

# NEW HAMPSHIRE HEALTH OFFICER'S ASSOCIATION

## 5-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

2023-2028



Developed in Collaboration with the  
NH Department of Health & Human Services  
Division of Public Health Service  
Health Officer Liaison Program

Authored by

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## “A plan without action is a dream, action without a plan is a nightmare”

### BACKGROUND

In 2022, the Board of Directors for the New Hampshire Health Officers Association (NHHOA) saw the necessity to develop a strategic action plan that included clear goals and objectives with specific activities to strengthen the organization and define a vision for moving forward. Members of the Board of Directors included

- Wayne Whitford, President, Newbury Health Officer;
- Brian Lockard, Vice President Salem Health Officer;
- Denise DeBlois, Treasurer, Deputy Health Officer Allenstown;
- Gwen Williams, Secretary, Health Officer Concord, and members;
- Ronald Beard, Lincoln Fire Chief
- Heidi Peek-Kukulka, Nashua Health Officer
- James Murray, Exeter Health Officer
- Rene Beaudoin, Nashua Deputy Health Officer
- Ron Eisenhart, Allenstown Health Officer.

With assistance from the State of New Hampshire, Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services (DPHS), Health Officer Liaison Program (HOLU), in February 2023, the strategic planning process began. Using Beverly Baer Drouin, DPHS Section Administrator and Sophia Johnson, DPHS Health Officer Liaison as facilitators, between February and April 2023, four independent meetings were held that included a total of 17 participants. Additionally, survey data was collected from an additional 28 people.

To solicit input from members of the board, an independent session was held that involved five of the nine members of the Board of Directors. Input from the remaining four members was solicited by way of survey monkey. Individual sessions were held with each of the organization’s two vendors; Nancy Kilbride, Events Your Way and Natch Greyes, Esq., NH Municipal Association.

To solicit input from active members of the organization, a virtual planning session was conducted, with twelve participating Health Officers that included:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Pamela Fortner, Health Officer Swanzey         | • Jeremy Boston, Health Officer Newington |
| • Michael McGuire, Health Officer Windham        | • Rob Deschenes, Health Officer Jaffrey   |
| • Carol Ann Rocheleau Health Officer Fitzwilliam | • Steve Yanuzzi, Health Officer Newport   |
| • Leigh Hayes, Health Officer Lebanon            | • Tim Herlihy NHBOA, Health Officer       |
| • Paul Branscombe, Health Officer New Boston     | Peterborough                              |
| • Liam Ehrenzweig, Health Officer Enfield        |   |

To ensure that the facilitators captured feedback from members of the organization that were unable to attend the virtual planning session, input was collected through a survey monkey, in which ten Health



Officers provided feedback. Unfortunately, IP Addresses for those that participated in this survey did not identify the names of specific Health Officers that responded to the survey monkey.

Finally, the facilitators were interested in feedback from Health Officers across the State that were not members of the NHHOA. To solicit their input, a survey monkey was used to collect feedback in which twenty-five Health Officers responded. Again, IP Addresses do not specifically identify the names of Health Officers that responded.

In each of these meetings, the facilitators walked participants through a series of questions designed to engage them in meaningful small group discussion and to capture participant’s thoughts and opinions. These same questions were asked through the survey monkeys used, though respondents did not have the benefit of small group discussion.

The questions that were asked during the planning sessions and through the survey monkeys included:

- It’s five years from today and we have created an awesome organization – please describe it.
- What is the value to a Health Officer in joining this organization?
- Who do we serve?
- How do we do this?
- What are the organization’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?

The facilitators collected everyone’s feedback, entering it later into a ‘word cloud’ software that graphically depicts the most popular answers to each of the questions. In a word cloud, the larger the font size, the higher the value people placed on that item. If participants provided feedback on a particular question with answers that were similar in nature (e.g. training, professional development, education), the author took the liberty of consolidating these similar answers into one word (training) for the purposes of the work cloud.

## QUESTION 1 - WHAT IS OUR VISION?

Question #1 that was asked of participants was, **“It’s five years from today and we have created an awesome organization –describe it”**. This exercise allowed participants to ‘dream build’ and the outcome resulted in a vision of an organization with strong leadership and robust membership that valued professional development, data collection, policy development, and the certification and professionalism of its members.



## QUESTION 2 – WHAT IS THE VALUE IN JOINING THIS ORGANIZATION?

The second question that was asked of participants was “**What the value to Health Officers in joining this organization?**” This question prompted participants to consider what they valued in being a member of the organization. A common theme ran through all feedback that indicated that members valued the professionalism that being a NHHOA member brought to their position. They valued networking opportunities, real time communication, professional development and being represented at the State legislator.



## QUESTION 3 - WHO DO WE SERVE?

The third question asked of participants was, “**Who does the organization serve?**” Feedback revealed that Health Officers focused on serving those that not only reside in their local communities, but those that worked, played or traveled through their community. Participants felt that they served the industries they regulate (e.g. childcare, restaurants, schools) and their professional colleagues within their local municipal government (e.g. fire chief, police chief, select board). Feedback was also received that Health Officer’s felt that they serve State agencies that include New Hampshire Departments of Health and Human Services, Environmental Services and Education.



## QUESTION 4 - HOW DO WE FULFILL THIS VISION?

The previous three questions all identified for the organization, the “who” they want to be, the “what” they want to be, and the “why” they are what they are. This fourth question asked, **“How do we obtain this vision”?** Feedback from this questions will guide board members in understanding necessary steps to reach their vision. Common themes that were received spoke of stronger leadership, improved communication, stronger advocacy, raising the image and awareness of Health Officers across the state.

HOW DO WE DO THIS?

*Create an organization with strong leadership and engaged members to help implement the shared vision, goals and objectives of the strategic action plan*

## STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS

The final exercise that participants provided feedback on was a ‘SWOT’ Analysis. ‘SWOT’ is a strategic tool used to assess the organization’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This tool helps identify competitive advantages, areas for improvement, potential markets, and risks. It involves listing and analyzing the internal and external factors that affect the organization’s performance and growth. It will help the organization devise a successful plan for the future, by leveraging their strengths, overcoming weaknesses, seizing opportunities, and mitigating threats. Feedback from the 43 participants identified the following:



<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combined experience &amp; knowledge</li> <li>• Educators</li> <li>• Understand authority to enforce statutes</li> <li>• Connected to town leaders</li> <li>• Monitoring the political landscape</li> <li>• Understand the local landscape of community</li> <li>• Partners with state agencies &amp; local government</li> <li>• Health Officers more visible than prior to COVID</li> <li>• Ability to network with other Health Officers</li> <li>• Access to professional development</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small membership</li> <li>• Limited communication</li> <li>• Financial instability</li> <li>• Unclear definition of a Health Officer</li> <li>• Limited membership participation</li> <li>• Limited data collection</li> <li>• Roles not defined</li> <li>• No social media presence</li> <li>• Not affiliated with local, regional or national groups</li> <li>• No clear policy direction</li> <li>• Only meet twice a year</li> <li>• Not enough case studies</li> <li>• Lack of public awareness of who Health Officers are</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow of membership</li> <li>• Affiliate membership</li> <li>• Gaining credentials for Health Officers</li> <li>• Health Officers become more visible</li> <li>• Use of federal funding for gaining credentials</li> <li>• Update readiness report</li> <li>• Developing He-P 900 Health Officer rules</li> <li>• Explore local, regional and national partnerships</li> <li>• Regional Health Officer groups</li> <li>• Alternative funding sources</li> <li>• Stronger connection to Regional Public Health Network</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political environment threatening Health officer’s authority</li> <li>• Financial instability</li> <li>• Small Board of Directors</li> <li>• Health Officer vacancy rate</li> <li>• No succession planning for key board members &amp; vendors</li> <li>• Limited manpower &amp; resources</li> <li>• Burnout of Board members</li> <li>• Lack of participation in the organization</li> </ul>

## DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PLAN

At the April 2023 Board of Director’s meeting, the DPHS facilitators presented preliminary findings from the feedback of the forty three participating Health Officers. The presentation outlined ‘next steps’ for the organization’s strategic planning. As a follow-up, the facilitators in collaboration with board members presented the findings of the strategic planning exercise and a rough outline, shown below, of goals, objectives and activities of the draft *5-Year Strategic Action Plan*.



## WHAT DOES THE 5-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FOCUS ON?

<b>WHO do we serve?</b>	Municipal Health and Deputy Health Officers across the State and their partnering organizations.
<b>WHAT do we do?</b>	Develop and support a network of public Health professionals that are an important and trusted point of contact for local concerns that fulfill a critical role in enforcing public health laws.
<b>WHY do we do what we do?</b>	We find value in a network of skilled public health professionals and their combined knowledge, ongoing professional development, and advocacy work.
<b>HOW do we do it?</b>	Create an organization with strong leadership and engaged members to help implement the shared vision, goals and objectives of the strategic action plan.

### OVER ARCHING GOAL

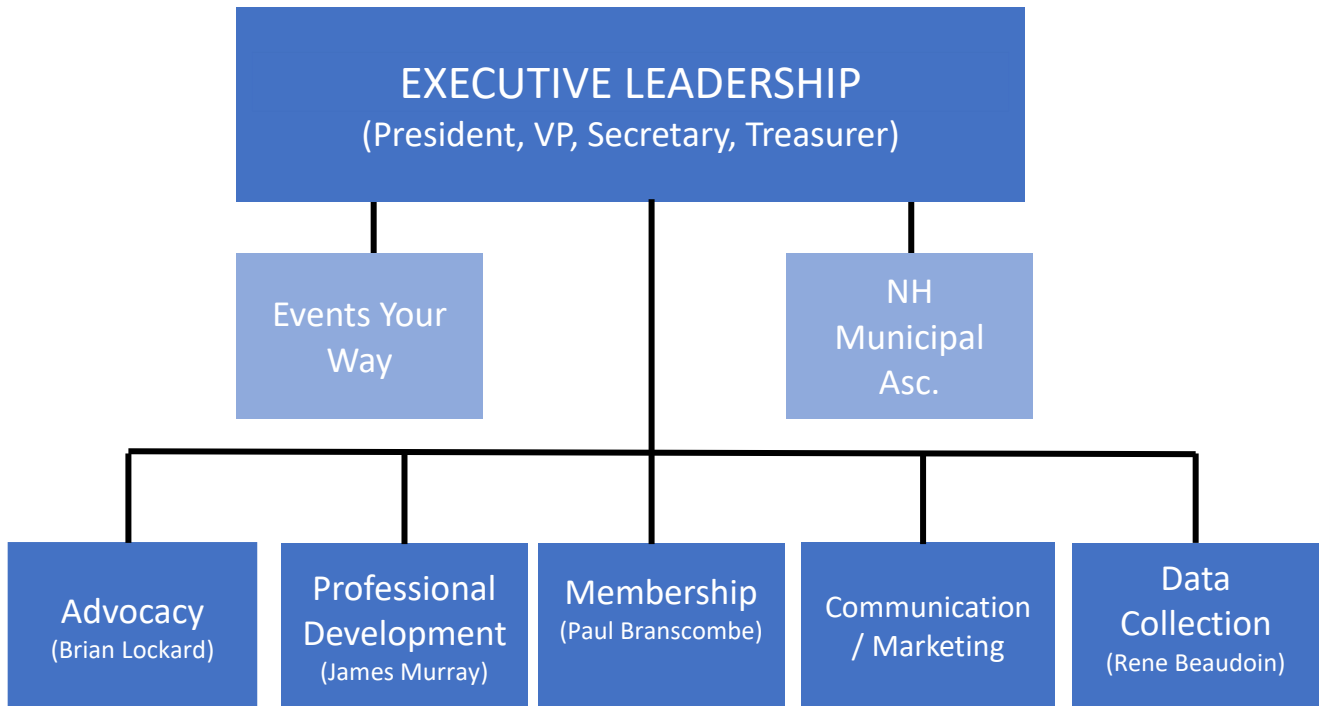
**“To build, sustain, and empower a local public health workforce”**

<b>OBJECTIVE 1</b>	Build a strong foundation of leadership that will guide the membership in the implementation of the strategic action plan.
<b>OBJECTIVE 2</b>	Create a conduit for strong communication between the board and membership that is ongoing, trusted, and valued.
<b>OBJECTIVE 3</b>	Recruit and retain Health officers and affiliate members to build a robust membership.
<b>OBJECTIVE 4</b>	Make professional development meaningful, accessible, and timely to ensure that local municipal Health officers are skilled, highly qualified public health professionals.
<b>OBJECTIVE 5</b>	Improve the ease of data collection on demographics, training needs, and enforcement activities of local municipal Health Officers.
<b>OBJECTIVE 6</b>	Ensure that the needs of Health officers across the state are represented in local and statewide policy development.



## HOW WILL THE STRATEGIC PLAN BE IMPLEMENTED?

To organize the feedback received from the strategic planning process, goals and objectives were organized around six common themes, shown below, that included leadership, advocacy, professional development, membership, communication/marketing, and data collection. Furthermore, work plans were developed around these common themes that begin on Page 8.



INDIVIDUAL WORK PLANS (See below)





**LEADERSHIP**

**OBJECTIVE #1** - Build a strong foundation of leadership that will facilitate the implementation of the strategic action plan.

Activity Number	Activity	Performance Measure (How will you know if you are successful)	Responsible person(s)	Dates
1.1	Ensure the board has the appropriate executive leadership (Officers) in place as outlined in Section I of the by-laws that include a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.	Four executive leadership positions filled	President	Ongoing
1.2	Ensure the board has appropriate members to support the Executive Leadership and guide subcommittees.	Board of Directors has nine members.	Executive leadership	Ongoing
1.3	Schedule at least four meetings annually of the executive leadership that have an agenda, record keeping, and identified action items.	Executive leadership meets four times annually	Vendor Secretary	Aug., Nov, Feb, & May
1.4	Schedule at least four meetings annually of the entire board that have an agenda, record keeping with updates from each committees.	Entire Board meets four times annually	Vendor Secretary	Oct, Jan, April, July
1.5	In accordance with Section 5 of the by-laws, provide notice and schedule an annual meeting of the Association to elect officers and transact business.	Notice provided prior to annual membership meeting	Board Vendor	Sept 2023
1.6	Identify ‘champions’ from the membership (or the board) to lead the implementation of five subcommittees that include membership, communication/ marketing, advocacy, professional development & data collection.	Subcommittee ‘champions’ identified	Board Membership	August 2023
1.7	Receive and review status of accounts payable, receivables, and investments monthly at each meeting of Executive Leadership.	Treasurer reviews finances bi-monthly with vendor.	Treasurer	Bi-monthly



1.8	Review and update <a href="#">NH Health Officer By-laws</a> every five years.	By-laws reviewed & updated.	President & Executive Leadership	September 2023
1.9	Develop a succession plan for the four Officers to ensure easy transition of leadership skills and historical knowledge.	Succession plan developed	Executive Leadership	2024
1.10	Ensure there is a contracted vendor in place to support the organization that has a clear scope of services.	Contract with scope of services in place	President Vendor	Annual
1.9	Update the existing mission and vision statement to accurately represent the organization.	Mission & Vision Statement updated	Board	2023
1.10	Ensure that there is an annual performance review process in place to provide vendor(s) feedback & review scope of services.	Annual review completed	Executive Leadership	2023
<b>COMMUNICATION &amp; MARKETING</b>				
<b>OBJECTIVE #2</b> – Create a mechanism for strong communication between the board and membership that is ongoing, trusted, and valued.				
Activity Number	Activity	Performance Measure (How will you know if you are successful)	Responsible person(s)	Dates
2.1	Communication subcommittee meets four times annually to complete activities in Objective 2. Champion meets to update Board of Directors four times annually.	Subcommittees meet four times annually	Subcommittee Champion	Sept., Dec, March, & June
2.2	In collaboration with the vendor, complete a review of organization’s website to ensure it includes relevant, timely and engaging information.	Website reviewed and updates identified	Subcommittee Vendor	Sept – October 2023
2.3	Update the organization’s website at least quarterly to ensure information is timely, relevant, and engaging.	Website updated at least four times annually	Vendor	June, Sept & December 2023



2.4	Solicit sponsorships from engaged vendors (affiliates) that are interested in developing strong business partnerships with the organization.	Sponsorships identified	Subcommittee Vendor	TBD
2.5	Implement a sponsorship package to attract affiliate members that outlines the benefits they would receive that might include website logos and hyperlinks, potential speaking engagement, or other opportunities.	Sponsorship package implement and sponsors secured	Vendor	TBD
2.6	Develop a communications plan that might include a social media presence that improves the visibility of municipal health officers & the Association.	Communication Plan	Subcommittee Vendor	TBD
2.7	Develop a strategy for regular communication to ensure executive officers, subcommittees, regional groups, affiliate members and general membership is informed of the activities within the organization.	Strategy developed that includes the 'what is distributed, how often and to whom'	Subcommittee Vendor	2023
2.8	Disseminate the AAG document to membership, and policy makers on a biennial basis.	AAG disseminated to DPHS, State Health Assessment committee & legislation	Subcommittee Vendor	Biennial 2023, 2025

<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>				
<b>OBJECTIVE #3</b> – Recruit and retain Health officers and affiliate members to build a robust membership.				
Activity Number	Activity	Performance Measure (How will you know if you are successful)	Responsible person(s)	Dates
3.1	Membership subcommittees meet four times annually to complete activities in Objective #3. Champion meets to update Board of Directors four times annually.	Subcommittees meet four times annually	Subcommittee Champion	Sept., Dec, March, & June



3.2	<p>Collaborate with vendor to review current membership package to ensure it identifies the benefits of being a member of the organization. Package could include descriptions of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discount at conference</li> <li>• Bill tracking</li> <li>• Ditty bag or other promotional items</li> <li>• Policy tracking</li> <li>• Connection to an organization that can advocate for specific bills</li> <li>• Real time advise/information/help with problems</li> <li>• Networking</li> <li>• Improved professionalism for resume/town/credibility</li> <li>• Improve the Health Officer Organization</li> <li>• Deep experience and knowledge</li> </ul>	Member packet reviewed and updated	Subcommittee vendor	TBD
3.3	Identify a strategy to promote membership amongst Health and Deputy Health Officers and Affiliate members.	Strategy to promote membership identified.	Subcommittee Vendor HONU	2023-2024
3.4	Vendor implements strategy to market membership package to Health and Deputy Health Officers and Affiliate members.	Vendor implements marketing strategy.	Vendor	2023-2024
3.5	Coordinate with Communication Subcommittee to recognize members with longevity. (e.g. Post on website, present certificates etc, send note)	Health & Deputy Health officers recognized	Subcommittee Vendor	October May
3.6	Coordinate with Communication Subcommittee to recognize accomplishments of membership at bi-annual membership meetings. e.g. Post on website, present certificates etc, send note)	Health & Deputy Health officers recognized	Subcommittee Vendor	May & October
3.7	Coordinate with Communication Subcommittee to recognize partner organizations/agencies that have supported the work of municipal Health Officers and/or the Association.	Partner Organization recognized	Subcommittee Vendor	May & October



3.8	Explore the collaborate with partner organizations, (e.g. NH Building Officials Association, NH Fire Protection Agency, NH Planning Association, or Fire Chiefs Association) to explore benefits of dual memberships	Dual membership explored	Subcommittee	TBD
3.9	Explore the benefits of initiating ‘rolling memberships’ so that board can welcome members all year long.	‘Rolling Memberships’ explored	Subcommittee Vendor	TBD
3.10	Develop a plan for engaging new members of the organization that might include a personal note, assigning a mentor, website recognition, conference ‘shout out’ etc.	Plan Developed to welcome/recognize new members	Subcommittee Vendor	Ongoing

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**OBJECTIVE #4** – Make professional development meaningful, accessible, and timely to ensure that local municipal Health officers are skilled, highly qualified public health professionals.

Activity Number	Activity	Performance Measure (How will you know if you are successful)	Responsible person(s)	Dates
4.1	Subcommittees meet four times annually to complete activities in Objective #4 in the work plan. Champion meet and updates Board of Directors four times annually.	Subcommittee meet four times annually	Subcommittee Champion	Sept., Dec, March, & June
4.2	Facilitate two conferences annually of the membership that include professional development.	Spring and Fall Health Officer Conference attracts >90 members	Subcommittee Vendor HOLU	May 2023 Oct 2023
4.3	Identify funding opportunities to expand professional development.	Funding opportunities identified	Subcommittee HOLU	Annually
4.4	Identify what training is needed to increase professional development.	Annual or bi-annual survey	Subcommittee	TBD



			HOLU	
4.5	Coordinate with the HOLU to implement at least six professional development activities annually.	Six professional development activities scheduled annually	Board HOLU	Annually
4.6	Maintain the on-line Health Officer Training Manual to ensure technical guidance documents are current and reflect the needs of the membership.	Individual guidance documents are no older than five years old	HOLU	Ongoing
4.7	Explore resources needed to increase the number of members that are certified by the National Environmental Health Association.	Resources identified	Subcommittee	2023
4.8	Identify funding to support the accreditation of up to X (TBD) Health Officers annually.	At least five Health Officers are accredited annually	Subcommittee HOLU	Annual

### DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

**OBJECTIVE #5** – Improve the ease of data collection on demographics, training needs, and enforcement activities of local municipal Health Officers.

Activity Number	Activity	Performance Measure (How will you know if you are successful)	Responsible person(s)	Dates
6.1	Subcommittee meets four times annually to complete activities in Objective #6 in the work plan. Champion meets and updates the Board of Directors four times annually.	Subcommittee meet four times annually	Subcommittee Champion	Sept., Dec, March, & June
6.2	Conduct a periodic survey to evaluate the demographics and needs of the Health Officer population across the state	Survey data collected & evaluated	Subcommittee HOLU	2025
6.3	Update the bi-annual infographic, ‘At-a-Glance’ document published by the HOLU that includes demographic data on the makeup of Health Officers across the state.	AAG Document created	HOLU CHI Committee	2023



6.5	Incorporate survey data into the <i>Readiness Report</i> that is due November 1 <sup>st</sup> annually.	Annual Readiness Report completed	Executive Leadership	November Annually
6.6	Explore the feasibility of creating a mechanism for voluntary reporting from municipal Health Officers	Feasibility of creating Excel spreadsheet explored	Subcommittee HOLU	2024

## ADVOCACY

**OBJECTIVE #6– Ensure that the needs of Health officers across the state are represented in local and statewide policy development.**

Activity Number	Activity	Performance Measure (How will you know if you are successful)	Responsible person(s)	Dates
7.1	Subcommittee meet four times annually to complete activities in Objective #7 in the work plan. Champion meets and updates the Board of Directors four times annually.	Subcommittee meets four times annually	Subcommittee Champion	Sept., Dec, March, & June
7.2	Identify any proactive legislation that the NH Health Officer Association would like to introduce during the legislative period.	Proactive legislation explored	Subcommittee	Ongoing
7.3	During the legislative session follow the weekly the updates on committees, house and senate bills and identify action items	Legislation sessions followed and action items identified.	Subcommittee	Ongoing
7.4	During the legislative session, organize efforts to respond to proposed legislation that would impact municipal Health Officers and the Association.	Develop timely Responses	Subcommittee	November to May

