SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

SCPH

2027-2029

Strategic Plan

October 2026

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Letter from the Health Commissioner

On behalf of the Summit County Board of Health and our dedicated team at Summit County Public Health (SCPH), I am pleased to present the 2027 - 2029 Strategic Plan. This plan, which will guide our endeavors over the next three years, represents SCPH's efforts to modernize and strengthen public health services within Summit County, Ohio. The 2027 - 2029 strategic planning process represented an opportunity for SCPH to redefine its priorities, transform public health programming, and continue to provide essential public health services to the cities, villages, townships and stakeholders we serve.

The new strategic plan builds on the direction established by the Board of Health, findings of the 2025 Summit County Community Health Assessment, and input from the 2026 SCPH Community Health Improvement Plan. In addition, extensive work has been conducted within SCPH to explore opportunities to modernize and strengthen public health programming to ensure our services continually improve and meet the needs expected by our constituents. I wish to thank our dedicated staff for their hard work, devotion, and creativity to ensure SCPH continues to advance and provide essential public health service to the residents of Summit County.

We are optimistic that we can achieve the goals set forth in the 2027 - 2029 Strategic Plan. I am grateful for our team, our Board of Health and community partners in the development and implementation of this plan.

To your good health,

Christopher A Barker

Christopher A. Barker, MPH
Summit County Public Health
Health Commissioner

Our Mission

The mission of Summit County Public Health is to protect and promote the health of the entire community through programs and activities designed to address the safety, health and wellbeing of the people who live in Summit County. The Health Department seeks to create a healthful environment and ensure the accessibility of health services to all.

Our Vision

We envision a community where all can achieve optimal health where they live, work and play, resulting in healthy places, healthy people, and healthier tomorrows.

Our Core Values

Summit County Public Health's (SCPH) core values are reflected in our strategic approach and guide our interactions with our clients, community partners and each other. We believe these values are what make us unique and are essential to helping create a healthier community for all. SCPH's core values are embodied in the acronym "PROMISE."

Providing professionalism – Honesty, integrity and competency in all interactions.

Respect – Everyone who interacts with us in any capacity will be treated with respect.

Outstanding quality – We are nationally accredited and have an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement.

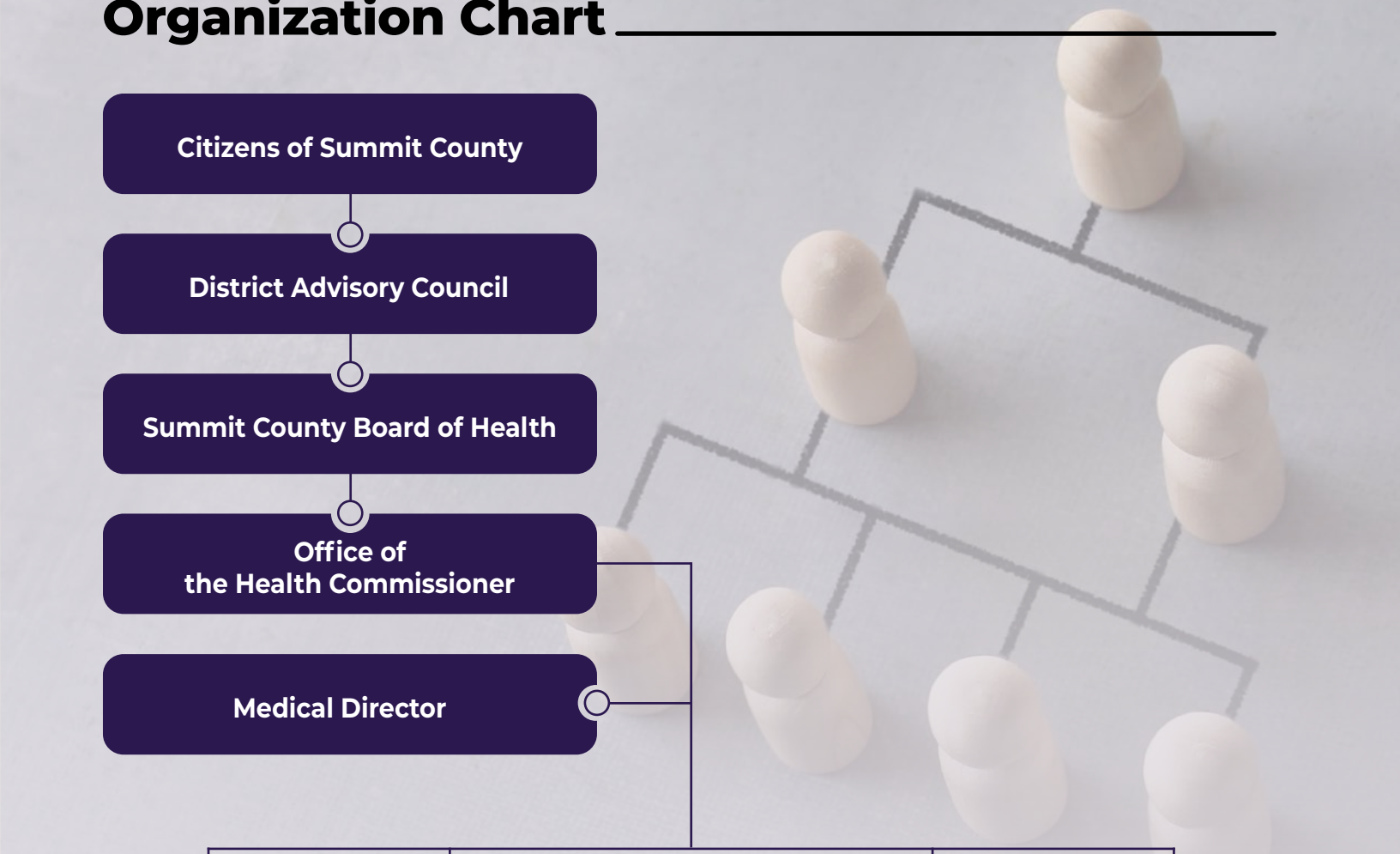
Mission-driven dedication – Our mission statement says it all. It's who we are and what we do.

Innovation – We look at every situation as an opportunity to be forward-thinking and proactive.

Service-orientation – Our goal is to provide excellent customer service in all interactions.

Equity for all – Everyone should have the opportunity to attain their highest level of health regardless of social or demographic factors.

Organization Chart



Citizens of Summit County

District Advisory Council

Summit County Board of Health

Office of the Health Commissioner

Medical Director

Administration / Support Services	Family Health	Systems / Services	Environmental Health	Clinical Health
Human Resources	Maternal and Child Health Services	Accreditation	Food Service and Recreation	Clinical Services
Fiscal	Woman Infant Children (WIC)	Community Assessments / Reports / Dashboards	Water Quality	Dental Services
Legal	Senior and Adult Services	Informatics / Epidemiology	Air Quality	Communicable Disease
Marketing	Family Health Services	Information Technologies	Healthy Homes	Reproductive Health
Vital Statistics		Facilities	Vector Control	
Emergency Preparedness		Behavioral Health Services	Animal Nuisances / Bites	

The Process

Summit County Public Health began developing its 2027–2029 Strategic Plan in late 2025, building on the progress and lessons learned from the previous strategic planning cycle. This process followed the agency's successful re-accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) in August 2025.

The strategic plan was informed by PHAB accreditation requirements, the Summit County Community Health Assessment (CHA), the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), agency performance data, and input from internal and external stakeholders. Together, these sources helped SCPH establish a comprehensive strategic direction for advancing public health and strengthening agency operations throughout Summit County.

The plan is organized by operational units to align program-level goals with agency priorities, CHIP, PHAB requirements, and the foundational responsibilities of public health. For this planning cycle, Informatics and Software Engineering is recognized as a separate operational unit from Information Technology to better reflect its distinct responsibilities related to data, systems development, process improvement, and organizational decision-making.

The operational units included in the planning process are:

- Clinic
- Dental Services
- Communicable Disease
- Environmental Health Administration
- Healthy Homes / Vector Control
- Air Quality / Solid Waste
- Food and Recreation
- Water Quality
- Senior and Adult Services
- Maternal Child Health
- Social Determinants of Health
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Behavioral Health
- Information Technology
- Informatics / Software Engineering
- Epidemiology
- Quality of Life
- Emergency Preparedness
- Human Resources
- Fiscal Operations
- Birth and Death Records
- Public Information and Communication

Each operational unit conducted an analysis of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Units then used the results of their Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analyses, along with relevant performance information and agency priorities, to develop goals and objectives for the three-year period.

Additional input was gathered from agency leadership, staff, community partners, community members, and the Summit County Board of Health. SCPH leadership and the strategic planning team reviewed this input alongside the unit-level SWOT analyses to identify recurring needs, opportunities, and organizational themes. These themes were then refined into the strategic priorities presented in this plan.

The goals and objectives established by SCPH's operational units support the agency's overall strategic direction while also reflecting the priorities identified through the CHA and CHIP. These community priorities are developed through the Summit Coalition for Community Health Improvement, a diverse partnership of organizations working collectively to improve health outcomes in Summit County.

Contributors to the Strategic Plan

Community Engagement

November 2024 - April 2025

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

SCPH partnered with Better Health Partnership in November 2024 to begin laying the foundation for the 2025 Community Health Assessment. These interviews were conducted with leaders of community organizations, governmental agencies, and other leaders to identify strengths and weaknesses of the health of Summit County residents, what health trends are noticeable, and opportunities to collaborate across systems to improve the health of the community.

May 2025

SUMMIT COALITION FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT (SCCHI)

SCCHI convened in person with the purpose of establishing the key priorities for the community health assessment and identifying any emerging gaps.

June-August 2025

COMMUNITY MEMBER SURVEYS

SCPH and the Center for Community Solutions revised the Adult Well Being Survey to include adverse childhood experiences. This provides information from the client and community member perspective on health issues in Summit County.

July-August 2025

FOCUS GROUPS

SCPH conducted eight focus groups with over 140 individuals participating and involving several organizations to gather valuable insights from the populations served in Summit County. The feedback received highlighted both the strengths and areas for potential improvement in health outcomes.

December 2025

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

SCPH released the 2025 Community Health Assessment.

December 2025

OPERATIONAL UNIT SWOT ANALYSIS

SCPH operational units assessed internal and external factors that could affect their work during the planning period.

March - May 2026

STAFF AND LEADERSHIP INPUT

Staff and agency leadership provided feedback to help shape organizational priorities and strategic direction.

May 2026

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Community partners established shared priorities and strategies through the Summit County Community Health Improvement Plan.

July 2026

BOARD OF HEALTH STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Summit County Board of Health reviewed the proposed direction and provided feedback on the strategic plan.

SWOT Analysis

Summit County Public Health conducted a SWOT Analysis in 2026. Each division and program unit organized its own discussions around **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities** and **Threats** currently facing their programs and the agency as a whole. They then drafted SWOT analyses. The data from the SWOT analyses of all the organizational units were then analyzed and common themes were identified.

Our **SWOT analysis** provided the following information:

S
STRENGTHS

- Committed, skilled, and adaptable workforce
- Strong teamwork and partnerships
- Trusted community presence
- Effective response to community needs
- Growing use of technology and data
- Flexible and cross-trained staff

W
WEAKNESSES

- Staffing capacity and workload pressures
- Manual and outdated workflows
- Inconsistent processes and training
- Limited cross-division coordination and communication
- Challenges measuring outcomes
- Knowledge transfer and continuity risks

O
OPPORTUNITIES

- Technology, automation, and AI enhancements
- Improved coordination across divisions
- Expanded use of data for planning and improvement
- Broader community outreach and engagement
- Expanded and strengthened partnerships
- New and diversified funding opportunities

T
THREATS

- External Funding and economic uncertainty
- Workforce demands, workforce environment, and continuity challenges in some program areas
- Public health misinformation and skepticism
- Growing community needs beyond capacity
- Cybersecurity and system vulnerabilities
- Frequent external policy and regulatory changes

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2027-2029

The following strategic priorities have been identified with input from each of the SCPH organizational units. They represent a dedication to serving Summit County through delivering core public health services and a commitment to serving as innovative and progressive leaders in the Summit County community.

Address public health hazards to protect the community.
SCPH protects the community from public health threats by strengthening preparedness, response, and recovery across natural, built, and technological environments while coordinating with partners and maintaining essential operations.

Strengthen community conditions, access to care, and health equity.
SCPH monitors community needs, addresses service gaps, and partners with organizations to ensure public health services and protections are accessible, equitable, and responsive.

Modernize public health practice through quality improvement, data, innovation, and interoperability.
SCPH improves processes, systems, and data use to enhance service quality, efficiency, accountability, client experience, and outcomes across programs.

Foster employee engagement, development, and performance.
SCPH attracts, retains, and develops a diverse, competent workforce by supporting staff development, engagement, collaboration, and leadership capacity.

Develop and advocate for evidence-based policy, practices, and programming.
SCPH uses timely data, community information, and program outcomes to inform decisions, guide evidence-based policies and interventions, and support trusted public health communication.

Strengthen financial sustainability and fiscal stewardship.
SCPH responsibly stewards public resources, aligns funding with priorities, and plans for long-term stability to maintain services and support its mission.

CHIP Alignment
This symbol indicates which SCPH strategic objectives align closely with the Summit County Community Health Improvement Plan, a shared community vision for improving health outcomes in Summit County.

Community Strategy and Systems

STRATEGIC UNIT: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Increase internal awareness and understanding of behavioral health, substance use, overdose prevention, and available services to reduce stigma and strengthen SCPH's ability to connect individuals to support.	
Goal 02: Expand and strengthen behavioral health service delivery by increasing access to Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) initiation, improving treatment linkage, and supporting long-term program sustainability.	
Goal 03: Expand awareness of behavioral health services and strengthen community partnerships to improve access to overdose prevention, suicide prevention, trauma-informed care, and recovery-friendly workplace resources.	
Goal 04: Improve the efficiency, accessibility, and quality of Behavioral Health services by evaluating internal processes and using feedback to identify and implement service delivery improvements.	

STRATEGIC UNIT: EPIDEMIOLOGY

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Increase the utilization of data and epidemiology products among internal and external partners by applying Quality Improvement (QI) methods to enhance access, usability, and relevance of public health data and analysis for data-informed decision making.	
Goal 02: Strengthen operational efficiency and ensure comprehensive, sustainable coverage of essential epidemiology services through workforce development, process improvement, and data management optimization.	

Address public-health hazards
Improve community conditions
Continuous quality improvement
Workforce development
Champion evidence-based health initiatives
Exercise financial stewardship
CHIP aligned

STRATEGIC UNIT: **INFORMATICS / SOFTWARE ENGINEERING**

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Conduct a Quality Improvement (QI) project to standardize software development practices within the Informatics Program in order to improve code quality, consistency, and knowledge sharing.	
Goal 02: Build technical resilience through standardized documentation, centralized knowledge management, and cross-training within the Informatics Program.	

STRATEGIC UNIT: **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Strengthen cybersecurity practices across the agency to protect systems, data, and operations from emerging threats.	
Goal 02: Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the employee and non-employee onboarding process to enhance timely access, security, and operational consistency.	

STRATEGIC UNIT: **QUALITY OF LIFE**

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Monitor and assess the health of Summit County residents through the development of collaborative community health reports and assessments to inform public health decision-making.	
Goal 02: Improve public health prevention efforts through the evaluation and enhancement of fatality review processes to better identify and address contributing factors to overdose and suicide.	
Goal 03: Monitor and assess the health impacts of policy changes at the local, state, and federal levels to inform data-driven policy recommendations that improve community health.	

Address public-health hazards
Improve community conditions
Continuous quality improvement
Workforce development
Champion evidence-based health initiatives
Exercise financial stewardship
CHIP aligned

OPERATIONS & GENERAL SUPPORT SERVICES

STRATEGIC UNIT: BIRTH AND DEATH RECORDS

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Improve access to Summit County birth and death records by modernizing record systems and expanding digital access for the public.	
Goal 02: Strengthen program resilience and continuity of operations by building staff capacity, standardizing processes, and improving operational readiness within Birth and Death Records.	

STRATEGIC UNIT: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Strengthen emergency preparedness and response capability by enhancing mass care and medical countermeasure planning, coordination, and operational readiness.	
Goal 02: Strengthen organizational resilience by improving the management of response assets and enhancing Continuity of Operations (COOP) capabilities to ensure the delivery of mission-essential public health services during disruptions.	

Address public-health hazards
Improve community conditions
Continuous quality improvement
Workforce development
Champion evidence-based health initiatives
Exercise financial stewardship
CHIP aligned

STRATEGIC UNIT: FISCAL OPERATIONS

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Strengthen fiscal operations by enhancing staff capacity and standardizing communication and financial processes to improve efficiency, accuracy, and continuity of services.	
Goal 02: Strengthen financial sustainability and fiscal stewardship by aligning financial resources with public health priorities, enhancing accountability, and supporting long-term organizational stability.	
Goal 03: Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of fiscal reporting and administrative processes through the evaluation and enhancement of systems and workflows.	

STRATEGIC UNIT: HUMAN RESOURCES

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Create and maintain a highly qualified, professional, diverse, and responsive workforce that accurately reflects the population in Summit County and supports the agency's mission, vision, and PROMISE.	
Goal 02: Identify, digitize, and optimize manual HR workflows and tracking mechanisms to enhance operational efficiency, data integrity, and user experience.	
Goal 03: Design and maintain a comprehensive Total Rewards program that ensures market competitiveness and a holistic approach to employee well-being to attract and retain top-tier talent.	
Goal 04: Design and implement a comprehensive Workforce Development Plan.	

Address public-health hazards

Improve community conditions

Continuous quality improvement

Workforce development

Champion evidence-based health initiatives

Exercise financial stewardship

CHIP aligned

STRATEGIC UNIT: **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION**

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Develop and implement a functional Health Alert Network (HAN) platform to support timely, coordinated, and effective public health communication.	
Goal 02: Improve the efficiency, accessibility, and responsiveness of SCPH marketing services through the evaluation and redesign of marketing request processes.	
Goal 03: Modernize SCPH's digital presence and brand identity to improve accessibility, consistency, and effectiveness of public communication.	

Address public-health hazards

Improve community conditions

Continuous quality improvement

Workforce development

Champion evidence-based health initiatives

Exercise financial stewardship

CHIP aligned

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

STRATEGIC UNIT: AIR QUALITY / SOLID WASTE

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Improve community awareness and understanding of air quality programs and regulations to support informed decision-making, regulatory compliance, and reduction of environmental health risks.	
Goal 02: Improve the efficiency and usability of air quality equipment maintenance tracking to enhance organization, accessibility, and timeliness of maintenance activities.	

STRATEGIC UNIT: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Strengthen administrative capacity and organizational resilience within Environmental Health by developing cross-trained staff and standardized administrative processes to support continuity of operations.	
Goal 02: Improve the efficiency, accessibility, and reliability of operational communication systems through the development and standardization of a centralized Operational Directory.	

Address public-health hazards
Improve community conditions
Continuous quality improvement
Workforce development
Champion evidence-based health initiatives
Exercise financial stewardship
CHIP aligned

STRATEGIC UNIT: FOOD & RECREATIONAL SAFETY

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Improve the timeliness, consistency, and quality of food safety inspections and complaint investigations to ensure adherence to established procedures and protection of public health.	
Goal 02: Establish and implement a "Clean Kitchen Award" program to recognize food service establishments that exceed regulatory requirements and promote a culture of food safety and public health excellence.	
Goal 03: Increase food service operator access to and participation in the Food Safety Basics training program to promote foundational food safety practices county-wide.	

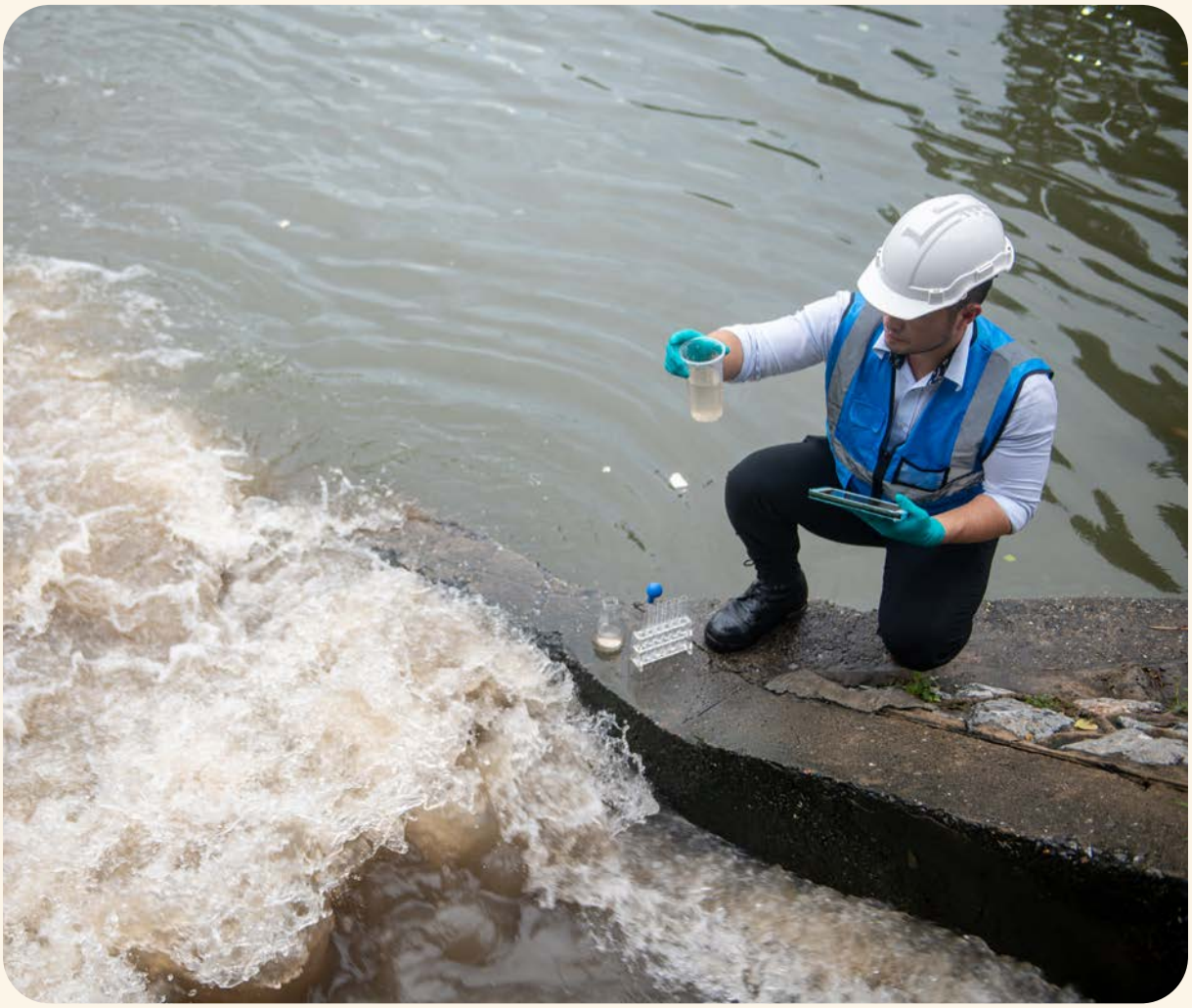
STRATEGIC UNIT: HEALTHY HOMES / VECTOR CONTROL

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Reduce environmental health risks and prevent vector-borne disease transmission by establishing a comprehensive tick surveillance and identification program to inform data-driven public health interventions in Summit County.	
Goal 02: Increase awareness and compliance with animal bite and rabies reporting requirements among Summit County veterinary clinics and hospitals to support timely disease surveillance, case management, and prevention of rabies transmission.	
Goal 03: Improve completion of parent/guardian questionnaires during lead investigations to enhance exposure assessment, case management, and prevention of lead-related health outcomes.	
Goal 04: Strengthen coordination between SCPH and City of Akron lead programs to improve communication, collaboration, and alignment of childhood lead poisoning prevention efforts.	
Goal 05: Strengthen cross-program knowledge and staff capacity across Healthy Homes programs to improve flexibility, coordination, and continuity of services.	

Address public-health hazards
Improve community conditions
Continuous quality improvement
Workforce development
Champion evidence-based health initiatives
Exercise financial stewardship
CHIP aligned

STRATEGIC UNIT: **WATER QUALITY**

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Establish and implement a standardized sewage treatment system (STS) blanket variance process to improve regulatory consistency, administrative efficiency, and protection of public health and the environment.	
Goal 02: Improve the accessibility, usability, and awareness of water quality educational resources to support informed decision-making and protection of public health.	



Address public-health hazards

Improve community conditions

Continuous quality improvement

Workforce development

Champion evidence-based health initiatives

Exercise financial stewardship

CHIP aligned

CLINICAL HEALTH

STRATEGIC UNIT: **CLINIC**

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Improve health outcomes by increasing public awareness and understanding of clinical services including prevention, screening, and treatment to reduce transmission and support early intervention.	
Goal 02: Strengthen clinic efficiency by standardizing and improving processes through the implementation and execution of a Quality Improvement Project.	

STRATEGIC UNIT: **DENTAL SERVICES**

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Ensure access to quality dental care for all by addressing systemic barriers through advocacy and outreach to promote equitable oral health outcomes.	
Goal 02: Improve the efficiency of dental clinic operations by utilizing technology to streamline patient intake and consent processes and enhance workflow and patient experience.	
Goal 03: Identify and secure financial resources to support the expansion of technology used in dental patient care to improve efficiency, access, and quality of services.	

Address public-health hazards

Improve community conditions

Continuous quality improvement

Workforce development

Champion evidence-based health initiatives

Exercise financial stewardship

CHIP aligned

STRATEGIC UNIT: **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE**

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Improve health outcomes by increasing public awareness and understanding of communicable disease prevention, screening, and treatment to reduce transmission and support early intervention.	
Goal 02: Improve operational efficiency within the Communicable Disease Unit through the implementation of a Quality Improvement (QI) project.	
Goal 03: Foster employee engagement, development, and performance by supporting ongoing training and professional development opportunities for Communicable Disease staff.	

Address public-health hazards

Improve community conditions

Continuous quality improvement

Workforce development

Champion evidence-based health initiatives

Exercise financial stewardship

CHIP aligned

FAMILY HEALTH

STRATEGIC UNIT: MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Improve maternal and infant health outcomes and reduce disparities by strengthening access to and coordination of quality resources and services within the Full Term First Birthday (FTFB) network.	
Goal 02: Improve the quality and effectiveness of home visiting services by identifying and addressing gaps in service delivery and ensuring consistent adherence to program standards.	

STRATEGIC UNIT: SENIOR AND ADULT SERVICES

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Improve caregiver capacity and confidence in supporting individuals with dementia by expanding access to evidence-based training and education programs.	
Goal 02: Improve operational efficiency and effectiveness within the Senior and Adult Services Department by identifying and addressing process inefficiencies.	

Address public-health hazards
Improve community conditions
Continuous quality improvement
Workforce development
Champion evidence-based health initiatives
Exercise financial stewardship
CHIP aligned

STRATEGIC UNIT: SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Strengthen community partnerships and reduce health disparities by implementing community-informed strategies that address social determinants of health among priority populations.	
Goal 02: Strengthen subcontractor relationships and accountability by using feedback and performance data to improve partnership effectiveness.	

STRATEGIC UNIT: WIC

GOALS:	Strategic Priority
Goal 01: Increase WIC program utilization by expanding community partnerships and improving referral pathways to reach eligible populations.	
Goal 02: Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of WIC service delivery through the implementation of a Quality Improvement (QI) project focused on clinic flow and participant experience.	

Address public-health hazards
Improve community conditions
Continuous quality improvement
Workforce development
Champion evidence-based health initiatives
Exercise financial stewardship
CHIP aligned

For Every
COMMUNITY.
For Every
RESIDENT.
For Our
FUTURE.

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www.scph.org

1867 W. Market Street
Akron, OH 44313
330.923.4891