



**METROPOLITAN
HEALTH DISTRICT**



METRO HEALTH 2.0 STRATEGIC PLAN

“Transforming Metro Health through Innovation,
Information, and Inspiration”



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Director's Message

I am delighted to announce the official release of the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District's *Metro Health 2.0 Strategic Plan*. Metro Health 2.0 is our department's new, five-year strategic plan for operationalizing critical and timely investments in public health infrastructure and modernization. Metro Health 2.0 also serves as our framework for building our internal capacity to work with community partners to achieve our vision of healthy people thriving in a healthy community.



In April 2022, Metro Health responded to the growing acknowledgement that systemic racism is a public health crisis by launching SA Forward, our community-oriented blueprint for addressing the root causes of health disparities in San Antonio and Bexar County. Like SA Forward, Metro Health 2.0 puts into action important lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic. Metro Health 2.0 provides the roadmap for building the public health capacity needed to tackle the health disparities that the pandemic has cast in such stark light. If SA Forward is the vehicle that transports us to a healthier and more equitable destination, Metro Health 2.0 is the engine that drives SA Forward.

Metro Health 2.0's release is the culmination of a year of hard work and collaboration across Metro Health divisions, office, and initiatives. Metro Health 2.0's steering committee, core team, advisory teams, and workgroups co-created goals and objectives for each of the strategic plan's six focus areas— **Community Engagement, Data & Information Technology, Financing, Partnerships, Public Health Laws and Governance, and Workforce**. Metro Health also encouraged employee engagement in the strategic planning process via the department's monthly newsletter, a staff survey, bi-monthly supervisor meetings, and quarterly all staff town halls.

Historically, boom-and-bust funding cycles have been the norm for public health, but commitments to public health modernization and transformation from the City of San Antonio and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are moving us away from this ad hoc funding strategy towards more sustained and targeted investments.

Investments from the City of San Antonio's General Fund and several state and federal grant sources made SA Forward a reality. A five-year Strengthening US Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce, and Data Systems grant from the CDC (for an amount up to \$25.5 million) has enabled Metro Health to operationalize Metro Health 2.0.

In addition to our staff's incredible work on the *Metro Health 2.0 Strategic Plan*, I am extremely grateful for the generous and timely support of City leaders and the CDC. Both saw the urgent need to build public health capacity in San Antonio and Bexar County and committed the necessary resources.

Whether you are a Metro Health employee, health care professional, or member of the public, I hope you find our *Metro Health 2.0 Strategic Plan* to be an inspiring pathway to building a healthier, more resilient, and more equitable community.

Sincerely,

Claude A. Jacob, DrPH, MPH
Health Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This executive summary presents the strategic direction undertaken by the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (Metro Health) to operationalize critical and timely investments in public health infrastructure, modernization, and capacity building to achieve Metro Health's vision of healthy people thriving in a healthy community.

The COVID-19 pandemic put a spotlight on the need for long-term investments in workforce development, public health infrastructure and modernization, and policy change to better address the root causes of health inequity. Metro Health 2.0 guides the department's efforts to build the highly skilled and diverse workforce and to create the robust infrastructure required to respond to today's complex public health challenges. Metro Health 2.0 builds internal capacity to work more effectively with partners to change systems that have produced disproportionately poor health outcomes and unequally distributed social determinants of health in our community, particularly among those who have been most impacted by systemic oppression.

Metro Health began the strategic planning process in March 2022. Metro Health established a Metro Health 2.0 steering committee and core team consisting of executive leadership and leadership/subject matter expert staff respectively. To ensure employee engagement throughout the strategic planning process, Metro Health invited a diverse group of frontline and mid-level staff to join the Metro Health 2.0 advisory team. These teams developed goals, objectives, and activities for each of Metro Health 2.0's six focus areas—Community Engagement, Data and Information Technology, Financing, Partnerships, Public Health Law and Governance, and Workforce.

As part of the Metro Health 2.0 strategic planning process, the core team reviewed existing organizational plans to ensure cross-departmental alignment with organizational/community goals and objectives, national frameworks, and PHAB accreditation standards. To ensure alignment with the 2017 Healthy Bexar Plan (Community Health Improvement Plan or CHIP), staff cross walked Metro Health 2.0 focus areas and CHIP priority areas. Metro Health will conduct a new Metro Health 2.0/CHIP crosswalk once the 2023 Bexar County CHIP is released.

Metro Health 2.0 is informed by a collection of national public health modernization strategies and frameworks. These include NACCHO's *Developing a Local Health Department Strategic Plan: A How-To Guide*, The Bipartisan Policy Center's *Public Health Forward: Modernizing the U.S. Public Health System*, PHAB's *Standards and Measures for Reaccreditation*, Health and Human Service Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion's *Healthy People 2030*, Public Health National Center for Innovations' (PHNCI) *Foundational Public Health Services and Capabilities*, and the CDC's *10 Essential Public Health Services*.

Metro Health will implement the Metro Health 2.0 Strategic Plan through a steering committee that is dedicated to working collaboratively to advance equity, aligning efforts to disaggregate data, removing barriers to accessing care, promoting ethical community engagement, dismantling institutional and systemic racism, building community power to change systems, redistributing resources, strengthening cross-sector partnerships to more effectively address social determinants of health, and training Metro Health staff in developing—and valuing—a comprehensive equity approach to public health practice. Through an applied health equity lens, the steering committee will keep equity at the center of all activities. The committee will provide recommendations to Metro Health leadership on how to foster a culture of inclusion, collaboration, and strategic alignment across the department.

METRO HEALTH OVERVIEW

Vision

Healthy people thriving in a healthy community.

Mission

To prevent illness, promote healthy behaviors, and protect against health hazards throughout our community through education, collaboration, and key services.

Values

Teamwork—We work together to make San Antonio better.

Integrity—We model ethical behavior.

Innovation—We are driven by continuous improvement.

Professionalism—We are qualified, skilled, and committed.



Communicable Disease

- Epidemiology
- Immunizations
- Public Health Laboratory Services
- STI Control and Prevention
- TB Control and Prevention



Community Health and Safety

- Chronic Disease Prevention
- Health Equity
- Maternal and Child Health
- Office of Health Equity
- Violence Prevention



Environmental Health and Operations

- Contracts, Grants and Compliance
- Environmental Health
- Operations
- Transformation and Strategic Initiatives
- Workforce Development



Mental Health and Community Resilience

- Center of Excellence for Trauma Informed Care
- Mental Health Collaborations



Director's Office

- Access to Care Office
- Administrative Support Team
- Marketing and Communications
- Policy and Civic Engagement Office
- Public Health Informatics

The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (Metro Health) provides public health services in San Antonio and unincorporated areas of Bexar County. Metro Health is operated by the City of San Antonio (CoSA) under the direction of the mayor, city council, and city manager. Metro Health functions under the leadership of the public health director. The director, in consultation with city leadership and community stakeholders, sets public health priorities and guides the overall activities of Metro Health. Metro Health became a Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) accredited health department in 2019 and is eligible for continued accreditation in 2024. Metro Health services are housed under five divisions and offices: the Director's Office, Communicable Disease, Community Health and Safety, Environmental Health and Operations, and the Office of Mental Health and Community Resilience. (See Appendices 1 and 2)

METRO HEALTH DIVISIONS AND OFFICES

Director's Office

Metro Health's Director's Office provides leadership, strategic direction, and administrative support to Metro Health's five divisions. The Director's Office helps Metro Health build its foundational public health capabilities to protect and promote the health of all people in our community through the Access to Care Office, Policy and Civic Engagement Office (PaCE), Public Health Informatics, Marketing and Communications, and Administrative Support.

Communicable Disease Division

Metro Health's Communicable Disease Division (CDD) provides essential public health services through these programs: Immunizations, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) Control and Prevention, Tuberculosis Control and Prevention, Epidemiology, and Public Health Laboratory Services. CDD is responsible for recognizing, identifying, and responding to events of public health significance and communicable disease outbreaks, epidemics, and pandemics in accordance with local, national, state mandates and guidelines. CDD provides our healthcare system, community-based organizations and partners, and the community at large with information about the control and prevention of communicable diseases.

Community Health and Safety Division

The Community Health and Safety Division (CHS) delivers services through four sections: Chronic Disease Prevention, Maternal and Child Health, Office of Health Equity, and Violence Prevention. CHS works collaboratively with community residents and organizations to improve wellness, increase access to resources, promote community resilience, and reduce acts of violence. The Office of Health Equity leads department efforts to implement culturally, linguistically, and locally tailored strategies to address entrenched health disparities and inequities within Metro Health and in marginalized communities.

Environmental Health and Operations Division

Metro Health's Environmental Health and Operations Division protects the San Antonio community against health hazards and provides operational support for the department. The division includes Food and Environmental Health (F&E), Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP), Air Quality, Climate & Environmental Education, Operations, Contracts, Grants and Compliance, Workforce Development and Transformation and Strategic Initiatives that includes the department's Performance Improvement team.

Office of Mental Health and Community Resilience

Metro Health's newest addition is the Office of Mental Health and Community Resilience (MHCR). Given the growing concern about mental health issues both nationally and locally, Metro Health is now optimally positioned to tackle mental health issues from a public health standpoint. MHCR works to enhance public health competency around mental health and trauma-informed care, facilitate the coordination and implementation of mental health initiatives across the City of San Antonio, and support the efforts of partner agencies and external community stakeholders.

Public Health Investments

Historically, boom-and-bust funding cycles have been the norm for public health, but commitments to public health modernization and transformation from the City of San Antonio and the CDC move us away from this ad hoc funding strategy towards more sustained and targeted investments.

City leadership saw the urgent need to build public health capacity in San Antonio and Bexar County and committed the necessary resources. Between 2010 and the present, Metro Health's budget has increased by 157.75%. Metro Health's total budget in 2010 was \$40 million with 418 full time employees (FTEs). For Fiscal Year 2024 (FY 24), it increased to \$103.1 million with 652 FTEs.

Metro Health's FY 2024 budget includes funding from the City of San Antonio's General Fund and several state and federal grant sources. CoSA's General Fund contributes \$43.6M. State and federal grant sources contribute \$59.4M. In November 2022, Metro Health was awarded a five-year Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Strengthening US Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce, and Data Systems grant for an amount up to \$25.5 million. These additional resources will enable Metro Health to expand its workforce and foundational public health capabilities, meet future public health needs, and address health disparities and inequities in our most vulnerable communities. Metro Health has aligned its strategic direction with CDC grant goals to better support department efforts.

Metro Health Staff

Metro Health's employees are diverse in skill, specialty, educational training, and age. Working across 39 programs and teams, Metro Health staff range from managers, analysts, and administrators to nurses, environmental health officers, health specialists, and community health workers. Three quarters of Metro Health employees are from a Hispanic/Latino background.

Staff members are engaged in a variety of professional activities in Texas and at a national level. They participate in workgroups and serve on the boards of large-scale public health organizations such as the American Public Health Association (APHA), National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC), Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB), the Texas Public Health Association, Texas Association of City and County Health Officials (TACCHO), Public Health Communications Collaborative, and the Bexar County Health Collaborative.

FROM ASSESSING COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS TO SETTING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

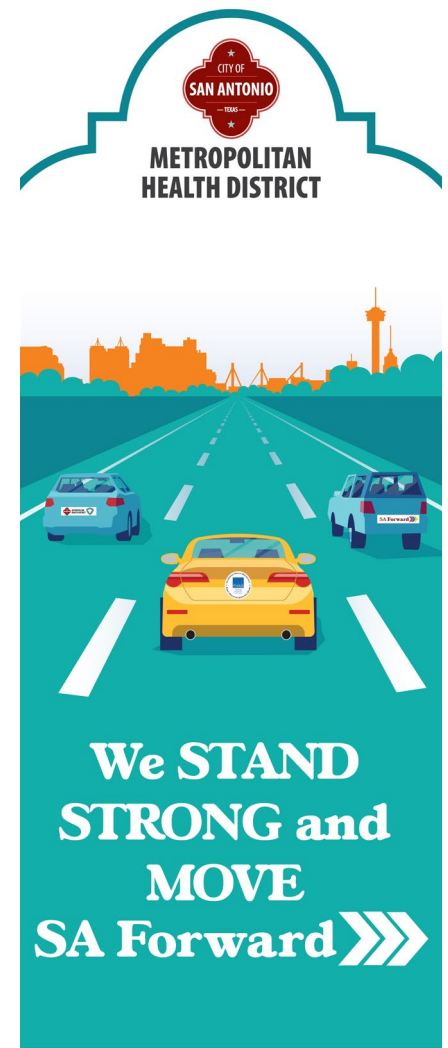
Racism as a Public Health Crisis and COVID-19

The way forward—led by the City’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Department and Metro Health’s Office of Health Equity—includes disaggregating data and promoting racially-equitable city services, programs, and policies. Metro Health takes the challenges facing San Antonio and Bexar County seriously. The department is committed to engaging and addressing these challenges through a coordinated and strategic approach. (See Appendix 3)

SA Forward

In 2022, Metro Health introduced its five-year SA Forward community blueprint. SA Forward addresses San Antonio/Bexar County’s most pressing health issues, aims to strengthen the local public health ecosystem, and intensifies Metro Health’s efforts to decrease social and racial disparities in health. SA Forward’s six priority areas include: **Access to Care, Data and Technology Infrastructure, Food Insecurity and Nutrition, Health Equity and Social Justice, Mental Health and Community Resilience, and Violence Prevention.**

Incorporating major lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic around health disparities, social justice, and public health capacity, Metro Health’s *SA Forward Plan* is an expansion of the 2019 strategic plan. To the priority areas identified in the 2019 plan, SA Forward adds Data and Technology Infrastructure, Health Equity and Social Justice, and Mental Health and Community Resilience. SA Forward also extends the 2019 plan’s Nutrition priority area to Food Insecurity and Nutrition. (See Appendices 4, 5, and 6)



BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Metro Health 2.0: the Engine of Transformative Change

With today's challenges, there is an increasing urgency for creative solutions and transformation within public health departments. The COVID-19 pandemic put a spotlight on the need for long-term investments in workforce development, public health infrastructure and modernization, and policy change so we can better address the root causes of health inequity. If SA Forward is the vehicle that transports us to a healthier and more equitable destination, Metro Health 2.0 is the engine that drives SA Forward.

Metro Health 2.0 guides our efforts to build the highly skilled and diverse workforce and to create the robust infrastructure required to respond to today's complex public health challenges. Metro Health 2.0 also builds our internal capacity to work more effectively with partners to change systems that have produced disproportionately poor health outcomes and unequally distributed social determinants of health in our community, particularly among those who have been most impacted by systemic oppression.

Strategic Planning Process

Using the National Association of County and City Health Officials' (NACCHO) *Developing a Local Health Department Strategic Plan: A How-To Guide* and *Strategic Planning Guide for Local Health Departments* as a guiding framework, Metro Health kicked off its strategic planning process in March 2022. Metro Health established a Metro Health 2.0 steering committee and core team consisting of executive leadership and leadership/subject matter expert staff respectively.

To ensure employee engagement throughout the strategic planning process, Metro Health invited a diverse group of frontline and mid-level staff to join the Metro Health 2.0 advisory team. These teams met as a group fifteen times over nine months to develop goals, objectives, and activities for each of Metro Health 2.0's six focus areas—**Community Engagement, Data and Information Technology, Financing, Partnerships, Public Health Law and Governance, and Workforce.** (See Appendix 7)



Metro Health 2.0 Road Trip

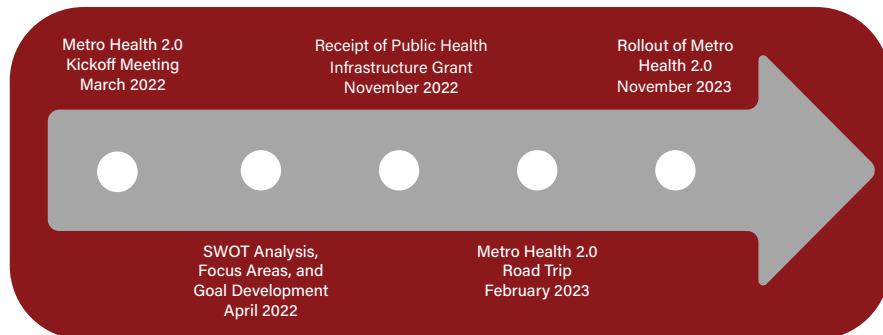
After completing an initial draft of this strategic plan, Metro Health, in February 2023, launched a four-part series of in-person employee events called the “Metro Health 2.0 Road Trip.” At each road trip stop, Metro Health’s director and executive leadership gathered additional feedback on the strategic plan through discussions and question and answer sessions. At the conclusion of the road trip series, staff were given the opportunity to provide input via survey. Feedback will be used to improve communication about the plan throughout the Metro Health 2.0 rollout process.



Metro Health 2.0 SharePoint

The department also launched a Metro Health 2.0 SharePoint site to give staff a one-stop, internal communications hub to enhance strategic plan-related and general department communications, while also encouraging cross-program collaboration. The Metro Health 2.0 SharePoint site connects staff, provides easy access to department-wide trainings, organizational charts, new hire orientation schedules, and much more. Monthly updates include the posting of a “topic of the month” in the SharePoint’s “Connection Section.” The monthly topic is designed to spark conversations, encourage idea sharing, and foster a culture of continuous quality improvement across Metro Health divisions and offices.

Metro Health 2.0 Planning Timeline



Alignment with Community Health Improvement Plan, Internal Plans, and Policies and Procedures

PHAB requires Metro Health (and all accredited health departments) to develop and maintain a library of key documents, including a strategic plan, a quality improvement plan, a workforce development plan, a health equity action plan, and a community health improvement plan (CHIP). Metro Health will apply for re-accreditation in December 2024. Metro Health 2.0 supports the department’s efforts in preparation for re-accreditation.

As part of the Metro Health 2.0 strategic planning process, the core team reviewed existing plans to ensure cross-departmental alignment with organizational/community goals and objectives, national frameworks, and PHAB accreditation standards. To ensure alignment with the 2017 *Healthy Bexar Plan* (CHIP), staff cross walked Metro Health 2.0 focus areas and CHIP priority areas. Metro Health will conduct a new Metro Health 2.0/CHIP crosswalk once the 2023 Bexar County CHIP is released.



The core team also reviewed internal policies and procedures as part of the department's strategic planning efforts. Metro Health’s Performance Improvement team will incorporate core team findings—such as gaps in alignment between Metro Health 2.0, PHAB *Standards and Measures*, national frameworks, and/or internal plans—into the department’s Quality Improvement Plan. Performance Improvement will engage in continuous strategic alignment activities to ensure the successful implementation of Metro Health 2.0’s six focus areas. (See Appendices 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12)

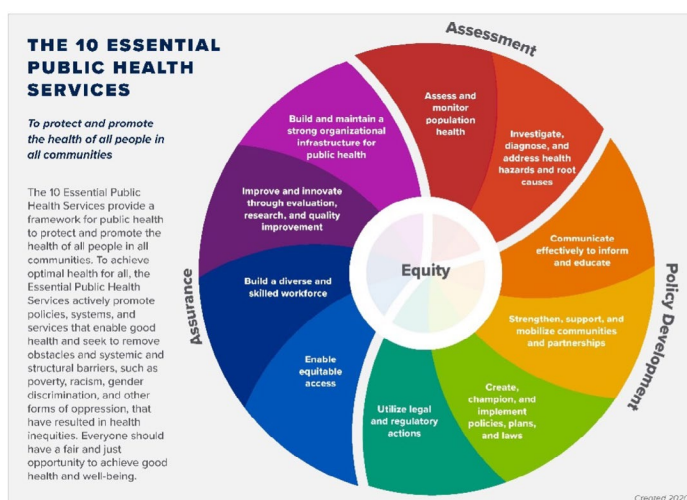
NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH FRAMEWORKS: THE ARCHITECTURE FOR METRO HEALTH'S TRANSFORMATION

Metro Health 2.0 is informed by a collection of national public health modernization strategies and frameworks. These include NACCHO's *Developing a Local Health Department Strategic Plan: A How To Guide*, The Bipartisan Policy Center's *Public Health Forward: Modernizing the U.S. Public Health System*, PHAB's *Standards and Measures for Reaccreditation*, Health and Human Service Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion's *Healthy People 2030* (See Appendix 13), Public Health National Center for Innovations' (PHNCI) *Foundational Public Health Services and Capabilities*, and the CDC's *10 Essential Public Health Services*.

The Bipartisan Policy Center's Public Health Forward: Modernizing the US Public Health System

Published in December 2021 by The Bipartisan Policy Center, *Public Health Forward: Modernizing the US Public Health System* defines a five-year vision for public health transformation. Public Health Forward recommends evidence-based actions and focus areas to guide policymakers and public health officials in their strategic investments and decision-making choices that seek to realize the vision of a modern, transformative, and equitable public health system. Metro Health 2.0's six focus areas are organized around The Bipartisan Policy Center's six priorities: **Community Engagement, Data and Information Technology, Financing, Partnerships, Public Health Law and Governance, and Workforce**. Metro Health 2.0 priority areas, objectives, and activities are presented in detail in Metro Health 2.0 Priority Areas (See Appendix 14)

CDC's 10 Essential Public Health Services (EPHS)



The CDC's *10 Essential Public Health Services* (EPHS) describe the public health activities that all communities should undertake. The EPHS provide a framework for public health to protect and promote the health of all people in all communities. To achieve equity, the EPHS promote policies, systems, and overall community conditions that enable optimal health for all and seek to remove systemic and structural barriers that have resulted in health inequities. Such barriers include poverty, racism, gender discrimination, ableism, and other forms of oppression. Everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to achieve optimal health and well-being.

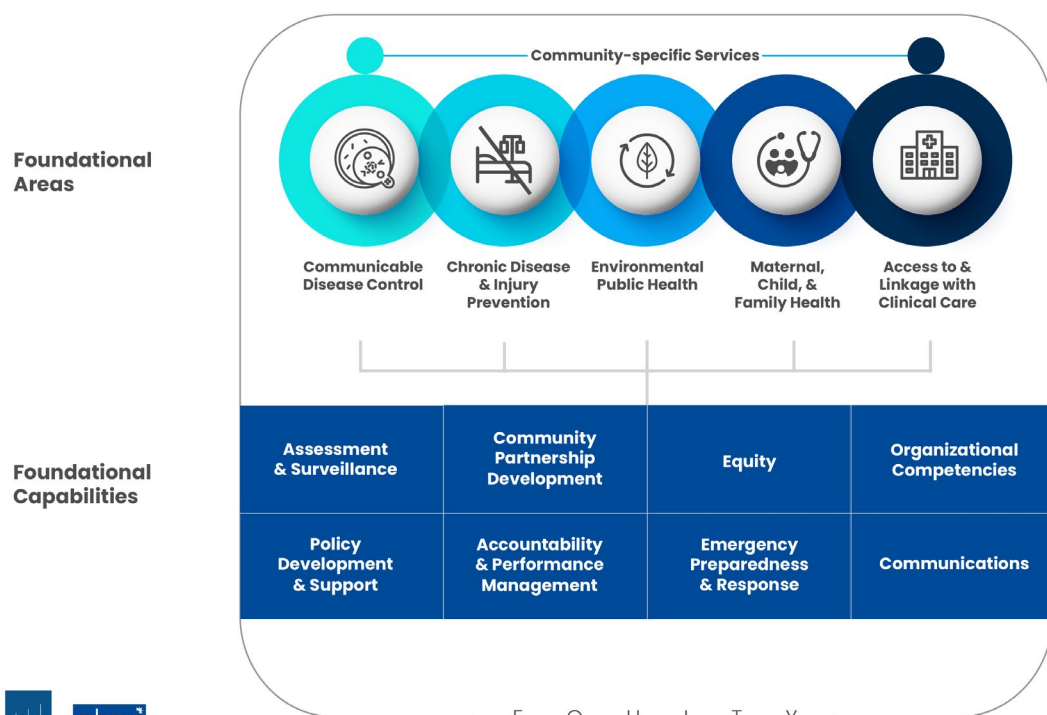
The 10 Essential Public Health Services include: 1.) Assess and monitor population health status, factors that influence health, and community needs and assets. 2.) Investigate, diagnose, and address health problems and hazards affecting the population. 3.) Communicate effectively to inform and educate people about health, factors that influence it, and how to improve it. 4.) Strengthen, support, and mobilize communities and partnerships to improve health. 5.) Create, champion, and implement policies, plans, and laws that impact health. 6.) Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public’s health. 7.) Assure an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy. 8.) Build and support a diverse and skilled public health workforce. 9.) Improve and innovate public health functions through ongoing evaluation, research, and continuous quality improvement. 10.) Build and maintain a strong organizational infrastructure for public health. (See Appendix 15)

PHNCI’s Foundational Public Health Services and Capabilities

Like all public health departments, Metro Health has a fundamental responsibility to provide public health protections and services in many areas, including preventing the spread of communicable disease; ensuring food, air, and water quality are safe; supporting maternal and child health; improving access to clinical care services; and preventing chronic disease and injury. PHNCI’s Foundational Public Health Services framework outlines the unique responsibilities of governmental public health entities and defines a minimum set of foundational areas and foundational capabilities and that must be available in every community.

Foundational Areas include core programs and services aimed at improving the health of the community. The five Foundational Areas are: communicable disease control, chronic disease and injury prevention, environmental public health, maternal, child, and family health, access to and linkage with care. Health departments require access to a wide range of critical data sources, robust laboratory capacity, preparedness and policy planning capacity, partnerships with community, and expert staff to leverage them in support of public health protections.

Foundational Public Health Services



Health departments require access to a wide range of critical data sources, robust laboratory capacity, preparedness and policy planning capacity, partnerships with community, and expert staff to leverage them in support of public health protections.

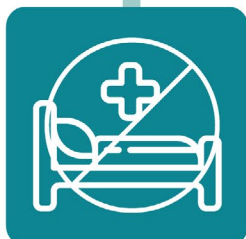
Foundational Capabilities consists of cross-cutting skills and capacities needed to support basic public health protections, programs, and activities key to ensuring community health, wellbeing and achieving equitable outcomes. The eight Foundational Capabilities that make up public health infrastructure are: Assessment and Surveillance, Community Partnership Development, Equity, Organizational Competencies, Policy Development and Support, Accountability and Performance Management, Emergency Preparedness and Response, and Communications. (See Appendix 16)

PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

- ✓ Assessment/Surveillance
- ✓ Community Partnership Development
- ✓ Equity
- ✓ Organizational Competencies
- ✓ Policy Development and Support
- ✓ Accountability/ Performance Management
- ✓ Emergency Preparedness and Response
- ✓ Communications



Communicable Disease Control



Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention



Environmental Public Health



Maternal, Child, and Family Health



Access to and Linkage with Clinical Care

METRO HEALTH 2.0 PRIORITY AREAS



FINANCING

Current State:

Metro Health's budget is approximately 33% City of San Antonio General Fund and 67% grant funding. In FY 2022, San Antonio City Council approved funding to implement SA Forward's six priority areas: **Access to Care, Data and Technology Infrastructure, Food Insecurity and Nutrition, Health Equity and Social Justice, Mental Health and Community Resilience, and Violence Prevention.** SA Forward, which is funded through the General Fund and grants, accounts for approximately 20% of Metro Health's budget. In November 2022, Metro Health was awarded a five-year CDC Strengthening US Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce, and Data Systems grant for an amount up to \$25.5 million. These additional resources will enable Metro Health to expand its workforce and foundational public health capabilities. Current challenges include sustaining initiatives and retaining staff who are funded through two- to three-year grant funding or through grants that are ending.

Future State:

Metro Health will continue to leverage General Fund and state/federal resources to maximize the impact of SA Forward, Metro Health 2.0, and other critical public health services. Metro Health will make data-driven decisions to sustain priority initiatives, staff levels and critical operational needs. Metro Health's fiscal team will ensure that opportunities for national foundation funding have been explored thoroughly. To expand internal capacity to secure additional resources, Metro Health will identify funding for grant writing training.

Goal 1:

Allocate funding to address gaps in core programs, to retain existing staff, and to dedicate resources for critical operational needs.

Goal 2:

Enhance fiscal management practices by consolidating and presenting standard operating procedures for fiscal processes and by implementing zero based budgeting.

Goal 3:

Enhance internal communication through a dashboard for the purpose of increasing internal connectedness and meeting established deliverables.



DATA AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Current State:

Metro Health offers in-person and online services, manages personal, operational, and environmental data, and purchases technology to deliver effective public goods and services. Metro Health has identified an organizational need for training on the most up-to-date data collection, management, analysis and sharing procedures in alignment with best practices and national frameworks and standards. The department has also identified a need for improved interoperability and collaboration between programs and recognizes that enhanced connectivity to Wi-Fi in certain areas of our community will improve the efficiency of service delivery.

Future State:

Metro Health will have a support team of experts to guide assessments, development, and implementation of data modernization initiatives and workplans across the department. Metro Health will move programs towards modernized, efficient, secure, and interoperable data systems, data collection pipelines, and data repositories, all while aiming for an enterprise-wide, cloud-based approach while allowing for the tailoring of data collection efforts when populations served do not have the means to utilize advanced technology. Annual assessments will inform and promote data collaborations with city, county, and state public health agencies. Training programs will be available across the spectrum of Metro Health's data and technology needs.

Goal 1:

Conduct a comprehensive assessment to understand how, what, and why data is collected across programs and to identify gaps and needs in data and technology infrastructure.

Goal 2:

Develop a department-wide plan to address gaps and needs identified, which may include training on development and use of metrics, data analytic and visualizations. Ensure compliance with the City of San Antonio's data governance directive regarding data storage and reporting practices across systems within the department.

Goal 3:

Implement the data and infrastructure modernization plan across programs in the department. This will focus on addressing barriers, building upon identified strengths, and enhancing capabilities.



WORKFORCE

Current State:

Metro Health has identified workforce training and development as a key part of its comprehensive quality improvement strategy during a period of record growth. Recent employee surveys, such as the 2021 Public Health Workforce, Interests and Needs Survey (PH WINS) and Metro Health's FY 2022 Employee Check-In Survey, have helped the department identify workforce needs. By strategically addressing these needs via targeted professional development, the department aims to increase staff proficiency, promote a culture of continuous learning, and recruit/retain a workforce that is representative of the diverse community it serves. As it develops strategies and goals to build a stronger, more resilient workforce, Metro Health is also cultivating partnerships necessary for building a more robust workforce pipeline and for positioning the department to become an academic health department.

Future State:

Metro Health will be better suited to meet workforce and community needs as it leads the way as a 21st century health department. Metro Health will thrive as an academic health department and will be viewed as a premier employer by public health students of all backgrounds. Metro Health staff—regardless of level, experience, or career stage--will be engaged, well trained highly skilled, and extremely knowledgeable about their role in our public health ecosystem. In the future state, Metro Health will continue to focus on workforce needs and will prioritize recruiting a diverse workforce—diversity understood expansively as reflective of the community we serve and inclusive of a wide range of skills, knowledge, experiences, ages, and educational backgrounds.

Goal 1:

Invest in the recruitment and retention of a diverse and inclusive public health workforce by formalizing partnerships with academic institutions.

Goal 2:

Implement a robust professional development training program that fosters a supportive working environment and gives staff the skills and knowledge needed to meet complex public health challenges.

Goal 3:

Work in collaboration with the CoSA's Human Resources department to improve recruitment, hiring, promotion, and retention policies and processes for the purpose of building a stronger, more resilient workforce.



PUBLIC HEALTH LAWS AND GOVERNANCE

Current State:

Policy—Metro Health’s Policy and Civic Engagement Office (PaCE) relies on coalition partners and City of San Antonio’s Government Affairs Department to flag policies and legislation that may be of interest or concern. Metro Health works through these partners to advocate for legislative and policy change. When community feedback is incorporated into legislative and policy recommendations, it generally comes from the grass tops rather than grass roots entities. **Communications**—Although Metro Health’s communications team has moved the needle on standardizing the department’s brand over the past two years, they could have a greater reach if a comprehensive, agency-wide communications strategy were implemented.

Future State:

Policy—Metro Health will have trained policy subject matter experts (SMEs) embedded in all Metro Health programs, offices, and divisions. These SMEs will function as a “network of advocates” who are in communication with the people most likely to be affected by specific legislative/policy decisions. The PaCE Office will continue to collaborate with community partners on advocacy plans that align strategically with their—and our—policy priorities. In the future state, public health’s role will remain intact, protected, and valued. **Communications**—a communications strategist will lead Metro Health’s efforts to inform and educate the community about public health and build trust with populations served. Metro Health programs will receive ongoing, cross-collaborative training to ensure the consistency of branding with CoSA and public health messaging.

Goal 1:

Advance Metro Health’s public policy agenda through policy analysis, coalition building, and engaging the legislative process.

Goal 2:

Support and clearly communicate the roles of public health departments to the public.



PARTNERSHIPS

Current State:

Metro Health recognizes that external partnerships can be strengthened through greater internal collaboration between Metro Health's community-oriented programs. Metro Health has also identified the need to incorporate health equity/social justice frameworks across programs, to standardize methods for managing collaborative relationships and engaging community members, and to set universal benchmarks and metrics for tracking and measuring the community impact of partnerships.

Future State:

Metro Health will have mechanisms in place to facilitate dialogue between department staff who do community partnership work and community partners. Staff and partners will see themselves as part of a broader health advocacy network with a shared vision for how to achieve systemic change that addresses conditions affecting population health. They will have protocols for data and information sharing within—and between—their collaboratives and will develop a strategic communications plan with adequate support for execution and sustainability. Metro Health and its partners will also pursue funding opportunities to support their collaborative work. Metro Health staff will take an integrated approach to public health advocacy and backbone support work in the department. This will require training resources specific to their backbone support role as well as shared metrics and benchmarks of success. Metro Health staff who manage community partnerships and strategic initiatives will adopt a health equity and social justice framework and will use theory of change models to guide strategic planning, decision making, and practice.

Goal 1:

Create new and expand existing external partnerships with an emphasis on ensuring sustainability.

Goal 2:

Generate funding to support work with community partners.

Goal 3:

Increase staff knowledge and skills for collaboration with partners, including coordination of partnership-building efforts across programs, offices, and divisions. Ensure that staff are equipped with the skills, time, and supports necessary to work effectively with external (and internal) partners.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Current State:

Metro Health's core community engagement activities include gathering input/feedback from community stakeholders to inform program planning and encouraging participation in surveys, focus groups, programs, services, and coalitions. Under SA Forward, Metro Health has increased its community engagement footprint through the establishment of a Community Health Worker Hub. Yet, Metro Health recognizes that opportunities remain for improving community engagement and inclusivity in organizational decision making and service delivery.

Future State:

Metro Health intends to develop a more systematic approach to bringing community members to the decision-making table and prioritize the recruitment of individuals and groups who have been historically silenced and excluded from decision-making processes. Metro Health also plans to compensate community stakeholders for the time, energy, expertise and lived experiences they bring to this work. Metro Health will also make capacity-building mini-grants available to grass roots organizations that address the social determinants of health and related health disparities. To engage diverse audiences, Metro Health will set aside funds for language interpretation services and multi-lingual materials and signage.

Goal 1:

Increase public awareness of Metro Health programs and services by empowering staff to serve as ambassadors in the community.

Goal 2:

Guide and support public-facing staff in the development of strategies/practices that engage community members in decision-making processes. Dedicate staff to long-term community engagement efforts.

Goal 3:

Ensure the systematic inclusion of community members in decision-making at Metro Health. Compensate community members and organizations for the time, expertise, and lived experiences they bring to planning and implementing health improvement strategies.

CENTERING HEALTH EQUITY IN METRO HEALTH 2.0

Metro Health will implement the *Metro Health 2.0 Strategic Plan* through a steering committee that is dedicated to working collaboratively to advance equity, to align efforts to disaggregate data, to remove barriers to accessing care, to promote ethical community engagement, to dismantle institutional and systemic racism, to build community power to change systems, to redistribute resources, to strengthen cross-sector partnerships to more effectively address social determinants of health, and to train Metro Health staff in developing and valuing a comprehensive equity approach to public health practice.

The Metro Health 2.0 steering committee will include staff from the Office of Health Equity, the Policy and Civic Engagement Office, the Access to Care Office, Informatics, and Performance Improvement. The committee will create an equity and inclusion framework that addresses the social determinants of health, systemic and institutional racism, data disaggregation, and community and partner engagement. Through an applied health equity lens, the steering committee will keep equity at the center of all activities. The committee will provide recommendations to Metro Health leadership on how to foster a culture of inclusion, collaboration, and strategic alignment across the department. Within the first six months of Metro Health 2.0's implementation, the steering committee will accomplish the following:

Goal 1:

Identify and recruit key staff from the Office of Health Equity, the Policy and Civic Engagement Office, the Access to Care Office, Informatics, and Performance Improvement to serve on the steering committee by November 30, 2023.

Goal 2:

Research and identify at least three frameworks to advance health equity within local public health practice in coordination with Metro Health's health equity consultant by March 31, 2024.

Goal 3:

Metro Health's executive leadership team will review and select a health equity framework for the department by April 30, 2024.

Goal 4:

Align workplans of offices that participate on the health equity framework steering committee by December 31, 2024.

REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION

The department will provide monthly updates on Metro Health 2.0's implementation. Performance Improvement will track updates in the department's Vision, Mission, Services, Goals (VMSG) performance management system. Workgroup leads will be responsible for entering updates into VMSG. Performance Improvement will submit progress reports to the executive leadership team. To ensure that goals and objectives are in alignment with the organization's needs, the department will evaluate Metro Health 2.0 annually. The department communicate with staff and stakeholders about Metro Health 2.0 on an ongoing basis. (See Table 1)

Table 1. Metro Health 2.0 Communication Schedule

Date/Frequency	Audience	Report Type
August 2023	Metro Health staff (All Staff Town Hall)	Department-Wide Roll Out
August 2023	City Council	Budget Presentation/Metro Health 2.0 Preview
October 2023	City Council B-Session	Full Presentation
November 2023	City Council	Progress Report
Bi-Monthly	Metro Health Supervisors	Progress Report
Monthly	Metro Health Staff	Newsletter Updates
Monthly	Metro Health Staff	Updates to Metro Health 2.0 Share-Point Site (Quarterly progress reports posted to site)

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The needs of Metro Health’s workforce are as diverse as our staff, programs, and initiatives. The successful implementation of the Metro Health 2.0 hinges on staff training and development activities that meet these diverse needs. Metro Health’s Workforce Development team identifies and analyzes staff needs through a continuous improvement lens.

During the Metro Health 2.0 planning process, Workforce staff facilitated discussions to identify training and skills gaps in each of the six workgroups—Financing, Data and Information Technology, Workforce, Public Health Laws and Governance, Partnerships, and Community Engagement. Several common, cross-cutting training needs emerged. By aligning trainings across diverse programs, Metro Health will be better equipped to address staff development needs. (See Table 2)

Table 2. Cross-Cutting Training Needs for Metro Health 2.0

Training/Skills Gap	Workgroup
CoSA Administrative Directives	Finance, PH Laws & Governance
Policy Development	Finance, Partnerships, PH Laws & Governance
Process Improvement	Finance, Comm. Engagement, Data & Info Tech, PH Laws & Governance
Equity (as a lens and tool)	Finance, Partnerships, PH Laws & Governance
Results Based Accountability	Finance, Partnerships, Data & Info Tech, Workforce
Quality Improvement	Finance, Comm. Engagement
Survey Development (question design, tools, data collection & interpretation)	Data & Info Tech, PH Laws & Governance, Workforce

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Metro Health Executive Leadership Team

Name	Title
Dr. Claude A. Jacob	Public Health Director
Dr. Anita K Kurian	Deputy Public Health Director
Dr. Junda Woo	Medical Director Local Health Authority
Jessie Higgins	Chief Mental Health Officer
Mario Martinez	Assistant Public Health Director
Morjoriee White	Assistant Public Health Director

Metro Health 2.0 Core Team

Name	Title	Focus Area
Amanda Manzello	Performance Improvement Manager	Workforce/Support
Carlos Rodriguez	Public Health Administrator	Community Engagement/ Partnerships
Claryssa Cortez	Public Health Administrator	Workforce/Support
Deirdre Murphy	Assistant to the Director	Public Health Laws & Governance
Duncan Brown	Department Fiscal Administrator	Financing
Dr. Golareh Agha	Chief of Informatics	Data & Information Technology
Jerry Trevino	Public Health Administrator	Support
Julie Sandoval	Public Health Administrator	Financing
Dr. Junda Woo	Medical Director Local Health Authority	Public Health Laws & Governance
Kathy Shields	Public Health Administrator	Community Engagement
Laura Lozano	Consultant, WHY Group	Support
Leticia Callanen	Special Projects Manager	Data & Information Technology
Dr. Maciel Ugalde	Senior Management Coordinator	Data & Information Technology/ Support
Patricia Kittle	Performance Improvement Manager	Workforce
Dr. Peter Stranges	Health Program Manager	Support
Dr. Rita Espinoza	Chief of Epidemiology	Data & Information Technology
Sean Greene	Public Health Administrator	Partnerships
Sian Elmore	Public Health Administrator	Community Engagement
Sonia Gonzales	Marketing Manager	Public Health Laws & Governance
Wendy Casey	Training and Development Coordinator	Workforce

Metro Health 2.0 Advisory Team

Name	Title	Focus Area
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Alondra Morales	Health Program Specialist II	Partnerships
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Employee Engagement Ambassadors		Workforce
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Justin Pelayo	Fiscal Manager	Financing
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Maria Buck	Project Manager	Data & Information Technology
Morgan Montalvo	Community Health Worker	Public Health Laws & Governance
Nadia Gaona	Community Health Worker Supervisor	Partnerships
Paloma Marin-Harris	Health Program Specialist I	Workforce
Ryan Davis	Sanitarian I	Data & Information Technology/ Support
Stacy Maines	Public Health Administrator	Workforce
Valarie Crawford	Fiscal Manager	Financing
Yvonne Puente	Senior Management Analyst	Data & Information Technology
Zita Powell	Workforce Development Analyst	Data & Information Technology

APPENDICES

[Appendix 1: Metro Health Organizational Chart](#)

[Appendix 2: PHAB Letter of Accreditation](#)

[Appendix 3: City of San Antonio Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis](#)

[Appendix 4: Bexar County and Atascosa County Community Health Needs Assessment Report](#)

[Appendix 5: Metro Health 2019 Strategic Plan](#)

[Appendix 6: SA Forward Blueprint](#)

[Appendix 7: Metro Health Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats \(SWOT\)](#)

[Analysis Results](#)

[Appendix 8: 2017 Healthy Bexar Plan](#)

[Appendix 9: Metro Health 2.0/2017 Healthy Bexar Plan Crosswalk](#)

[Appendix 10: Metro Health Quality Improvement Plan](#)

[Appendix 11: Metro Health Workforce Development Plan](#)

[Appendix 12: Metro Health Equity Action Plan](#)

[Appendix 13: Health and Human Service Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#)

[Healthy People 2030](#)

[Appendix 14: The Bipartisan Policy Center's Public Health Forward: Modernizing the U.S.](#)

[Public Health System](#)

[Appendix 15: CDC 10 Essential Public Health Services](#)

[Appendix 16: PHNCI Foundational Public Health Services Framework](#)