

The Health Policy Institute of Ohio is a nonprofit organization located in Columbus, Ohio, that was created in 2003 by a group of health foundations. These funders recognized the need for a statewide organization focused on independent, non-partisan health policy analysis. HPIO has earned a reputation as a trusted and credible resource for state policymakers and other key stakeholders.

This strategic plan will be in effect from 2020 to 2026.

Vision

The Health Policy Institute of Ohio's vision is that Ohio is a model of health, wellbeing and economic vitality.

As seen in figure 1, HPIO's vision will be achieved by improving health value in Ohio through improved population health and sustainable healthcare spending.

Figure 1. HPIO's vision



Mission and unique role

HPIO's mission is to provide independent and nonpartisan analysis needed to create evidence-informed state health policy that improves health value.

Federal, state and local public policy play an instrumental role in achieving health value. Policy change, as a complement to health programs and services, is a key lever to impacting healthcare spending and health outcomes. **HPIO's work will focus on state-level public policy** decisions that can lead to improved health value. The Institute's primary audience is state public policymakers in both the executive and legislative branches of Ohio government.

HPIO is Ohio's only nonpartisan organization solely dedicated to informing state health policy decisions. The Institute's independence from any particular sector and its knowledgeable staff will enable the organization to be both agile and credible. HPIO does not take positions on specific legislation, but will use its expertise on a comprehensive range of health policy issues, including the social drivers of health, to translate complex health policy information for state policymakers and others and to provide objective research, analysis and data presentation.

HPIO will perform three key roles in the policymaking process:

- **Lead.** Manage and facilitate multi-stakeholder meetings and collaborative processes to elevate policy options.
- **Inform.** Collect, analyze, synthesize and summarize data and information through environmental scans, literature reviews, needs assessments, focus groups, key stakeholder interviews, reports, dashboards, graphics and presentations.
- **Improve.** Provide health improvement planning and create evaluation processes with a strong focus on identifying measurable, time-bound objectives and the implementation of evidence-based strategies.

Values

HPIO embraces the following values:

Objectivity – Improving the health of all Ohioans without representing the perspective of a particular sector or political ideology.

Diversity – Seeking out and considering diverse perspectives and encouraging thoughtful dialogue focused on potential solutions.

Credibility – Providing information and policy options that are data driven and evidence informed.

Relevance – Focusing on the most pressing health policy issues facing Ohio and maintaining the agility needed to shift with changing needs and opportunities.

SWOT analysis

The diagram below summarizes HPIO’s internal strengths and weaknesses identified in 2018 and 2019 annual organizational evaluations and by staff. It also lists the external opportunities and threats discussed by the HPIO Board of Directors and staff during a strategic planning session in July 2019.

Outcomes and impact

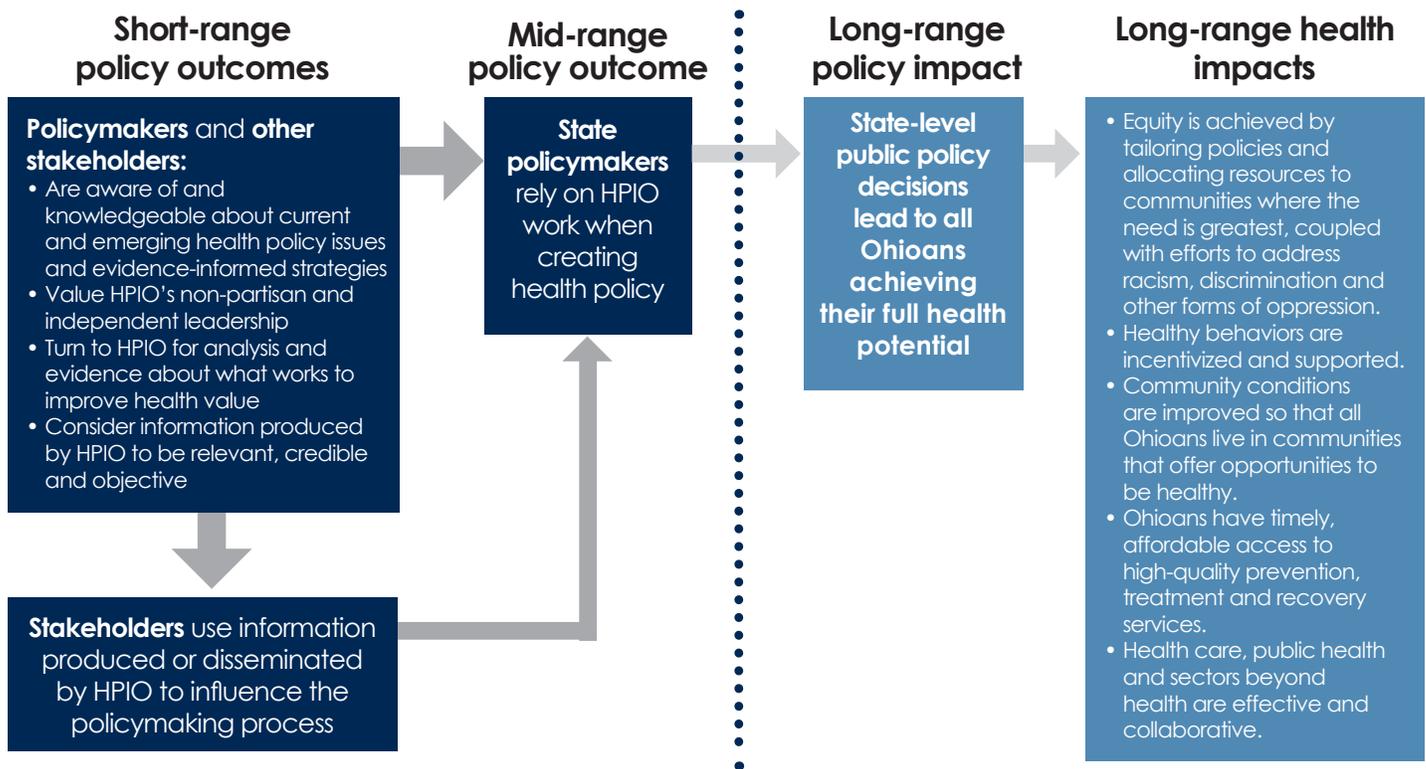
HPIO’s intended **short-range outcomes** are that:

- Policymakers and other stakeholders who engage in the policymaking process:
 - Are aware of and knowledgeable about current and emerging health policy issues and evidence-informed strategies
 - Value HPIO’s non-partisan and independent leadership
 - Turn to HPIO for information, analysis and evidence about what works to improve health value
 - Consider information produced by HPIO to be relevant, credible and objective
- Stakeholders use information produced or disseminated by HPIO to influence the policymaking process

HPIO’s intended **mid-range outcome** is that state policymakers rely on HPIO when creating health policy. HPIO’s work will influence state policymakers directly and via stakeholders who use HPIO products to influence the policymaking process. The contributions of HPIO are among many factors that influence policy change and health value.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational reputation for credibility, objectivity and relevance • Frequent engagement with policymakers • Strong and consistent media presence across multiple platforms (i.e. print, radio, TV, social) • Health Value Dashboard is widely recognized as a go-to source of information to inform policymaking and planning • High retention rate of staff has built knowledge and expertise • Positive relationships with stakeholders • Skilled meeting facilitation • Highly-rated forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accuracy of estimating the time and effort required to complete work • Over delivering on some work products • One of many contributors to policy change and cannot always determine extent to which a policy change is attributable to HPIO’s influence • Lack of an endowment
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths can be leveraged to partner with state government and other external entities • Increased focus among stakeholders and some policymakers on social drivers of health, public health and equity • Upcoming redistricting of state legislative districts in 2022 could bring new legislative relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifts in funder and other stakeholder priorities • Truth, evidence and in-depth analysis not valued • Potential future economic recession • Term limits and changes in executive and legislative policymakers • Tension between complementing and collaborating with other organizations vs. competing • Media changes such as turn over of reporters and reductions of news staff

Figure 2. Relationship between short- and mid-range outcomes, long-range policy impact and long-range policy impact



The intended **long-range policy impact** is that state-level public policy decisions lead to all Ohioans achieving their full health potential.

The **intended long-range health impacts** are:

- Equity is achieved by tailoring policies and allocating resources to communities where the need is greatest, coupled with efforts to address racism, discrimination and other forms of oppression.
- Healthy behaviors are incentivized and supported.
- Community conditions are improved so that all Ohioans live in communities that offer opportunities to be healthy.
- Ohioans have timely, affordable access to high-quality prevention, treatment and recovery services.
- Healthcare, public health and sectors beyond health are effective and collaborative.

Figure 2 shows the relationship between the short- and mid-range outcomes and long-range policy and health impacts. There are many factors outside of HPIO that affect Ohio's progress towards its long-range impact, including the political, social and cultural climate, economic trends, technological advances, advocacy, public policy at the federal and local-level and private

sector actions. The influence of these other factors is denoted with a vertical dotted line in figure 2.

The specific tactics and approaches used by HPIO will continually evolve based on Ohio's performance on long-range policy and health impacts and other considerations, such as the policy landscape.

Tactics

HPIO's work will focus on state-level public policy decisions that can lead to Ohio being a model of health, wellbeing and economic vitality through improved health value. Using data in the [Health Value Dashboard](#) as a foundation for prioritization, HPIO will identify evidence-informed policy strategies to improve Ohio's health value rank and deploy the following tactics to advance those strategies:

Written and online products: HPIO publications and online resources will provide comprehensive and clear analysis on specific health policy topics. Through these products, HPIO will describe the "basics" of health policy and identify specific policy options that are evidence-informed, realistic and actionable.

HPIO will disseminate these products to state public policymakers through face-to-face meetings, hard-copy distribution of briefs and email outreach. HPIO also will disseminate its products to its list of over 5,000 stakeholders representing a wide variety of sectors.

Education: HPIO will present at national, state and local conferences, prioritizing opportunities that could impact policy change in the next one to three years. HPIO will produce Ohio Health Policy News, a weekly email that highlights news articles relevant to state health policy. In addition, HPIO will produce the Ohio Health Value Review, a quarterly electronic update designed to strengthen connections between public health and healthcare partners and highlight opportunities for sectors to work together to improve health value.

HPIO will also host multisector educational forums and webinars that offer a broad audience with the opportunity to learn about key health policy issues. These will include objective analysis from recognized national, state and local experts on current health policy issues and discussion of how these issues impact Ohio. The target audience will be state public policymakers (legislators, legislative staff, state agency and executive staff) and stakeholders that use information produced or disseminated by HPIO to influence the policymaking process, such as providers, advocates, health plans, employers, consumer representatives, researchers and public health. Generally, HPIO events will be open to the public and may provide certain groups with continuing education credits (such as lawyers or social workers).

Facilitation: HPIO will convene and facilitate diverse multi-stakeholder groups on key topics, such as health measurement, health equity, addiction and other ad hoc groups as needed. Through these groups, the organization will encourage dialogue, utilize the expertise of participants to inform analytical products and ensure that diverse perspectives are considered and understood.

Consulting: HPIO will provide fee-based consulting services on behalf of public and private sector entities that engage HPIO to conduct research, perform analysis, facilitate advisory or work groups and create written products. HPIO's consulting will be an opportunity for HPIO to influence the policymaking process by directly serving policymakers as clients and/or by generating products that deepen HPIO's understanding of key policy issues and drivers. HPIO's consulting will also generate revenue to be invested in core projects.

Engagement and outreach

Policymaker engagement: HPIO's primary audience is state public policymakers. The Institute will build relationships with state policymakers and staff who serve in both the executive and legislative branches of Ohio government.

- **Executive branch.** HPIO will regularly hold one-on-one and/or group meetings with Governor's office staff, agency directors and staff in state agencies. HPIO will participate in groups convened by leaders in the executive branch and engage their expertise in advising HPIO. The Institute will also seek contractual projects with state agencies.
- **Legislative branch.** HPIO will regularly hold one-on-one and/or group meetings with members of the Ohio General Assembly, particularly those who serve on health-related committees. HPIO will track the activities of the General Assembly and provide interested party or informative testimony on topics about which HPIO has developed expertise. The Institute also will periodically provide hard copies of HPIO briefs and reports to all members of the General Assembly. HPIO will provide technical assistance to state policymakers on health policy issues as requested and as capacity allows.

Stakeholder engagement: Key stakeholder groups both inform and use HPIO products. These stakeholders include healthcare providers (hospitals, primary care, behavioral health, dental health, etc.), local governments, Medicaid managed care plans, private insurers, public health organizations, consumer advocates, stakeholders in other sectors outside of health that have an impact on community conditions, researchers and academic institutions, health foundations and other philanthropic entities, business leaders and media. HPIO will build relationships with these stakeholders so that they use the information produced or disseminated by HPIO to influence the policymaking process. This will include presenting HPIO's projects, holding individual meetings, convening advisory groups and attending meetings hosted by other groups, prioritizing engagement that could result in or influence policy change.

Communications

HPIO will use a variety of channels to market its work and communicate its value to Ohio policymakers and key stakeholders, including:

- **Electronic mailing list.** HPIO will regularly distribute electronic mailings to its database of more than 5,000 contacts. Mailings will include announcements of the release of HPIO publications and invitations to forums and events.
- **HPIO Impact.** HPIO will produce a quarterly newsletter that concisely describes the projects and impact of HPIO. The primary audience for HPIO

Impact will be funders and other supporters of the Institute, although all issues of the newsletter will be posted on the organization's website for a broader audience.

- **Media relations.** HPIO will build on its strong media presence statewide by promoting its work to a list of more than 150 media contacts throughout the state and nationally. The Institute will continue to build relationships with key media members to ensure that HPIO expertise is regularly included in print and broadcast media outlets. HPIO policy staff members will be made available for interviews and/or technical assistance.
- **Website and social media.** HPIO will maintain a website organized by health policy topic areas. HPIO will continually review the efficacy of using social media platforms to support the mission of the organization.
- **Ohio Health Policy News.** HPIO will maintain a blog that provides brief summaries of health policy news (with links to full news articles), with all content delivered weekly via email to subscribers. The content will be primarily aggregation of news articles, but also will include announcements of HPIO publication releases and events.
- **Presentations.** HPIO will present its products and expertise to state policymakers and to stakeholders who influence the policymaking process.

HPIO will engage a communications consultant in 2020 to explore other marketing and communication strategies that could be considered to advance HPIO's mission and achieve HPIO's short-and mid-range policy outcomes. HPIO will also form a Communications Committee comprised of both Board Directors and other experts to advise HPIO on communications strategy.

Financial management

HPIO will be responsible stewards of the resources granted by funders and revenue generated by consulting and fees. HPIO will complete the tasks outlined in the organization's internal financial control policy that includes processes for managing cash receipts, cash disbursements, payroll and review of monthly financial statements by the contract Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and President. HPIO will engage an independent accounting firm annually to audit the organization's financial statements and prepare its IRS Form 990.

HPIO will employ staff and/or engage contractors (such as the contract CFO) whose job duties will include tasks related to bookkeeping, human resources, resource development, audit/taxes and governance. The staff/contractors charged with financial management will verify bank reconciliations

and payroll and prepare quarterly financial reports. The CFO also will review compliance with internal financial controls and assist with the annual audit preparation.

Financial statements will be presented to both the Audit and Finance Committee of HPIO's Board and the entire Board of Directors quarterly. The audited financial statements will be presented to, and approved by, the Board of Directors. The IRS Form 990 will be reviewed by the Board of Directors prior to submission to the IRS.

HPIO will present a draft operating budget to the Audit and Finance Committee in September or October of each year. The Board will review and approve this budget in October for the upcoming fiscal year (January-December).

Resource Management

HPIO will strategically ensure financial stability and growth by:

- Retaining the support of founding core funders
- Engaging additional core funders and forum sponsors
- Competing for contracted projects

Eight core funders (HealthPath Foundation of Ohio [formerly known as Anthem Foundation of Ohio], Interact for Health [formerly known as The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati], Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation, George Gund Foundation, Saint Luke's Foundation of Cleveland, Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton, Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland and Cleveland Foundation) partnered to create HPIO in 2003. Seventeen years later, these foundations continue to invest in HPIO by providing general operating support.

Over the past nine years, HPIO has engaged several additional core funders (for example, Nord Family Foundation, Cardinal Health Foundation, North Canton Medical Foundation, Mercy Health and CareSource Foundation). In 2012, HPIO began to seek sponsors for educational forums, creating a successful forum series sponsorship program in 2014. In addition to providing financial support for HPIO's forums series, forum sponsorships provide an opportunity for HPIO to develop relationships with partners and offers the potential to convert forum sponsors into core funders over time.

HPIO will continue to seek out new core funders, particularly for specific projects, and forum series sponsors. HPIO will be a diligent steward of the resources granted to the organization, maintaining strong relationships with funders and sponsors and communicating the impact of the organization's work.

HPIO will seek introductions and research prospects to establish new funding partnerships.

While maintaining core funding and forum series sponsorships at or above 2019 levels will remain a strategic priority, HPIO will continue to compete for contracted projects. HPIO will explore ideas for projects with potential customers and bid on requests for proposals that align with HPIO's mission and vision. Since state policymakers are the organization's primary audience, HPIO will focus on seeking opportunities to partner with state government entities. These projects provide HPIO the opportunity to achieve its mission of informing the state policy making process. HPIO also will pursue opportunities to engage in work on behalf of other public and private sector entities

Evaluation

Evaluation is valued by HPIO because it provides an opportunity for the organization's staff and Board of Directors to reflect on what's working and what needs to be improved. The Board and staff of HPIO embrace a culture of continuous improvement and frequently pursue ways to strengthen processes and increase effectiveness. In addition, evaluation is a critical way for HPIO to demonstrate accountability to funders.

HPIO will evaluate both programmatic and organizational performance. Programmatic evaluation will focus on the tactics, outcomes and impact of HPIO's work. Organizational evaluation will focus on the effectiveness of staff and the Board of Directors in contributing to the mission of HPIO.

Programmatic evaluation

HPIO will conduct internal evaluation activities to assess progress toward outcomes specified in the strategic plan and *Pathway to Impact* logic model. Evaluation results will be used to:

- Guide internal continuous quality improvement (CQI): Quarterly staff reviews and CQI plans
- Update the Board of Directors on performance strengths and challenges: Semi-annual performance dashboards
- Demonstrate accountability to funders: Reporting to funders on grant reports and proposals

With guidance from the HPIO Evaluation Committee, staff will set quarterly and annual targets for 40+ metrics regarding performance on work products (outputs), short-range outcomes and mid-range outcomes.

HPIO will use the following evaluation methods to collect performance data:

- Annual stakeholder survey: Online survey conducted in January each year

- Forum evaluation surveys: Surveys administered to forum participants
- Output and outcome tracking: Staff-documented data on HPIO activities, products, outcomes and impact

Board evaluation and development

While HPIO has engaged in programmatic and staff evaluation for several years, the organization has not had a comprehensive approach to evaluating Board performance and engaging in improvement activities related to governance. The HPIO Board of Directors recognizes that a highly effective Board performs the required legal duties (duty of care, duty of loyalty, duty of compliance, and duty to maintain accounts) and identifies additional measures of success to optimize governance of the organization. Therefore, the Board will contract with a firm with expertise in the field of nonprofit board governance in the first half of 2020 to assess current Board performance and make recommendations. The Board will then decide which of these recommendations should be implemented.

The HPIO Board of Directors will regularly engage in education and learning sessions facilitated by both external and internal experts. The Board will be encouraged to attend HPIO's educational forums and webinars both to show support for the organization and to learn about relevant and timely topics.

Staff evaluation and development

Evaluation of staff job performance will occur annually, at a minimum, during the first quarter of the calendar year. Objectives will be developed by both the employee and the supervisor and will align with this strategic plan. The purpose of staff evaluation will be to guide an employee's progress, to discuss ways in which performance can be improved and, when appropriate, to explore potential for advancement. These formal performance reviews are in addition to the informal meetings supervisors will have with employees throughout the year. The HPIO President will be evaluated by the Board of Directors in a similar manner. More information on performance evaluations is included in HPIO's Employee Handbook.

HPIO staff will be offered opportunities to build knowledge by attending conferences and workshops. HPIO may occasionally engage external consultants to build skills in key areas. For example, HPIO in 2018 engaged a communication consultant and in 2019 engaged an equity consultant. The HPIO management team, currently comprised of the President and three vice presidents, will engage in learning sessions to build leadership skills and discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the organization.