

Caldwell County Health Department
Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Caldwell County Health Department Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025



CALDWELL COUNTY
North Carolina



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Strategic Plan 2022-2025

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Mission Statement

“To promote, protect, and improve the health of our community”

Acronyms

Acronym	Description
CCHD	Caldwell County Health Department
NCIPH	North Carolina Institute for Public Health
QI	Quality Improvement

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Introduction

Caldwell County Health Department (CCHD) is committed “to promote, protect, and improve the health of our community.” As a part of realizing their mission, CCHD worked with the North Carolina Institute for Public Health (NCIPH) from the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina to facilitate CCHD management team members in developing a three-year strategic plan.

This process resulted in four strategic questions, with specific action plans for each:

- How can CCHD demonstrate the value of our agency?
- How do we attract, support, and keep great staff?
- How do we stay relevant and adapt as needs change?
- How can we stay financially viable?

The Strategic Plan aligns with CCHD’s Guiding Principles:

- Collaborate with partners to develop programs that meet the public health needs of the community, prevent disease, improve health and assure public safety.
- Be the voice for the people served by its programs and educate elected and appointed officials on the public health needs of the county in order to allocate appropriate resources to meet those needs.
- Be trusted by the community as the leader in public health and the voice for public health needs.
- Develop and strengthen partnerships that promote public health leadership and assures a quality, skilled workforce at the agency that is committed to lifelong careers in public health.
- Lead the community in understanding the relationship between lifestyle and personal health in order to prevent chronic disease.

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Process

CCHD's Management Team worked with Dr. Stephen Orton and Margaret Benson Nemitz at NCIPH to facilitate a strategic planning process in the fall of 2021. Eleven participants (Attachment 1) attended a pre-planning session to review key stakeholders, compile data, and discuss trends, opportunities, and strategic questions (Attachment 1). Following the pre-planning session, participants reviewed stakeholder relationships and existing data in order to prepare for a day-long strategic planning retreat (Attachment 2). Dr. Orton and Ms. Benson Nemitz facilitated both sessions using an interactive Mural board to capture and summarize themes in the discussions, which they then used to inform this report.

Themes from Existing Reports

Throughout the strategic sessions, participants recognized the momentum and innovation of CCHD. While much of the public health landscape has significantly shifted in response to COVID-19, CCHD continues to work on many existing priorities. In the 2017 Community Health Assessment, Caldwell prioritized preventative care, substance abuse, and mental health based on magnitude, seriousness of consequences, and overall feasibility of health priorities. In the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, CCHD focused on goals of improving efficiency and capacity of staff; serving more clients, including outreach in the community; positioning CCHD in succeeding with Medicaid Transformation; and exploring and addressing health impacts of jobs, housing, food and transportation. Participants highlighted areas of growth and accomplishment across these existing areas, while also recognizing the need for continued focus on staffing, services, and funding.

Strategic Questions

The Management Team selected four strategic questions to guide the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan

- How can we demonstrate the value of our agency?
- How do we attract, support and keep great staff?
- How do we stay relevant and adapt as needs change?
- How can we stay financially viable?

Appreciative Inquiry

NCIPH facilitated the Management Team through a modified Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis using Appreciative Inquiry. Participants by thinking about the trends and opportunities they see impacting CCHD over the next five years. Then, using Appreciative Inquiry, participants were asked to think about what is working well, what is the team most proud of, what are the biggest successes, and what work excites them the most. This series of questions helped illuminate CCHD's internal strengths. Finally, participants were asked to dream about what they hoped CCHD would become, and anticipated challenges. The table below summarizes the trends and opportunities; the strengths derived from the list of things that are working well; and the anticipated challenges. The "dream" outputs are included as long-term goals in the Action Plan that follows.

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Trends and Opportunities

- New methods of outreach and service provision available as technology use expands
- Medicaid transformation will lead to many more patients having access to CCHD's services
- Expand partnerships with schools and community organizations to provide services on-site
- Adoption of state rules changes
- New county leadership
- Caldwell's population is growing as more people move into the area
- New grant opportunities related to COVID-19, ARPA, Southeast rural businesses, and environmental health

Strengths

- Passionate, connected, and innovative agency
- Balanced COVID response with existing needs, creating positive pivots that benefit the agency overall
- Technology investments have improved logistics
- Clientele and services offered have grown in recent years

Anticipated Challenges

- Staff recruitment and retention, particularly considering limitations in offering competitive pay
- Uncertainty about continued COVID-19 response
- Backlog of services on hold due to COVID-19 response
- Over-reliance on technology

After the four strategic questions were identified, the team analyzed their importance as they relate to the current and future state of the department, as well as opportunities to address the questions as strategic goals in the strategic plan. Participants broke off into groups to complete a strategic issue checklist for each of the four goals to cultivate the brainstorming of possible strategies. Through this activity, the team decided to keep all four questions for the strategic plan. The staff then drafted broad strategies for each of the strategic questions, supplemented by a list of key stakeholders, and a consideration of workforce development strategies to support the work and address potential weaknesses.

Finally, participants drafted three-year action plans for each of the four strategic goals. Each action plan identified organizational and community-level short-term (one-year) and long-term (three-year) action items, the lead tasked with the work, and the goal or measure of success.

Strategic Goals:

Caldwell County Health Department's Strategic Goals and Objectives/Action Items were developed by the Management Team and other staff members in October and November 2021 during strategic planning sessions.

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Strategic Question 1: How can we demonstrate the value of our agency?

Long Term Goal	CCHD has a well-maintained facility that meets community's needs.
Three-Year Strategies	Share value of CCHD with the Board of Health and community Improve CCHD facilities
One-Year Objectives	1.1 - Create opportunities for Board of Health to directly see health department operations 1.2 - Promote CCHD services through existing communication channels 1.3 - Assess CCHD facilities and housekeeping services, improve climate
Existing and New Partners	Board of Health, County Commission, County Manager, Chamber of Commerce organizations sharing CCHD building space, local schools and colleges

Year 1 Activities	Lead	Goal/Measure	Timeframe
1.1.1 Board of Health participates in a "life in a day" at CCHD	Management Team-with Admin heading	BOH presence and knowing CCHD staff and their job duties.	1 year
1.2.1 Create engagement plan using new mobile app...	Marketing team	To promote the mobile app with services of the Health Dept.	6 months
1.2.2 Highlight staff and services through public access channel	Marketing team	To show the community Health Dept services and staff.	6 months
1.2.3 Figure out the best way to share staff profiles with partners and clients	Marketing team	Using CCHD App, social media and CCGTV to promote HD staff and services	1 year
1.2.4 Advocate for public WiFi to visitors in the building	Management Team-with Admin heading	To have WiFi in public areas of the building available for use	2 years
1.3.1 Host a cleaning spree event to improve appearance of physical spaces	Management	Thorough cleaning of the facility by 3 rd party	2 years
1.3.2 Maintain cleanliness of the building	Housekeeping/staff	Work with building and maintenance to ensure the quality and care of the HD building is being managed	3 years

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Strategic Question 2: How do we attract, support and keep great staff?

Long Term Goal	Staff want to come here, work here, retire with us
Three-Year Strategies	Establish clear and reasonable expectations for staff Decrease staff burnout / Increase staff engagement? Increase staff pay
One-Year Objectives	2.1 - Provide supervisors with training and resources to set clear expectations and provide staff support? 2.2 - Build trust between staff and supervisors 2.3 - Identify opportunities to improve human resource practices
Potential Partners	Caldwell Human Resources, Board of Health, Population Health improvement Partners, North Carolina Institute for Public Health, hospital systems, university systems (Lenoir Rhyne, App State)

Year 1 Activities	Lead	Goal/Measure	Timeframe
2.1.1 Hold motivational training for management	HD/Asst HD	To encourage management, morale	16mos
2.2.1 Develop platform for staff to share what they want/need to do the job	QI	To have open communication between staff and supervisors about job needs.	1.5 years
2.2.2 Organize team building events through the STAR team	STAR	To increase staff moral	3 years
2.3.1 Bring in a facilitator to conduct QI cycle for human resources	Admin	To look over QI for the health dept/HR hiring processes	3 years
2.3.2 Build a welcoming team for new staff	STAR	Building team for new employees to show aspects of the HD	2 years

*Activity 1.1.1 and 1.2.4 also supports objective 2.2

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Strategic Question 3: How do we stay relevant and adapt as needs change?

Long Term Goal	Provide client-centered care
Three-Year Strategies	Respond to new trends and changes in the field
One-Year Objectives	3.1 - Develop plan to strategically respond to Medicaid transformation 3.2 - Determine how to adapt lessons learned from COVID-19 into continued efforts 3.3 - Assess opportunities to advance technology within the health department
Potential Partners	Medicaid clients, media, IT

Year 1 Activities	Lead	Goal/Measure	Timeframe
3.1.1 Hold learning sessions about Medicaid transformation	Admin Officer/ CCPN	Staff is familiar with Medicaid transformation.	3 years
3.2.1 Conduct a hot-wash on COVID-response to determine how to integrate lessons learned	Management team	Hold a meeting to discuss lessons learned regarding COVID, and what changes should be made.	1 year
3.3.1 Identify opportunities to improve accessibility through technology	Staff	Through a survey and learning sessions, through how to get the word of the Health dept into the community.	2 years

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Strategic Question 4: How can we stay financially viable?

Long Term Goal	Adapt our financial model to be self-supporting/sustainable
Three-Year Strategies	Adjust financial model to accommodate Medicaid transformation Improve financial efficiencies
One-Year Objectives	4.1 - Train additional staff on coding and billing 4.2 - Identify opportunities to decrease no-show rate
Potential Partners	Community Care Physician Network, Insurance companies, referral sites both in and out, state consultants

Year 1 Activities	Lead	Goal/Measure	Timeframe
4.1.1 Incorporate coding and billing training into new employee training	Admin Officer	Training staff on coding and billing	6 months
4.2.1 Bring in a facilitator to conduct QI cycle to address no-show rate	Admin/QI	To look over QI processes for the health dept to decrease no show rate.	3 years

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Ten Essential Public Health Services

The following overview of Public Health Services is taken directly from CDC and can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nphpsp/essentialservices.html>.

Public health systems are commonly defined as “all public, private, and voluntary entities that contribute to the delivery of essential public health services within a jurisdiction.” This concept ensures that all entities’ contributions to the health and well-being of the community or state are recognized in assessing the provision of public health services.

The public health system includes:

- Public health agencies at state and local levels
- Healthcare providers
- Public safety agencies
- Human service and charity organizations
- Education and youth development organizations
- Recreation and arts-related organizations
- Economic and philanthropic organizations
- Environmental agencies and organizations

The 10 Essential Public Health Services describe the public health activities that all communities should undertake and serve as the framework for the National Public Health Performance Standards (NPHPS) instruments. Public health systems should:

1. Monitor health status to identify and solve 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 and action 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. Link people to needed public health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable
8. Assure competent public and personal health care workforce.
9. Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.
10. Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

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Community Health Assessment and State of the County Health Report

The North Carolina Division of Public Health requires local health departments to conduct a comprehensive Community Health Assessment (CHA) every three years. In Caldwell County, the most recent CHA was conducted in 2017 (a CHA was not collected in 2020 due to COVID-19). Based on findings from the CHA, the following health priorities were identified in Caldwell County:

- Preventative Care
- Substance Misuse
- Mental Health

During the interim three years, local health departments are responsible for issuing an annual report, known as the State of the County Health (SOTCH) Report. Caldwell County completed the last SOTCH Report in 2021 and will complete the next one in 2022. This report provides an annual review of the health of the community, tracks progress in addressing priority health issues by comparing state and local data, and identifies new initiatives and emerging issues that affect the health status of county residents.

Both the CHA and SOTCH Report can be found on-line at www.caldwellcountync.org

Health Department Programs and Services:

Caldwell County Health Department offers a variety of services, including screening, diagnosis, treatment of health problems and conditions, preventive services, and community health services. We provide quality health services to the individual, family, and community, regardless of race, age, disability, sex, religion, or income. In order to serve the community, our staff includes:

- Physicians & physician extenders
- Public health nurses
- Community health educators
- Dentists and dental assistants
- Nutritionists
- Breastfeeding educators, peer counselor, & lactation consultant
- Social workers
- Lab technicians
- Environmental health specialists
- Animal control officers and shelter attendants

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Health Education:

Health Education and Promotion provides community outreach services in the area of wellness and prevention, with a specific focus on nutrition, physical activity, and tobacco use interventions. Our department provides guidance and assistance with local level policy change related to general health and wellness strategies.

Dental Services:

Our state of the art clinic provides services for children ages birth-18 years for preventive, restorative, or oral health education to residents who have Medicaid or Health Choice. Our primary goal is to prevent dental decay and other dental diseases to avoid conditions that are more painful and costly to treat.

Clinical Services:

The clinical services available at Caldwell County Health Department include the following:

- Primary care for illness with adults and children
- Family Planning
- Adult and pediatric physicals
- Maternity care
- Immunizations (adult & child)
- Communicable disease, STD testing

Also available is the breast and cervical cancer control program, providing breast exams, pap smears, and mammograms for women 50-64 years.

Women's Health:

Women's Health offers client centered services to pregnant and postpartum women regardless of their financial situation. Our services include pregnancy testing, routine and sick maternal health visits, and ultrasounds. We also participate in the NC Medicaid Pregnancy Medical Home program and offer newborn and childbirth classes.

Child Health:

Child Health programs include:

- Care Coordination for Children (CC4C)
- Newborn/postpartum assessment
- Immunization coordination
- School Health

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WIC/Nutrition:

This program offers nutrition education and food vouchers for pregnant and postpartum women, and children under the age of 5 years old. We also provide the following:

- Breastfeeding education & support
- Infant feeding guidelines
- Special diets for women & children

Environmental Health:

Environmental Health provides inspection services for Caldwell County in the following areas:

- Onsite water protection
- Private drinking water wells
- Food, lodging, and institutions
- Child care centers
- Public swimming pools
- Tattoo parlors
- Child lead prevention
- Migrant housing

Services for programs range from regulatory inspections, permits, compliant investigations, and consultative visits.

Animal Control:

Animal Control offers a number of services for you and your pets:

- Shelter for lost, stray, or homeless animals
- Animal cruelty investigations
- Dangerous dog investigations
- Rabies investigations
- Adoptions and rabies vaccinations are every 2nd Saturday, 10am-2pm

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Caldwell County at a Glance:

Demographics	Caldwell County	North Carolina
Population, 2019	82,178	10,488,084
White, 2019	91.5%	70.6%
Black or African American, 2019	5.2%	22.2%
American Indian/Alaska Native, 2019	0.6%	1.6%
Asian, 2019	0.8%	3.2%
Native American/Other Pacific Islander, 2019	0.1%	0.1%
Two or more races, 2019	1.8%	2.3%
Hispanic/Latino, 2019	5.9%	9.8%
Persons living in poverty, 2019	12%	13.6%
Median household income, 2019	\$44,511	\$54,602
Unemployment rate	3.7%	4.1%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2019

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2017 Community Health Assessment

Due to COVID-19, a 2020 Community Health Assessment was not conducted. A copy of the Caldwell County Community Health Assessment is available on the county's webpage at www.caldwellcountync.org

The Caldwell County Health Department and Caldwell UNC Healthcare, along with many other organizations within the community have successfully completed the 2017-2020 Community Health Assessment (CHA). The CHA is a process through which community members gain an understanding of the health concerns and health-care systems in the community by identifying, collecting, analyzing and disseminating information on community assets, strengths, resources and needs. The CHA also shows what is needed in the community. It is used to identify factors that will affect the health and welfare of a population and determine the availability of resources within the community, such as leaders, public health agencies, businesses, hospitals, private practitioners and academic centers. A CHA is mandated for the health department by the state every 3-4 years and for not-for-profit hospitals by the IRS every 3 years.

In December of 2017, the Community Health Assessment Advisory Committee began reviewing data from numerous outside sources in addition to responses from the community health assessment opinion survey in order to determine Caldwell County's top three health priorities for the next three years. A total of 620 surveys were collected from Caldwell County citizens. The survey was available to the public as an online link and as paper copies at the library. The committee also partnered with the Clerk of Court and offered the survey to those who were serving jury duty. To really understand what the community's needs are, qualitative data is needed along with the quantitative data collected in surveys. To collect this qualitative data, the CHA committee conducted focus groups which represented a variety of socioeconomic and demographic groups in Caldwell County. Those groups included adults, seniors, low income/minority individuals and teens. The focus groups were a significant part of the primary data, because they gave the committee a more comprehensive understanding of the community's opinions than the data from the surveys could. After surveys were collected, it was necessary for the committee to choose 3 priorities which will be a focus for the partnership over the next three years. These priorities will give the group a platform to work on in order to increase the health and wellbeing of the citizens of Caldwell County. For priority selection, the advisory committee joined together and ranked, based on the community's opinions, resources available and programs already implemented, the priorities from 1 to 5 based on the magnitude, seriousness of consequences and the overall feasibility. The top three priorities are Preventative Care, Mental Health and Substance Abuse.

Preventative Care

Preventative care is routine health care that includes screenings, services and counseling to help prevent illness, disease or other health problems. Examples of preventative care include wellness visits, standard immunizations and screenings for blood pressure, cancer, cholesterol, depression, obesity and Type 2 diabetes as well as, pediatric screenings for hearing, vision, developmental disorders, depression and obesity. Organizations involved include: Caldwell County Health Department, UNC Caldwell Health, Caldwell County School System, and West Caldwell Health Council, among other community partners.

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Mental Health

Mental health is not just emotional health, it also includes psychological and social wellbeing. Mental health affects how we think, feel and act; as well as how we respond to stressors, interact with others and make choices. During each stage of life, mental wellbeing is important. Issues around mental health continue to be a target area for improvement in Caldwell County. While resources related to mental health are limited, Caldwell County has a need for these types of services. Strategies to target these issues will include building community partnerships that will focus on providing adequate resources to the public with a goal of reducing the stigma surrounding these conditions. Community collaboration will also work towards increasing the support that is in place to provide help to those suffering from mental health conditions. Organizations involved include: Caldwell County Health Department, UNC Caldwell Health, VAYA Health, and RHA Health Services.

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse and misuse continues to be a major health concern and issue in Caldwell County. Substance abuse can include the misuse or abuse of alcohol and illicit drugs. In 2016, according to the Injury and Violence Prevention Branch, there were 17 unintentional opiate poisoning deaths, 2 heroin deaths, 24 medication poisonings and 11 benzodiazepine poisoning deaths in Caldwell County. Community groups will be working on this issue through measures such as providing prevention and awareness education along with promoting Operation Medicine Drop locations and equipping the community (agency employees, pharmacies, healthcare, etc.) with naloxone.

Next Steps

The approved Caldwell County Health Department Strategic Plan will be available on the county webpage (www.caldwellcountync.org) to solicit community input. Paper copies of the plan will be available at the Health Department. This information will be communicated via the local media. The Caldwell County Health Department Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually by agency staff and the Caldwell County Board of Health in an effort to address the changing needs of the community and its citizens.

Attachments

Strategic Planning Team

Anna Martin	Health Director
Janelle McDonald	Dentist
Cindy Jolly	Women's Health
Lisa Lowe	Clinic Nursing Director
Pam Culbreth	Animal Control
Libby Clark	Finance
Jill Gragg	Child Health
Mark Picton	Medical Director
Jeannie Walker	Assistant Health Director
Adam Jones	Environmental Health
Laurie Elian	WIC

First Strategic Session Agenda

October 25, 2021

1 - Stakeholder Analysis

Generate a short list of important stakeholders for the next 3 years.

Before November 1 meeting, work individually or in pairs about the nature of our relationship with each stakeholder.

2 - Data

Generate a list of documents to have the group review before Nov 1:

- Budget history and budget future

- Performance data

- CHA and CHIP

- Relevant other strategic plans for county/community

- Other:

3 - Trends and Opportunities (or threats)

First cut at trends on Monday. What important trends will impact Caldwell Public Health in the next five years? What opportunities do you see coming up?

4 - Strategic Questions

Quick once-around to get a list of potential "strategic questions" started.

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Second Strategic Session Agenda

November 1, 2021

1 – Review Data

Reflect on key themes from last week and from the documents you shared.

2 – Discover Strengths

Interview each other to elicit stories about what is working, where your passions lie, what successes and bright spots you see.

3 – Dream Big

Brainstorm about big dreams, best outcomes, hopes for the future, wishes.

4 – Review Strategic Questions (SQ)

Complete worksheets on each of the top 3 or 4 questions to confirm that they are strategic. Share how each question (SQ) is critical to answer now. Map how each SQ responds to trends and opportunities; fits the agency; connects to stakeholder needs and our mandates.

5 – Draft Dreams / Goals / Objectives for each SQ

We will work on these simultaneously in subgroups and then report back

6 - Connect Stakeholders to Strategies

7 – Draft 1-Year Workplans

What will we do in the next six months / next twelve months, with our current capacity?

