Montgomery County Health Department

Strategic Plan 2018-2021

The mission of the Montgomery County Health Department is to provide high-quality public health services to individuals and families in Montgomery County.



Executive Summary

Introduction

The Montgomery County Health Department Strategic Plan describes the agency's operational framework and key priority areas for the years 2018 through 2021. Through a collaborative process involving Health Department staff, partnering agencies, organizations, and community members, health priorities have been identified for the county. The Strategic Plan outlines the Montgomery County Health Department's commitment to focus on these areas while still meeting the operational goals of the agency. Montgomery County is a very rural county where resources are scarce. Although the Montgomery County Health Department takes the lead in many of the goals outlined in this report, a successful outcome is only achieved through the collaboration of agencies, organizations, and committees working together toward these common goals.

Planning Process

Members of the Montgomery County Health Department Management Team and the Montgomery County Board of County Commissioners acting as the Board of Health collaborated to define a planned approach toward mitigating the key concerns outlined in this plan. When considering the development of the Strategic plan, the group focused on the following questions:

- What has the community identified as public health concerns in the county?
- What do state and local statistics indicate are county health concerns?
- What are the health priorities chosen for the county?
- Does the Montgomery County Health Department have the capacity to improve the health of the community?
- What strategies will be used to focus our efforts on meeting these priorities? Who will be responsible for the implementation of these strategies? What is the associated timeline for these goals?

Priority Health Issues

At the conclusion of the Strategic Planning process, the team formally adopted the following as Priority Health Issues on which to focus their work during the 2018-2021 years:

- 1) Diabetes/Obesity Prevention and Control
- 2) Teen Pregnancy Prevention
- 3) Substance Abuse Prevention and Reduction (including Opioids, Alcohol, & Tobacco)
- 4) Sustained Delivery of High-Quality Public Health Services
- 5) Quality Improvement and Performance
- 6) Client Recruitment and Retention

Summary

As is the case with most counties in North Carolina, it is evident that the Montgomery County Health Department cannot address the priorities identified without the collaboration of many partnering agencies. It is imperative that the Health Department focuses its direct services on high quality, effective practices while pursuing appropriate modifications in service delivery and expansion. Perhaps most importantly, the agency will also serve as a catalyst to stimulate collaborative interventions in the community among various partners. It is our desire that by sharing our strategic plan with governing bodies, businesses, nonprofits, citizens, residents and others, we can create common ground and collaborate for improvement in these significant health issues that affect the health of the public.

MCHD Operational Framework

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Montgomery County Health Department is to provide high-quality public health services to individuals and families in Montgomery County.

Vision Statement:

Reducing health disparities to improve personal and public health in Montgomery County through education, diagnosis, treatment and surveillance.

Core Values:

- **Integrity-** fostering honesty and respect in dealing with ourselves and others; striving for equity and building trust
- Quality- continuously seeking to enhance the value of our services and processes
- **Service-** striving to meet the diverse needs of our many internal and external customers with creativity and commitment
- **Collaboration-** communicating and working together for the overall good of the team, organization, customer and community.
- Accountability- valuing fiscal and programmatic integrity; practicing good stewardship

Guiding Principles

The Montgomery County Health Department strives to meet the following principles (1) Become accredited and maintain accreditation standards, (2) Utilize "best practice" in implementing public health initiatives, (3) Recruit, develop and retain a well-qualified staff, (4) Seek private and public funding sources to support and improve services, (5) Be fiscally responsible, (6) Improve residents' health outcomes and quality of life, (7) Prepare to respond to a public health emergency or disaster, and (8) Serve as a health information resource for the community.

Ten Essential Public Health Services

The ten essential public health services relate to the three core functions of public health which are assessment, policy development, and assurance. The ten essentials are as follows: (1) Monitor health status to identify community health problems; (2) Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community; (3) Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues; (4) Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems; (5) Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts; (6) Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety; (7) Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility and quality of personal population-based health services; (8) Research for new insights and solutions to health problems; (9) Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care otherwise unavailable; and (10) Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce.

Local Health Data

2016 Montgomery Community Health Assessment:

In 2016, the Montgomery County Health Department partnered with the FirstHealth 2020 Vision Committee to complete a Community Health Assessment. Primary data was collected from the community through the Community Health Opinion Survey tool which was developed in partnership between FirstHealth and the Montgomery County Health Department. This survey was distributed by paper and electronic mechanisms. Secondary data was gathered from local, state, and regional statistics from various sources.

- 2016 Montgomery County Community Health Opinion Survey- Primary data for the Montgomery County Community Health Assessment was collected in September 2016 using a convenience sample. Electronic surveys were sent out via Survey Monkey and groups were asked to forward to friends, family, and business associates living in Montgomery County. Paper surveys were collected at daycares, restaurants, church gatherings, doctors' offices, beauty salons, barber shops, banks, pharmacies, and other local businesses. All paper surveys were hand-entered into Survey Monkey to allow for a combined analysis of paper and electronic surveys. The sampling method yielded 1,443 respondents, including representation from all five towns in the county.
- **Secondary Data** The major source for secondary data in the Montgomery County Community Health Assessment and the Strategic Plan included:
 - North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics
 - NC Detect
 - Shift NC
 - FirstHealth School Based Health Center
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - NC High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Health Concerns Identified through the Montgomery Community Health Assessment (2016)

Montgomery County Community Health Opinion Survey	Secondary Data
 Obesity/Overweight 	 Cancer- All Sites
 Cancer 	 Heart Disease
 Diabetes 	 Chronic Lower
 High Blood Pressure 	Respiratory Disease
 Aging Problems 	 Alzheimer's Disease
 Heart Disease/Heart 	 Stroke
Attacks	 Diabetes Mellitus
Teen Pregnancy	 Unintentional Injuries
 Mental Health 	 Flu/Pneumonia
 Sexually Transmitted 	 Motor Vehicle Injuries
Disease	 Kidney Disease
 Dental Health 	
Motor Vehicle Accidents	

Capacity to Improve Health

A review and analysis of the factors of Montgomery County Health Department that impact the delivery of services to the community was conducted by the Management Team in November of 2017. Identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats was made by Health Department employees, the Montgomery County Board of County Commissioners acting as the Board of Health and Health Department clients through client satisfaction surveys. The results have been combined from all groups and are shown in the table below.

Strongtho	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Strengths Knowledgeable staff Many employees with experience and longevity Provide good clinical services Good community partners Go above & beyond to get patients answers Provide holistic care Sliding-fee scale Walk-in appointments available Teamwork Good relationships with the public Amount of education patients are receiving Ability to offer ultrasounds to maternity patients on-site Service integration Nutrition education & breastfeeding support Staff desire to improve public's health	Small, outdated facility with cold building temperatures Lack of funds & resources Efficiency Length of visit Stigma of health department Staff training Inconsistent phone system Limited space to hold classes Inability to use social media to promote services Lack of adequate salaries Lots of paperwork Not accepting all forms of insurance Not much work on managing chronic disease No full-time provider Transportation issues	Training and interpersonal skills Team building Increase knowledge on Electronic Health Records Data collection Grant funding Educate partners and community members about public health Increase awareness of public health issues and health department services Building updates Keeping up with technology Using social media Expand community collaborations Recruit patients Hire well-qualified staff Expanding hours of operation Mobile vans for certain services	Decreased funding Loss of skilled personnel Building temperature may cause clients not to come back Decreased program participation Time-consuming process to get through Technology changes Community perception of HD Electronic efficiency Program elimination Low patient numbers Community care centers Overworked staff School health centers Private providers

Selection of Health Priorities

As part of the 2016 Community Health Assessment, a priority-setting session was held in December of the same year. Representatives from the local hospital, health department, social services, school system, community, and various other county agencies and organizations participated in the session and identified (1) adult and childhood obesity and diabetes, (2) teen pregnancy, and (3) substance abuse as priority health issues for Montgomery County. For further information on the priority setting session, please refer to the 2016 Community Health Assessment which can be accessed on the Montgomery County website at the following address: www.montgomerycountync.com.

In the fall of 2017, members of the Montgomery County Health Department Management Team reviewed the health priorities identified through the Community Health Assessment process, client surveys and employee surveys. The groups discussed these priorities and their commitment to the provision of the 10 Essential Public Health Services, indicating that they must always be a primary focus of the department. The groups reviewed the SWOT analysis to determine the ability of the agency to mitigate change in priority areas. Taking into consideration the commitment to (1) provide high-quality public health services in all program areas (2) operate under the core values and guiding principles adopted by the agency and (3) ensure the provision of the ten essential public health services, the Management Team endorsed the following six priority areas for 2018-2021:

- 1) Diabetes/Obesity Prevention and Control
- 2) Teen Pregnancy Prevention
- 3) Substance Abuse Prevention (Including Opioids, Alcohol, and Tobacco)
- 4) Sustained Delivery of High-Quality Public Health Services
- 5) Quality Improvement and Performance
- 6) Client Recruitment and Retention

Especially in light of the current economic environment, and faced with the burden of loss of key staff members, it is evident that the Montgomery County Health Department cannot address the priorities identified without the collaboration of many partnering agencies. Financial stress is not unique to the Health Department or even to Montgomery County as a whole; most of the county's businesses, agencies and organizations have been faced with economic trial. Although the economic crisis could be a death blow to a rural county that is already struggling, it has also provided an opportunity to form more effective partnerships and share resources to maximize the impact of services offered throughout the county by a variety of organizations.

Obesity Prevention and Reduction for Adults and Children

OBJECTIVE	Decrease the proportion of adults and children who are overweight or obese and reduce diabetes prevalence.
OUTCOME	By December 2021, there will be a decrease in adult overweight and obesity in Montgomery County by 3%, for a rate of 67% (as shown in the data collected in the Research Consultant Survey). By December 2021, there will be a decrease in childhood overweight and obesity by 5%, for a rate of 42%. Additionally, the percentage of adults in Montgomery County with diabetes will decrease by 2%.
BASELINE DATA	According to the 2015/2016 Professional Research Consultant Survey, the current adult overweight and obesity rate is 70.1%. Montgomery County School Nurses collected Body Mass Index information on every student (Pre-K through 12 th grade) in the public school system in 2015/2016. According to the data gathered, the childhood overweight/obesity rate is 47%. In 2013, the Centers for Disease Control indicated that Montgomery County has a diagnosed diabetes percentage of 12.5 and the diabetes mortality rate of 39.9.

STRATEGIES	OUTCOME	COMMUNITY PARTNERS' Roles and Responsibilities	TIME FRAME
MARCHES (Montgomery Active Recreation through Community- Healthcare Engagements)	5 th -8 th grade children who have BMIs in the 85 th percentile or greater will be referred to this program. Teaching children and their families how to increase their physical activity levels and healthy eating habits will work towards decreasing overweight/obesity rates.	FirstHealth is leading this program in collaboration with the Montgomery County Health Department, Cooperative Extension, and Montgomery County School-Based Health Centers and Schools. Partners will be involved in the planning, recruitment, implementation, and evaluation.	January 2018- TBD
Healthy Vending & Healthy Corner Stores	Healthy vending options will be implemented in at least five businesses or organizations and at least one corner store will adopt healthy food options. This will work towards increasing healthy eating in individuals.	FirstHealth, the Montgomery County Health Department, and the 2020 Vision Task Force will be responsible for planning and implementing these initiatives.	Ongoing
Educational Outreach/Event	At least one educational outreach or event will be planned every year to promote healthy eating and increasing physical activity levels and show the importance of these habits on an individual's health.	The Montgomery County Health Department will be responsible for planning and implementing this outreach/event. This could also be done in collaboration with any community partners, including those on the 2020 Vision Task Force.	Annually
Built Environment Expansion for the Daily Mile Program	All elementary schools in Montgomery County will have a 0.2 or 0.25 mile walking trail created on the school campus to promote increasing physical activity levels for students. These trails will be open to the public to increase their physical activity levels as well.	FirstHealth is leading this strategy in collaboration with the 2020 Vision Task Force to plan and create these trails.	Ongoing

have a 5-7% weight loss, improved blood glucose levels, and for supporting recruitment and promotion efforts.	FirstReach Pre- Diabetes Program	Individuals with pre-diabetes glucose levels will be referred to this program and the goal is to	FirstHealth is responsible for program planning and implementation and the 2020 Vision Task Force members are responsible	Ongoing
increased minutes of physical activity by the end of the program.		blood glucose levels, and increased minutes of physical		

Priority 2:

Teen Pregnancy Prevention

OBJECTIVE	Reduce the number of teens in Montgomery County becoming pregnant.	
OUTCOME	By December 2021, the teen pregnancy rate in Montgomery County will be reduced by 10%.	
BASELINE DATA	According to the ShiftNC, the 2016 Montgomery County teen pregnancy rate is 45.5 (aged 15-19) per 1,000. Montgomery County is ranked 10 th in the state for teen pregnancies.	

STRATEGIES	OUTCOME	COMMUNITY PARTNERS' Roles and Responsibilities	TIME FRAME
Family Planning Outreaches	At least two outreaches will be conducted each year to educate youth and adults about the importance of teen pregnancy prevention and family planning services. By raising awareness about the extent of teen pregnancy prevalence, and by educating youth and adults on community resources available to help offset the problem, this outreach will help to lower the teen pregnancy rate.	Montgomery County Health Department will coordinate with the 2020 Vision Task Force and Montgomery County Schools to promote teen pregnancy prevention messages and family planning services. These outreaches could be conducted in a variety of ways, including exhibiting at a health fair, giving a presentation, sending out flyers/brochures, news articles, etc.	Bi-Annually
Teen Pregnancy Prevention Intervention	At least one teen pregnancy intervention will be implemented every year. Only evidence-based programs will be considered for implementation.	The 2020 Vision Task Force will collaborate with the Montgomery County Schools' Teen Pregnancy Task Force, the Health Advisory Board, the School Health Advisory Board, and the Health Department to seek funding for, plan and implement other intervention projects.	Annually

Priority 3:

Substance and Prescription Abuse Prevention and Reduction

OD IFOTIVE	Decrease substance abuse of all types, including
OBJECTIVE	opioids, tobacco, and alcohol.
OUTCOME	By December 2021, decrease the number of youth and adults who report consuming alcohol, using illicit drugs, or misusing prescription drugs.
BASELINE DATA	NC High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2015) indicates that 29.2% of youth report currently drinking alcohol, 22.3% report currently using marijuana, 13.1% currently smoke cigarettes, and 17.9% report having taken prescription drugs without a prescription. According to NC Detect in 2016, there were 38 unintentional medication/drug overdoses, 4 heroin overdoses, 80 medication/drug overdoses, and 7 opioid overdoses.

STRATEGIES	OUTCOME	COMMUNITY PARTNERS' Roles and Responsibilities	TIME FRAME
Educational Outreach	At least one educational outreach will be conducted every year to educate individuals about the dangers and negative health effects of substance abuse which will lead to decreases in substance abuse in Montgomery County.	The Montgomery County Health Department will collaborate with the Montgomery County Substance Abuse Task Force and Montgomery County Schools to plan, promote, and implement an event or outreach.	Annually
Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14	At least 10 families will be educated on positive parenting techniques and skill development to make healthy choices by abstaining from substance use. By improving relationships and positive feelings between youth and parents the goal is to lower rates of alcohol and drug usage in youth.	NC Cooperative Extension will be the lead agency and will be planning, recruiting, promoting, implementing, and leading the program in collaboration with the Montgomery County Health Department.	2018-2019
Community-Based Medication Disposal Program (Permanent Drop Boxes)	At least one permanent, locked drop box will be installed in at least two of the four remaining municipalities of the county currently without a drop box (Troy has one) which will lead to decreases in substance abuse in Montgomery County.	The 2020 Vision Committee and the Montgomery County Substance Abuse Task Force will work with the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office to secure permanent, locked, drop boxes where people can dispose of their prescription medications. This intervention will be marketed through newspapers, partner websites, and word of mouth.	January 2018- December 2021

Priority 4:

Sustained Delivery of High-Quality Public Health Services

OBJECTIVE	Services at the Montgomery County Health Department.	
OUTCOME	Ninety percent of clients completing the "Client Satisfaction Survey" will indicate satisfaction with the services received at the Montgomery County Health Department and all state program audits will be completed satisfactorily.	

STRATEGIES	OUTCOME	Polos and Posnonsibilities	TIME FRAME
Customer and Community Surveys	Health Department clients will be surveyed twice per year and community members/partners will be surveyed annually to determined service improvement needs.	Roles and Responsibilities Nursing Director will develop and evaluate the client surveys. All staff members will administer the survey to clients during survey weeks. Health Education Supervisor will develop, administer and evaluate the community member/partner survey. All survey results will be discussed during QI team meetings and Management Team	Biannually for Client Surveys Annually for Community Members/Partners
Audits	Monthly internal audits of all programs offered at the Health Department will be conducted to ensure program compliance. State audits will be conducted every two years.	meetings. Audit Chairperson will provide audit materials and facilitate the audit. Program coordinators will report findings to the affected disciplines and send results to the QI coordinator. Program heads will participate in every internal audit of their program. Staff members will rotate audit responsibility to ensure that the program head, audit chairperson, and four other employees complete the monthly audits.	Ongoing Internal Monthly Audits
Recruitment and retention of highly qualified staff	Highly qualified staff will be in place to implement programs and services.	Health Director and Supervisors will follow the recruitment and retention policies to recruit and retain a skilled staff. Management Team will ensure positive employees relations among all staff through the conducting of an annual Employee Satisfaction Survey to measure changes in employee morale and the establishment of departmental awards to encourage employees to suggest improvements in productivity, training and employee performance.	Ongoing
Implement a Culture of Service	All Montgomery County Public Health services will be delivered with a patient-centered focus.	Management team will review bi-annual client satisfaction surveys and annual community surveys and discuss a plan to focus on any problem areas, concerns, or suggestions for improvement that arise during the surveys.	Ongoing
Ensure that Clinic Staff and/or a Provider is Available During All Clinics	Clinic staff and/or a provider will always be available during clinic hours, ensuring easiest access to care.	The Health Director will work with the Nursing Supervisor to make certain that all clinics are covered and staffed accordingly.	Ongoing

Priority 5:

Quality Improvement and Performance

OBJECTIVE	performance.	
OUTCOME	Health Department clinics and programs will be improved for maximum efficiency and employee job performance will demonstrate mastery of public health core competencies and team-building attitudes.	

STRATEGIES	OUTCOME	Roles and Responsibilities	TIME FRAME
Quality Improvement Committee	The Quality Improvement committee will continue to meet quarterly to review services and complaints, suggest corrective action plans to mitigate these concerns, and oversee the implementation of the plans.	The Health Director will appoint a Committee Coordinator and recruit staff members to serve on the committee. The Committee Coordinator will share results of the meetings in the next scheduled Management Team meeting. Meeting results include all items brought up as concern and the QI Committee's position on mitigating those concerns. Management Team staff will consider the recommendations of the committee and will ultimately determine how to best address identified concerns.	Quarterly
Incorporate Team- Building Activities	Management Team and Staff will participate in at least one teambuilding activity. This will work to strengthen positive relationships between staff and increase employee morale.	The Health Director and Management Team will plan a team-building activity.	Ongoing
Review and Update Evaluation Form	The employee evaluation form will be reviewed and updated to reflect public health competencies.	The Health Director and Management Team will review and update the evaluation forms.	Ongoing
Incorporate Public Health Core Competencies into the Performance Evaluation/Job Description Process	A job competency checklist will be created and implemented in combination with the annual performance evaluation process and included in job descriptions as they are updated and created.	Management Team and Supervisors will develop the checklist and incorporate them.	Ongoing
Develop Individual Work Plans	Employees will have plans to guide their work toward achieving the duties outlined in their job descriptions.	During the annual job evaluation process, employees and supervisors will meet to discuss the expected job duties for the following year and develop a written plan to meet those duties. This plan may include opportunities for workforce development, training needs, additional funding, partnership building, and other needs as indicated.	Annually during Performance Appraisals

Priority 6:

Revenue Enhancement/ Client Recruitment and Retention

	To enhance revenues, lower costs, and	
OBJECTIVE	recruit and retain clients.	
OUTCOME	The Montgomery County Health Department will operate within a budget that is approved by the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners acting as the Board of Health and County Manager.	

STRATEGIES	OUTCOME	Roles and Responsibilities	TIME FRAME
Assure that staff are coding procedures correctly	Reimbursement will increase by at least 2% per year.	Nursing Supervisor will make sure that appropriate staff understands the ICD-10 codes through training and reminders. Clerical Supervisor will work with clerical and billing staff to notify providers when codes are omitted or are not typical of the procedure.	Ongoing
Conduct a Coding Audit	At least one provider coding audit will be performed to ensure the provider is coding correctly.	The Clerical Supervisor and Nursing Supervisor will work together to schedule this coding audit.	Ongoing
Debt Set Off Program	All clients who are delinquent with outstanding balances of greater than or equal to \$50.00 are entered into the Debt Set-off program.	Clerical Supervisor will work with billing staff to regularly monitor client balances and ensure adherence with the Debt Set-off policy.	Ongoing
Seek Grant Funding	At least one grant will be sought annually to assist in the implementation of public health programs not covered by state and local funding.	Health Education Supervisor will work with any department staff to prepare and submit grant applications as necessary.	Ongoing
Increase Public Awareness of Health Department Services	At least two public awareness events will be conducted annually.	Health Education staff will host annual health promotion events, partner with other agencies to reach underserved populations and regularly promote health department services through brochures, presentations, news articles, county website and other media.	Ongoing

Next Steps

DISSEMINATION

Copies of the Montgomery County Health Department Strategic Plan will be disseminated to all key stakeholders including members of the Montgomery Board of Commissioners acting as the Board of Health and all partners identified in the plan. The Strategic Plan will be made available to the public by accessing it online at www.montgomerycountync.com. Printed copies of the plan will be available upon request by contacting the Montgomery County Health Department.

ANNUAL REVIEW AND UPDATE

The current Strategic Plan outlines the department's goals and priorities for the years 2018-2021. This plan will be reviewed and updated annually by Montgomery Health Department staff and the Montgomery Board of Commissioners acting as the Board of Health.

CERTIFICATION

The signatures below certify that the Montgomery County Health Department Strategic Plan has been reviewed by the Montgomery County Health Director and Management Team, as well as the Montgomery Board of Commissioners acting as the Board of Health, and has been formally adopted for implementation during the fiscal years of 2018-2021.

Montgomery County Health Director	Date	
Chairman Montgomery BOCC acting as BOH	Date	
Chairman, Montgomery BOCC acting as BOH	Date	