WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

TRANSFORMATIONAL PLAN

A VISION FOR HEALTH IN WASHINGTON STATE

CORNERSTONE VALUES: EQUITY • INNOVATION • ENGAGEMENT

VISION: EQUITY AND OPTIMAL HEALTH FOR ALL

The Washington State Department of Health's ***Transformational Plan*** reenergizes our commitment to health for all — creating policies and conditions so everyone can live their healthiest lives. We cannot embark on this journey alone. We must collaborate with communities, community-based organizations, local public health entities, governmental partners, health care providers and systems, the private sector, Tribal Nations, and many, many more. Infusing our agency's values into how we transform our services, go about our activities, and strengthen our core work, is critical to the bright and robust future ahead.

We know our cornerstone values of **Equity**, **Innovation**, and **Engagement** (**EIE**) are key drivers in shaping our future. Our vision for each strategic priority is the "what" we are striving for and key examples of the "how" we will do our work are reflected in our transformations in action. While this is not an exhaustive list of everything we currently do or plan to do, it does provide our roadmap for how and where we prioritize our efforts. Additionally, it boldly positions our agency for the ever-changing future already upon us!

OUR PRIORITIES AND VISION FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL HEALTH

I. HEALTH AND WELLNESS

All Washingtonians have the opportunity to attain their full potential of physical, mental, and social health and well-being.

II. HEALTH SYSTEMS AND WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION

All Washingtonians are well served by a health ecosystem that is robust and responsive, while promoting transparency, equity, and trust.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

All Washingtonians will thrive in a broad range of healthy environments — natural, built, and social.

IV. EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND RESILIENCE

All Washington communities have the information and resources they need to build resilience in the face of myriad public health threats and are well-positioned to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and natural disasters.

V. GLOBAL AND ONE HEALTH

All Washingtonians live in ever-connected environments that recognize and leverage the intersection of both global and domestic health as well as the connections of humans, animals, and the environment.

TRANSFORMATIONS IN ACTION

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

COMMUNITY CENTERED

VISIBILITY AND VALUE

EQUITY DRIVEN

COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT

On behalf of the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), I am pleased to present our agency's ***Transformational Plan: A Vision for Health in Washington State***.

In this document, you will find five Priorities for our agency followed by six Strategies each (30 in total) intended to provide our "north star" for our agency's transformative work over the course of the next few years.

While much of this work has been ongoing already, this document provides our agency an opportunity to align our work with the vision of Governor Jay Inslee's aspirational words during his inauguration speech in 2021 when he asked all of us to "reimagine public health."

We know it is difficult to reimagine health when we have so many challenges about us. Yet, we have a responsibility to respond, and not only respond, but to step up and remind each one of us that we are in this together. In the process, we must also advance the "3Vs" of public health.

What you will see in this document is the culmination of numerous discussions — whether internally or with partners, whether informally or formally, whether within our state or beyond — that provided our team with the insights into a path for advancing "health" in our state moving forward.

We know this document will not be everything to everyone, nor is it intended to be as such. Instead, it gives our agency the direction in how we prioritize our work leveraging our cornerstone values of **Equity**, **Innovation**, and **Engagement** (**EIE**) that have centered our work.

In some cases, this will allow us an opportunity to take a closer look at what we are currently doing and consider the value proposition of continuing that work. In other cases, it will undoubtedly validate our work and inspire us to reach even further than we have ever before. That is what "reimagining health" is all about.

Let me close by saying thank you to the countless partners and colleagues who helped us with this plan and the amazingly dedicated team at DOH that allowed us to move this work forward while simultaneously fighting a pandemic. And, a special shout-out to our HHS subcabinet and other state agencies that will be instrumental in helping advance this work ahead.

Now the hard work begins — making words on paper a reality in action. Yet together, we are confident we can and will do just that!

Sincerely,

Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH
Secretary of Health
The Great State of Washington

Release date: August 1, 2022

This ***Transformational Plan*** is charting the course for our collective future. Serving the health needs of nearly 8 million Washingtonians spread over 71,000 square miles of incredibly beautiful and diverse land, will never be easy. This is exactly why we do not plan to do it alone.

We commit to working alongside communities and partners alike. We will be advocates for the "**health ecosystem**" which is a dynamic landscape of partners and influencers of health at the local, state, and national levels: public health, health care, governmental and private partners, Tribal Nations, and a multitude of other partners whose work and actions impact and influence health. Most importantly, our partners are everyday Washingtonians.

Despite an unprecedented and challenging time in serving the health needs of Washingtonians due to COVID-19, as a state we rose to the occasion, saved lives, leveraged innovations, and built partnerships that will serve to **strengthen communities** and transform how we approach the notion of health to meet the needs of the future.

As we look beyond COVID-19, we aim to approach our work with the same sense of urgency, nimbleness, and innovation that was critical in fighting this pandemic. We will tell our story because our story is the **story of Washington's people** and its communities. In the process, we will demonstrate our field's impact so that others recognize and embrace the vital role of public health in our everyday lives. We will embrace the notion of the "**3Vs**" and increase public health's **Visibility**, which in turn engenders **Value**, and thereby builds trust and **Validation** of our work and its impact.

We will continue to forge and foster partnerships with those we have worked with in the past and newer ones we have only begun engaging so that the health ecosystem is harnessing the strength of our collective effort to improve health. We will convene and lead relationships that reflect the important intersection of countless partners. Our shared **commitment to health and well-being** is the foundation for future collaboration. Given the myriad of challenges in store for all of us — from reproductive health to climate to opioids and addressing social determinants of health — we must astutely pivot to meet these head on. The upcoming work is simply too important to do it alone.

This plan creates **our roadmap** for building healthy communities full of resilient people. We do this by preventing disease and injury, modernizing an array of systems, serving health needs, and helping coordinate the related social needs of all Washingtonians. Through already launched milestone efforts like Governor Inslee's **Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) initiative** or the Legislature's investment in **Foundational Public Health Services**, we will demonstrate our commitment to transforming the health of communities while also addressing health inequities that this pandemic has laid bare. By ensuring equity, fairness, and justice principles are embedded in our activities, we will seek impactful and measurable solutions to often complex and historically rooted issues that are preventing equitable access to health and health care alike.

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Our vision for a **modernized public health system** is one that will serve communities through capabilities and tools that further their ability to thrive and are equally supported by a robust, well-trained and capable workforce that is supported and trusted. We will bring novel approaches to improving health through new models of innovation, key engagement and communications pathways, promotion of whole person health, and the detection, prevention and response to a variety of diseases and conditions. We will pursue and support new models of care and innovative technologies that support access to necessary mental, emotional, and physical health.

Since the work of public health is never done, we will remain committed and prepared for future public health threats — from natural to human-caused disasters, infectious disease emergencies, and environmental and climate-related impacts. We will **protect our communities** against the threat from vector-borne and other communicable diseases, as well as the impact of human (and animal) migration patterns across the globe.

More than ever, the connections between **global health** and domestic health as well as principles of **One Health** remind us of why human, animal, and environmental intersections are more important to understand than ever. In the process, we will respectfully learn from others whether across our state, our nation, or across the globe.

We recognize we are emerging from arguably the most difficult and critical time in the history of our nation. We have seen our nation divided far too long. The gravity of this moment has not been lost on any of us and its impact is long-term. Our hope is that together we will not just move forward, but we will thrive and **transform our system of health in Washington** and be a model for others — where together we create the reality that everyone across Washington has the opportunity to live the healthiest of lives. The work has only just begun but this moment marks the beginning of this road.

Thank you for partnering with us on this journey — together we can and will make a difference.

PRIORITY I. HEALTH AND WELLNESS

VISION

All Washingtonians have the opportunity to attain their full potential of physical, mental, and social health and well-being.

GROWING
THRIVING COMMUNITIES

COMMITMENT

We will lead initiatives that support and promote upstream prevention efforts to advance optimal physical health, mental and behavioral health, spiritual health, resilience, and overall well-being where individuals, families, and communities can thrive. Our actions recognize that social, structural, and economic determinants of health must be addressed to achieve true health equity and optimal health for all.

KEY STRATEGIES

1. **Promote** a broad range of initiatives that support pro-health and wellness behaviors and actions related to physical activity, nutritional health, mental and behavioral health, emotional and spiritual health, and comprehensive holistic health to advance both individual and community health across all of Washington.
2. **Support** community rooted and informed initiatives that address conditions early, including for adverse childhood experiences, and throughout the life course, to improve health and well-being longer term.
3. **Advance** a continuum of prevention and harm reduction strategies that address common risk and protective factors associated with injuries as well as use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, opioids, and other substances and related behaviors.
4. **Engage** partners and people with lived experience and embrace multisector strategies to address upstream factors that contribute to the impact on key health concerns such as chronic disease, addiction, injuries, and the like.
5. **Utilize** morbidity and mortality data and strategies to inform action-oriented prevention programs and policy recommendations that address disproportionality in health outcomes.
6. **Deploy** proactive communication and health promotion strategies that promote mental and physical health wellness while countering stigma in seeking care.

PRIORITY II. HEALTH SYSTEMS AND WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION

VISION

All Washingtonians are well served by a health ecosystem that is robust and responsive, while promoting transparency, equity, and trust.

MODERNIZING
DATA ACCESS

COMMITMENT

We will align skills, resources, and partnerships to ensure our health systems and infrastructure capabilities are scalable, responsive, and modernized to promote data driven and innovative approaches to improving health. We will build and transform our systems to be accessible and responsive to Washingtonians regardless of who they are or where they live.

KEY STRATEGIES

1. **Invest in** and **support** secure and innovative health information technologies and infrastructure supports that will enable partners to access and exchange information that addresses whole person health in a culturally and linguistically respectful way.
2. **Ensure** our public health, health care, and community-based partners and their workforce have the data, technology, and system supports they need to build and utilize connections among health, social, and community initiatives.
3. **Champion** the recruitment, development, and retention of a strong, capable, and diverse and inclusive state, local, and Tribal public health workforce and further policies and efforts that support, invest in, and diversify our health system workforce.
4. **Strengthen** the collection, analysis, linkage, and dissemination of timely, accessible, and actionable health data, guided by community priorities, to inform better community level interventions and initiatives that improve both individual and population health.
5. **Co-create** robust data sharing capabilities and systems with local health jurisdictions, with Tribes honoring Tribal data sovereignty, and other stakeholders to support better detection, understanding, and addressing of the burden of disease and health inequities.
6. **Invest in** and **leverage** previously developed tools, technologies, and strategies, including newer ones utilized during the COVID-19 pandemic such as interactive dashboards, communications pathways, and geospatial mapping to assist individuals, communities, health systems, and policy makers, to make data-informed decisions to promote health.

PRIORITY III. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

VISION

All Washingtonians will thrive in a broad range of healthy environments — natural, built, and social.

ENSURING
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

COMMITMENT

We will lead broad efforts that address external factors impacting health, safety, and well-being, recognize the intersection of people, animals, and environment, and incorporate principles of environmental justice and shared responsibility for community health.

KEY STRATEGIES

1. **Support** systems and policies that promote optimal individual and community health by investing in proactive efforts to advance a broad range of healthy environments and interactions where people live, learn, work, worship, and play.
2. **Ensure** our policies, planning, and programming incorporate environmental justice principles with the goal of reducing health inequities and promoting community well-being.
3. **Incorporate** data-driven approaches and community engagement strategies, assets and strengths, into public health and response planning efforts aimed at building resilience against the health and social impacts of climate change and other environmental challenges.
4. **Ensure** communities likely to bear the worst climate-related and environmental health impacts have resources and support to foster resilient communities that promote true health and well-being.
5. **Support** initiatives that promote safe and active living, commuting and recreation, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and increase community cohesion.
6. **Communicate** and **promote** the health benefits of behavior change and interventions that protect our environment, while ensuring equitable access to health opportunities through robust data systems and information sharing.

PRIORITY IV. EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND RESILIENCE

VISION

All Washington communities have the information and resources they need to build resilience in the face of myriad public health threats and are well-positioned to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and natural disasters.

BUILDING
RESILIENCY

COMMITMENT

We will lead our response to health threats and emergencies in a proactive, effective, and equitable way that assures strength of response, supports health systems, leverages community solutions, promotes cross-sector collaboration, and advances health security. Our efforts will learn from previous emergencies and response activities within Washington and beyond to build resilient communities.

KEY STRATEGIES

1. **Respond** with strength and decisiveness on behalf of Washingtonians and the communities in which they live to minimize impact on people and lives, sustain necessary response capabilities, and advance protections in advance of, during, and in the aftermath of a broad range of public health threats and emergencies.
2. **Collaborate** with a myriad of community-rooted organizations, disaster response and recovery partners, and interagency partners to develop, share, and act upon key information in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways related to hazards and emergencies.
3. **Recruit**, **develop**, **train**, and **retain** a robust and capable workforce prepared to respond in an emergency and institute planning initiatives to support response personnel in disaster response and recovery efforts integrating models of excellence and infrastructure advancements from a broad range of emergencies including the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. **Seek** flexible and sustainable funding opportunities to invest in activities that support robust response activities, workforce, tools, and the communities we serve and that allow for scarce resources to be equitably allocated.
5. **Support** and **prioritize** community-led solutions to mitigate barriers to optimal outcomes, survival, and resilience for all communities especially those most at-risk through a broad range of community engagement and response initiatives.
6. **Ensure** resilience and behavioral health promotion planning and implementation efforts are key components of current and future response activities serving community members, partners, and responders alike.

PRIORITY V. GLOBAL AND ONE HEALTH

VISION

All Washingtonians live in ever-connected environments that recognize and leverage the intersection of both global and domestic health as well as the connections of humans, animals, and the environment.

LEVERAGING
GLOBAL EXPERTISE

COMMITMENT

We will lead the development and implementation of creative solutions to improve the health and well-being of Washingtonians emphasizing the connectedness of a strong bidirectional global-domestic health ecosystem. It will simultaneously underscore the importance of One Health recognizing the relationships of human health as they intertwine with that of animals and the environment.

KEY STRATEGIES

1. **Incorporate** best practices from beyond borders to advance the health and well-being of Washingtonians and the communities in which they live through strong bidirectional pathways for advancing partnerships, key planning strategies, and communications efforts.
2. **Leverage** the collective strength and wisdom of existing and emerging global health and One Health stakeholders and institutions within (and beyond) Washington state to participate in and support robust and connected networks of information sharing, strategy development, and engagement.
3. **Seek** resources and funding as well as partnership opportunities to enhance capabilities across health systems to ensure a globally connected community of partners with particular emphasis on mentorship and training opportunities, system and technology enhancements, and engagement pathways to address domestic issues through global health learnings.
4. **Advance** timely, culturally, and linguistically respectful health information and initiatives, in partnership with health system providers and communities, to support the health and well-being of refugee, immigrant, and migrant communities across Washington.
5. **Emphasize** the complex connections of human, animal, and environmental health in our health promotion activities and expand our capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to global public health threats with domestic health impact whether infectious disease or otherwise.
6. **Further** and **support** our important role in binational relations and connectedness with health partners and other key entities in Canada and beyond to advance information sharing, health systems knowledge, and strategy development.

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

FOUNDATIONAL TRANSFORMATIONS

OUTWARD MINDSET

We build an organizational culture in which we see others as people who matter and focus on achieving agency objectives in ways that help our employees, partners, and customers achieve theirs.

ALIGNED RESOURCES

We use our agency priorities to drive how we develop, manage and invest our funding for maximum effectiveness.

INNOVATIVE ORGANIZATION

We ensure our strategic decisions and work environment support the exploration and adoption of new approaches to address both existing challenges and emerging health needs.

EQUITY CENTERED WORKFORCE

We commit to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace, while centering communities adversely impacted by systemic and cultural oppression in decision-making and ensuring equitable access to services, opportunities, and information.

CULTURE

FUNDING

INNOVATION

EQUITY

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Washington State Department of Health

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