Health and Human Services Agency

Strategic Plan 2011-2020

Healthy people in thriving and safe communities

Strategic Plan 2011-2020

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From the Director

Thank you for your interest in our first 10-year strategic plan. When three separate departments combined in 2006, our direction from the Board of Supervisors was to coordinate services to better serve clients, increase efficiency, maximize funding and reduce duplication. Today, we have a unified vision and mission. We have reorganized and consolidated services to reach similar populations, and we have a cohesive leadership team. We are striving to look at our community and clients holistically, helping with physical health, mental health and addiction issues at once. This plan continues our progress.

In essence, the purpose of a strategic plan is to define common priorities and identify the means to address them. Instead of focusing on the myriad of continuous program improvements and program-specific goals that we engage in across the Agency every day, we chose to illustrate the strategic issues that would continue our cross-Agency growth. We have already accomplished a lot through collaboration, and we now have a road map for the future, taking into account our likely obstacles and opportunities. This strategic plan will help guide us in making decisions, seeking funding, facing new challenges and staying current with trends.

The strategic planning process involved input from multiple levels of staff and community partners. Workgroups researched the best practices to address each of these issues, and sought input to prioritize the possibilities. What follows in this document is the product of our efforts. From the direction in these pages, staff are developing action plans, establishing baseline and ongoing measurements to monitor progress, and pursuing resources to accomplish these goals.

We hope you will join us in creating a healthy, safe and thriving community for years to come.

Sincerely,
Donnell Ewert
Director
Shasta County Health and Human Services Agency

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From our Advisory Boards

It is our pleasure to endorse the Shasta County Health and Human Services Agency's 2011-2020 Strategic Plan. Members of our advisory boards participated in the development and review of the strategies and activities contained herein. We believe this strategic plan accurately reflects the priorities of the Health and Human Services Agency.

We commend the Shasta County Board of Supervisors and Health and Human Services Agency staff for their commitment to the vision of a healthy, thriving and safe community. We are confident this plan will serve as a road map toward that vision. We are grateful to have been part of the process to develop this plan, and we look forward to receiving updates on progress toward these goals.

Sandra Tary, Chair
Mental Health/Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board

Brad Frost, Chair
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Our Vision

Healthy people in thriving and safe communities

Our Mission

Partnering with communities to protect and improve health and well being

Our Values

Compassion: Caring about people
Prevention: Stopping problems before they start
Collaboration: Teamwork and partnership
Equality: Serving everyone
Excellence: Quality, integrity and accountability

Executive Summary

The Strategic Plan is organized around six overarching 10-year goals:

1. Decrease use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs
2. Prevent adverse childhood experiences
3. Promote mental well-being
4. Empower independence and self-sufficiency
5. Increase accessibility of services
6. Increase organizational capacity to provide high-quality services

There are 24 strategies to reach those goals, accompanied by five-year activities designed to support the strategic direction while leaving some flexibility for staff to develop and carry out specific action plans. In 2015, the HHSA will review progress and assess new or emerging developments in our environment, scientific research or funding and refresh/replace the activities under each goal.

To help us maintain focus, we used the following guidelines when developing activities:

- Evidence shows its effectiveness
- Would have major impact
- Cost effective
- Culturally appropriate
- Acceptable to the community we serve
- Realistic to implement
- Within our scope of responsibility and control
- Sustainable
- A new approach or something that hasn't been fully implemented
- Integrates different parts of the Agency

HHSA Timeline

June 2006: Board of Supervisors votes unanimously to form the Health and Human Services Agency

November 2006: Alcohol and Drug co-locates with Mental Health

2007: HHSA Steering Committee formed

June 2009: Business and Support Services consolidates and co-locates in downtown Redding

July 2009: Eligibility joins team in Anderson office; Public Guardian, Public Authority and In-Home Supportive Services move to Breslauer Way with other adult services (eligibility team joins them in March 2010)

October 2009: Agency transforms into Adult Services, Children's Services, Public Health and Regional Services

November 2009: Mental Health Advisory Board merges with the Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board to create the "Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board"

May-July 2011: Presentation of Strategic Plan

History of the Agency

In March 2006, the Board of Supervisors instructed staff to look into the feasibility of combining Mental Health, Public Health and Social Services departments into one agency. The study determined that the benefits of consolidation included enhanced coordination of services for shared clients, increased efficiencies, maximum use of financial leveraging, and cost savings due to reduced duplication.

On June 27, 2006, the Board of Supervisors approved the creation of the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA). By creating the Agency, the Board was seeking:

- A consolidated continuum of care for the families, children and individuals served by the agency.
- Programs that promote prevention and the health, well-being, safety and permanency of all children, families and other individuals in Shasta County.
- Objectivity and flexibility to receive community input, implement, evaluate, modify and refine practices to meet future needs and challenges.

Purpose for the Transformation

The HHSA's vision is for every Shasta County resident to enjoy opportunities for safe, healthy and productive lives within our various communities. Our first priority is to prevent health and social problems before they start. We promote optimal health for all, with extra investment in some special vulnerable populations that need us to support and preserve their well-being. The frail, the abused, the mentally ill and those without resources look to the HHSA for help to meet their basic needs, and to protect everyone's health and safety. To further our efforts to deliver integrated services to shared populations, we transformed the three original departments into five new branches that work collaboratively to address the many social, economic and health issues that confront our residents across program boundaries. This change aimed to improve efficiencies and to organize our services to be more responsive to customer needs.

Our goal is to have our staff use their skills and knowledge as a team to help customers at one place instead of sending them to many locations to get services. This makes our services easier to access, less confusing and more likely to be successful for those who need them. It treats the "whole" person or family, based on their needs.

Overview of Services

Children's Services helps ensure that children are safe. This branch provides child protection services and intensive support for abused and neglected children and their families. They also support children who can't remain or return home safely, by licensing foster homes and providing adoption services. The branch also provides children's mental health and youth alcohol and drug services and works with juvenile justice and education to coordinate services for clients.

Adult Services focuses on issues that affect people age 21 and older. Mental health services include outpatient, 24-hour crisis and residential mental health care. This branch also provides alcohol and drug services and follows up on adult abuse reports. In-Home Support Services helps those who need assistance with daily activities in order to remain safely at home and the Public Authority keeps a registry of screened caregivers to provide in-home support. Public Guardian helps people who require guardianship or conservatorship to manage their personal and financial affairs.

Public Health focuses on community-wide prevention of communicable and chronic disease, injury, substance use, tobacco use, family violence and lead poisoning. Public Health helps the community develop policies and support environments that encourage healthy behaviors. It promotes nutrition, physical activity, healthy aging, worksite wellness and maternal and children's health. The branch maintains a system for low-income well-child medical checkups and another to assure therapy and medical care for low-income children with disabilities.Emergency preparedness and the laboratory are also housed in Public Health.

Regional Services helps clients in the areas where they live. Located in south Redding, downtown Redding, Anderson, Shasta Lake, Burney and in the future Enterprise, these centers help with one or more safety net services such as CalFresh, WIC, Medi-Cal, General Assistance, County Medical Services Program, Healthy Families and CalWORKs. To encourage healthy families, each center also offers additional services, including prenatal care guidance, substance abuse treatment for pregnant and parenting women, tobacco cessation, passenger safety education, breastfeeding support and parent education. The Opportunity Center provides vocational training and employment services to adults with disabilities.

Business and Support Services serves the HHSA branches with human resource support, contracts management, information technology, compliance, facilities and fiscal services to help achieve HHSA's goals.

In focus

In Shasta County, almost two-thirds of smokers were younger than 18 when they started.[1]

Nearly half of Shasta County 11th graders have been very drunk or sick after drinking.[2]

Teens abuse prescription drugs more than cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine combined.[3]

About 19 percent of Shasta County adults have had five or more drinks in one sitting in the past month (binge drinking).[4]

[1,4] Mercy Medical Center, Redding: Community Health Assessment Survey, 2010.

[2,3] California Department of Education: California Healthy Kids Survey, Fall 2008.

Decrease the use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs

Tobacco use is the number-one preventable cause of death in Shasta County. Substance abuse destroys lives, undermines families and costs tens of millions of dollars annually in Shasta County in health care, public safety, workplace injuries and lost productivity, foster care and other expenses. If we can prevent youth from using tobacco and alcohol, future suffering is reduced. And if we can create a system to screen for and treat addictions in a compassionate and supportive way, users will have ample opportunities to quit this destructive behavior. We can help by practicing healthy habits ourselves, being good role models and getting engaged with youth and our community.

Strategy 1: Increase the number of health care providers that screen for and treat substance use disorders.

Supporting activities:

- Provide tools and advocate for the use of evidence-based, standardized substance use screening and referral protocols in health care delivery settings
- Support the integration of substance use screening into electronic health record systems
- Increase health care providers' understanding of laws, resources and practical methods to support their patients' mental health, substance abuse and physical health equally
- Implement substance use screening and referral protocols with HHSA clients
- Support the development of additional substance use treatment capacity

Strategy 2: Decrease access to alcohol and unauthorized prescription drugs among underaged persons.

Supporting activity:

- Reduce youth access to drugs and alcohol through a comprehensive community awareness, lockup and drug disposal campaign

Strategy 3: Promote community policies to decrease abuse of alcohol and other drugs.

Supporting activities:

- Pursue the passage of a social host ordinance addressing underage access to alcohol and other drugs in at least one city or the county
- Partner with community to develop strategies to lessen the impact of marijuana use in Shasta County

Strategy 4: Decrease the percentage of HHSA employees and clients who use tobacco.

Supporting activities:

- Implement a tobacco cessation program for staff
- Implement tobacco screening, education and cessation protocols with HHSA clients
- Implement outdoor smoke-free policies at all HHSA office locations

Measures of success

- Decrease the percentage of Shasta County residents who abuse alcohol, including underage drinking.
- Decrease the percentage of Shasta County residents who abuse prescription drugs.
- Decrease the percentage of Shasta County residents who abuse marijuana.
- Decrease the percentage of HHSA employees and clients who use tobacco.

In focus

Having just one defined adverse childhood experience increases the likelihood of alcoholism later in life by 60%, and having four or more increases the chances by more than 300%.[1]

At any given time, 700 or more children are receiving services from Shasta County's child welfare system.

Shasta County's rate of child abuse is more than twice the state rate.[2]

[1] Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente

[2] Child Welfare Services Reports for California, retrieved 6/3/2011 from UC Berkeley Center for Social Services website (http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare)

Prevent adverse childhood experiences

Our childhood lays the foundation for our lives. If we experience traumatic events at an early age, we carry the burden of that pain into adulthood and may experience more mental, physical and social problems in later life. Adverse childhood experience categories are defined in comprehensive studies as:

- Emotional abuse or neglect
- Physical abuse or neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Mother treated violently
- Household member was problem drinker or other drug user
- Household member was imprisoned
- Household member was chronically depressed, suicidal or severely mentally ill
- Parental separation or divorce

The more of these categories that people experience before 18 years old, the more likely that they will struggle with addiction, mental illness, violent tendencies, work interruptions, risky behaviors, and chronic health problems as adults, and potentially carry these problems into the next generation. Fortunately, these cycles can be broken.

Strategy 1: Increase community awareness of and engagement in preventing adverse childhood experiences.

Supporting activity:

- Establish a community-wide collaborative to engage residents to take action to prevent the long-term damage caused by adverse childhood experiences

Strategy 2: Enhance preconception and pregnancy care for women of childbearing age.

Supporting activities:

- Develop resources to screen and treat women for domestic violence, alcohol and other drug use, and mental illness
- Support women and girls to achieve higher education and financial independence

Strategy 3: Increase protective factors for youth who identify three or more types of adverse childhood experience in their personal history.

Supporting activity:

- Develop services that combine treatment for trauma caused by adverse childhood experiences with increased opportunities for positive extra-curricular activities

Strategy 4: Increase parenting abilities among expectant parents and parents of young children.

Supporting activities:

- Implement evidence-based home visiting programs for high-risk families
- Partner with community to develop family resource centers
- Provide evidence-based parent education to high-risk families

Measures of success

- Reduce the rate of substantiated cases of child maltreatment.
- Increase the proportion of women who report being screened by medical providers in pre-conception and prenatal care visits for domestic violence, alcohol use/abuse, use of unprescribed drugs and depression.
- Increase the average Developmental Asset Profile scores of youth exposed to adverse childhood experiences.
- Increase the proportion of births that result from a planned pregnancy.
- Increase the average age at which a woman gives birth for the first time.

In focus

Mental illnesses affect almost every family in America.[1]

Stigma and fear of discrimination keep many people from seeking help.[2]

Regular physical activity has been shown to reduce illness and death from mental health disorders, including reducing the risk of developing depression.[3]

Patients with serious mental illness are now dying up to 25 years earlier than the general population.[4]

[1] National Alliance on Mental Illness.

[2] Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

[3] Centers for Disease Control.

[4] National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors.

Promote mental well-being

Whether we are diagnosed with a mental illness or experience depression and anxiety at times in our life, we all need to care for our mental health. We can stay emotionally healthy by building and maintaining healthy relationships, being physically active and experiencing the restorative power of nature. Social support and personal relationships protect against depression and anxiety disorders, and are critical for children to develop healthy interpersonal behaviors. We all benefit from spending time outside, exploring and socializing with others.

Strategy 1: Improve outcomes for children with serious emotional disturbances and adults with serious mental illness through evidence-based early intervention and treatment.

Supporting activities:

- Establish provider collaborative to strengthen mental health system and improve integration with primary care
- Increase treatment capacity by clarifying roles, optimizing funding streams and building collaborative programs

Strategy 2: Increase access to mental health services for specific vulnerable and underserved populations.

Supporting activities:

- Increase early identification of mental illness through education, training, screening and fighting stigma
- Provide housing support and wraparound services for transition-age youth
- Partner with community organizations to ensure availability of culturally appropriate services

Strategy 3: Decrease social isolation and strengthen neighborhoods.

Supporting activities:

- Foster neighborhood pride and volunteerism
- Engage communities in planning healthy neighborhoods and encouraging positive social interaction

Strategy 4: Foster contact with nature and promote physical activity community-wide.

Supporting activities:

- Promote participation in outdoor activities in the community, especially among vulnerable and underserved populations
- Increase access to different types of safe and affordable transportation

Measures of success

- Decrease emergency room visits for mental illness among Shasta County residents.
- Decrease psychiatric hospitalizations among Shasta County residents.
- Increase the percentage of individuals who seek help for self-reported mental/emotional issues.
- Decrease the percentage of the population with inadequate social/emotional support.
- Increase the percentage of individuals who use a local paved or dirt trail for walking, hiking or biking or report regular physical activity.

In focus

43,758 Shasta County residents were enrolled in Medi-Cal and County Medical Services Program in April 2010.

23,733 Shasta County residents received CalFresh (Food Stamp) benefits in May 2011.

Only 20 percent of Shasta County adults have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 30 percent statewide and 28 percent nationwide.[1]

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

Empower independence and self-sufficiency

Employment and education are the clearest pathways out of poverty. Yet many Shasta County residents struggle daily to meet their basic needs – food, medical care and shelter. Many lack educational opportunities that would qualify them for living-wage jobs. By helping our most vulnerable residents gain and maintain access to critical benefits and education and employment support, HHSA can help create opportunities for every person to reach his or her full potential and support community conditions that help people lead healthier, self-sufficient lives.

Strategy 1: Increase access to nutritious food among vulnerable populations.

Supporting activities:

- Promote healthy choices and increase outreach for nutritional programs
- Increase accessibility and use of Farmers' Markets

Strategy 2: Increase access to preventive, primary and integrated health care.

Supporting activities:

- Improve access to medical insurance programs for low-income people
- Support collaborative efforts to increase access to primary care "medical homes"

Strategy 3: Increase educational attainment among county residents.

Supporting activities:

- Support collaborative efforts to increase post-secondary education for young people
- Promote and support educational attainment and/or vocational training among HHSA clients and employees

Strategy 4: Increase employment opportunities for individuals with low incomes or disabilities.

Supporting activities:

- Further develop vocational training services for individuals with autism or severe mental illness
- Increase work experience placements, subsidized employment and self-employment among CalWORKs recipients.

Strategy 5: Increase community capacity to address the needs of elders and dependent adults.

Supporting activities:

- Strengthen capacity to prevent high-cost institutional care
- Support increased community capacity to identify and refer at-risk seniors to available services.

Measures of success

- Increase the percentage of vulnerable population(s) accessing nutrition programs and consuming the recommended servings of fruits and vegetables.
- Increase the percentage of the population that have a regular medical provider to go to when they are sick or need health advice.
- Increase the proportion of Shasta County residents with post-secondary education.
- Increase employment among CalWORKs, Adult Services, General Assistance and Opportunity Center participants.
- Decrease the rate of hospitalization and institutional care among low-income elder and dependent adults served by HHSA.

In focus

The Health and Human Services Agency touches the life of virtually every Shasta County resident.

The HHSA has a physical presence in all three incorporated cities and in the town of Burney.

More than 7,000 clients visit the HHSA's offices for services each month.

Increase accessibility of HHSA services

HHSA is in a unique position to support people to meet their most basic needs. Many HHSA clients have significant obstacles to success, including a lack of food, clothing, shelter, transportation and healthcare. Fundamentally, the HHSA was founded on the premise that we need to be easy to find and use. That means we need to provide services in all geographic locations, including phone and Internet access. And when people come to us, we need to go the distance to meet their needs in a courteous and culturally appropriate manner.

Strategy 1: Increase awareness of HHSA services.

Supporting activities:

- Develop and implement consistent HHSA service awareness and messaging
- Create an "HHSA Standard of Excellence" that results in positive customer experience
- Expand online presence and capacity

Strategy 2: Provide integrated HHSA services in geographically accessible locations.

Supporting activities:

- Establish a benefit telephone call center
- Develop a long-range plan for regional service centers
- Explore HHSA service co-location opportunities with organizations that support health and self-sufficiency

Strategy 3: Enhance access to services through the use of technology.

Supporting activities:

- Launch and market C4Yourself and one other web-based eligibility screening tool
- Place automated service and eligibility kiosks in strategic locations throughout the community
- Market benefits and availability of dialing 2-1-1 and of using other Internet resources

Measures of success

- Increase the proportion of eligible persons who receive needed HHSA assistance.
- Decrease the percent of HHSA clients who have unnecessary interruptions in support.
- Decrease the amount of time and distance it takes clients to access services.
- Increase the percent of clients who report having a positive customer service experience when interacting with the HHSA.

In focus

The HHSA has about 800 employees and represents more than 1.5 million annual hours of service to county residents.

The HHSA's annual budget is about $151 million, but the direct economic value of these services easily exceeds $400 million per year.

Build organizational capacity to provide high-quality services

An organization's strength is built on its strong financial base and ability to successfully fulfill its mission, maintain a dynamic workforce and stay current with technology. While we have enacted many cost cutting measures and operate more efficiently as one organization, we want to build on that capacity to most effectively meet the community's needs. We strive to be a supportive force for a healthy, safe and thriving community for everyone.

Strategy 1: Develop integrated methods to address financial capacities and risks.

Supporting activities:

- Build effective long-term business planning tools to aid management decisions
- Include key staff in development and all staff in implementation of budget and business practices

Strategy 2: Develop consistent and comprehensive tools and processes to measure effectiveness.

Supporting activity:

- Establish an agency-wide continuous quality improvement system that builds on existing efforts

Strategy 3: Build systems to ensure an effective workforce.

Supporting activities:

- Centralize coordination of staff development resources
- Establish core competencies for classifications and duty assignments
- Train new and future managers in business and management skills
- Identify critical operations to ensure continuity during disasters and train staff accordingly

Strategy 4: Maximize use of technology to improve effectiveness.

Supporting activity:

- Formalize a system to assess and prioritize technology needs to assure resource efficiency and optimize customer service

Measures of success

- Increase the proportion of HHSA supervisors and managers who report having the tools and skills they need for effective, long-term planning and decision making.
- Increase the proportion of programs that are evaluated and/or use a consistent system of continuous quality improvement.
- Increase the percentage of HHSA employees who report having access to training necessary to do their job.
- Increase the percentage of HHSA clients who report a positive customer experience when interacting with HHSA.

What comes next?

Now that we have a strategic plan to guide us this decade, what's next? Here are some of the steps we will take toward achieving our six strategic goals by December 2020.

Communicate priorities to improve health and well-being

- Post plan on the website (shastahhsa.net)
- Inform staff, community members, local leaders and elected officials, partners and media
- Share HHSA priority goals and strategies with partners as opportunities arise

Partner with communities to improve health and well-being

- Exchange strategic plans with partners to find common ground for collaboration
- Support community efforts targeted at common outcomes
- Advocate for system changes that will further efforts

Manage HHSA resources

- Seek new resources to support the activities
- Leverage limited resources with partners to reach goals

Guide staff and increase collaboration

- Tap the creativity and initiative of staff to modify existing or create new programs and services
- Better coordinate efforts within and among branches of the HHSA to address priorities in a comprehensive and efficient manner

Monitor progress and review plan

- Establish specific targets and develop measurement tracking tools to assess progress
- Report results to the Advisory Boards and the Board of Supervisors
- Review activities and, in 2015, consider new activities for 2016-2020

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