HHS Strategic Plan, FY 2018 – 2022

Draft, September 2017
## Introduction

### Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Draft for OMB, September 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mission Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Organizational Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Strategic Plan Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Stakeholder Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Strategic Goal 1: Reform, Strengthen, and Modernize the Nation’s Health Care System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Objective 1.1: Promote affordable health care, while balancing spending on premiums, deductibles, and out-of-pocket costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Objective 1.2: Expand safe, high-quality healthcare options, and encourage innovation and competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Objective 1.3: Improve Americans’ access to health care and expand choices of care and service options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Objective 1.4: Strengthen and expand the healthcare workforce to meet America’s diverse needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Strategic Goal 2: Protect the Health of Americans Where They Live, Learn, Work, and Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Objective 2.1: Empower people to make informed choices for healthier living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Objective 2.2: Prevent, treat, and control communicable diseases and chronic conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Objective 2.3: Reduce the impact of mental and substance use disorders through prevention, early intervention, treatment, and recovery support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Objective 2.4: Prepare for and respond to public health emergencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Strategic Goal 3: Strengthen the Economic and Social Well-Being of Americans across the Lifespan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Objective 3.1: Encourage self-sufficiency and personal responsibility, and eliminate barriers to economic opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Objective 3.2: Safeguard the public against preventable injuries and violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Objective 3.3: Support strong families and healthy marriage, and prepare children and youth for healthy, productive lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Objective 3.4: Maximize the independence, well-being, and health of older adults, people with disabilities, and their families and caregivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Strategic Goal 4: Foster Sound, Sustained Advances in the Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Objective 4.1: Improve surveillance, epidemiology, and laboratory services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective 4.2: Expand the capacity of the scientific workforce and infrastructure to support innovative research

Objective 4.3: Advance basic science knowledge and conduct applied prevention and treatment research to improve health and development

Objective 4.4: Leverage translational research, dissemination and implementation science, and evaluation investments to support adoption of evidence informed practices

Goal 5: Promote Effective and Efficient Management and Stewardship

Objective 5.1: Ensure responsible financial management

Objective 5.2: Manage human capital to achieve the HHS mission

Objective 5.3: Optimize information technology investments to improve process efficiency and enable innovation to advance program mission goals

Objective 5.4: Protect the safety and integrity of our human, physical, and digital assets

Appendix A: HHS Organizational Chart
Introduction

Mission Statement

The mission of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is to enhance the health and well-being of Americans, by providing for effective health and human services and by fostering sound, sustained advances in the sciences underlying medicine, public health, and social services.

Organizational Structure

HHS accomplishes its mission through programs and initiatives that cover a wide spectrum of activities, serving and protecting Americans at every stage of life, beginning at conception. Eleven operating divisions, including eight agencies in the U.S. Public Health Service and three human services agencies, administer HHS’s programs. While HHS is a domestic agency working to protect and promote the health and well-being of the American people, the interconnectedness of our world requires that HHS engage globally to fulfill its mission. In addition, staff divisions provide leadership, direction, and policy guidance to the Department.

Appendix A includes the organizational chart for HHS. Appendix B briefly describes the functions of all of HHS’s operating and staff divisions (OpDivs and StaffDivs), and provides links to the divisions' websites for additional information.

Strategic Plan Development

Every four years, HHS updates its strategic plan, which describes its work to address complex, multifaceted, and evolving health and human services issues. An agency strategic plan is one of three main elements required by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 (P.L. 103-62) and the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-352). An agency strategic plan defines its mission, goals, and the means by which it will measure its progress in addressing specific national problems over a four-year period.

All OpDivs and StaffDivs within HHS contributed to the development of this draft of the HHS Strategic Plan FY 2018 – 2022 (Strategic Plan), as reflected in its strategic goals, objectives, and strategies. The Strategic Plan’s content aligns with the priorities of the Administration and HHS.
Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

This Strategic Plan describes HHS’s efforts within the context of five broad strategic goals:

- Strategic Goal 1: Reform, Strengthen, and Modernize the Nation’s Health Care System
- Strategic Goal 2: Protect the Health of Americans Where They Live, Learn, Work, and Play
- Strategic Goal 3: Strengthen the Economic and Social Well-Being of Americans across the Lifespan
- Strategic Goal 4: Foster Sound, Sustained Advances in the Sciences
- Strategic Goal 5: Promote Effective and Efficient Management and Stewardship

The strategic goals and associated objectives focus on the major functions of HHS. Primary strategies for accomplishing HHS’s goals are presented within each objective. Although the strategic goals and objectives presented in the Strategic Plan are separate sections, they are interrelated, and successful achievement of one strategic goal or objective can influence the success of others. The Strategic Plan highlights where strategies relate to each other across objectives, and points the reader to additional information in other sections. Multiple divisions within HHS often contribute to successful achievement of a strategic goal or objective; divisions that make these contributions to strategic goals and objectives are listed within the appropriate sections of the Strategic Plan.

The strategies presented are not intended to be an exhaustive list, but a select set of activities that are intended to lead to good outcomes in each area.

Stakeholder Engagement

Under the GPRA Modernization Act, federal agencies are required to consult with Congress and to solicit and consider the views of external parties. HHS will update this section to reflect input received from public and Congressional consultation conducted in the fall of 2017.
Strategic Goal 1: Reform, Strengthen, and Modernize the Nation’s Health Care System

HHS is dedicated to reforming, strengthening, and modernizing the Nation’s health care system. By promoting greater affordability and balancing spending, strengthening health care quality and patient safety, improving access and expanding choices, and investing in the health care workforce, HHS seeks to improve health care outcomes for people we serve. While we may refer to the people we serve as beneficiaries, enrollees, patients, or consumers, our ultimate goal is to improve healthcare outcomes for all people, including the unborn, across healthcare settings.

The four objectives in this strategic goal include a selection of strategies HHS is implementing related to health care affordability, quality, access, and a stronger workforce. The strategies presented are not intended to be an exhaustive list, but a curated set of activities that we believe will positively impact health outcomes.

Within HHS, the following divisions are working to achieve this goal: Administration for Community Living (ACL), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Indian Health Service (IHS), Office for Civil Rights (OCR), Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC), Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals (OMHA), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
Objective 1.1: Promote affordable health care, while balancing spending on premiums, deductibles, and out-of-pocket costs

HHS is supporting multiple strategies to reduce healthcare costs and promote more affordable health care – promoting preventive care to reduce future medical costs, strengthening informed consumer decision-making and price transparency, strengthening and expanding coverage options in order to provide greater choice for consumers, promoting the use of lower cost healthcare options, and incentivizing quality and value-based care. HHS also collects, analyzes, and applies data to improve access to affordable health care. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

AHRQ and CMS work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

**Promote preventive care to reduce future medical costs**

- Reduce downstream costs by implementing high-value, evidence-based prevention interventions to achieve better health outcomes
- Lower long-term expenditures by promoting evidence-based disease prevention behaviors, activities, and services, particularly for individuals at high risk for development of chronic conditions
- Reduce avoidable costs by increasing use of primary and secondary preventive health services
- Reduce need for avoidable medical costs by increasing use of timely prenatal, maternal, and postpartum care
- Support availability of preventive health services such as screenings, immunizations, and vaccinations by healthcare providers and community partners.

*Note: additional strategies on immunizations, vaccinations, and screenings can be found in Objectives 2.2, 2.3, and 3.3.*
Strengthen informed consumer decision-making and transparency about the cost of care

- Enhance comparison and decision-making tools, including online resources, to help Americans make informed decisions about health insurance coverage options and service cost options
- Build out and broaden models that allow beneficiaries the option of controlling more of their healthcare dollars
- Support health literacy tools and partner efforts to promote understanding of health costs and terminology, so that consumers can choose the most appropriate, affordable health plan that meets their health needs
- Increase education and awareness of coverage options such as Medicaid, Medicare Fee-For-Service, Medicare Advantage, Prescription Drug Plans, and integrated care options
- Test new payment models on alternative approaches to end-of-life care that incentivize patient and family-centered preferences, while respecting religious beliefs and moral convictions, and promote programmatic payment and quality of care options for advance care planning in support of the physician/patient relationship.

Strengthen coverage options to reduce consumer costs

- Implement policies that increase the mix of younger and healthier consumers purchasing plans through the individual market
- Pursue policies that foster lower premiums by reducing the rate of healthcare cost growth, and decrease average individual health insurance market rate increases
- Streamline eligibility and enrollment processes for Medicare, Medicaid, and other community supports so that all populations, including individuals most in need, have access to the services they need

Promote higher value and lower cost healthcare options

- Promote the use of high-quality, lower cost healthcare providers, such as community health workers, dental therapists, and community organizations, where appropriate
- Modify payments to achieve greater site neutrality and facilitate appropriate settings, including community settings, of care at a lower cost

Incentivize quality and value-based care

- Promote the application of proven clinical preventive services for high impact risk factors and early stage disease detection, through federal guidelines, quality measurement, and partnerships with accrediting organizations, including faith-based and other community organizations
GOAL 1: REFORM, STRENGTHEN, AND MODERNIZE THE NATION’S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

191 • Improve return on investment of federal and state spending by encouraging development
of payment models that reward value over volume

192 • Incentivize better planning, coordination, and management of services across the
continuum of care to improve outcomes for people with chronic conditions

195 *Note: additional healthcare quality strategies are in Objective 1.2*

Collect, analyze, and apply data to improve access to affordable health care

197 • Provide information on the prevalence, causes and consequences of high health care
financial costs, including social factors that exacerbate costs

199 • Partner with states, community organizations, and the private and nonprofit sectors to
educate Americans about their health insurance coverage options and how they can
identify the best plan for themselves, and to provide information on how Americans can
access and use their benefits

203 • Track trends in premiums, out-of-pocket payments, deductibles, and out-of-pocket
maximums in health plans

205 *Note: additional surveillance strategies are in Objective 4.1*
Objective 1.2: Expand safe, high-quality healthcare options, and encourage innovation and competition

HHS works to expand safe, high-quality healthcare options through multiple strategies – preventing adverse health events; incentivizing high-quality care; leveraging technology; implementing coordinated, team-based approaches to care; and empowering patients. HHS is working to reduce disparities in healthcare quality and patient safety, focusing on populations at high risk for poor health outcomes. Research and surveillance efforts also help HHS understand how better to support safe, high-quality care. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACL, AHRQ, CDC, CMS, HRSA, OCR, ONC, and SAMHSA work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Improve patient safety and prevent adverse events such as healthcare-associated infections and medication harms across the healthcare system

- Improve use of public health and health care data to empower decision-making at national, state, and local levels
- Enhance the connections between public health and health care for early detection and efficient response to healthcare-associated disease outbreaks
- Align incentives and promote the use of evidence-based guidelines, strategies, innovation, and public–private partnerships to identify, target, and prevent healthcare-associated infections, antibiotic resistance, and other adverse events in all healthcare settings
- Support clinicians and other healthcare providers to deliver safer care to their patients through programs that engage public health, healthcare, and private partners (including faith-based and other community organizations) to advance patient safety efforts, prevent healthcare-associated infections, and improve medication prescribing and use
- Conduct applied research to identify and address quality gaps and patient safety risks for healthcare-associated conditions, and promote the wide-scale implementation and adoption of this evidence to accelerate improvements
GOAL 1: REFORM, STRENGTHEN, AND MODERNIZE THE NATION’S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

• Support research and innovation to strengthen evidence-based recommendations, address quality gaps and safety risks for healthcare-associated conditions, develop improved methods and strategies to prevent healthcare-associated infections and combat antibiotic resistance, and translate this knowledge and evidence into practical tools, training, and other resources to accelerate progress to improve quality and patient safety

Incentivize safe, high-quality care

• Develop new payment and service delivery models that speed the adoption of best practices
• Improve provision of, and access to, clinically appropriate preventive services to patients in the quality payment program and advanced payment models, through improved understanding of uptake of preventive benefits, particularly for those patients who are high risk
• Expand opportunities for Medicare and Medicaid alternative payment models to incentivize value-based care options
• Help beneficiaries access preventive care in community-based settings, while encouraging innovation and competition through use of performance-based payment
• Develop methods for value-based purchasing to encourage and incentivize improvement among all providers while promoting research on how to recognize variation in performance due to circumstances outside the control of the provider

Leverage technology solutions to support safe, high-quality care

• Advance interoperable clinical information flows so providers can efficiently send, receive, and analyze data across primary care, acute care, specialty care including behavioral health care, and post-acute care settings
• Promote implementation of understandable, functional health information technology tools to support patients in their decision-making, and health care providers and their workflows

Implement coordinated, team-based approaches to care

• Collaborate with healthcare systems and community partners to facilitate the spread of evidence-based clinical practices and the appropriate incorporation of innovations, such as data analytic techniques and clinical decision-support
• Use learning and action networks and training delivery systems to build the capacity of providers to implement improvement activities that address emerging threats to health and safety
GOAL 1: REFORM, STRENGTHEN, AND MODERNIZE THE NATION’S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

• Promote and implement models that connect primary care, acute care, behavioral health care, and long-term services and supports to facilitate transitions between care settings, especially for dual Medicare-Medicaid enrollees

• Implement a collaborative model for behavioral health integration with primary care that is team-driven, population-focused, measurement-guided, and evidence-based

Empower patients, families, and other caregivers to facilitate the delivery and increase the use of safe, high-quality, person-centered care

• Expand the engagement of patients, families, and other caregivers in developing and implementing programs that improve the quality of care and increase access to services available to them

• Promote the development, implementation, and use of experience and outcome measures, including patient-reported data and price transparency data, as appropriate, for use in quality reporting

Reduce disparities in quality and safety

• Enhance the use of health information technology among safety net providers and community-based organizations to inform decision-making, better engage patients in their care, improve public health outcomes, and increase public health reporting

• Encourage and support workforce solutions that deliver culturally appropriate care, including through extending needed flexibility to states and partners seeking to implement these solutions

• Increase capacity to provide patient-centered care by promoting geriatric-competent, disability-competent, and culturally-competent care

• Promote technical training and assistance to disseminate promising practices around geriatric-competent, disability-competent, and culturally-competent care

• Increase available information in cultural- and health literacy-appropriate levels, and in alternate formats, such as in languages other than English, to improve access to health information

• Conduct, fund, and apply research on the role of social determinants of health, as appropriate, to improve health outcomes, including access, quality, and safety

Collect, analyze, and apply data to improve access to safe, high-quality health care

• Assist healthcare organizations with implementing approaches to improve quality in healthcare delivery by using evidence for continuous policy, process, and outcomes improvement
Collect additional data, identify barriers to access, facilitate consumer engagement and promote evidence-based practices, to improve access to physical and behavioral health services.

Measure and report on healthcare quality and disparities at the national, state, local, and individual provider level to facilitate improvement in the healthcare system.

Support rapid communication and coordination between public health practitioners and clinicians to increase use of evidence-based prevention strategies to address risk factors, and their underlying causes, for disease and health conditions.

*Note: additional surveillance strategies are in Objective 4.1*
Objective 1.3: Improve Americans’ access to health care and expand choices of care and service options

Improving access to health care involves multiple strategies – from improving healthcare coverage options, to improving consumer understanding of options, to designing options responsive to consumer demands, while removing barriers for faith-based and other providers. HHS also is actively working to reduce disparities in healthcare access, creating solutions to promote access for individuals and populations at highest risk. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACL, CMS, HRSA, IEA, IHS, OCR, OGA, and SAMHSA work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Expand coverage options

- Expand plan choice in the Medicare Advantage and Part D Prescription Drug Program by reducing administrative, regulatory, and operational burdens, while protecting the integrity and soundness of these programs
- Conduct timely, comprehensive and transparent reviews of requests for new or expanded Medicare Fee-for-Service coverage of items and services, making decision information readily accessible
- Support consumer choice and transparency by promoting the availability of a range of individual health insurance plans and other health care payment options, including faith-based options, with different benefit and cost-sharing structures
- Improve access of dual Medicare-Medicaid beneficiaries to fully integrated physical and behavioral care options

Improve consumer understanding of healthcare options and consumer-directed healthcare decisions

- Promote information and assistance that is accessible, transparent, and provided in understandable formats to ensure care and insurance options meet patient needs
• Expand communication and coordination within communities to enable communities to identify community needs and more effective approaches to improve delivery of healthcare services

• Collaborate across federal agencies and stakeholders to ensure effective and coordinated implementation of mental health parity, especially as it pertains to substance use disorders and serious mental illness

• Expand the use of innovative payment and service delivery models, including those to encourage patients to use high-value clinical services and optimize medication use based upon their specific healthcare needs

• Provide information through partners, including faith-based and other community organizations, on how to access and use benefits and avoid situations of falling victim to fraud or abuse

**Design healthcare options that are responsive to consumer demands, while removing barriers for faith-based and other community-based providers**

• Test pilot programs and models that partner HHS with consumer-driven demand technologies and companies to address patients as consumers

• Allow consumers the opportunity to purchase customizable health insurance plans, with cost-sharing and out-of-pocket costs commensurate with benefits chosen

• Vigorously enforce laws, regulations, and other authorities, especially Executive Order 13798 of May 4, 2017, *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty*, to reduce burdens on the exercise of religious and moral convictions, promote equal and nondiscriminatory participation by faith-based organizations in HHS-funded or conducted activities, and remove barriers to the full and active engagement of faith-based organizations in the work of HHS through targeted outreach, education, and capacity building

• Implement Executive Order 13798 of May 4, 2017, *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty*, and identify and remove barriers to, or burdens imposed on, the exercise of religious beliefs and/or moral convictions by persons or organizations partnering with, or served by HHS, and affirmatively accommodate such beliefs and convictions, to ensure full and active engagement of persons of faith or moral conviction and of faith-based organizations in the work of HHS

• Promote equal and nondiscriminatory participation by persons of faith or moral conviction and by faith-based organizations in HHS-funded, HHS -regulated, and/or HHS-conducted activities, including through targeted outreach, education, and capacity building.
GOAL 1: REFORM, STRENGTHEN, AND MODERNIZE THE NATION’S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

- Seek ideas, strategies, and best practices from the private sector and not-for-profit faith-based and community organizations that can be introduced to Department-administered programs, to meet evolving consumer needs
- Engage with global partners to learn about effective health care models and best practices that could be used domestically for the benefit of the American people

**Reduce disparities in access to health care**

- Test patient-centered models of care, including patient-centered medical home recognition and care integration, and support the adoption and evolution of such models that reduce expenditures and improve quality of care
- Simplify enrollment, eliminate barriers to retention, and address shortages of healthcare providers who accept Medicare or Medicaid and providers who offer specialized care
- Support research to provide evidence on how to ensure access to affordable, physical, oral, vision, behavioral, and mental health insurance coverage for children and adults
- Identify individuals and populations at risk for limited health care access and assist them to access health services, including prevention, screening, linkages to care, clinical treatment, and relevant support services, including through mobilization of faith-based and community organizations
- Provide resources and tools to providers and plans to encourage implementation of activities and strategies to help improve healthcare access
- Remove barriers to inclusion and accessibility for people with disabilities in public health programs (e.g., communication, physical environment, workforce competencies for public health and healthcare professionals)
Objective 1.4: Strengthen and expand the healthcare workforce to meet America’s diverse needs

HHS is investing in a number of strategies to strengthen and expand the healthcare workforce – from reducing provider shortages, to providing professional development opportunities for the healthcare challenges of today and tomorrow, to removing barriers for health care providers with religious beliefs or moral convictions, to collecting and analyzing data for continuous improvements. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

AHRQ, CDC, CMS, HRSA, IHS, and SAMHSA work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Reduce provider shortages in underserved and rural communities

- Support the training, recruitment, placement, and retention of primary care providers in underserved and rural communities through grants, student loan repayment, local recruitment, and other educational incentives
- Incentivize healthcare providers to work in underserved and rural areas
- Assist primary care practices in integrating services for mental health and substance use disorders, to expand access in underserved and rural communities
- Improve access to behavioral and oral health services in underserved and rural communities by supporting the training, recruitment, placement, and retention of behavioral health, dental health, and primary care providers to address workforce shortages, reduce disparities and ensure an equitable workforce distribution
- Support development of telehealth models to increase access to care in rural and underserved areas

Support professional development of the healthcare workforce

- Increase awareness and promote use of clinical decision-support and patient-provider communication tools; share evidence-based practices and training opportunities to provide safety and scientific knowledge to the workforce
• Expand and transform the healthcare workforce through the training and engagement of emerging health occupations, such as community health workers and promotores de salud, and community partners to enhance the provision of culturally-, linguistically-, and disability-appropriate services, and increase workforce diversity

• Transform clinical training environments to develop a healthcare workforce that maximizes patient, family, and caregiver engagement and improves health outcomes for older adults by integrating geriatrics and primary care

• Increase access to quality trainings for public health workers that address cross-cutting competencies

• Remove any barriers to, and promote, full participation in the health care workforce by persons and/or organizations with religious beliefs or moral convictions

Collect, analyze, and apply data to better understand opportunities to strengthen the healthcare workforce

• Evaluate and monitor the workforce to facilitate occupational forecasting, data collection and analysis, and general research to identify the characteristics, gaps, needs, and trends of the workforce and where to target resources

• Examine state or tribal models that have allowed providers – such as midwives, nurse practitioners, and dental health therapists – to practice or provide care outside of a physician’s or dentist’s practice
Strategic Goal 2: Protect the Health of Americans Where They Live, Learn, Work, and Play

HHS efforts to improve public health involve close partnerships with state, local, tribal, territorial, and foreign governments and nongovernmental entities, including faith-based and other community organizations, within and outside the United States. Through advancing health promotion and wellness, promoting healthcare access, preventing and controlling communicable and chronic disease, reducing the impact of mental and substance use disorders, and preparing for and responding to public health emergencies and disasters, HHS seeks to improve public health outcomes for the Nation.

The four objectives in this strategic goal include a selection of strategies HHS is implementing related to health promotion, communicable and chronic disease, mental and substance use disorders, and public health emergencies.

Within HHS, the following divisions are working to achieve this goal: Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Administration for Community Living (ACL), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Indian Health Service (IHS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Office for Civil Rights (OCR), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), Office of Global Affairs (OGA), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
Objective 2.1: Empower people to make informed choices for healthier living

Promoting public health is more than preventing disease; HHS is working on a number of strategies to help people increase control over and improve their health and well-being, including through faith-based and other community organizations. Health promotion and wellness strategies supported by HHS are often focused on populations at risk for poorer health outcomes, such as older adults, people with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, American Indian and Alaska Native populations, people with low socioeconomic status, children, and people with limited English proficiency.

HHS seeks to achieve this objective, in part, by removing barriers to, and promoting, participation in HHS conducted, regulated, and funded programs by persons and organizations with religious beliefs or moral convictions and other community organizations – who have historically been the primary funders and deliverers of health care and human services in the United States.

By supporting individual healthy choices and expanding access to healthier living supports, HHS is investing in a number of strategies related to health promotion and wellness. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACF, ACL, ASPR, ATSDR, CDC, CMS, FDA, HRSA, NIH, OASH, OCR, OGA, and SAMHSA work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Ensure people have the information they need to make healthier living choices

- Communicate culturally competent and linguistically appropriate messages, delivered by appropriate messengers, including faith-based and other community organizations, in plain language and in alternate formats for persons with disabilities, using approaches that leverage new and emerging communications technologies
- Support programs and build partnerships with organizations that build the health literacy skills of disadvantaged and at-risk populations, and promote proven methods of checking understanding to ensure individuals understand health and prevention information, recommendations, and risk and benefit tradeoffs
GOAL 2: PROTECT THE HEALTH OF AMERICANS WHERE THEY LIVE, LEARN, WORK, AND PLAY

- Encourage providers to communicate effectively with patients, families, and caregivers by offering tools and resources to assist discussions centered around care and healthier living
- Support development of tools that provide information about potential environmental hazards in the natural and built environments
- Provide adolescents with information and support to make healthy decisions regarding their health and well-being
- Develop tools and resources that improve health department and healthcare setting efficiency in providing education, training, and quality assurance for screening, treatment, services and prevention messages
- Partner with private organizations, including faith-based and community organizations, to develop and implement programs to help people make healthy life choices
- Increase awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyle behaviors among patients and caregivers for risk reduction of chronic conditions and other illnesses, including for those with or at risk of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias, across the lifespan

Promote better nutrition and physical activity

- Enhance understanding of how consumers notice, understand, and act on food labeling and nutrition information, including nutrition facts labels, nutrition product claims, and dietary recommendations
- Decrease prevalence of obesity by encouraging breastfeeding, promoting healthy food and healthy beverage consumption and increased physical activity
- Reduce chronic diseases and related health behaviors that impact older adults and people with disabilities by adapting and implementing evidence-based programs and policies, such as implementing nutrition standards and guidelines
- Form public-private partnerships to promote health in schools and houses of worship, such as wellness workshops, physical activity, health literacy, and nutritional excellence programs
- Increase collaboration with stakeholders, including industry, consumer, and public health groups, to enhance consumer nutrition education directed towards age and demographic groups with specific needs

Reduce tobacco-related death and disease

- Reduce the negative health effects of tobacco use, by implementing a comprehensive approach which includes discouraging people from starting to use tobacco products,
**GOAL 2: PROTECT THE HEALTH OF AMERICANS WHERE THEY LIVE, LEARN, WORK, AND PLAY**

- Encouraging tobacco users to quit, educating parents on the potential harm to their children if the parents smoke and on the availability of smoking cessation programs, and reducing the harm caused by tobacco use
  - Reduce underage access to tobacco products by ensuring tobacco is not sold to individuals younger than age 18

**Expand access to healthier living supports**

- Increase access to preventive services, social and supportive services, and care management in areas and populations with high chronic disease burden
- Increase access to preventive services, to breastfeeding supports, to adaptive mammography equipment in clinics, to women’s health services that improve the incidence of healthy childbirth, including prenatal/pregnancy care and supports, and encourage and support lactation accommodations
- Support patient, consumer, and caregiver involvement in care planning, as appropriate, to ensure that care is person-centered, responding to the needs and wishes of those being served, including their religious or conscience needs and wishes

**Promote healthcare access and reduce health disparities**

- Develop and disseminate the use of culturally and linguistically competent, accessible approaches to reduce healthcare costs, improve quality of life, and reduce disparities
- Build partnerships across federal and state, territorial and tribal governments as well as nongovernmental entities, including faith-based and community organizations, to engage with disadvantaged or at-risk populations in healthcare decision making and healthy lifestyles
Objective 2.2: Prevent, treat, and control communicable diseases and chronic conditions

Through research, surveillance, and service delivery, HHS is working on a number of strategies to prevent, treat, and control communicable diseases and chronic conditions. HHS educates individuals, their families, and caregivers to prevent and manage communicable and chronic conditions and to improve health outcomes and well-being. HHS also implements strategies to make data exchange systems interoperable so that data can be shared between systems, data collection can be more efficient, and data can be used for evidence-based and cost-effective health interventions. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACF, ACL, ASPA, ASPR, CDC, CMS, FDA, HRSA, IHS, NIH, OASH, OGA, and SAMHSA work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Prevent and control infectious diseases

- Increase research on vaccine discovery and implementation science on best approaches for enhancing dissemination and uptake of effective vaccines domestically and internationally
- Mobilize resources to support the development, testing, and preparation of vaccines
- Develop a comprehensive portfolio of safe and effective vaccines, therapeutics including both pharmaceuticals and non-pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, and medical devices against a broad array of communicable diseases and chronic conditions
- Implement effective and coordinated public health and health care interventions to detect, prevent, and control environmental, person-to-person, and zoonotic transmission of infectious diseases in the U.S. and globally
- Respond to outbreaks of infectious diseases to identify their cause, limit their spread, and identify strategies for preventing future outbreaks
GOAL 2: PROTECT THE HEALTH OF AMERICANS WHERE THEY LIVE, LEARN, WORK, AND PLAY

Reduce the emergence and spread of antibiotic-resistant infections
- Prevent the emergence and spread of antibiotic-resistant infections domestically and internationally by increasing surveillance, early detection methods, and response capacity
- Expand the study and use of low-cost, readily available alternatives to antibiotics, as interim solutions to antibiotic resistance
- Foster improvements in the appropriate use of antibiotics by improving prescribing practices and promoting antibiotic stewardship across all healthcare settings and in all veterinary settings
- Advance development and use of rapid and innovative diagnostic tests for identification and characterization of infections and resistant bacteria

Prevent or mitigate contamination of food
- Work with stakeholders to implement science-based preventive control standards for domestic and imported foods
- Increase consumer-based communications, outreach, and research on measures to improve consumer food safety-related behaviors and practices
- Increase research, data analysis, and systematic evaluation to improve the effectiveness of food safety education in changing unsafe consumer food handling behaviors

Support early detection and treatment of communicable and chronic diseases
- Increase access to a core set of clinical preventive services including immunizations and screenings, especially for underserved populations
- Expand screening for tobacco use, alcohol misuse, and obesity, and offer counseling and treatment as appropriate
- Improve HIV viral suppression and prevention by increasing engagement and re-engagement activities for screening, care, treatment and support services
- Increase access to hepatitis B and hepatitis C screening, care, and treatment for people with hepatitis B or hepatitis C infection
- Prevent the spread of infectious diseases among persons who inject opioids or other drugs by supporting implementation of effective, comprehensive community- and school-based interventions that reduce the infectious risks associated with injection of opioids and other drugs, increase screening and treatment for bloodborne pathogens, and provide access to effective treatment of substance use disorder
GOAL 2: PROTECT THE HEALTH OF AMERICANS WHERE THEY LIVE, LEARN, WORK, AND PLAY

- Improve early detection and treatment of those with and at risk for a range of diseases and disorders, including heart attack, stroke, heart failure, asthma, COPD, diabetes, kidney disease, cancer, and chronic pain, through widespread implementation of evidence-based interventions
- Improve triage and screening for the prevention of communicable diseases and the future development of chronic diseases in children through annual health screenings and age-appropriate immunizations for children

*Note: additional mental health and substance use strategies are in Objective 2.3*

Support chronic disease management interventions

- Expand participation by older adults and adults with disabilities in self-management education interventions
- Improve planning, coordination, and management of services to better meet the needs of people with complex health care needs and chronic health conditions

Fund and conduct research on opportunities to prevent, treat, and control chronic conditions and communicable diseases

- Accelerate research and national efforts to implement solutions at the individual, family and community level, including through partnerships with faith-based and community organizations, to reduce childhood obesity, including focusing on the pregnancy period to age five in terms of the etiology and interventions
- Develop, evaluate, and implement high-impact public health interventions domestically and internationally, and advance policies to increase community and individual engagement in infectious diseases prevention efforts
- Invest in research on the use of specific non-pharmacological social and behavioral interventions to prevent, treat, and control communicable and chronic conditions

*Note: additional research investment strategies are in Objective 4.3*
Objective 2.3: Reduce the impact of mental and substance use disorders through prevention, early intervention, treatment, and recovery support

Through prevention, early intervention, treatment, and recovery supports, as well as collaborations with local, state, and tribal governments and nongovernmental organizations, including faith-based and community organizations, HHS seeks to reduce the impact of mental and substance use disorders and improve outcomes. HHS also is leveraging technology and expanding access to evidence-based supports related to mental and substance use disorders. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACF, ACL, AHRQ, CDC, CMS, FDA, HRSA, IEA, IHS, OCR, and SAMHSA work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Expand prevention, screening, and early identification of serious mental illness and substance use disorders

- Apply a public health approach for preventing opioid misuse, opioid use disorder, and opioid overdose deaths including through promoting safer prescribing practices
- Educate and empower individuals and communities, including through partnerships with faith-based and community organizations, to recognize the signs of serious mental illness and substance use disorders, to encourage screening and identification of such problems
- Ensure early screening of children and youth to identify those with or at risk for serious emotional disturbance and substance use disorders, and expand access to integrated mental health and substance use disorder services
- Promote healthy development, including social and emotional development, in young children to avoid behavioral problems and promote school readiness and learning
- Support screening for depression, suicide risk, substance use, overdose risk, and other behavioral disorders in schools, emergency departments, and inpatient and outpatient settings
• Increase healthcare providers’ use of alcohol use disorder screening and brief intervention approaches to reduce consequences of risky behavior, including effects of alcohol use in pregnancy

• Support adoption of other evidence-based prevention strategies, including environmental strategies, to prevent substance misuse and substance use disorders

• Increase school- and community-based primary prevention programs, including through faith-based and community organizations, that integrate risk and protective factors for mental health and substance use disorders among youth

**Improve access to high-quality care and treatment for mental and substance use disorders**

• Support the integration of the full continuum of behavioral health care and primary care and medical systems, and increase the capacity of the specialty behavioral health systems to ensure that the physical health needs of the people they serve are met

• Advance policy, training, practice, research, evaluation, and coordination to mobilize organizations, systems, and communities to implement trauma-informed approaches

• Provide integrated child and family supports to parents/guardians with substance use disorders to support healthy child development and that families remain intact

• Improve access to medications that reverse opioid overdose and prevent death and support efforts to increase engagement in treatment following an opioid overdose

*Note: additional behavioral health care quality strategies are in Objective 1.2*

**Improve access to recovery support for people with serious mental illness and substance use disorders**

• Expand the peer provider workforce by working with states to increase the training, certification, financing, and supervision of peers

• Support broad adoption of evidence-based supported housing, supported employment, and supported education programs

• Engage individuals and communities, including through faith-based and community organizations, to provide social and community recovery support

• Ensure that individual rights are protected including addressing abuse and neglect, parity, Olmstead, Americans with Disabilities Act, and other protections

**Build capacity and promote collaboration among states, tribes, and communities**

• Improve community capacity to provide comprehensive, coordinated, and evidence-based supports for people with serious mental illness, substance use disorders, and serious
emotional disturbances with a focus on reducing crises and use of emergency services, hospitalization, and involvement with the criminal justice system

- Foster and strengthen relationships with faith-based and community partners to encourage their full and robust involvement in addressing the opioid crisis in their local communities by providing accurate, up-to-date information regarding health and human service activities, resources, and subject matter expertise; and by strengthening national, regional and local coalitions

- Promote the health and independence of older adults with or at risk for behavioral health conditions (i.e., mental illness, substance use disorders, suicide) through improved collaboration with federal and non-federal stakeholders

**Invest in evaluation and promote evidence-based interventions**

- Analyze data on behavioral health disparities to increase understanding of factors contributing to disparities, identify disadvantaged and at-risk populations, assess trends, and inform policy and program development

- Strengthen clinician training on evidence-based practices related to the prevention and treatment of opioid use disorders to inform clinical management decisions for patients, including effects of opioid use in pregnancy

- Improve adoption and continued refinement of selected evidence-based practices for serious mental illness, medication assisted treatment for opioid use disorder, and effective use of psychotherapy and antidepressant medication for depression

- Improve access to a full evidence-based continuum of care for people with mental and substance use disorders, including medication-assisted treatment, follow-up from inpatient and residential care, and recovery supports, with a focus on opioid use disorders and serious mental illness

- Prevent suicides and suicide attempts by expanding evidence-based approaches for adults and youth

**Leverage technology and innovative solutions**

- Develop, test, and disseminate clinical decision supports through electronic health records to use evidence-based mental health and substance use disorder guidelines for preventing and treating mental health and substance use disorders to increase access to appropriate behavioral care services

- Increase the use of health information exchange to improve the coordination and integration of care, including by increasing the number of behavioral health providers
GOAL 2: PROTECT THE HEALTH OF AMERICANS WHERE THEY LIVE, LEARN, WORK, AND PLAY

using interoperable electronic health records and by addressing confidentiality policy barriers to health information exchange

- Address the barriers, real or perceived, under Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and 42 CFR Part 2, to the sharing of mental health and substance use disorder information, through health information exchange, or otherwise, with other health care providers and with family members and friends of persons suffering with such illnesses

- Improve access to mental health and substance use disorder care for rural and underserved populations by supporting care through telehealth services through regulation and policy clarification and refinement, technical assistance, training and funding opportunities
Objective 2.4: Prepare for and respond to public health emergencies

Through direct services and critical partnerships with state, local, tribal, territorial, and foreign governments and nongovernmental entities (including faith-based and community organizations), and the private sector, HHS works to strengthen the Nation’s emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. HHS invests in research and in the public health and health care workforce to support continued improvements in the U.S. government’s preparedness, response, and recovery capacity. In addition, HHS works to promote global health security, enhancing preparedness activities at the country, regional, and global levels to identify gaps, build capacity, and track progress to be able to prevent, detect, and respond to health threats before they reach our Nation. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACF, ACL, ASA, ASPR, CDC, CMS, FDA, HRSA, IEA, NIH, OASH, OCR, and OGA work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Promote emergency preparedness and improve response capacity

- Provide expertise and tools to state and local governments, health systems and facilities, and other organizations, including faith-based and community organizations, to strengthen their capabilities to provide continuous, safe, and effective health care, public health services, and/or social services during emergencies and through the recovery period, including when such care or services may need to be delivered in alternate settings or by alternate mechanisms
- Develop and implement data-driven approaches that prioritize resources and technical support for under-prepared geographical regions and communities to maximize preparedness across the nation
- Enhance and expand the use and availability of public health and healthcare emergency response situational awareness tools, including investments in new systems and technologies that support rapid risk assessment, decision-making, resource coordination across many levels, and monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions
- Assess preparedness to plan for and use medical countermeasures during a public health emergency, and establish requirements based on estimated response needs, capacity to use, and desired characteristics of medical countermeasures to protect the public
Support timely, coordinated, and effective response and recovery activities

- Promote effective disaster risk reduction strategies to mitigate adverse physical and behavioral health impacts of disasters and public health emergencies
- Respond rapidly to limit the impacts of incidents by compiling, using, and sharing event information, using health diplomacy to coordinate health requests and communications with international partners, and executing response plans, operations, risk communication, and research to respond to emerging and re-emerging disease threats, and other activities
- Ensure that the needs of disadvantaged and at-risk populations are met in emergencies, through effective integration of traditionally underserved populations into planning, response, and recovery efforts
- Engage in planning and improvement activities with interagency, intergovernmental, and other domestic and international stakeholders, including faith-based and community organizations, to support the Nation’s timely response to public health emergencies and delivery of human services following a natural disaster or other public health threat

Improve collaboration and communication with federal and State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) partners

- Provide accurate and timely public health communication and media support to stakeholders and leadership, including deployed HHS leaders and teams
- Improve decision support at all levels through active collaboration with state, local, tribal, and territorial partners to share human health, environmental, zoonotic, and other relevant information to improve situational awareness
- Build resilient healthcare coalitions that integrate efforts of hospitals, emergency medical services, emergency management, and public health agencies
- Work with partners to develop, exercise, update and maintain risk communication, response, and recovery plans
- Formalize strategic partnerships to better ensure that medical countermeasure products and policies can be implemented effectively during an incident

Strengthen and protect the emergency preparedness and response workforce
GOAL 2: PROTECT THE HEALTH OF AMERICANS WHERE THEY LIVE, LEARN, WORK, AND PLAY

• Reduce illness and injury from hazardous exposures among first responders, emergency managers, public health officials, healthcare and human services providers, and their communities through health and safety training and education

• Advance and sustain a trained workforce to strengthen public health response to health emergencies to protect U.S. communities from domestic and global threats

• Develop and implement a vision for the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps for the twenty-first century, including roles and functions during public health and other emergencies

• Coordinate with the Commissioned Corps and other HHS human resources to help fill hard-to-fill assignments, bridge critical workforce gaps, and respond to public health emergencies

• Support health emergency response teams to respond rapidly to international health emergencies

• Increase capacity of emergency responders, healthcare and human services providers, and public health professionals to address needs of at-risk individuals in disaster and public health emergency preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery

Advance global health security

• Enhance international preparedness activities at the country, regional, and global levels to identify gaps, build capacity, and track progress to prevent, detect, and respond to health threats

• Enhance international preparedness through medical countermeasures and community mitigation measures, respecting the inherent dignity of persons from conception to natural death

• Collaborate with, and provide leadership to, international programs and initiatives to strengthen global preparedness and response to public health and medical emergencies

• Further develop, exercise, and update HHS plans for responding to international health threats which have the potential to impact national health security

Conduct focused research to create the knowledge to support evidence-based interventions for public health emergencies

• Enhance the portfolio of strategies, interventions, and evaluations to prevent and respond to public health emergencies
GOAL 2: PROTECT THE HEALTH OF AMERICANS WHERE THEY LIVE, LEARN, WORK, AND PLAY

- Accelerate research on novel therapeutics, vaccines, rapid diagnostics, and behavioral interventions to expand evidence-based biomedical countermeasures and preparedness strategies

Note: additional research investment strategies are in Objective 4.3
Strategic Goal 3: Strengthen the Economic and Social Well-Being of Americans across the Lifespan

A core component of the HHS mission is our dedication to serve all Americans from conception to natural death, but especially those individuals and populations facing or at high risk for economic and social well-being challenges, through effective human services. HHS efforts to improve human services include efforts to support socially and economically safe, stable environments for individuals, families, and communities. This strategic goal also focuses on HHS efforts to improve outcomes for children and families, older adults, people with disabilities, and people with limited English proficiency.

The strategies presented are not intended to be an exhaustive list, but a curated set of activities that we believe will positively impact human services outcomes.

Within HHS, the following divisions are working to achieve this goal: Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Administration for Community Living (ACL), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Indian Health Service (IHS), Office for Civil Rights (OCR), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
Objective 3.1: Encourage self-sufficiency and personal responsibility, and eliminate barriers to economic opportunity

HHS invests in safety net programs as well as programs that seek to assist specific populations who are, or who are at risk of, being unemployed or underemployed – such as youth, people with disabilities, and formerly incarcerated individuals – in preparing for, acquiring, and sustaining employment. HHS implements strategies to strengthen self-sufficiency and independence through personal responsibility and economic opportunity.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACF, ACL, and CMS work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Reform safety net programs to assist disadvantaged and low income populations

- Foster coordination and innovation across safety net programs, including faith-based and community organizations, to help individuals and families in need to become self-sufficient
- Increase access to comprehensive services (i.e., health, behavioral health, student loans, public assistance, and public housing) through short-term, transitional public welfare services and partnerships with other federal agencies and faith-based and community organizations, help formerly incarcerated individuals develop habits of personal responsibility, including obtaining and maintaining employment, reconnecting with their children and families, paying child support, and avoiding recidivism
- Support youth to transition to adulthood by strengthening personal responsibility, relationship and employability skills, and by increasing knowledge to help youth establish and maintain positive, healthy relationships—including connections with caring adults—through evidence-based or evidence-informed healthy marriage and relationship education

Invest in education, training, work, and work supports

- Strengthen the required work participate rate standards for states receiving TANF funds, and provide guidance and technical assistance to state TANF programs to engage adult cash assistance recipients (who have the capacity to work) in work activities
GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF AMERICANS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

• Reinvigorate the TANF program to advance the objective of helping families in need find stability and support through the employment and economic independence of adult participants and the healthy development of children whose families receive assistance

• Invest in evidence-informed practices that enable adults, unemployed noncustodial parents, youth, and individuals with disabilities to prepare for, acquire, and sustain employment to enhance economic self-sufficiency and well-being for themselves and their families

• Provide assistive technology equipment to people with disabilities allowing them more self-sufficiency and eliminating barriers to their economic opportunity

• Working with faith-based and community organizations, advance independence and economic self-sufficiency of individuals and populations facing economic and social challenges through education, leadership opportunities, protection of rights, training, and capacity building

• Increase the number of employed people with disabilities by encouraging and assisting integration into the greater community’s workforce

• Integrate refugees entering the country into American society and connect them with wraparound services and resources for economic opportunity and success

Note: additional strategies on supporting independence for people with disabilities are in Objective 3.4
Objective 3.2: Safeguard the public against preventable injuries and violence

HHS plays a key role in safeguarding the public against preventable injuries and violence – including child maltreatment, unintentional poisoning, domestic violence and dating violence, and falls, abuse, neglect, and exploitation among older adults and people with disabilities. HHS invests in a number of strategies to protect vulnerable groups – including identifying evidence-based practices, collecting and analyzing data, and forging partnerships with state and local stakeholders. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing to improve outcomes and reduce injuries and violence.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACF, ACL, CDC, IHS, and OASH work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Identify and disseminate evidence-based practices to reduce injuries and violence

- Increase access in states and communities to the best available evidence for violence and injury prevention to implement programs to reduce risks across the lifespan
- Invest in rigorous research and evaluation of falls prevention and violence prevention programs and promotion of evidence-based strategies to reduce injuries among high-risk populations through communication activities and participation with community and industry stakeholders
- Invest in rigorous research and evaluation to identify effective violence and injury prevention strategies, and support the adoption of evidence-based practices to address these issues
- Develop the foundation of knowledge about important abuse intervention models to enhance evidence-based services for older adults and adults with disabilities
- Disseminate evidence-based strategies to keep children and youth safe from violence and injuries – including child maltreatment, unintentional poisoning, drowning, fires and burns, and infant suffocation
- Invest in rigorous research and evaluation of domestic violence programs, including those provided by faith-based and community organizations, increase support for community based services for victims of domestic and dating violence, and provide training and
GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF AMERICANS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Technical assistance to build their capacity to serve victims of intimate partner abuse, especially those from underserved communities.

Expand partnerships with Federal, state, local, tribal, and other stakeholders to reduce injuries and violence.

- Expand interagency partnerships and systems to train health care and human service providers to assess for domestic violence and do brief interventions to link victims to safety and support services, including through faith-based and community organizations.
- Expand bullying and youth dating violence prevention partnerships with Federal, state, local, tribal and non-governmental stakeholders to support safety and well-being.
- Expand and strengthen partnerships with federal, state, and local partners, including faith-based and community organizations, on gang prevention programs as well as investing in youth mentoring and coaching, counseling, and life skills and workforce training.

Collect, analyze, and report national data on incidence and consequences of injuries and violence.

- Assess health care use and costs associated with violence and unintentional injury, including patient safety events that occur in healthcare settings.
- Develop and enhance timely, coordinated data systems to monitor injuries and violence by using expanded surveillance, innovative methods, and new technology to inform and evaluate national and state prevention activities.

Note: additional surveillance strategies are in Objective 4.1.
Objective 3.3: Support strong families and healthy marriage, and prepare children and youth for healthy, productive lives

Through child and youth development activities, support for parents and caregivers, promotion of evidence-based practices, and integration of health and human services efforts, HHS is working to support healthy children and youth and strong families. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing to improve outcomes among children, youth, and families.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACF, ACL, AHRQ, CDC, HRSA, IHS, OASH, and SAMHSA work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Support healthy development and well-being of children and youth

- Protect women and their unborn children from harm and harmful exposures during pregnancy, and promote recommended protective prenatal and postpartum behaviors, including encouragement of breast-feeding when possible
- Address data gaps in prevalence and risk factors for child maltreatment
- Expand access to infant and early childhood mental health consultation in key early childhood systems, and access to mental health services for children and families
- Improve services to children and families involved in the child welfare system as a result of a parental or caretaker opioid or other substance use disorder, including through faith-based and community organizations
- Promote healthy development in young children to avoid behavioral challenges, promote school readiness and learning, and offer parents of young children access to evidence-based, culturally-appropriate parenting education and supports
- Improve the quality of early childhood development through professional development, parental involvement and coaching, and other training and technical assistance
- Identify effective approaches for early language development and integrate proven approaches into existing programs that reach children to achieve optimal brain development for all children, and leverage relationships with public and private partners, including faith-based and community organizations, for broad implementation
GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF AMERICANS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

• Promote increased physical activity and active play, improved nutrition, reduced screen time, and increased interpersonal contact with and between children in child care and early childhood development programs

• Develop the evidence base on interventions or components of programs that moderate the effects of child trauma or high numbers of adverse childhood experiences

• Working with partners, including faith-based and community organizations, support successful youth transitions to adulthood by strengthening relationship and employability skills, and by increasing knowledge to help youth establish and maintain positive, healthy relationships, including connections with caring adults, through evidence-based or evidence-informed healthy marriage and relationship education, including those programs provided by faith-based and community organizations

Support parents, guardians, and caregivers

• Improve opportunities for parent participation in a evidence-based parenting curriculum or mentoring programs to improve parenting skills and lead to better learning and development outcomes for children and marital and family stability

• Support efforts, including through faith-based and community organizations, to educate parents and caregivers about healthy child development, effective parenting practices, and specific developmental and health concerns faced by their children

• Support and engage fathers in innovative program models across agencies to better integrate them into their families’ life and thereby unifying families and helping to lift them out of poverty

• Encourage parents and families to maximize involvement with their children, reduce screen time, and expand conversation and positive family interactions

Promote coordinated, high-quality, evidence-based human services

• Provide training and technical assistance to help parents and families have greater involvement with teachers, educators, and caregivers to improve the quality of early childhood settings

• Support faith-based and community organizations to promote strong, healthy family formation and maintenance through programs that combine marriage and relationship education services with efforts to address participation barriers, economic stability, and needs of their participants

• Develop and implement local and national dissemination strategies to communicate the value of healthy marriages and relationships, and of the success sequence, which
GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF AMERICANS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

recommends completing education, obtaining employment, and getting married before a first or subsequent child, across all socioeconomic demographics

Integrate human services and health supports to support well-being of children, youth, and families

- Ensure more young children become up to date on all age-appropriate preventive and primary health care, including sensory and developmental screening, with appropriate referral and intervention
- Promote interagency federal, state, and local coordination, including through faith-based and community organization, to facilitate families’ access to services and help them navigate systems of care across the full spectrum of family needs, including housing, education and training, healthcare, child care, social services, and economic supports
- Integrate age- and developmentally-appropriate strategies into programs designed to help all youth manage risk and make better choices
- Integrate trauma-informed, family-focused behavioral health services with pediatric primary care
- Increase access to health education services, such as opportunities to learn about the importance of healthy eating and physical activity, and parental mental health or substance use, for families with young children
- Remove barriers to inclusion and accessibility to early child care and education for children with disabilities

Invest in research and evaluation to strengthen human services programs

- Conduct applied research and disseminate findings to maximize use of evidence-based strategies to improve the well-being of children at all stages of development, youth and families
- Develop evidence on policies and practices that support stable, economically secure families

Note: additional research investment strategies are in Objectives 4.3 and 4.4
Objective 3.4: Maximize the independence, well-being, and health of older adults, people with disabilities, and their families and caregivers

Through enhancing community living opportunities, improving care transitions, strengthening long-term services and supports, and supporting caregivers and the workforce, including through partnerships with faith-based and community organizations, HHS is working to maximize the independence, well-being, and health of older adults and people with disabilities. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing to improve outcomes related to children and adults with disabilities, and older adults.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACF, ACL, CDC, CMS, HRSA, OASH, and SAMHSA work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Strengthen supports for community living

- Develop age- and dementia-friendly livable communities to improve quality of life for older adults, families, caregivers, people with disabilities, and the larger community
- Promote independence of older adults and people with disabilities through improved federal collaboration, including with faith-based and community organizations, to ensure opportunities to live and receive services in the community
- Foster culture change through inclusion and accessibility for children and adults with disabilities and older adults and removing physical and other barriers
- Ensure programs for people with disabilities and older adults help protect them from all forms of abuse, including physical, mental, emotional, and financial abuse, and help ensure their ability to exercise their rights to make choices, contribute to their communities, and live independently

Support improved care transitions and care coordination

- Promote collaboration among federal, state, local, and private sector partners, including faith-based and community organizations, that serve older adults, people with disabilities, and their families and caregivers to improve access to a full range of healthcare services, and home and community-based services
GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF AMERICANS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

- Pursue initiatives and programs to provide support to older adults, people with disabilities, and their families and caregivers as individuals move between institutional settings and home
- Increase the proportion of youth with disabilities who have plans in place for transitioning from pediatric to adult care

**Improve quality and availability of long-term services and supports, including home and community-based services (HCBS)**

- Support the development of endorsed performance measures to include a HCBS core set to measure and quantify processes and outcomes, and enable comparable data for public reporting and quality measurement
- Permit innovative delivery system models and program flexibilities that include HCBS to improve quality, accessibility, and affordability in Medicare and Medicaid
- Expand person-centered models of care in Medicare and Medicaid that provide an integrated approach to addressing individuals’ medical, long-term support, and other needs to maintain health, well-being, and independence
- Identify opportunities to accelerate the development, evaluation, translation, implementation, and scaling up of comprehensive care, services, and supports for persons with dementia, families, and other caregivers
- Assist states in strengthening and developing high-performing long-term services and supports systems that focus on the person, provide streamlined access, and empower individuals to participate in community living
- Educate and improve the awareness of HCBS providers for integrating the access and functional needs of older adults and people with disabilities into disaster and public health emergency preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery

*Note: additional health care quality strategies are in Objective 1.2, and emergency preparedness and response strategies are in Objective 2.4*

**Strengthen supports for caregivers**

- Expand the availability of, and access to, supports for unpaid family caregivers, to maximize the health and well-being of the caregivers and the people for whom they provide care
- Educate and empower community supports, such as faith-based and community organizations, to provide support of all types for caregivers
- Identify research gaps in caregiving and optimize sharing of research findings
GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF AMERICANS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

- Improve access to educational and community-based resources that caregivers can use to maintain and/or increase their health and well-being

Reduce disparities in services for older adults and people with disabilities

- Include culturally appropriate, person- and family-centered care planning in federal social and healthcare services for older adults and persons with disabilities to protect individual choice and address a person’s current and future economic resources, including advanced care planning needs
- Monitor, through existing national surveillance systems, the status of the health, well-being, and independence of older adults and people with disabilities, and improve reporting on these populations

Strengthen the workforce

- Educate the healthcare and service professional workforce on the concerns of a geriatric population to ensure awareness of the unique challenges and issues of older adults
- Improve and increase competency in the healthcare and direct service workforce in person-centered approaches and cultural competency
- Strengthen the training and capacity of healthcare providers to recognize, assess, refer, connect, and engage caregivers
- Strengthen partnerships between academia, health delivery systems, and faith-based and community organizations to educate and train the workforce to provide high-quality, culturally competent care
GOAL 4: FOSTER SOUND, SUSTAINED ADVANCES IN THE SCIENCES

Strategic Goal 4: Foster Sound, Sustained Advances in the Sciences

This strategic goal describes efforts to improve surveillance, epidemiology, and laboratory services; strengthen the scientific workforce and infrastructure; advance basic science knowledge, applied prevention and treatment research, and evaluation; and finally, disseminate, apply, and leverage knowledge to improve health, public health, and human services outcomes. The research pursued under this strategic goal is to be conducted consistent with the understanding that human subjects protection applies to all human beings from conception to natural death.

The strategies presented are not intended to be an exhaustive list, but a curated set of activities that describe critical science and research investments and priorities.

Within HHS, the following divisions are working to achieve this goal: Administration for Community Living (ACL), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
**Objective 4.1: Improve surveillance, epidemiology, and laboratory services**

HHS is dedicated to conducting science that leads to evidence-based, high-quality care and rapid interventions to mitigate health crises. Data and information from high-quality science aids in the prevention and early intervention of foodborne illnesses and infectious disease outbreaks such as Zika and Ebola. Also, surveillance allows us to identify populations and geographic areas with unusually high levels of chronic or behavioral conditions.

HHS fosters, facilitates, and uses partnerships across all levels of government, including international, non-governmental, academic, and private institutions to promote the alignment of surveillance methods and the timely and effective sharing of surveillance data, epidemiological analyses, laboratory specimens, and data on health system capability and capacity data.

Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing to improve surveillance, epidemiology, and laboratory services.

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**Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs**

ASPR, CDC, CMS, FDA, NIH, OCR, OGA, and SAMHSA work to achieve this objective.

**Strategies**

**Promote and protect laboratory quality and safety**

- Ensure training for laboratory personnel and management, and ensure evaluations and inspections to promote laboratory and employee safety, security, and occupational health
- Review standards for laboratory quality and strengthen guidance to increase patient and laboratory safety
- Enhance domestic and international laboratory infrastructures and quality assurance systems to collect, ship, screen, store, and test specimen samples for public health threats and interventions for such threats
- Support the development, implementation, and evaluation of new laboratory technologies and their use for emerging infectious diseases, antimicrobial resistance, food safety, pharmaceutical safety, chronic disease risk factors, and environmental biomonitoring
- Leverage expertise and provide resources to improve on laboratory regulatory requirements and best laboratory practices
GOAL 4: FOSTER SOUND, SUSTAINED ADVANCES IN THE SCIENCES

- Provide essential ongoing professional development opportunities to ensure the laboratory-based workforce remains on the cutting edge of relevant scientific and technological advancements
- Support the private and secure collection, maintenance, analysis, and sharing of information to improve surveillance and expand the evidence base for high-quality care and rapid interventions, through Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) rules and guidance

**Strengthen surveillance and epidemiology to protect health security and improve health outcomes**

- Develop innovative solutions for conducting population health monitoring, risk assessments, and analysis of epidemiological data to improve our understanding of health risk factors and the effectiveness of health interventions, and to support a data-driven approach to emergency preparedness, response, and recovery
- Foster state, federal, and international partnerships to improve surveillance across the continuum of care to identify and control infectious disease threats, healthcare-associated infections, antimicrobial-resistant pathogens, environmental health hazards, and other threats to public health and health security
- Enhance domestic and global capacity for influenza surveillance to ensure rapid detection and reporting of cases or outbreaks of influenza viruses that have pandemic potential and to monitor trends in seasonal influenza epidemiology
- Promote use of youth-focused surveillance and data collection to inform school and community actions that improve the health of adolescents
- Support and enhance the collection of behavioral health survey and surveillance data to establish trends and detect aberrations, particularly in response to local or national disasters, in order to respond to community level emergencies and localized public health threats
- Strengthen understanding of the opioid crisis through better public health surveillance to inform clinical management decisions for patients, including effects of opioid use in pregnancy and neonatal abstinence syndrome
- Implement advanced laboratory, epidemiologic, and environmental methods across federal and state agencies to identify, investigate and stop foodborne outbreaks sooner and prevent future illness by identifying and addressing gaps in the food safety system

*Note: additional strategies on emergency preparedness and response are in Objective 2.4*
Facilitate information sharing, exchange, and alignment

- Implement information technology solutions that support timely information exchange among local, state, international, and federal agencies, healthcare facilities, and laboratories while ensuring that these systems minimize threats to information security
- Modernize domestic and international infectious and chronic disease surveillance systems to improve system interoperability and more rapid reporting, data exchange and use to drive timely public health and medical action and response
- Promote new and innovative methods to rapidly collect, store, standardize, share, and analyze data across all levels of government, and with non-governmental partners, to improve situational awareness and public health surveillance before, during, and after public health and medical emergencies

Enhance and standardize public health data collection and reporting

- Enhance domestic and international information systems (e.g., data linkage, shared services, data standards) and apply modern data science methods to provide timely, high quality, and actionable data for early outbreak detection, rapid response to public health threats, programmatic planning, and targeted interventions for populations at risk
- Improve data collection methodologies and systems for enhancing real time and local data collection in order to minimize local burden, and improve timeliness, reliability and comparability of the data, allowing for local public health and healthcare providers to use data for decision making and response mobilization
- Improve surveillance of antimicrobial resistance by developing reporting guidelines for microbiology laboratories based upon federal, state, and local requirements
- Optimize the ascertainment and evaluation of adverse events related to the use of regulated human and animal medical products, including the development and more effective use of large nationally representative database systems, electronic health records, common data models, and natural language processing
- Improve health and behavioral health outcomes for children and their parents by building epidemiological capacity in states and counties to identify high need issues and particular areas of risk using surveillance data and then responding with appropriate evidence-based interventions and policy development

Note: additional strategies on adverse health events are in Objective 1.2
Objective 4.2: Expand the capacity of the scientific workforce and infrastructure to support innovative research

As science and technology advance, it is imperative that research staff and scientists involved in HHS-conducted or HHS-supported research have the resources needed to conduct high quality and efficient work. Through various initiatives and programs, HHS recruits and trains students, recent graduates, and other professionals to conduct rigorous and reproducible research. HHS invests in Federal statistical units responsible for national surveys that provide reliable, timely and policy relevant information for policy makers and researchers. Additionally, HHS provides research training and career development opportunities to ensure that a diverse pool of highly trained investigators will be available across the range of scientific disciplines necessary to address the Nation’s biomedical and scientific research needs. HHS invests substantial resources in research facilities that provide access to instruments, technologies, services, as well as access to expert consultants.

Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing to expand the capacity of the scientific workforce and infrastructure to support innovative research.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACL, AHRQ, ASPR, CDC, FDA, NIH, OASH, and OGA work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Recruit and retain a scientific workforce responsive to future demands

• Support fellowships and other training programs in academic, industry, and government settings to help recruit and train early career scientists and survey statisticians

• Provide research training and career development opportunities to ensure that a diverse pool of highly trained investigators will be prepared for and available across the range of scientific disciplines necessary to address the Nation’s biomedical and scientific research needs

• Explore effectiveness of formal and informal mentorship of new scientists, including data scientists

• Conduct joint fellowship programs targeted to researchers and regulatory reviewers to provide multidisciplinary training across the interrelated areas of basic and translational science
GOAL 4: FOSTER SOUND, SUSTAINED ADVANCES IN THE SCIENCES

- Review administrative systems and policies to ensure they are aligned with anticipated workforce needs

Promote ethical and responsible research

- Assess peer review practices and provide the workforce with best practices for peer review
- Improve human subjects protection, and enforcement of human subjects protection regulations and other laws governing research, especially with respect to research involving human embryos or embryonic stem cells/tissue, fetal tissue, genetic engineering and manipulation of the germ cell, and the creation of chimeras
- Provide guidance and tools, including required trainings, to ensure that researchers are able to conduct research ethically, safely, securely, and responsibly
- Improve the methodological rigor, transparency, and reproducibility of federally-funded research and surveys and strengthen public confidence in federally-supported research and survey findings

Collaborate with the broader research community to strengthen innovation

- Facilitate interactions with domestic and international partners to promote basic science and research/educational collaborations between federal researchers, and educators, and the community, and to engage in innovative joint research projects
- Promote a culture of responsible data sharing, openness, and collaboration to better engage with academia and the private sector, consistent with applicable privacy and security requirements

Strengthen facilities and infrastructure capacity

- Leverage facilities as shared resources, which provide investigators access to advanced technologies through cutting-edge instrumentation operated by appropriately trained staff
- Ensure that the scientific research workforce has access to modern tools and resources for data science and scientific computing
Objective 4.3: Advance basic science knowledge and conduct applied prevention and treatment research to improve health and development

HHS conducts and funds basic and applied research to gain fundamental knowledge about living systems, and applies that knowledge to improve health and address a multitude of public health concerns, including: preventing emerging infectious disease; increasing the effectiveness for responding to global health threats; encouraging the use of age appropriate vaccines to minimize the burden of vaccine-preventable diseases across the life span; creating evidence-based guidelines to improve both behavioral and physical health and well-being; and identifying the most effective health and community-based interventions to address risk factors for addiction or substance use disorders. HHS disseminates this information broadly to state and local partners, to ensure that all Americans, including populations at risk for poor health and well-being outcomes, also can benefit from these advances. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing to advance basic science and applied research.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACL, AHRQ, ASPR, CDC, FDA, NIH, and OASH work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Foster a broad and diverse research portfolio to meet public health needs

- Conduct basic science and applied research and disseminate findings to maximize the use of age appropriate vaccines to minimize the burden of preventable diseases across the life span
- Conduct applied research to identify the most effective health and community-based system interventions that address the modifiable risk factors for prescription opioid misuse, heroin initiation, and opioid use disorder and overdose
- Develop and assess improved methods for rapidly detecting and investigating disease outbreaks and developing new preventive and therapeutic strategies
- Foster and capitalize on advances in personalized medicine to prevent and improve care for unmet medical needs
- Invest in research and education on behavior change methods, such as effective stress management, proper nutrition, and regular exercise
• Foster integration of behavioral and social science research into research involving acceptability and understanding of genomics and proteomics, to accelerate time-to-trial as well as improve study designs

• Support a broad and diverse portfolio of biomedical research by supporting a range of scientific disciplines, including basic and translational research, to augment scientific opportunities and innovation for public health needs, consistent with human subject protections, which protect all persons from conception on, and bioethics

• Produce and promote patient-centered healthcare delivery methods and interventions that improve care quality, promote healthcare access, reduce disparities, and address social determinants of health among populations at risk for poor health outcomes

• Support research to identify, implement, and evaluate interventions to reduce health disparities and improve the health of populations at risk for poor health outcomes

**Invest in research to strengthen and support healthcare providers**

• Strengthen research capacity across the nation and reduce health disparities by building the capacity to conduct fundamental biomedical research at institutions across all states

• Support applied research to evaluate the adoption, implementation, and impact of clinical decision support systems, and evidence-based guidelines on clinical and community preventive services and treatments to improve both behavioral and physical health and well-being

• Fund research on shared decision making to support healthcare providers’ efforts to deliver healthcare services that empower patients, families, and caregivers to implement lifestyle behavior modification aimed at better health and healthcare outcomes

• Fund applied research, development, training, and sharing of information and products to improve knowledge and practice of service delivery professionals who are supporting disadvantaged and at-risk populations

• Conduct research and disseminate findings on systems of care and strategies such as team-based care, enhanced communication, and improvements in technology that reduce burden and burnout of healthcare professionals and that create healthy workplaces

**Invest in research to prevent and mitigate global threats to health and well-being**

• Support basic science and applied prevention and treatment research on approaches to reduce the global burden of HIV, viral hepatitis, enteric and respiratory diseases, tuberculosis, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases
• Support basic and applied research to prevent and treat emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, and decrease time, and increase effectiveness, for responding to global health threats

• Strengthen basic and applied science and treatment pipelines by collaborating with other federal agencies to assess potential health threats and bolster the fundamental science knowledge in these risk areas to expedite the development of therapies

Foster a broad research plan to improve safety and efficacy of products

• Facilitate patient-focused medical product development to inform regulatory decision making

• Facilitate the development and qualification of clinical outcome assessment tools to measure clinical benefit in medical product development

• Conduct research to facilitate development and availability of innovative, safe, and efficacious human and animal medical products, including development of regulatory science

• Support and facilitate the adoption of innovative pharmaceutical technology to modernize product development and manufacturing, ensuring the consistent supply of high quality medicine for patients, and encourage the development of low-cost, high quality generic pharmaceuticals

Invest in research to reduce the incidence of the leading causes of death

• Support basic and clinical research to discern risk factors for, and the underlying pathophysiology of, the leading causes of death and accelerate applied and preventive research solutions

• Support research to prevent the leading causes of death in adults by improving the quality and specificity of reporting causes of death, developing systematic studies and testing interventions to determine and prevent the actual causes of death, thereby increasing both life expectancy and quality of life and reducing healthcare costs

• Support research to develop and test methods to increase adoption by primary care providers of recommendations from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force for clinical preventive services that address the leading and actual causes of death

• Support research to assess the five-year health outcomes and adverse events of preventive interventions that target the actual and leading causes of death, to assist the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force in providing evidence-informed recommendations
Objective 4.4: Leverage translational research, dissemination and implementation science, and evaluation investments to support adoption of evidence informed practices

HHS is dedicated to ensuring that we are using the lessons learned from our research and practice to inform how we continue to improve health, healthcare, and human services. Through collaborations on translational research, including dissemination and implementation science, and evaluation, HHS is able to promote and support adoption of evidence-informed practices to improve health and well-being. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing to leverage translational research, dissemination and implementation science, and evaluation investments.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

ACF, ACL, AHRQ, CDC, CMS, FDA, HRSA, NIH, OASH, and SAMHSA work to achieve this objective.

Strategies

Accelerate change through strategic partnerships and innovations

- Promote innovative approaches to translating research into interventions that improve health and well-being, by modernizing processes and removing obstacles to bring more effective practices to more people more quickly
- Leverage cutting edge science to support product development strategies, regulatory evaluation, and implementation science by establishing platforms for interaction with academic institutions, other government agencies and their investments, and industry

Improve programs for populations at risk for poor health and well-being outcomes

- Assess evidence-based practices and service delivery system improvements to increase access to services and improve outcomes and quality of life for disproportionately affected populations
- Support research conducted in a variety of settings and populations, to improve the quality and utility of evidence generated from HHS investments and the impact of those investments on a broad range of outcomes
GOAL 4: FOSTER SOUND, SUSTAINED ADVANCES IN THE SCIENCES

- Evaluate multifaceted strategies to apply evidence-based interventions to reach disproportionately affected populations and reduce health disparities

Disseminate knowledge

- Increase dissemination and implementation of evidence-based practices and provide training and technical assistance to stakeholders to improve outcomes
- Systematically review current evidence on the effectiveness of programs and policy, and disseminate these findings in easily accessible formats to practitioners and decision-makers
- Disseminate patient-centered outcome research findings to health professionals and organizations that deliver health care

Evaluate HHS programs for efficiency and effectiveness

- Foster a culture of learning through opportunities for coordination and collaboration within and across HHS and with external partners
- Identify improvements to existing evidence-based programs and policies to share broadly with local communities for public health impact
- Encourage the use of learning agendas or other tools to prioritize critical questions that generate evidence to guide decision making and continuous learning, including short- and long-term questions that build a portfolio of evidence about what works for whom
- Promote the use of common evidence standards, principles and practices for evaluation, and policies that support rigorous, relevant, transparent, independent, and ethical evidence-building activities

Support adoption of evidence-based practices

- Engage healthcare, public health, and human service system research networks to study and support local adaptation/customization of evidence-based practices
- Develop and disseminate tools and provide technical assistance that supports adoption and implementation of evidence-based practices to improve access to high-quality public health, healthcare, and human services
- Support knowledge translation capacity and practice to ensure that knowledge generated by grantees and others working in the field is used or adopted by its intended users
Goal 5: Promote Effective and Efficient Management and Stewardship

This strategic goal describes HHS efforts to develop the systems, workforce, and infrastructure to address the health, public health, and human services challenges of today and the future. Responsible allocation and expenditure of public funds, the development of robust and secure information management systems, cultivation of a highly skilled and motivated workforce, and a commitment to safety and security are all part of this management and stewardship goal.

The strategies presented are not intended to be an exhaustive list, but a curated set of activities that describe the Department’s priorities in this area.

All Operating and Staff Divisions within HHS are committed to achieving this goal.
**GOAL 5: PROMOTE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT AND STEWARDSHIP**

**Objective 5.1: Ensure responsible financial management**

HHS is committed to using its funding wisely and efficiently to fulfill its mission in a changing environment. Whether streamlining the acquisition process for laboratory supplies, establishing enterprise-wide solutions, or keeping current with information technology products and services investments, HHS takes the administration of its funding seriously. HHS will identify laws and regulations that inhibit accurate identification of improper payments and, as possible, effect change to address the root causes and improve payment accuracy. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing to ensure responsible financial management.

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**Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs**

All OpDivs and StaffDivs contribute to achievement of this objective.

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**Strategies**

**Streamline business processes to improve financial management**

- Use quality improvement principles to review key business processes, and identify opportunities to reduce risk and improve outcomes in areas such as financial management, grant management, and acquisitions
- Reduce inconsistent recording and incomplete financial data and, thus, reduce efforts required to perform data cleanup and data transformation
- Preserve public trust and stewardship of taxpayer funding by ensuring effective internal controls and efficient operating policies and procedures are in place that can result in an unqualified audit opinion with no material weaknesses

**Promote effective and efficient risk management across HHS and its programs**

- Conduct and use risk assessments within an enterprise risk management framework to improve information sharing and leadership decision-making, resulting in risk-informed strategy execution and program implementation
- Use public-private partnerships to prevent and detect fraud and other inappropriate payments across the healthcare industry by sharing fraud-related information and data, promoting best practices, and educating partners
1499  • Preserve the Medicare Trust Fund through prevention and detection of fraud, waste,
1500  abuse, and improper payments using program integrity tools, policies, and collaboration
1501  • Manage the costs associated with governmental imposition of private expenditures
1502  through implementation of Executive Order 13771 of January 30, 2017, Reducing
1503  Regulation and Controlling Regulatory Costs, by ensuring that, consistent with the
1504  Administrative Procedure Act and as informed by the terms of the Executive Order and
1505  associated guidance, for every one new regulation issued, at least two prior regulations
1506  are identified for elimination, and the cost of planned regulations are managed through a
1507  budgeting process
1508
1509  Strengthen the financial management, acquisition, and grants workforce
1509  • Reduce knowledge gaps within the financial management, acquisition, and grants
1510  workforce by supporting hiring, training, and development programs to strengthen
1511  competencies
1512  • Support knowledge transfer programs and training strategies so that the financial
1513  management, acquisition, and grants workforce can respond to challenges and changing
1514  demands across the enterprise
1515  • Develop a financial management, acquisition, and grants workforce that uses cross-
1516  functional and knowledge transfer training programs to respond to challenges and
1517  changing demands across the HHS enterprise
1518  Note: additional strategies on strengthening the HHS workforce are in Objective 5.2
Objective 5.2: Manage human capital to achieve the HHS mission

A high-quality workforce is essential for achieving the HHS mission. HHS is working to enhance the quality of our workforce through hiring and retaining a diverse and high caliber workforce, fostering employee engagement, deploying staff and supervisory training and professional development opportunities, and creating a stronger focus on performance and employee accountability. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing to manage our human capital.

Note: efforts to support the workforce can be found in Objectives 1.4, 2.4, 3.4, and 4.2

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

All OpDivs and StaffDivs contribute to achievement of this objective.

Strategies

Hire and retain a high-quality workforce to respond to current and emerging demands

- Recruit and retain the most qualified candidates to best meet the needs of the populations that we serve
- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of recruitment efforts by partnering with hiring managers to better leverage data, analytics, workforce planning, and succession management strategies to inform recruitment strategies
- Improve workforce planning efforts by targeting mission-critical occupations, and the occupations that provide crucial administrative and support functions

Cultivate a diverse workforce and maximize opportunities for employees to contribute to mission success

- Foster a work environment free from unlawful discrimination and harassment that uses the capabilities of every employee at all organizational levels
- Promote diversity and a quality workforce by improving access to reasonable accommodations and eliminating barriers to diversity
GOAL 5: PROMOTE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT AND STEWARDSHIP

Promote employee engagement

- Use employee feedback and best practices from across the federal government to identify and develop strategies to act on employee input and increase employee engagement

- Increase employee engagement, participation in the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, and belief that results will be used to improve the organization

Strengthen employee performance and accountability

- Enhance workforce accountability and inclusion through manager training and a transparent and impartial appraisal and recognition program

- Increase workforce accountability through effective performance measures, enhanced training, and appropriate administrative actions

Increase the effectiveness of staff and supervisory training and development opportunities

- Conduct succession planning and workforce development analyses to eliminate skill gaps in critical positions

- Advance employee development by encouraging cross-training activities, developmental and rotational assignments, mentoring and coaching, and other cross-functional activities

- Create and implement development opportunities to provide staff with the leadership, technical, and behavioral skills to succeed in their current and future positions

Leverage technology to support human capital management

- Implement enhanced information technology tools to increase transparency, streamline human resources processes, and attain reliable human capital data

- Improve operational efficiency and effectiveness by leveraging technology and automating business processes, and by increasing and promoting telework and virtual workforce programs across HHS, as appropriate in light of job responsibilities

- Use enterprise-wide technology to the maximum extent possible to solve human resources operational issues and inefficiencies
Objective 5.3: Optimize information technology investments to improve process efficiency and enable innovation to advance program mission goals

Technological advances can rapidly transform information technology systems from innovative to outdated. To achieve the HHS mission, legacy systems need to be upgraded and the infrastructure modernized to ensure the quality delivery of HHS services. HHS is working to increase collaborative partnerships with industry and academia to leverage cutting edge technology advances. HHS aims to enhance the experience of internal and external customers interacting with, using, or accessing HHS information technology to improve satisfaction, reduce burden, improve the overall user experience, and increase productivity. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing to optimize information technology investments.

Note: health information technology strategies to improve healthcare quality and access can be found in Objectives 1.2 and 1.3; health information technology strategies to improve mental health and substance use outcomes can be found in Objective 2.3

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

All OpDivs and StaffDivs contribute to achievement of this objective.

Strategies

Improve the customer experience

- Promote adoption of user-centered design for information technology services targeted to the American public
- Engage users and other critical partners to promote usability and accessibility of systems and data access, throughout the life cycle of information technology projects
- Leverage unified communications technology across HHS to promote a mobile, agile workforce that can be more engaged and participatory regardless of work location

Modernize information technology systems

- Employ and support management and administration of software and services that serve as a bridge between operating systems, databases, and applications
- Deliver shared services to minimize custom application development, maximize collaboration, and reduce cost, when appropriate
GOAL 5: PROMOTE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT AND STEWARDSHIP

- Support the capability of high performance computing services to deliver parallel processing for running advanced application programs efficiently, reliably and quickly
- Reduce the risk associated with unsupported or end-of-life systems by identifying opportunities to modernize, decommission, or replace legacy systems

**Improve acquisition of information technology assets and services**

- Align acquisition processes with information technology business models and practices, to provide the ability for HHS staff to acquire the information technology products and services to support mission activities more efficiently
- Promote strategic sourcing or other procurement vehicles for efficient and cost-effective provisioning of information technology goods and services
- Define, promote, and institutionalize the sharing of common information technology and business services to reduce new development and unnecessary costs, enable and encourage common processes, facilitate information sharing, and promote collaboration

**Strengthen governance and management of information technology investments**

- Support ongoing management and planning to optimize use of technology expertise and resources, properly align staffing and responsibilities, and maximize resources
- Implement skills-based workforce training for technology practitioners who design, manage, operate and support information technology investments

*Note: additional strategies on strengthening the HHS workforce are in Objective 5.2*

**Optimize HHS capacity for data-driven decision-making**

- Improve system interoperability to allow efficient data sharing, strengthen detection and surveillance of regulated products, reduce risks in manufacturing, production and distribution of regulated products, and increase regulatory science capacity to effectively evaluate products
- Improve the capture, use, and management of operational and administrative data by establishing formal processes, rules, and templates to control data sharing and protect sensitive information
Objective 5.4: Protect the safety and integrity of our human, physical, and digital assets

HHS is dedicated to protecting the safety and integrity of our human, physical, and digital assets through the implementation of physical security, personnel security, insider threat, internal emergency management programs, cybersecurity and privacy programs, and counterintelligence. Below is a selection of strategies HHS is implementing to protect the safety, security, and integrity of our people, facilities, systems, and information.

Contributing OpDivs and StaffDivs

All OpDivs and StaffDivs contribute to achievement of this objective.

Strategies

Identify, assess, remediate, and monitor risks to safety, security, and integrity

- Advance an enterprise-wide risk management approach that continually provides situational awareness of HHS’s risk posture by effectively identifying, assessing, remediating, and monitoring HHS risks
- Establish enterprise-wide safety and security models that incorporate best practices from other federal agencies

Protect information technology systems, data, and sensitive information, and prevent, detect, mitigate, and respond to cybersecurity events

- Maximize enterprise-level data access and security for stakeholders while ensuring data integrity and privacy in support of streamlined program flexibilities, accountability, and information exchange
- Ensure stronger authentication of privileged users to support application security
- Improve the sharing of intelligence with federal and private sector partners to improve situational awareness and reduce cyberthreats
- Maximize data access and usability to internal and external users while protecting data confidentiality, integrity and availability, including beneficiary privacy
- Promote integration of electronic data systems to increase efficiency and minimize redundancy while maintaining appropriate standards for identity management and the
protection of personally identifiable information (PII) and protected health information (PHI)

• Use a priority-based risk management approach that focuses on the protection of sensitive data, including PII and PHI data sets, High Value Assets, and Mission Essential Systems

Execute essential functions, even in the event of an emergency, while protecting the safety of the HHS workforce

• Promote and ensure the execution of essential federal functions, while providing for the safety and well-being of employees during emergency situations, including continuity of operations and emergency evacuations, and ensure that all safety and emergency plans take into consideration the varying needs of the HHS workforce

• Review and update continuity plans and procedures to ensure the safety of our workforce while taking advantage of available technologies, increasing efficiency, and minimizing duplication of efforts

Protect HHS facilities and infrastructure

• Strengthen physical, organizational, and functional infrastructure to maximize HHS’s ability to meet increased demands

• Implement best practices in identity and access management to enforce appropriate levels of protection to HHS-owned physical and logical assets and to ensure only authorized users are given access to resources and information
Appendix A: HHS Organizational Chart

Link to https://www.hhs.gov/about/agencies/orgchart/index.html