



Priority Issue 1: Obesity, Physical Inactivity, and Nutrition

Problem Statement

Obesity, overweight, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity are associated with profound, adverse health conditions. These include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, some cancers, and other limiting physical and mental health issues. In Pennsylvania, two out of three adults (6.2 million residents) and one out of three school-age children (0.5 million) have excess weight. Evidence links obesity, physical inactivity, and poor nutrition to shortened lifespan. Today's youth are in danger of dying at younger ages than their parents.

Goal 1 Decrease the percentage of adults and children who meet the criteria for overweight and obesity.

Objective 1.1 Decrease the percentage of Pennsylvania adults who are obese from 30 percent in 2013⁵ to 27 percent by December 2020.

Strategy 1.1.1 Collaborate with insurance companies to include in insurance plans evidence-based services for wellness and prevention programs (e.g., weight management, nutrition counseling, gym membership and healthy living programs) provided by licensed qualified individuals and organizations.

Suggested Activities

- Collect information from insurance companies about their programs to promote wellness and reward individuals for successful participation.
- Gather information on wellness incentives offered by insurance companies.
- Make recommendations for best practices to implement better access to screening and prevention services.
- Establish and define a list of qualified providers for this strategy.

Performance Measures

- Increase the number of insurance companies offering nutrition counseling, gym membership, and healthy living provided by licensed qualified individuals and organizations.

Assets

- Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Pennsylvania Insurance Department
- Aetna, Blue Cross, Blue Shield, and Highmark for some level of nutrition intervention

Lead Agency/Organization

DOH, Innovation Center; Pennsylvania Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (PAND)

Potential Partners

DHS; MCO Group; DOH, Bureau of Health Promotion and Risk Reduction (BHPRR)

Strategy 1.1.2 Work with medical providers to educate patients on prevention of chronic disease and weight loss strategies in a linguistically appropriate manner and provide referrals to community resources.

Suggested Activities

- Identify a liaison within Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) to help push information about SHIP initiatives out to medical community.
- Work with lead medical association and professional affiliations to encourage medical providers to increase their efforts to educate their patients on evidenced-based approaches available for decreasing chronic disease, increasing weight loss and increasing community referrals to available programs.

Performance Measures

- Rate of inclusion in medical journals, e-news, and other communications about evidence-based programs, initiatives and best practices

Assets

None identified

Lead Agency/Organization

DOH, Division of Nutrition and Physical Activities (DNPA)

Potential Partners

PAMED; PAFP; Pennsylvania Section of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' (ACOG); Pennsylvania Society of Internal Medicine; DOH; local health departments

Strategy 1.1.3 Develop a process for identifying community resources so that providers (e.g., health care, educational, religious) can provide adults and children with individualized referrals to resources for healthy eating and activity choices.

Suggested Activities

- Develop a health resources compendium for community organizations that identifies resources to address health related issues.
- Educate providers about local 211 resources available to their patients.
- Educate providers of local health departments.

Performance Measures

- Review resources compendium for completeness and usage.

Assets

- DOH information resources

Lead Agency/Organization

DOH, DNPA

Potential Partners

None identified

Objective 1.2 Decrease the percentage of Pennsylvania youth that are overweight or obese from 39 percent in 2012-13 school year⁶ to 36 percent by December 2020.

Strategy 1.2.1 Implement youth healthy living programs that reach parents to improve the nutrition and physical activity levels of youth at home and in school.

Suggested Activities

- Provide information about youth healthy living programs to various entities that work with parents regarding child health.
- Address healthy living topics in school social media campaigns.
- Conduct focus groups with parents.

Performance Measures

- Number of requests from parents for information on resources for nutrition and physical activity
- Number of parents who participate in a training
- Number of training sessions provided for parents

Assets

- Pennsylvania Chapter of Action for Healthy Kids
- The DOH, BHPRR will be implementing LiveHealthyPA.com, an online hub for individuals, communities, schools, organizations and businesses to connect and access information and share ideas about preventing disease and injury.

Lead Agency/Organization

- Pennsylvania Chapter of Action for Healthy Kids

Potential Partners

Penn State University Extension; Pennsylvania School Board Association; school nurses; Keystone Stars; Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE); National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners; DHS, Office of Child Development and Early Learning

Strategy 1.2.2 Increase and strengthen school-based policies around nutrition and physical activity.

Suggested Activities

- PDE, Division of Food and Nutrition (DFN), will provide technical assistance, best practices, and templates for strong policy language in local school wellness policies (LSWP) to schools and districts.
- PDE, DFN will partner with the Pennsylvania School Board Association (PSBA) to develop a LSWP template.
- PDE will post LSWP template on website.
- DOH, DNPA will administer a grant program to 15 targeted school districts to assess nutrition and physical activity policies and practices and provide technical assistance to revise their wellness policies.

Performance Measures

- Number of schools that revise their LSWP by 2018
- Number of LSWPs in existence
- Development of new policy/regulation

Assets

- DOH, DNPA is administering a capacity building grant program.
- DOH Offices of Policy and Legislation
- A final rule from U.S. Department of Agriculture on new, stronger requirements for LSWP is expected in 2015.

Lead Agency/Organization

DOH, DNPA; PDE, DFN

Potential Partners

Pennsylvania Chapter of Action for Healthy Kids; Pennsylvania Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics (PA AAP); Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA); schools; school nurses; health education teachers

Strategy 1.2.3 Work with medical providers to educate patients on prevention of chronic disease, weight loss strategies, and referral to community resources.

Suggested Activities:

- Publicize availability of free, continuing medical education/continuing education unit (CME/CEU) on-site and webinar Educating Practices/Educating Physicians In their Communities (EPIC) programs through agencies, institutions and professional associations that have contact with health care professionals and school personnel (e.g., health education teachers, school nurses).

Performance Measures:

- Number of EPIC programs given
- Number of sites reached by EPIC programs (some programs, such as conferences, reach more than one site)
- Number of EPIC program attendees and geographic reach (aim for every county)
- Follow-up with sites as part of assessing EPIC program impact

Assets

- PA AAP EPIC programs on topics of obesity, breastfeeding, medical home (special needs)

Lead Agency/Organization

PA AAP

Potential Partners

Pennsylvania Health Literacy Coalition; Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP); PAND; Pennsylvania State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (PSAHPERD); Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Network; regional health networks (e.g., Geisinger, University of Pittsburgh, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia); insurers (e.g., Highmark, Blue Cross)

Goal 2

Improve the health of Pennsylvania residents already impacted by obesity, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity.

Objective 2.1 Decrease the percentage of Pennsylvania adults who have obesity who report they have fair or poor general health from 26 percent in 2013⁷ to 23 percent by December 2020.

Strategy 2.1.1 Work with primary care providers to increase referrals for those with obesity, poor nutrition or physical inactivity that includes counseling about wellness checks, nutrition, diet and physical activity provided by licensed qualified health care providers.

Suggested Activities

- Survey physicians on numbers of referrals.
- Encourage physicians to distribute nutrition and physical activity prescription pads.
- Increase screening, diagnosis and referral to Diabetes Prevention Program.

Performance Measures

- Number of programs given
- Number of sites reached by programs
- Number of attendees and geographic reach
- Follow-up with sites as part of assessing program impact

Assets

- Penn State University Extension
- Diabetes Prevention Program

Lead Agency/Organization

Pennsylvania Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (PAND)

Potential Partners

Penn State University Extension; Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP); DHS; DOH, BHPRR; Pennsylvania State Nursing Association (PSNA)

Strategy 2.1.2 Remove barriers to evidence-based medical practices for people with severe obesity.

Suggested Activities

- Hold a coalition meeting to craft an “ask” for Pennsylvania employers to add evidenced-based medical practices to employee health plans.
- Meet with Pennsylvania employers to discuss employee health plan coverage.

Performance Measures

- Pilot or implementation of a more complete benefit plan

Assets

- University of Pennsylvania and University of Pittsburgh Medical Center are leaders on studies on this topic.
- Geisinger Health System, Obesity Institute

Lead Agency/Organization

Obesity Action Coalition (OAC)

Potential Partners

Geisinger, Obesity Institute; American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery; Obesity Society

Goal 3 Increase opportunities for and engagement in physical activity.

Objective 3.1 Decrease the percentage of Pennsylvania adults who engage in no leisure-time physical activity from 26 percent in 2013⁸ to 23 percent by December 2020.

Strategy 3.1.1 Provide affordable and accessible opportunities to be physically active, such as parks, trails, fitness events and recreational facilities, particularly in underserved communities.

Suggested Activities

- Establish best practices for the implementation of an annual Temple University sponsored physical activity fair responsive to rural/urban needs.
- Provide outdoor fitness equipment accessible to all ages and abilities in parks.
- Expand DOH's WalkWorks program.
- Develop a diverse collection of park and playground designs that appeal to all ages, ethnicities and abilities.
- Conduct research to explore recreation needs and behaviors of African Americans, Hispanics and other ethnic groups.
- Encourage worksite wellness.
- Develop a toolkit to meet the physical activity and recreational needs of Pennsylvania's residents, including those with disabilities.
- Hold physical activity events.
- Identify grants or resources to promote physical activity.
- Work with local governments to survey residents for their recreation needs.

Performance Measures

- Completion of a toolkit to meet the needs of Pennsylvania’s residents, including those with disabilities
- Increase the percentage of residents who walk outdoors.

Assets

- Temple University Collaborative on Community Inclusion is implementing a physical activity fair.
- Penn State Extension offers a free, statewide “Everybody Walk Across PA” program online.
- DOH, DNPA is partnering with the DOH, Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control, on a Worksite Wellness initiative that includes tobacco control, lactation support, diabetes, high blood pressure and community resources.
- University of Pittsburgh and DOH work together on WalkWorks.

Lead Agency/Organization

DOH, DNPA; Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

Potential Partners

Penn State University Extension; DOH, DNPA; universities; community development corporations; YMCAs; Temple University; local parks and recreation organizations

Strategy 3.1.2 Reduce barriers so that every Pennsylvania resident has equal access to local parks, school campuses and facilities, and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Suggested Activities

- Explore free transportation (e.g., park bus, park pass, school bus) that would be reimbursable with a physical activity prescription.
- Increase the number of parks that are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Provide guidelines to help communities conduct walkability and bike-ability assessments and apply for national recognition as bicycle- or walk-friendly communities.
- Launch a mobile-friendly website for residents to easily find local parks.
- Work with Pennsylvania counties to identify gaps in local outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Identify the park and recreation needs of Pennsylvania’s rural communities.
- Develop Pennsylvania-specific park/trail “prescription” programs to encourage outdoor physical activity.

Performance Measures

- Launch of ExplorePALocalparks.com
- Number of counties that update their county park and recreation plans

Assets

- Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Department implemented a park/trail “prescription” program with Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia.

Lead Agency/Organization

DCNR

Potential Partners

Pennsylvania Recreation and Preservation Society; physicians; school boards; local parks; local health departments

Strategy 3.1.3 Encourage walking and bicycling for transportation and recreation through improvements in the built environment.

Suggested Activities

- Engage county planning directors around the built environment.
- Organize community-sponsored walking/biking events to a location or activity.
- Increase access to bikes and related equipment.
- Develop a statewide list of bike resources (e.g., earn a bike, bike share, bike repair).
- Provide technical assistance to municipalities to consider the addition of bike lanes and sidewalks, where appropriate, during the planning process for transportation projects.
- Provide guidelines to help communities and businesses conduct walkability and bikeability assessments and apply for national (and other) recognition for bicycle and/or pedestrian-friendly communities.
- Develop toolkit and market to community, organizations, and churches.
- Develop strategies to access and repurpose abandoned bikes.

Performance Measures

- Meeting with county planning directors
- Number of municipalities that receive technical assistance
- Development of toolkit to implement activity

Assets

- 2014-2019 Pennsylvania Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Lead Agency/Organization

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)

Partners and Potential Partners

DOH, Innovation Center (would engage county planning directors on physical activity); DCNR; Fraternal Order of Police; police departments; universities; landscape architects; DOH, Safe Transportation Program

Objective 3.2 Increase percentage of Pennsylvania adolescents who are physically active daily from 28 percent in 2009⁹ to 31 percent by December 2020.

Strategy 3.2.1 Work with school boards, districts, principals, and community partners to integrate physical activity into the culture of schools by offering ABCs (Activity Breaks for Children), physical education, and/or recess.

Suggested Activities

- Provide comprehensive school physical activity program (CSPAP) training to schools.
- Improve school policies and practices regarding physical activity and nutrition using PDE materials and forthcoming template.
- Encourage state and local parks to list amenities, resources, and educational materials so that schools and youth-based organizations can more easily incorporate local outdoor activities into curricula.

Performance Measures

- Number of CSPAP trainings provided to schools

Assets

- CSPAP training, funded by the CDC and developed by SHAPE America in conjunction with Let's Move! Active Schools, is available to schools.
- A final rule from US Department of Agriculture on new, stronger requirements for LSWP is expected in 2015.
- PDE will develop school materials and templates for new LWSP rulings.

Lead Agency/Organization

DOH, DNPA; PDE, health and physical education (HPE)

Potential Partners

DCNR; PSAHPERD

Strategy 3.2.2 Work with PDE to review the Chapter 23 regulations and update the Pennsylvania State Standards for health, safety and physical education.

Suggested Activities

- Collaborate with PDE to create a committee that will review state standards.
- Review state standards for HPE.
- Create a survey about health and physical education curriculum and standards concerns, which will be sent to all school districts for completion.
- Create Pennsylvania Standards Aligned System (SAS) portal to HPE to build lesson plans, discussion boards for collaboration between schools, trainings and resources.

Performance Measures

- Complete update of state standards for HPE.
- Number of meetings to review standards with committee
- Evaluate surveys to build SAS Portal page and to review standards with educators.
- Number of schools participating in SAS training
- Number of group members from schools on HPE SAS portal

Assets

- Chapter 23 regulations

Lead Agency/Organization

DOH, Innovation Center

Potential Partners

PDE; PSAHPERD; state university HPE department chairs or designated staff

Strategy 3.2.3 Provide professional development to update physical education curriculum, including physical education for children with disabilities.

Suggested Activities

- Post all professional development trainings to schools on SAS portal and email to HPE teachers.
- Create professional development opportunities with state universities.
- Schedule meetings with state universities to discuss trainings.
- Work with PSAHPERD for HPE training opportunities.
- Develop topics for trainings.
- Create a calendar of trainings and easy access to sign up to participate.
- Institute schedule from CDC's grants presented to additional school districts.
- Create trainings for adaptive physical education.

Performance Measures

- Number of HPE teachers trained

Assets

- PDE works closely with state universities to see the number of trainings that are available to health and physical education teachers.
- PSAHPERD
- DOH grant from CDC to promote and implement quality physical education and supportive nutrition environment in schools
- DOH grant from CDC to promote adolescent health through school-based IV/sexually transmitted disease prevention and school-based surveillance.

Lead Agency/Organization

PDE, health and physical education advisor

Partners and Potential Partners

State universities; school districts

Goal 4

Increase opportunities for access to and consumption of healthy foods and healthy beverages.

Objective 4.1 Increase the percentage of Pennsylvania adults who consume at least five servings of fruits and/or vegetables every day from 15 percent in 2013¹⁰ to 17 percent by December 2020.

Strategy 4.1.1 Ensure low-income Pennsylvanians at risk of hunger have access to fruits and vegetables through programs.

Suggested Activities

- Relaunch Pennsylvania's Interagency Council on Food and Nutrition.
- Refresh/reissue the existing Blueprint for a Hunger-Free Pennsylvania.
- Work with legislators to ensure funding for anti-hunger programs.
- Develop community-based group activities that link procurement of affordable healthy foods with improving skills and purchasing and preparing foods.

Performance Measures

- Develop performance measures based on the refresh of the Blueprint for a Hunger-Free Pennsylvania.

Assets

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program
- School Breakfast and Lunch Program from PDE
- Summer Food and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) from PDE
- State Food Purchase Program (Department of Agriculture)
- Emergency Food Assistance Program (Department of Agriculture)
- Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (Department of Agriculture)
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program (Department of Agriculture)
- Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (Department of Agriculture and WIC)
- Charitable emergency food distribution
- DOH, Healthy Corner Store Program

Lead Agency/Organizations

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

Potential Partners

Pennsylvania Department of Aging; DOH, WIC; DOH, DNPA; DHS, Office of Income Maintenance; PDE, DFN; Department of Community and Economic Development; anti-hunger groups (e.g., Feeding Pennsylvania, Hunger-Free Pennsylvania, Just Harvest, Greater Philadelphia Coalition to End Hunger); Pennsylvania Legislative Hunger Caucus

Strategy 4.1.2 Increase access and promote fruits and vegetables and outreach in a variety of settings (e.g., community, home or school gardens, farm stands, urban agriculture, mobile markets and healthy corner store initiatives).

Suggested Activities

- Partner with grocery stores on implementing mobile markets.
- Identify and convert vacant or unused lots into garden space or urban agriculture with local health departments.
- Encourage farmers markets to accept SNAP and WIC farmers market checks.
- Improve funding for outreach and transportation to encourage use of farmers markets.
- Develop community-based group activities that link procurement of affordable healthy foods with improving skills and purchasing and preparing foods.
- Review study of farmers' market nutrition program (FMNP) redemption, being done at Chatham University.

Performance Measures

- Number of farmers markets that accept SNAP or FMNP
- Number of community gardens
- Number of Master Gardener Training sessions
- Number of FMNP checks that are not cashed

Assets

- Penn State Master Gardener Program
- Most of the local health departments in Pennsylvania get funding for increasing access to fruits and vegetables.
- Department of Agriculture received a grant from the USDA to allow participants to receive double SNAP dollars on their farmers market checks.
- Mediterranean Cuisine Comes to Pennsylvania (Penn State Extension)
- Everybody Walk Across Pennsylvania (Penn State Extension)
- Dining with Diabetes (Penn State Extension)
- State Food Purchase Program (Department of Agriculture)
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (Department of Agriculture)
- Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (Department of Agriculture)
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program (Department of Agriculture)
- Farmers Market Nutrition Program (Department of Agriculture and WIC)

Lead Agency/Organization

DOH, Bureau of WIC; DOH, DNPA

Potential Partners

Penn State Extension; Department of Agriculture; WIC; county and municipal health departments; state food banks; Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture; SNAP