

ESSEX COUNTY OFFICE PUBLIC HEALTH MANAGEMENT: ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE GUIDE

OVERVIEW – 2025 -2026 STRATEGIC GUIDE TO ENHANCE HEALTHCARE ACCESS

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

LOCALIZE HEALTH SERVICES

KEY STRATEGY: *EXPAND THE USE OF MOBILE HEALTH SERVICE VANS WITHIN ESSEX COUNTY TO LOCALIZE HEALTH SERVICES: THIS STRATEGY PRESENTS AS THE OVERARCHING AND INTEGRATING INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE HEALTHCARE ACCESS, SUPPORTED BY THE OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OUTLINED IN THIS STRATEGIC GUIDE.*

Key recommendations:

- Focus van services on preventative care, education and information sharing.
- Coordinate with existing mobile health services across the County to optimize van availability and deployment, targeting underserved areas and populations.
- Use van services to facilitate access to primary care homes and community services, also.

ENHANCE COLLABORATION

KEY STRATEGY: *FOSTER SUSTAINABLE COALITIONS AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS*

Key Recommendations:

- Strengthen internal capacity/ability to build and sustain strategic partnerships.
- Co-locate services/leverage partnerships with FQHCs, schools & health departments.
- Integrate initiatives/programs into van services to address SDOH.
- Enhance communications with partners/community

ADVANCE HEALTH EDUCATION

KEY STRATEGY: *CREATE AND LEAD COUNTY-WIDE HEALTH EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS*

Key Recommendations:

- Build on existing health education campaigns (i.e., national & state campaigns).
- Partner with local schools and higher education to create content for campaigns.
- Engage with community stakeholders to promote health messaging.

IMPROVE LANGUAGE TRANSLATION SERVICES

KEY STRATEGY: *EXPAND AND FACILITATE THE USE OF LANGUAGE TRANSLATION SERVICES*

Key Recommendations:

- Increase use of language line translation services.
- Employ linguistically culturally competent staff to complement the language line services.
- Partner with community leaders and institutions to develop training initiatives to increase the availability of culturally competent translators in community and clinical settings.
- Collaborate with the community to increase the availability of linguistically competent navigators and case workers.
- Train clinical providers on using language line services and working with translators.

COORDINATE DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING INITIATIVES

KEY STRATEGY: *LEAD COORDINATION OF DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING EFFORTS WITHIN THE COUNTY*

Key Recommendations:

- Conduct a pilot project to coordinate data reporting across public health offices.
- Facilitate the adoption of clear, coordinated goals among the County's public health offices to guide data handling and access at the County level.
- Plan and allocate resources to advance a coordinated initiative to handle and report data at the County level.
- Enhance visibility and raise awareness about ECOPHM's current capacity and role for data management and reporting.

DEVELOP RESOURCE AWARENESS TOOL

KEY STRATEGY: *DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES INFORMATION REPOSITORY*

Key Recommendations:

- Ensure robust data vetting & maintain current information.
- Disseminate information via multiple accessible channels.
- Enable independent, consumer-friendly access to information.

ENHANCE ADVOCACY ROLE TO SECURE PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING

KEY STRATEGY: *BOLSTER CAPACITY TO FOSTER INCREASED FUNDING SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVES*

Key Recommendations:

- Explore and adopt innovative funding models for public health
- Engage with the private philanthropy sector to communicate priority health needs and collaborate on directing funding to community organizations addressing SDOH.
- Pursue legislative mandates to secure sustainable public health funding.

ESSEX COUNTY OFFICE PUBLIC HEALTH MANAGEMENT: ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE GUIDE

OVERVIEW – 2025 -2026 STRATEGIC GUIDE TO ENHANCE HEALTHCARE ACCESS

CROSS-CUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Cross-cutting themes, linking the seven strategic objectives and recommendations for implementation, emphasize the importance of adopting intentional, culturally competent and coordinated community-based public health initiatives to improve access to preventative and primary care, and to address social health determinants.

- **Ensure stakeholder trust and community engagement:** Increase ECOPHM's visibility and communication among stakeholders and partners. Enhance community-based partnerships and engagement by dedicating resources to facilitate collaborations and partnerships. Promote transparency in data collection, management, and usage.
- **Ensure equity and accessibility for marginalized groups:** Foster intentional efforts to provide culturally and linguistically competent services, focusing on equity in primary and preventive healthcare, targeting underserved communities. Implement strategies that focus on localizing and tailoring services that align with the needs and culture of the targeted communities and locations.
- **Enhance coordination across agencies and systems:** Lead initiatives to coordinate services for maximum impact and effectiveness through resource alignment. Streamline and guide collaborative efforts to address access barriers, including social determinants of health.
- **Ensure planning and intentional actions to affect an integrated strategy to improve healthcare access:** Develop a comprehensive plan to implement the seven objectives. The strategic implementation plan should consider long-term investments in capacity building, including infrastructure, staffing, and programmatic sustainability. Incorporate an evaluation component to measure the impact and effectiveness of planned initiatives.

NOTE: *The findings and recommendations in this study do not imply that they are not already present, but rather that participants considered them crucial for Essex County to successfully implement strategies to enhance access to primary and preventive care.*

For further details regarding the Essex County Healthcare Access Feasibility Study findings and recommendations, please see the full report: Essex County Office of Public Health Management- Access to Care Feasibility Study.