- Messaging about public health issues.
- Strengthening our community presence:
  - ✓ Interactions between public health staff and members of the public.
  - ✓ Working with partners on community issues related to public health.
  - ✓ Enhanced social media and web presence.
- Updating on the progress we make on strategic priorities.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITY: HEALTHY, SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS



The environments in which people live, learn, play and work profoundly impact their health. Transportation options, school policies, community design, recreation opportunities, access to healthy foods and numerous other environmental factors can help or hinder the health of the community.

For the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit to make equitable, long-term changes that benefit the public's health, an investment in policies and programs that create supportive environments for healthy living is needed. Creating healthy environments cannot be done in isolation by any one organization or field. It requires coordinated and comprehensive effort by multiple sectors, organizations, and leaders.

**Goal Statement** – The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit will advocate for, and support the development of, environments that encourage and facilitate health.

**Strategies** – To achieve this goal, we will:

1. Influence our built environments to support health.
2. Create healthier spaces, especially for children and youth.
3. Support and advocate for the development of healthy public policies.

### Impact

Communities are systems. Each organization and individual contributes to and affects that system. In creating healthy, supportive environments, the HNHU seeks to spark meaningful dialogue in our communities about what helps us to be healthier. We wish to be catalysts for change so it is easier for everyone to be healthy and safe. We want to collaborate with more partners in our environments and systems, and to help all people feel valued by and engaged with their communities.

Our communities will see us develop healthy, supportive environments through:

- Educating decision-makers and the community about the importance of healthy built environments.
- Strengthening partnerships, developing policies and building capacity in systems that engage with children and youth (e.g., school boards, schools, childcare, recreation, community coalitions).
- Continuing to foster positive working relationships with other municipal departments (e.g., recreation, planning).
- Community mobilization, advocacy and engagement regarding the development of healthy public policies.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITY: ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH



Organizational success is created by individuals who feel valued and supported. It is important that we, as an organization, support a culture where employees, volunteers and policy makers feel engaged, informed and valued as contributing members of the team. Our knowledgeable staff are a key asset for the HNHU. We want to build on this foundation and strengthen our organization to be its most effective. For this reason, we seek to enhance communications across our organization. Clear, consistent communication between staff and across teams supports collaboration, promotes engagement and deepens our effectiveness.

**Goal Statement** – The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit will be an effective organization where employees feel valued and engaged.

**Strategies** – To achieve this goal, we will:

1. Foster a workplace culture that engages, supports and empowers employees to reach their full potential.
2. Recruit and retain highly skilled and dedicated staff.
3. Develop a comprehensive succession plan.
4. Explore and review the strengths and challenges of the current governance model.

### Impact

This priority of building a stronger organization is not only about the HNHU. In creating a stronger organization, we, in turn, are better able to serve and support our communities. We want to have the right people in the right jobs with the right skills and resources. As we develop our organizational culture, the HNHU will become a preferred employer with a stable, expert workforce. Our team will be stronger and more agile, and will know they are important to our organization and to our communities.

Our staff and communities will see us foster a positive, engaged working environment by:

- Identifying the learning needs of our organization and encouraging staff to grow through professional development.
- Generating opportunities for succession and recruitment through anticipated vacancies and gaps.
- Performing an evaluation of our current governance model and acting on recommendations to optimize our governance effectiveness.
- Creating a culture of collaboration across our organization.
- Celebrating our successes together.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITY: QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE



The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit will adopt a philosophy of continuous quality improvement. This will ensure the programs and services we provide are of the highest possible standard, fall within our mandate and align with our communities' current and future needs. We will use the best available evidence, innovation, and collaboration to maximize our impact.

**Goal Statement** – The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit will ensure quality and efficiency in all programs and services.

**Strategies** – To achieve this goal, we will:

1. Build a culture of continuous quality improvement.
2. Utilize a planning and prioritization framework.
3. Develop a strong performance management system.

### Impact

We want our communities to receive the best possible public health programs and services. As we embrace a culture of continuous quality improvement, we will work toward becoming the best we can be and demonstrate our accountability and value to those we serve.

Our communities will see us demonstrate excellence and efficiency through:

- Offering high quality programs and services.
- Allocating organizational resources in accordance with organizational priorities.
- Demonstrating linkages between performance, CQI and program outcomes.





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