

Health & Wellness Element

Maintaining and improving the health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities is one of society's most fundamental goals, similar in importance to public safety and providing adequate shelter. Creating healthier places and improving the health and education of people contribute to lower governmental costs for health care, enhances the capacity of the individual and collective workforce, and leads to a stronger economy and overall prosperity. Positive outcomes are not only the result of health-care treatment and the provision of a social safety net; they must also be achieved through preventive or upstream efforts that help avoid or reduce the occurrence of physiological, financial, and social instability.

The County is committed to improving the health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities through collaboration with public, private, and not-for-profit organizations. The County is also responsible, within the bounds of annual state and federal funding, for implementing the human health and social assistance responsibilities of the state and federal governments. Establishing a more complete county and stronger communities is achieved through the County's provision of or coordination with others to provide places, facilities, and programs for learning, arts and culture, entertainment, and social bonding.

In the context of this Element, the terms "health" or "health and wellness" are used broadly to reference physical health, behavioral health, and social well-being.

Purpose

The Health and Wellness Element:

- Provides guidance on addressing issues that by their nature require extensive coordination and collaboration within the County and with outside agencies and organizations.
- Establishes a holistic approach to the continuum of care.
- Identifies the County's policy focus regarding its use of state and federal funds to improve the physical and behavioral health of residents.
- Describes the County's priorities and roles in serving the health and social needs of vulnerable populations.

Principles

We believe:

- Human health and wellness are intrinsically valuable.
- Facets of health and wellness are often interrelated and should be addressed together, with a focus on preventative and proactive care.
- The health, well-being, education, and enrichment of residents are key components to the prosperity and quality of life in San Bernardino County.
- A diverse range of community and cultural resources, programs, and facilities help make the entire county and individual communities more complete and prosperous.

- Society has chosen to maintain a safety net that protects the most vulnerable and assists individuals and households in transitioning to self-sufficiency.
- Human health and social assistance services are state and federal responsibilities implemented, subject to available state and federal funding, by the County in partnership with service providers and not-for-profit organizations.

Goals & Policies

Goal HW-1 Health and Social Wellness

Supportive public facilities and services that assist and guide individuals to achieve and sustain self-sufficiency, social stability, and excellent physical and behavioral health and wellness.

Policy HW-1.1 **Coordinated holistic approach.** We invest in a holistic approach to individual health and wellness to improve the continuum of care, providing coordinated services through departments and agencies associated with human services, economic development, law and justice, and housing, as well as other agencies and nongovernmental organizations.

Policy HW-1.2 **Cultural humility and inclusion.** We guide the development and delivery of appropriate health care, health services, and social assistance by recognizing and continuously learning about the diverse values, cultures, languages, and behaviors found throughout the county, especially for those that are underserved or isolated.

Policy HW-1.3 **Monitoring health and social conditions.** We prioritize our resources to address the most pressing needs by continually engaging residents and monitoring health and social conditions, trends, and emerging needs across the county, while complying with federal and state mandates.

Policy HW-1.4 **Funding application coordination.** We coordinate the application for funding resources to maximize the long-term benefit of addressing multiple health and social issues, both within the County organization and between the County and other agencies and organizations.

Policy HW-1.5 **Partnerships and capacity building.** We leverage partnerships with other agencies and organizations to address health and wellness issues, and, as funding allows, assist in building the capacity of service providers and partner organizations to expand their service and effectiveness.

Policy HW-1.6 **Healthy behaviors.** We collaborate with other public agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and private service providers to offer education and training that enable individuals to make better health and wellness choices. We work to remove environmental and social barriers to healthy habits.

Policy HW-1.7 **Upstream issues.** We collaborate with partners to address upstream issues related to the social determinants of health and social stability (e.g., income, education, housing, neighborhood conditions, and job skills), and to reduce the occurrence of and costs associated with responding to acute and chronic conditions, while complying with federal, state, and local mandates.

- Policy HW-1.8 **Assistance for veterans.** We invest in services to assist veterans and their families countywide connect with service providers and apply for benefits from federal, state, and local governmental agencies.
- Policy HW-1.9 **Homelessness.** We address homelessness by coordinating a comprehensive countywide network of service delivery and by focusing on transitional and permanent supportive housing for the homeless, including the chronically homeless and near-homeless families and individuals.
- Policy HW-1.10 **Safety net.** We use state and federal funding to provide a safety net of services that provides temporary, transitional, and ongoing assistance to protect those most vulnerable.
- Policy HW-1.11 **Insurance and medical services.** We collaborate with other public agencies, non-profit organizations, and private health and wellness service providers to facilitate residents obtaining medical insurance, vaccines and preventative care, behavioral health, and treatments, through private service providers, County health and wellness facilities, and public programs.
- Policy HW-1.12 **Equity.** We monitor and seek to achieve equitable access to County health and social services, with an emphasis on environmental justice focus areas countywide.
- Policy HW-1.13 **Health care professional capacity.** We collaborate with other public agencies, non-profit organizations, and private health and wellness service providers to ensure that an adequate number of medical, behavioral, and dental health professionals serve residents countywide, with an emphasis on health care professional shortage areas.
- Policy HW-1.14 **Arrowhead Regional Medical Center.** We provide quality general and specialty health care services, operate medical residency programs, conduct community outreach and wellness programs, and act as a safety-net hospital for the countywide under-insured and uninsured. We also leverage ARMC as an economic asset to stimulate the local economy and attract investment and professionals from outside the county.

Goal HW-2 Education

A common culture that values education and lifelong learning and a populace with the education to participate and compete in the global economy.

- Policy HW-2.1 **Lifelong learning.** We collaborate with educators, the business community, students and families, recreation departments and other public agencies, and civic and not-for-profit organizations to foster lifelong learning including early childhood literacy, cradle to career education, English as a second language, career development, and adult enrichment. We encourage approaches to learning that embrace diverse modes of learning for all.
- Policy HW-2.2 **Land use compatibility for schools.** We prioritize the safety and security of public schools in unincorporated areas by minimizing incompatible land uses near instructional facilities. We encourage school districts to place new schools where existing and planned land uses are compatible.

Policy HW-2.3 **Superintendent support.** We support the Superintendent of Schools in fulfilling the obligations for school district support, advocacy, and student services

Policy HW-2.4 **Health and enrichment programs.** We provide additional support for school districts for nutrition, physical activity, arts, and other enrichment programs, commensurate with the availability of grants and other funding resources.

Goal HW-3 Community Development

Assets that contribute to a complete county and healthy neighborhoods and communities.

Policy HW-3.1 **Healthy environments.** We collaborate with other public agencies, not-for-profit organizations, community groups, and private developers to improve the physical and built environment in which people live. We do so by improving such things as walkability, bicycle infrastructure, transit facilities, universal design, safe routes to school, indoor and outdoor air quality, gardens, green space and open space, and access to parks and recreation amenities.

Policy HW-3.2 **Building social capital.** In unincorporated communities, we support the provision of neighborhood and community gathering places for social activities, and the provision of meeting spaces and facilities for community organizations in order to build social capital, establish a sense of community, increase volunteerism, and expand civic engagement.

Policy HW-3.3 **Public libraries.** We operate public libraries in unincorporated areas and contract cities/towns to provide programs and facilities that ensure equitable access to information and digital technology, provide places and activities for people to connect with other people, promote literacy and reading for pleasure for children and adults, and foster a culture of creativity, innovation, and collaboration. We invest in the modernization and expansion of public library facilities as adequate funding is available.

Policy HW-3.4 **Public museums.** We operate County museums to preserve and depict the history, culture, and natural science of San Bernardino County. We invest in facilities and technology and collaborate with other institutions, organizations, and businesses in order to increase public exposure to museum holdings.

Policy HW-3.5 **Arts and culture.** We increase awareness of the benefits of the arts throughout the county by recognizing and promoting the arts, artists, performing arts, and cultural organizations as valuable resources for community identity, economic vitality, and tourism. We encourage private and not-for-profit support of artistic and cultural activities through mutual programs and public-private partnerships.

Policy HW-3.6 **Multi-use facilities and integrated development.** We encourage those who build and/or operate community assets to accommodate multiple functions and programs. We encourage the development of new residential, commercial, and institutional uses and public facilities that incorporate one or more community assets.

- Policy HW-3.7 **Attracting local-serving businesses.** We actively work across County departments and agencies to attract businesses that provide desired goods and services in unincorporated communities, especially in environmental justice focus areas, including but not limited to food stores with fresh produce, health care, child care, pharmacies, and other retailers. We balance community desires with comprehensive assessments of market demand to guide our business attraction efforts.
- Policy HW-3.8 **Attracting leisure and entertainment.** We advocate for the establishment and retention of leisure and entertainment businesses and venues, countywide, that contribute to the complete county concept.
- Policy HW-3.9 **Community-driven improvements.** We provide resources and information to assist unincorporated communities with the implementation of Community Action Guides.