



COUNTY OF MONTEREY  
**HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

**2025-2028**

# Strategic Plan

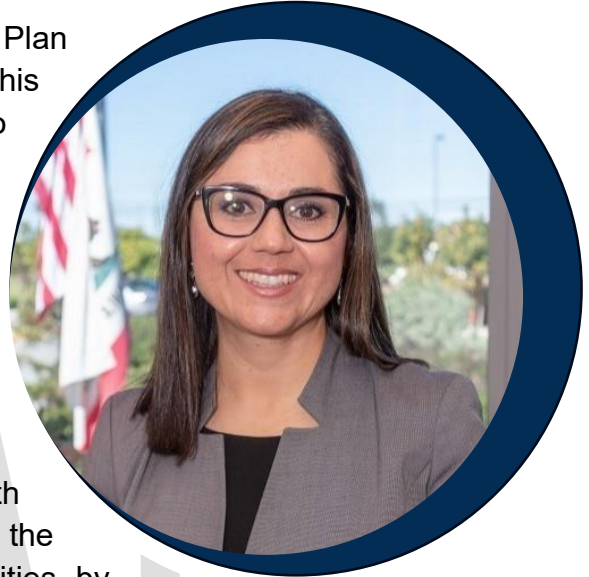
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# From the Director

Dear Monterey County residents, partners, and leaders,

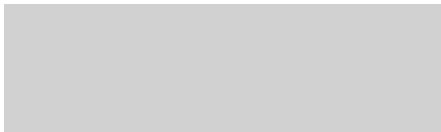
I am very pleased to launch the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan for the County of Monterey Health Department. This strategic plan will guide our important work while also ensuring the Department is able to quickly respond to emerging needs and opportunities. Building on previous and ongoing work and reflecting extensive input from staff and community leaders, I hope it inspires both our employees and our partners.



We set the stage by presenting the County of Monterey Health System, which includes the collaborative work of the County of Monterey Health Department and Natividad Medical Center. Across the system, we serve our patients and our communities by providing person-centered care and community-focused care and services. The Health Department’s range of functions ensures that the system supports the health and wellbeing of our community members at multiple levels, from safety net services to upstream prevention.

Organized around four goals, this plan provides direction for how to leverage finite funding, our employees’ expertise and dedication, and our strong relationships with community leaders and organizations. Goal 1 strengthens our commitment to centering and expanding residents’ leadership by helping partners gain the knowledge and skills needed to make our county healthier and more equitable. Goal 2 reaffirms our commitment to providing person-centered, accessible services. Goal 3 reflects the need to invest in our employees and identifies a suite of strategies to ensure our critical services and programs continue. Finally, goal 4 recognizes key ways to increase our effectiveness by adjusting internal processes and practices.

Sincerely,



**Elsa Mendoza Jimenez, MPH**

Director of Health Services, Public Administrator/Conservator/Guardian

# Contents

From the Director.....	1
The County of Monterey Health System.....	3
About the Health Department.....	4
Health Department 2025-2028 Strategic Goals.....	5
2025-2028 Goals + Strategies.....	6
How the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan was Developed .....	8
Engagement.....	8
Alignment.....	10
Monitoring Implementation .....	11
Glossary.....	15
Acknowledgements.....	17

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The cover of this plan features portions of the following murals.

*Top left:* Untitled mural painted in 2024 on the outside of Mee Memorial Hospital at 809 Broadway Street, King City. Artists: Paul Richmond and Brenda Scettrini-Saglio.

*Top right:* A “The Hug,” painted in 2024 on the outside of the Alisal Integrated Health Center/ Centro del Salud Integrado de Alisal (a County of Monterey Health Department facility) at 331 North Sanborn Road, Salinas. Artists: José Ortiz, Pepe Nolasco, Juan Carlos Padilla, and David Rubio of Hijos del Sol Arts Productions.

*Bottom:* “Under Passageway,” painted in 2023 on the underpass at South Sanborn Road, Salinas. Artist: Timothy Robert Smith.

# The County of Monterey Health System

Our exceptional team serves each patient and our communities



## Person-Centered Care

We provide the highest-quality care that is compassionate, tailored to each patient and their loved ones and accessible to all.



## Community-Focused Care and Services

We improve the health, wellness and quality of life of all Monterey County community members and work to achieve health equity.



## Highest-Quality Health Care

We provide responsive, evidence-based primary and specialty care, mental health and substance use services, as well as emergency, trauma and hospital services.



## Wellness + Community Leadership

We support individuals and families to be healthy by meeting them where they are with preventative care and health education. We also engage residents in making decisions that shape their communities.



## Healthy Communities

We work collaboratively within and across communities to make Monterey County a safe and healthy place.



COUNTY OF MONTEREY  
**HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

**Natividad**<sup>®</sup>  
Inspiring healthy lives

# About the Health Department

## Vision

Creating a legacy of health together

## Mission

To enhance, promote, and protect the health of Monterey County individuals, families, communities, and environment

The Health Department’s mission aligns with the Board of Supervisors’ long-standing strategic focus on health and wellness for Monterey County residents. Broader than the Health Department’s work, the Supervisors seek to: Improve health and quality of life through County supported policies, programs, and services and to promote access to equitable opportunities for healthy choices and healthy environments in collaboration with communities.

## Values

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Health Equity</b> | We cultivate activities, programs, and policies that equalize opportunities for communities to be healthy. |
| <b>Excellence</b>    | We promote quality outcomes through learning and continuous performance improvement.                       |
| <b>Respect</b>       | We value the strengths, experiences, and perspectives of others.   |
| <b>Innovation</b>    | We search for creative solutions, manage resources wisely, and lead the way.                               |
| <b>Integrity</b>     | We conduct our work in a trustworthy and dependable manner.  |

## Organization

The Health Department is comprised of the following bureaus, divisions, branches, and units.

- Administration Bureau
- Animal Services Division
- Behavioral Health Bureau
- Clinic Services Bureau
- Emergency Medical Services Agency
- Environmental Health Bureau
- Human Resources Branch
- Planning, Evaluation, and Policy
- Public Administrator/Public Guardian Division
- Public Health Bureau

# Health Department 2025-2028 Strategic Goals

**Goal 1. Build Community Power and Partners' Capacity to Increase Equity and Improve Health**

**Goal 2. Provide Exceptional Person-Centered Care through Accessible, Community-Focused Health Services**

**Goal 3. Enhance Employee Wellbeing and Workforce Capacity**

**Goal 4. Deepen Organizational Effectiveness and Support Long-Term Sustainability**

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# 2025-2028 Goals + Strategies

Icons indicate that the strategy aligns with:



2024-2027 Monterey County Community Health Improvement Plan



Natividad's 2025-2028 Strategic Plan

## Goal 1. Build Community Power and Partners' Capacity to Increase Equity and Improve Health

- 1.1 Engage community members to build community capacity to advocate and participate in government decision-making
- 1.2 Energize cross-sector partners to advance equitable policy and systems changes
- 1.3 Improve the department's information dissemination to diverse communities and sectors
- 1.4 Promote affordable and healthy housing



## Goal 2. Provide Exceptional Person-Centered Care through Accessible, Community-Focused Health Services

- 2.1 Strengthen the continuum of care to provide a seamless patient experience across the County of Monterey Health System to improve health outcomes
- 2.2 Increase accessibility of medical, dental, mental health, and substance use services, especially for underserved communities
- 2.3 Maximize preventative clinical care, early intervention, and timely treatment to improve wellbeing
- 2.4 Expand population health initiatives to improve health outcomes and promote equity



## Goal 3. Enhance Employee Wellbeing and Workforce Capacity

- 3.1 Increase engagement and retention efforts by promoting a workplace culture of wellbeing, inclusion, and belonging
- 3.2 Implement multi-pronged approach to increase the department's capacity to provide culturally and linguistically responsive programs and services
- 3.3 Create and implement a workforce development plan to strengthen staff skills in key areas
- 3.4 Address effects of vacancies and improve the department's hiring process
- 3.5 Increase communication with and opportunities for leadership at all levels of staff



## Goal 4. Deepen Organizational Effectiveness and Support Long-Term Sustainability

- 4.1 Reinforce an organizational culture of continuous quality improvement and learning
- 4.2 Expand communication and collaboration across and between Health Department bureaus and programs, as well as with other County departments
- 4.3 Continue to increase and diversify revenue to support organizational priorities
- 4.4 Leverage technology and data-sharing agreements to improve efficiency, access to care, and quality of services





# How the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan was Developed

This strategic plan updated the previous strategic plan based on the following inputs:

- ✓ Extensive document review of local, regional, state-wide, and national plans, frameworks, and recommendations/lessons learned related to advancing equity and improving health outcomes
- ✓ Implementation status updates from department staff focused on strategies and activities identified in the previous strategic plan that had been paused or stopped due to the COVID-19 pandemic or other changes to funding and/or the regulatory environment
- ✓ Review of all reaccreditation requirements from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB)
- ✓ Meetings with the Strategic Planning Team that includes staff from across the Department
- ✓ SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis focused on primary data gathered through interviews with the leaders of key partner organizations and meetings with Health Department staff and County Supervisors
- ✓ Meetings with the County of Monterey Health System Executive Steering Committee and Patient Experience & Operations Integration Workgroup to ensure that the Health Department and Natividad Strategic Plans contain shared and complementary strategies
- ✓ Quantitative and qualitative data from the Health Department Strategic Planning Process Staff Input Survey with employees' response to draft goals, draft strategies, and example activities

## Engagement

To ensure alignment with Public Health Accreditation requirements, Health Department staff at all levels of the organization and members of the governing entity (the County Board of Supervisors) identified departmental strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the SWOT analysis portion of the planning process. Staff at all levels also provided input on draft goals and strategies. Additional information about engagement with the Board of Supervisors and Health Department staff follows.

### County of Monterey Board of Supervisors

The Health Department's governing entity is the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors. All five Supervisors were engaged to provide their perspective on the Health Department's strengths and weaknesses, as well as their understanding of the main issues impacting their constituents and other county residents' health and wellbeing. After the final Strategic Planning Team meeting, the Director of Health Services will present the draft strategic plan to the Board of Supervisors in a public meeting.

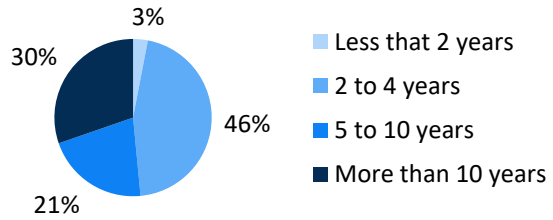
### Health Department Staff

The strategic plan was developed through five virtual meetings that Raimi + Associates facilitated with the Strategic Planning Team (SPT). The SPT included employees from six Department bureaus.

All Health Department staff were invited to participate in one of two 2-hour meetings that Raimi + Associates facilitated virtually in April 2024. The 55 attendees represented Administration, Behavioral Health, Clinic Services, Environmental Health, and Public Health Bureaus. After both meetings,

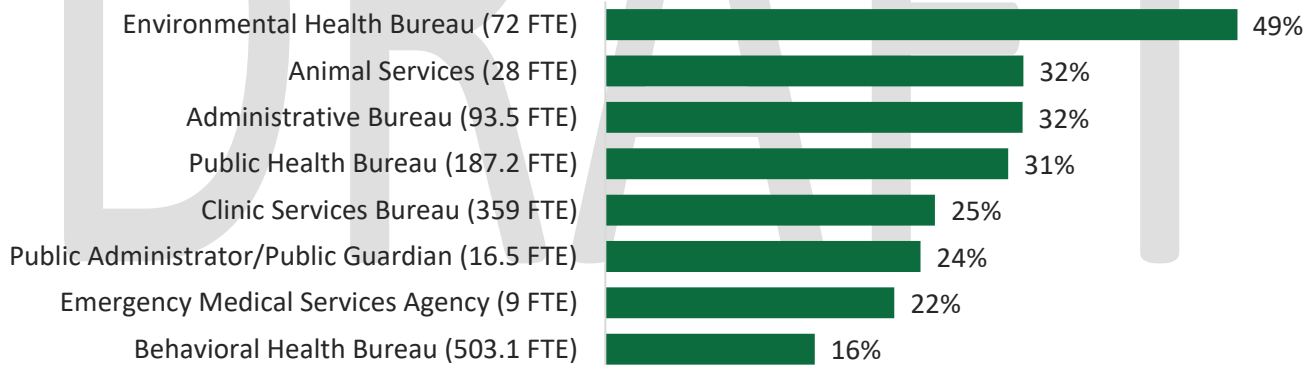
attendees and other staff who had expressed their interest in participating were invited to share additional input in Google Docs with notes on the Department’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Raimi + Associates used a content analysis approach to identify themes from the input provided during these two meetings.

**FIGURE 1. TENURE AT HEALTH DEPARTMENT FOR INPUT MEETING PARTICIPANTS (n=33)**

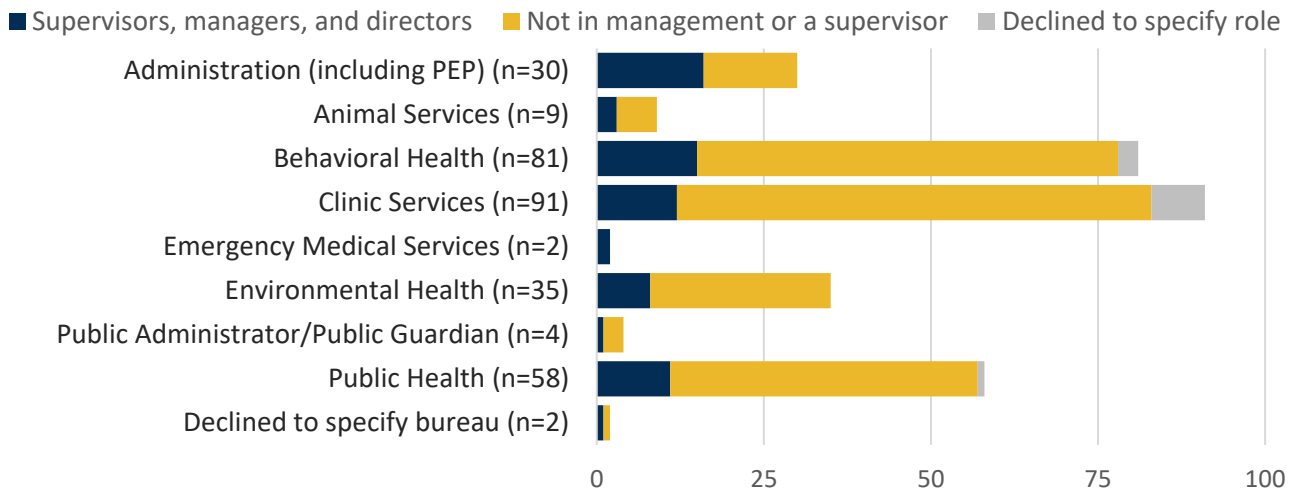


In September 2024, all Health Department staff were invited to complete an anonymous online survey soliciting their feedback on draft goals, draft strategies, and example activities that were identified based on the input described above. To encourage staff to respond, participants had the option to provide their confidential email address to be included in a drawing for ten \$50 gift cards (once the drawing was complete, all email addresses were deleted). A total of 312 responses were submitted and 134 participants shared an email address. Responses included staff in all bureaus, with both managers and non-manager participants from all but the bureau with the fewest FTE. Raimi + Associates used a content analysis approach to analyze more than 40 pages of write-in feedback on the draft goals, draft strategies, and example activities presented in the survey, and recommended revised language based on the survey data. The final strategic plan reflects all input

**FIGURE 2. SEPTEMBER 2024 STAFF INPUT SURVEY RESPONSE RATE PER BUREAU (n=312)**



**FIGURE 3. SEPTEMBER 2024 STAFF INPUT SURVEY PARTICIPATION**



## Alignment

The table below indicates that some strategies within the County of Monterey Strategic Plan goal align with goals, strategies, and/or recommendations from the specified local or regional plan or report.

### Alignment with County and Regional Strategic Plans and Strategies

	County of Monterey Health Department 2025-28 Goals			
	1	2	3	4
Natividad Strategic Plan 2025-2028		✓		✓
Monterey County 2024-2027 Community Health Improvement Plan	✓	✓	✓	
County of Monterey Health Department’s Health Equity Plan	✓		✓	✓
County of Monterey Clinic Services Strategic Plan 2024-2026	✓	✓	✓	✓
First 5 Monterey County 2024-2029 Strategic Plan	✓	✓		
Monterey County Community Action Partnership Strategic Plan 2022-2026	✓			✓
County of Monterey Environmental Health Annual Report Fiscal Year 2022-2023			✓	
Lead Me Home Plan Update: 5 Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness in Monterey and San Benito Counties, 2021-2026	✓	✓		
Impact Monterey County Strategy Maps	✓	✓	✓	
Monterey County COVID-19 Disparate Impact Report	✓	✓	✓	
Monterey County Emergency Medical Services Agency 2017-20 Strategic Plan		✓		✓

### Alignment with Federal Strategic Plans and Frameworks

The table below indicates that some strategies within the County of Monterey Strategic Plan goal align with goals or priorities identified in the specified federal plan.

	County of Monterey Health Department 2025-28 Goals			
	1	2	3	4
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Agency 2023-2026 Strategic Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services 2022-2026 Strategic Plan		✓	✓	✓
Health Resources & Services Administration Strategic Plan Fiscal Year 2025	✓	✓	✓	✓
Centers for Disease Control Moving Forward Core Areas for Improvement	✓		✓	✓
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Strategic Framework	✓	✓	✓	✓

# Monitoring Implementation

The strategies identified in the strategic plan establish priorities across the Health Department. Staff in Planning, Evaluation, and Policy (PEP) will monitor and support implementation throughout the Health Department via the performance management system and regular communication with bureau chiefs and other staff. This communication will occur at least annually. PEP staff will also identify annual objectives with measurable and time-framed targets that relate to the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan. Each bureau and program will also integrate strategic plan implementation activities into annual work plans.

Each selected performance measure included in this section will be used to monitor the implementation of one relevant strategy in the strategic plan. These performance measures were identified because they were both meaningful and feasible to track (for example, from data that are already recorded, measures also used to monitor implementation of other plans). In the first two years of implementation, staff will identify additional performance measures (primarily related to strategies that will be implemented with new or significantly expanded activities).

## Goal 1. Build Community Power and Partners' Capacity to Increase Equity and Improve Health

### Strategies

- 1.1 Engage community members to build community capacity to advocate and participate in government decision-making
- 1.2 Energize cross-sector partners to advance equitable policy and systems changes
- 1.3 Improve the department's information dissemination to diverse communities and sectors
- 1.4 Promote affordable and healthy housing

### Selected Performance Measures

- a) Funding (\$) contributed to Community-Driven Health Equity Fund
- b) Percentage of Clinic Services patients who receive vaccines at Health Department clinics

## Goal 2. Provide Exceptional Person-Centered Care through Accessible, Community-Focused Health Services

### Strategies

- 2.1 Strengthen the continuum of care to provide a seamless patient experience across the County of Monterey Health System to improve health outcomes
- 2.2 Increase accessibility of medical, dental, mental health, and substance use services, especially for underserved communities
- 2.3 Maximize preventative clinical care, early intervention, and timely treatment to improve wellbeing
- 2.4 Expand population health initiatives to improve health outcomes and promote equity

### Selected Performance Measures

- a) Number of quality improvement projects completed in partnership between Natividad and Clinic Services
- b) Percentage of mental health clients whose cases have been reviewed to assess co-occurring substance use disorders and have results recorded in their Electronic Health Records
- c) Percentage of new Behavioral Health clients who receive initial service within 10 business days of initial nonurgent request
- d) Number of individuals served by Community Health Workers
- e) Percentage of Clinic Services well-child check appointments able to be scheduled within a two-month window (based on third next available Clinic Services appointment)

### Goal 3. Enhance Employee Wellbeing and Workforce Capacity

#### Strategies

- 3.1 Increase engagement and retention efforts by promoting a workplace culture of wellbeing, inclusion, and belonging
- 3.2 Implement multi-pronged approach to increase the department's capacity to provide culturally and linguistically responsive programs and services
- 3.3 Create and implement a workforce development plan to strengthen staff skills in key areas
- 3.4 Address effects of vacancies and improve the department's hiring process
- 3.5 Increase communication with and opportunities for leadership at all levels of staff

#### Selected Performance Measures

- a) Percentage of Health Department staff reporting the department's work culture supports their health and wellbeing
- b) Percentage of Health Department staff reporting, "I feel like I belong here"
- c) Percentage of Health Department staff who recommend the County of Monterey as a great place to work
- d) Percentage of all hires who were already Health Department employees (i.e., hires that are promotions)
- e) Number of languages other than English that staff speak fluently, by bureau
- f) Percentage of managers in each bureau who have participated in the "Better UP" program (individualized coaching)
- g) Quarterly position occupancy rates
- h) Percentage of Health Department staff reporting their immediate manager cares about their development
- i) Percentage of Health Department staff reporting their immediate manager regularly coaches them on their job performance

## Goal 4. Deepen Organizational Effectiveness and Support Long-Term Sustainability

### Strategies

- 4.1 Reinforce an organizational culture of continuous quality improvement and learning
- 4.2 Expand communication and collaboration across and between Health Department bureaus and programs, as well as with other County departments
- 4.3 Continue to increase and diversify revenue to support organizational priorities
- 4.4 Leverage technology and data-sharing agreements to improve efficiency, access to care, and quality of services

### Selected Performance Measures

- a) Number of quality improvement projects completed, by bureau
- b) Number of grant proposals submitted
- c) Number of departments and other partners with which HD has active data sharing memoranda of understanding (MOUs)

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# Glossary

The Health Department’s 2025-2028 goals and strategies include the following terms. Definitions that are not cited have been developed by Health Department staff and/or consultants.

## Community-Focused Health Services

The County of Monterey Health System improves the health, wellness, and quality of life for all Monterey County community members and works to achieve health equity. The Health System is locally designed and expands care delivery beyond traditional healthcare settings into community settings such as the workplace, schools, places of worship, homeless shelters, housing for older adults and institutions. Data systems are incorporated to understand the population being served, and services are comprehensive, coordinated, cooperative and collaborative.

## Community Power<sup>1</sup>

The ability of communities most impacted by inequity to act together to voice their needs and hopes for the future and to collectively drive structural change, hold decisionmakers accountable, and advance health equity.

## Continuum of Care

An integrated system of care that guides and tracks patients over time across a range of health and social services spanning all levels and intensity of care. The County of Monterey Health System provides continuity along the continuum of care.

## Equity

Every person is able to attain their full potential and no one is disadvantaged by social position or other socially determined circumstances.

## Health Equity

Attainment of the highest level of health for all people, where everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their optimal health regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, preferred language, or other factors.

## Healthy Housing<sup>2</sup>

A home/residence that is dry, clean, safe, ventilated, free of pests and contaminants, well maintained, and thermally comfortable. In addition, homes should be affordable and accessible to all people, regardless of age or ability.

<sup>1</sup> Pastor, M., et al. (2020). “A Primer on Community Power, Place, and Structural Change.” USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute. <https://www.lead-local.org/structural-change>

<sup>2</sup> (2022) “The Principles of a Healthy Home.” National Center for Healthy Housing. <https://nchh.org/information-and-evidence/learn-about-healthy-housing/healthy-homes-principles/>



## Inclusion and Belonging<sup>3</sup>

Inclusion is the intentional admission of people who have been systematically excluded from formal and informal spaces, institutions, and communities.

Belonging means that one's well-being and participation are valued and that that one has genuine opportunities to meaningfully contribute to decision-making.

## Person-Centered Care

The County of Monterey Health System considers the whole person (not only a narrow focus on condition or symptoms) including their preferences, wellbeing, social and cultural background. Healthcare and non-healthcare professionals work collaboratively to support people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to make informed decisions about their own health and healthcare. Care, support, and treatment are coordinated and tailored to meet the needs of each individual, and each person is always treated with dignity, compassion, and respect.

## Policy and Systems Changes

Policies and systems shape where and how people live, learn, work, and play. Changing these can either interrupt or exacerbate inequities. Decades of public health research have demonstrated that addressing the social determinants of health through policy and systems changes can improve health outcomes for entire communities and can increase equity.

A policy guides decisions. Government policies include laws, adopted budgets, regulations, and judicial rulings. Public sector agencies, non-profit organizations, and for-profit companies all have formal and informal policies that outline procedures and establish expectations for employees and other representatives.

A system is a group of parts that are connected (in both formal and informal ways) because of their shared focus or purpose. Systems changes are necessary to address complex problems (for example, homelessness, food insecurity) and to sustainably increase equity.

## Quality Improvement

A continuous effort to increase the efficiency, effectiveness of programs, services, and practices. In public health, this often involves the use of a deliberate and defined improvement process, such as Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA).

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<sup>3</sup> Definitions based on those included in the Othing & Belonging Institute's "Glossary of Key Terms" (written by Nicole Montojo for the 2021 Summer Teacher Institute): [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nUXCugXx-QMzYL7hdMPO8\\_Tn1ysmP2GWq8HpGSzU4/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nUXCugXx-QMzYL7hdMPO8_Tn1ysmP2GWq8HpGSzU4/edit?usp=sharing)

# Acknowledgements

## County of Monterey Supervisors

Luis Alejo, JD, Ed.M., District 1

Glenn Church, District 2

Chris Lopez, District 3

Wendy Root-Askew, District 4

Mary Adams, District 5

## Key Leader Interviewees

Dan Baldwin, Chief Executive Officer/President, Community Foundation for Monterey County

Katy Castagna, MBA, Chief Executive Officer/President, United Way Monterey County

Carmen Gil, MPH/HSA, City Manager, City of Gonzales

Deneen Guss, EdD, Superintendent, Monterey County Office of Education

Francine Rodd, Executive Director, First 5 Monterey County

## Health System Executive Steering Committee

### Health Department

Elsa Jimenez, MPH, Director of Health Services

Prashant Shinde, MHA, Bureau Chief

Caroline Kennedy, MD,  
Clinic Services Medical Director

Begonia Campos Romero,  
Outpatient Service Director

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Patricia Alcocer, Management Analyst II

Guadalupe Hueramo,  
Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator

### Natividad Medical Center

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Nancy Buscher, RN, DNP, Chief Nursing Officer

Daniel Leon, Chief Financial Officer

Andrea Rosenberg,  
Chief Ancillary and Support Services Officer

Craig Walls, MD, PhD, Chief Medical Officer

Dana Regnier, RN,  
Nursing Services Division Manager

## Health Department Staff

Thank you to all Health Department staff!

## Strategic Planning Team

### Administration Bureau

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Krista Hanni

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Vicente Lara

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Christina Santana-Amezquita

Karen Smith

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Katy Eckert

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Jessica Ramirez

Melanie Rhodes

Dr. Marni Sandoval

### Clinic Services Bureau

Sheena Morales

Begonia Romero

### Emergency Medical Services Agency

Kimberley Hernandez

Debra Hopgood

### Environmental Health Bureau

Ricardo Encarnacion

Marni Flagg

### Public Health Bureau

Kristy Michie

Dr. Edward Moreno

Cristabelle Oropeza

## Facilitator of the Strategic Planning Process

### Raimi + Associates

Kym Dorman, MPH, Principal and Project Director

Paige Kruza, MPH, Intermediate Associate and Project Manager





COUNTY OF MONTEREY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

2025-2028

# Strategic Plan

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[CountyofMonterey.gov/government/departments-a-h/health](https://CountyofMonterey.gov/government/departments-a-h/health)