

# Arizona Health Improvement Plan

## Health Equity

2024-2025 UPDATE



*Updated December 2023*



# Acknowledgements

The Arizona Health Improvement Plan (AzHIP) was developed collaboratively with input from partners and stakeholders across the state.

## **The plan was recently updated in the Fall of 2023 with input from:**

The AzHIP Steering Committee, composed of multi-sector leaders engaged in the public health system as well as Community partners and priority implementation team members.

The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) thanks everyone who contributed their time, ideas, and expertise to building the AzHIP and the vision of Healthy People, Healthy Communities.

# AzHIP

## Steering Committee Members

**Jennifer Cunico - Co-Chair**

Arizona Department of Health Services

**Suzanne Pfister - Co-Chair**

Vitalyst Health Foundation

**David Adame**

Chicanos Por La Causa

**Lisa Alexander**

School Nurses Organization of Arizona

**Lieutenant Colonel Dana Allmond**

Arizona Department of Veterans' Services

**Maddy Bynes**

Arizona Association of Area Agencies on Aging

**Cynthia Claus**

Phoenix Area Indian Health Services

**Dr. Mary Ellen Dalton**

Health Services Advisory Group

**Zaida Dedolph**

Office of the Governor

**Dr. Dan Derksen**

University of Arizona Center for Rural Health

**Kelli Donley Williams**

Arizona Public Health Association

**Candy Espino**

Arizona Council of Human Service Providers

**Gwenda Gorman**

Inter Tribal Council of Arizona

**Dr. Nika Gueci**

ASU Center for Mindfulness, Compassion,  
& Resilience

**Carmen Heredia**

Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System

**Leslie Horton**

Arizona Local Health Officers Association

**Debbie Johnston**

Arizona Hospital & Healthcare Association

**Mckayla Keams**

Arizona Advisory Council on Indian Health Care

**Marion Kelly**

Mayo Clinic Office for Community Affairs

**Beth Kohler**

Arizona Association of Health Plans

**Tomás León**

Equality Health Foundation

**Libby McDannell**

Arizona Medical Association

**Floribella Redondo**

Arizona Community Health Worker Association

**Virginia Roundtree**

Arizona Department of Economic Security

**Joan Serviss**

Arizona Department of Housing

**Kim Russell**

Navajo Nation Department of Health

**Christine Wiggs**

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona

**Jessica Yanow**

Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers

# Summary & Background

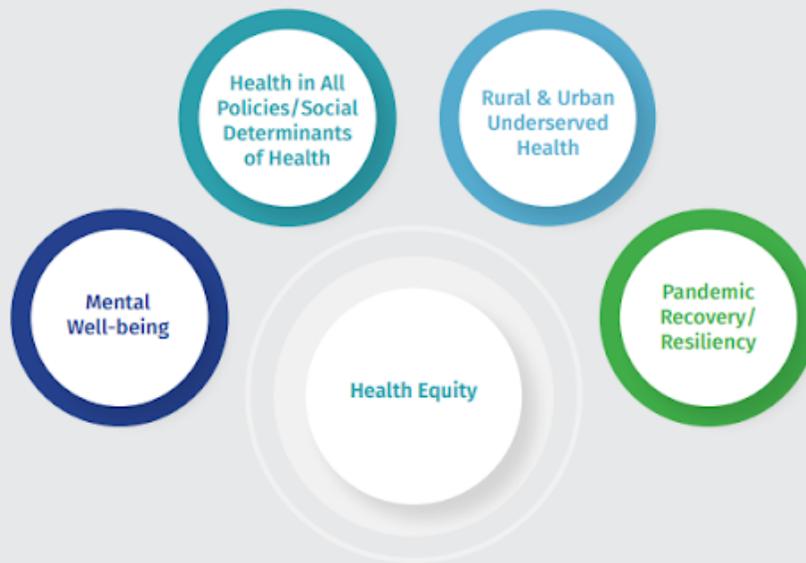
The Arizona Health Improvement Plan provides a structure and a venue bringing together a networked system of partners to improve the health of communities and individuals across Arizona. Driven by data and community participation, the AzHIP includes input from individuals and organizations who comprise the public health system. The plan aligns the state on common goals by enhancing non-traditional partnerships, focusing work on priority areas, breaking silos, and leveraging community health improvement plans (CHIPs) statewide. By identifying priorities specific to Arizona's needs, the plan can make the greatest impact on health promotion and disease prevention.

The first plan spanned 2016-2020 and described how ADHS and community partners and stakeholders worked together to address four cross-cutting issues and 13 health priority issues to significantly impact large numbers of Arizonans.

The process to set the new priorities for 2021-2025 included a collaborative approach informed by the State Health Assessment, which provides a snapshot of health and wellbeing in Arizona, presentations to stakeholders, a partner survey, and Summit participation. Centered on health equity, the AzHIP provides a unique opportunity to transform the health of our communities through strong, innovative partnerships.

The 2021-2025 AzHIP builds on the progress of the 2016-2020 AzHIP and consists of five strategic priorities which focus on underlying health issues and significant overarching health disparities faced by Arizonans, including impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a living document intended to be monitored and evolve during its duration.

## AzHIP 2021 - 2025 Priorities



With the guidance of the AZHIP Steering Committee, a Core Team of subject matter experts and community leaders for each priority team drafted the vision, goals, and overarching strategies of this plan.

To ensure the **5-year plan** is flexible and can account for emerging health issues, the initial action plans focus on **18-24 months** of work. In the Fall of 2023, the AzHIP plan was updated using a collaborative approach informed by dialogue with stakeholders at numerous sessions.

Where appropriate, the priority teams leveraged additional subject matter experts as subgroups to bring a detailed focus to proposed actions. Key in the development of each priority were statewide planning sessions to capture and incorporate community input.

**Additionally, priority teams considered the following:**



As part of the integration of health equity, attention to cultural humility is embedded in all of the 2021-2025 priorities. Cultural humility acknowledges that someone's culture can only be appreciated by learning from that person. Attributing traits or attitudes to members of a certain group may not be accurate or helpful in understanding them.

**The AzHIP will be implemented by a wide range of public and private partners, including:**

**State agencies**

**Local health departments**

**Community-based organizations**

**Employers and private organizations**

**Universities**

**Local non-profits**

**Other local agencies and organizations**

# Priorities

Numerous community and stakeholder forums were held during the planning of the 2021-2025 Arizona Health Improvement Plan (AzHIP). In total, over 500 individuals participated from both private and public organizations across the state. These forums were designed to ensure the AzHIP priorities were meaningful and addressed the most important issues to Arizonans.

**Note:** Leading organizations of tactics and/or action steps have been noted in parentheses.

# Health Equity

Arizona has a rich and diverse culture with unique communities, populations, and geography. From urban Phoenix to the bottom of the Grand Canyon, from the United States/Mexico Border Region to tribal lands, the health of Arizona's residents is a priority, not only for the Arizona Department of Health Services, but for our entire community (ADHS SHA, 2019). The development of the AzHIP Health Equity Action Plan strategies and action steps was guided by the 2019 ADHS State Health Assessment, which highlighted many high-priority issues and inequities.

Addressing health equity is more than just a written commitment, it is a commitment to action. Within the Health Equity Action Plan, the action steps identified are focused on how health equity can become operationalized within communities, organizations/agencies, and systems with a focus on data infrastructure, capacity, and sharing; enhanced community partnership and engagement; and moving further upstream to address policy, system, and environmental change. The Health Equity Action Plan is meant to be a plan that is foundational to all AzHIP Health Priority Areas and is co-created and embraced by all statewide partners and the entire public health system, to support the vision of Healthy People, Healthy Communities for all Arizonans.



# VISION

**Health equity** is defined as every person having the opportunity to “attain their full health potential,” and is improved when individuals who are impacted by inequities and injustices are co-creating solutions and policies; and when systems are responsive to communities.

**Health inequities and injustices** include differences in length of life; quality of life; rates of disease, disability, and death; severity of disease; and access to treatment, disadvantages due to race or other socially and economically determined circumstances.

-Adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (3.9.2021)

# Health Equity

## STRATEGIES & INDICATORS

### **Strengthening Data Infrastructure: Informing, Integrating, and Sharing**

- Enhance the use and capabilities of informatics in public health

### **Community Partnership and Engagement**

- Increase the health literacy of the population

### **Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change**



## Strengthening Data Infrastructure: Informing, Integrating, and Sharing

### Tactic A

#### Advance Data Equity Best Practices

- Advance best practices for centering equity during each stage of data lifecycle which can include the development of collaborative position papers and facts sheets, and a catalog of data equity resources. (ADHS, ADHS Data Advisory Committee)
- Identify the action areas from the other AZHIP Priority implementation groups that involve data and ensure that data equity best practices are prioritized wherever possible. (ADHS, ADHS Data Advisory Committee, AZHIP Co-Chairs)
- Connect ADHS programs with community based organizations (e.g., through community advisory boards and the ADHS Equity Partner list) with an emphasis on strengthening and building collaborations around data. (ADHS, ADHS Data Advisory Committee)
- Encourage the ethical usage and expanded adoption of Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) by groups committed to health equity doing work at the community level. (ADHS, ADHS Data Advisory Committee)
- Spread awareness of funding opportunities that support Arizona organizations to build their capacity for using data to advance health equity. (ADHS, ADHS Data Advisory Committee)



## Strengthening Data Infrastructure: Informing, Integrating, and Sharing

### Tactic B

#### Strengthen Data Sharing and Transparency

- Increase collaboration and strengthen best practices around data sharing between ADHS and state agencies, health information exchange, local health departments, and community organizations. Identify common goals and any barriers that can be removed. (Contexture, ADHS Data Advisory Committee)
- Increase collaboration and strengthen best practices around data sharing between ADHS and Tribal Nations with emphasis on Indigenous data sovereignty. (Arizona Advisory Council on Indian Health Care, ADHS Data Advisory Committee)
- Increase the public awareness of all data available at ADHS and the means of accessing it (e.g., public health data portal, data requests submission form, GIS open data, annual reports and dashboards). (ADHS, ADHS Data Advisory Committee)
- Enhance the use and capabilities of informatics in public health. (ADHS, ADHS Data Advisory Committee)



## Community Partnership and Engagement

### Tactic A

#### **Strategically engage stakeholders, including diverse and nontraditional stakeholders, in meaningful ways which build trust in relationships and engagement**

- Conduct training on best & promising practices, including topics such as non-traditional community engagement, models/frameworks of innovative Community Engagement, common language, tele-community engagement, and offering a variety of practices that are culturally competent in approach. (ADHS, OHE)
  - Currently being reviewed and adapted at the ADHS agency level in the Equity Action Plan
- Communicate (e.g., through webinars, data sharing) data collection findings with statewide partners and communities, which closes the loop on identifying, sharing, and communicating data. (AzHIP HEIT, ADHS)
- Develop evaluation metrics/tools which assess the impact of partnerships. (ADHS)
  - ADHS will do this through the Equity Partner List and report back to HEIT



## Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change

### Tactic A

#### **Policy Change: Empower communities to drive policy change**

- Develop educational opportunities for community stakeholders so that they may engage in policy change efforts. Centering the importance of lobbying vs. advocacy vs. education. Ensuring that all levels of government - tribal, federal, state, local - are highlighted in the training.
- Reassess previous policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) initiatives/efforts to reinvigorate opportunities for health in all policies (HiAP) implementation, (e.g., complete streets, shared use, urban shade plans, multimodal transportation, affordable housing, and local school wellness policies). (ADHS, HEIT)
  - PSE Playbook has been completed and now it needs to be promoted.

### Tactic B

#### **Systems Change: Remove barriers to assist individuals/ communities in navigating systems**

- Adopt an inclusive practice that ensures community members, including under-represented and resourced, are represented in all planning stages of initiatives and programs designed to advance health equity. (ADHS)



## Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change

### Tactic C

#### **Environmental Change: Promote Smart Growth development and foster engagement of non-traditional stakeholders**

- Support efforts of the AzHIP Rural & Urban Underserved Health Priority to bolster rural resources addressing access to healthcare services. (HEIT)
  - Schedule meeting between HEIT and Rural and Urban Underserved Health Priority to see where there is alignment or collaboration
- Increase the health literacy of the population. (ADHS, HEIT)
  - Strengthen health and digital literacy efforts by providing communication in multiple languages & modes, and offering professional interpretation and translation services, in coordination with the Health Equity Community Partnership & Engagement strategies.

# Appendix

## Implementation Partners

Arizona Advisory Council on Indian Health Care

Arizona Department of Health Services

Arizona Developmental Disabilities  
Planning Council

Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System

Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association

Arizona State University

Arizona Food Bank Network

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona

Care 1st AZ

Contexture

Dignity Health, St. Joseph's Hospital  
and Medical Center

Dominium Housing

Esperança

Graham County

Grand Canyon University

Health First Foundation

Health Management Associates

HonorHealth

Inter Tribal Council of Arizona  
Epidemiology Center

Maricopa County Department of Public Health

Mercy Care

Navajo County Public Health Services

Navajo Nation Department of Health

Peer Solutions

Phoenix Children's Hospital

Pima County Health Department

Pinal County

Pinnacle Prevention

Solari

Unite Us

University of Arizona

Vitalyst Health Foundation

Yavapai County Community Health Services



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH SERVICES

**Arizona Department of Health Services**

[azhip@azdhs.gov](mailto:azhip@azdhs.gov)

150 N. 18th Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85007