

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office on Women's Health (OWH)
STRATEGIC PLAN FY2010-FY2015
(Effective October 1, 2008)**

VISION, MISSION, PRIORITIES AND CORE VALUES

VISION

All women and girls are healthier and have a better sense of well-being.

MISSION

Provide leadership to promote health equityⁱ for women and girls through sex/gender-specificⁱⁱ approaches.

PRIORITIES

- Address gender-based health disparities.
- Direct policy development through international, national, state and local leadership.
 - Educate and advocate for healthy behavior and choices.
 - Eliminate health disparities among diverse populations of women and girls.
- Reduce leading causes of illness, disability, and premature death for women and girls.

CORE VALUES

The staff of the Office on Women's Health (OWH) is committed to the highest ethical standards. Our policies, procedures, practices, programs and standards guide us as we apply the following core values to our work.

Integrity & Professionalism

We conduct ourselves with integrity and professionalism in our dealings with and on behalf of OWH. We communicate in an open, honest and positive manner.

Excellence

We conscientiously strive for excellence in our work and our interpersonal interactions. We value excellence in our staff and in our programs. We are committed to being leaders and supporting our leadership.

Diversity

We value the diversity of our staff, our partners and our programs. Our differences assure that OWH is a forum for the expression, consideration and evaluation of ideas. Through the diversity of these ideas and the diverse staff who review them, our learning is enriched and strengthened.

Accountability

We are accountable as individuals and as members of the OWH staff for our ethical conduct. We are transparent in our communications and actions, and we are supportive of staff. We are accountable for upholding established office procedures.

Respect

We respect ourselves and the rights and dignity of others. We respect and support our leadership. Our leadership respects, values and supports staff.

Innovation

We inspire passion and creativity and promote flexibility in all aspects of the OWH experience. We reward the staff's creativity and initiative.

Service

We provide opportunities for developing and implementing successful programs. We enhance opportunities for career development and advancement. We create an atmosphere that encourages and supports collaboration and partnership, both within DHHS and with external organizations.

BACKGROUND

OWH is the nation's leader in promoting the health of women and girls. The Office serves as the focal point for women's health activities within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) through our leadership and collaboration efforts. Through grants and contracts, OWH funds a wide spectrum of activities and programs in support of our mission. We work with many partners, including federal government agencies; non-profit organizations; consumer groups; associations of health care professionals; tribal organizations; and state, county and local governments.

The Office on Women's Health (OWH) was established in 1991 within DHHS to improve women's health. OWH has expanded that charter to include girls. Located within the Office of the Secretary, Office of Public Health and Science (OPHS), OWH is directed by the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health (Women's Health) [DASH-WH]. It is comprised of a central office with its headquarters in Washington, D.C., and 10 regional offices spread across the United States (See Appendix A).

The DASH-WH also chairs the Coordinating Committee on Women's Health (CCWH). It was formed in 1985 to advise the Assistant Secretary for Health on current and planned activities across DHHS that safeguard and improve the physical and mental health of women and girls. The CCWH is comprised of senior-level representatives from each of the agencies and staff offices within DHHS.

OWH's staff and organizational structure are presented in Appendix B.

OWH GOALS

1. To develop and impact national health policy as it relates to women and girls
2. To develop, adapt, implement, evaluate and replicate model programs on women's and girls' health
3. To educate, influence and collaborate with health and human services organizations, health care professionals and the public
4. To increase OWH's organizational efficiency and performance

STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The OWH Strategic Plan FY 2010–FY 2015 was developed by OWH staff in response to the 2007 restructuring of the Office and recommendations from the 2008 staff retreat. It provides an overarching framework to guide OWH’s efforts to improve the health and well-being of women and girls. The Strategic Plan’s goals and objectives inform OWH’s efforts to eliminate disparitiesⁱⁱⁱ in four areas: 1) health care promotion; 2) service delivery; 3) public and health care professional education; and 4) career advancement for women in health professions and science.

The Strategic Plan sets the Office’s priorities. Flexibility is built into the plan with the understanding that OWH will need to respond to Presidential and Congressional requests or directives as well as to emerging health issues that affect women and girls. The Strategic Plan also aligns with the DHHS Strategic Plan, the OPHS Strategic Plan and Healthy People.

It is a living document that will be reviewed annually by OWH staff. The review will be conducted for three primary reasons:

1. To assess our progress in meeting performance and efficiency measures;
2. To update and revise strategies, action steps, and performance and efficiency measures; and
3. To identify new strategies and action steps that support achieving the goals and objectives of OWH’s Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan serves as the foundation for OWH’s operational procedures. To enhance our operational performance, we will use the following criteria to guide the development and funding of *all* OWH programs and initiatives. To be considered for funding, all proposed programs must meet these five requirements:

1. Fills an unmet need.^{iv}
2. Uses or adapts an evidence-based^v approach or cites source(s) supportive of the proposed approach.
3. Develops a product: publication, policy recommendations, tool kit, etc.
4. Includes a partnership and outreach plan.^{vi}
5. Includes an evaluation plan.

All programs and activities funded by OWH must support a goal(s) and objective(s) of the Strategic Plan. See Appendix C for a table showing current OWH programs and activities and their relationship to the Strategic Plan.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, ACTION STEPS AND MEASURES

The strategies and action steps presented in this section are not inclusive. They illustrate the type of approaches that can be used to support a goal and objective. Strategies and action steps will probably change as actions are accomplished and new ones are implemented.

GOAL 1. DEVELOP AND IMPACT NATIONAL HEALTH POLICY AS IT RELATES TO WOMEN AND GIRLS

OBJECTIVE: Lead, Coordinate, or Strengthen Federal, State and Local Partnerships to Impact National Health Policy as It Relates to Women and Girls

STRATEGY A. Lead senior-level taskforce(s) and working groups (i.e., town hall meetings and advisory groups) to prepare and provide feedback on written documents on high-priority women's and girls' health issues (e.g., Action Plans, Surgeon General Reports, white papers and policy papers).

Action Steps

1. Initiate or prepare high-level reports and activities on major issues in women's and girls' health. Examples follow.
 - a. Action Plan(s) (e.g., an adolescent girls' Action Plan)
 - b. Surgeon General Report(s) (e.g., breastfeeding)
 - c. White Papers (e.g., a report on the nation's caregivers)
 - d. Town Hall Meetings (e.g., the 10th-Year Anniversary of National Women's Health Week)
2. Review and provide comments on policies, reports, initiatives and campaigns that impact the health and well-being of women and girls.
3. The OWH Deputy Director works with the Executive Secretariat to ensure that OWH is asked to review all appropriate and relevant documents that would benefit from OWH's expertise on women's and girls' health, prior to the documents' Departmental clearance.

Efficiency Measures

1. On an annual basis, initiate or complete at least 5 high-level reports and activities regarding high-priority women's and girls' health issues, and ensure these final products are widely disseminated.
2. Increase the number of clearance requests that solicit women's health expertise received from the Executive Secretariat by 10 percent each year.

STRATEGY B. Create a Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) to advise OWH on women's and girls' health policies and programs. The FAC would be comprised of key executives and decision makers from the private sector, academia, foundations, women's health organizations and other groups.

Action Steps

1. Determine the requirements for establishing a FAC.
2. Complete and submit paperwork for establishing a FAC.
3. Identify organizations or individuals with appropriate expertise to serve on the FAC.
4. Establish national women's and girls' health priorities with input from the FAC.

Performance Measure

By January 2015, establish and make functional an OWH Federal Advisory Committee.

STRATEGY C. Expand the DHHS Coordinating Committee on Women’s Health (CCWH) to include other Federal departmental representatives to collaborate on women’s and girls’ health policy.

Action Steps

1. Identify other Federal agencies that support women’s health, such as the Department of Defense, Department of Justice, Department of Labor, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Education, Department of Veterans’ Affairs, Department of Agriculture, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, Federal Trade Commission and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and invite them to work with us on appropriate tasks.
2. Expand the CCWH to include additional Federal agencies.

Performance Measure

By October 2009, establish and make functional an expanded CCWH.

STRATEGY D. Lead and coordinate regional taskforces and working groups to build and expand partnerships that will solve problems at the regional level and influence priorities at the national level.

Action Steps

1. Implement OWH, OPHS and Departmental priorities at the regional level.
2. Maintain and strengthen partnerships and collaborations with the State Women’s Health Coordinators and the Minority Women’s Health Panel of Experts.
3. Establish taskforces or working groups to collect, analyze and provide access to data and resources on women’s and girls’ health.
4. Use *Quick Health Data Online* and other data sources to identify problems at the national, state, regional and county levels.

Performance Measure

By January 2010, establish at least one taskforce or working group in each PHS region.

GOAL 2. DEVELOP, ADAPT, IMPLEMENT, EVALUATE AND REPLICATE MODEL PROGRAMS ON WOMEN’S AND GIRLS’ HEALTH

OBJECTIVE: Develop, adapt, implement, evaluate and replicate model women’s and girls’ health programs on issues that are not being addressed at the national level by any other public or private entity.

STRATEGY A. Develop programs based on disparities in women’s and girls’ health for populations such as minority women and girls as well as women and girls with disabilities, for example. Programs can also focus on such health factors as age, geography, family history, low socio-economic status, risk factors, chronic conditions and infectious diseases.

Action Steps

1. Develop new programs based on documented disparities in women’s and girls’ health.
2. Use OWH resources such as *Quick Health Data Online* as the primary source for identifying health disparities.
3. Use the criteria outlined in the OWH strategic plan to guide the development of new programs.
4. Use the advice of the CCWH, FAC, regional workgroups and other working groups to identify unmet needs and model programs.
5. Develop an outreach and dissemination plan.

Efficiency Measure:

Focus 100% of new OWH model programs on documented health disparities and health care reform issues.

STRATEGY B. Require model programs to use evidence-based strategies or to adapt evidence-based strategies from another field or discipline.

Action Steps

1. Use resources such as the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality’s Evidence-Based Reports; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Compendium of HIV Prevention Interventions with Evidence of Effectiveness; Cancer Control Plan, Link, Act, Network with Evidence-based Tools (P.L.A.N.E.T.); and peer-reviewed journals to identify evidence-based strategies.
2. Submit new or successfully replicated evidence-based strategies to peer-reviewed journals, Cancer Control P.L.A.N.E.T., or other clearinghouses to promote best practices.

Efficiency Measure

Use, adapt or cite an evidence-based strategy(ies) as the underpinning of 100% of new OWH model programs.

STRATEGY C. Evaluate programs to determine their effectiveness and impact on women and men and girls and boys.

Action Steps

1. Include an evaluation plan and budget in all program requests for OWH funding.
2. Develop an OWH statement on program evaluation as a requirement and include it in all OWH contract solicitations and grant announcements.
3. Ensure that a local and national evaluation is conducted for all OWH-funded programs.
4. Present program evaluation results at conferences and meetings and publish these results.
5. Require all OWH contractors and grantees to enter data into the Performance Measurement System (PERMS).

Efficiency Measure

100% of new OWH model programs have an evaluation component.

GOAL 3. EDUCATE, INFLUENCE AND COLLABORATE WITH HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS, HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS AND THE PUBLIC

OBJECTIVE 1: Provide accurate, up-to-date, science-based and/or evidence-based information on the health disparities of women and girls in the prevention, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of their health conditions.

STRATEGY A. Disseminate women's and girls' health information and the findings of OWH model programs.

Action Steps

1. Exhibit at health professional and consumer conferences on women's and girls' health.
2. Maintain, update, market and expand womenshealth.gov, girlshealth.gov, 1-800-994-9662, and TDD: 1-888-220-5446.
3. Publish the results of OWH programs in peer-reviewed journals.
4. Increase media outreach and campaigns (especially those of mutual interest with the First Lady's Office).
5. Increase the dissemination of publications such as white papers, policy papers and tool kits.

Performance Measure

Between 2008 and 2015, double the number of articles per year citing or evaluating OWH programs in peer-reviewed journals.

Long-term Outcome Measure (OMB PART)

Increase the percentage of women-specific *Healthy People 2010* objectives and sub-objectives that have met their target or are moving in the right direction.

Annual Output Measure (OMB PART)

Number of users of OWH communication resources (e.g., National Women's Health Information Center, womenshealth.gov website, and girlshealth.gov website).

STRATEGY B. Increase the number of presentations by OWH staff at conferences and meetings.

Action Steps

1. Develop a process for tracking OWH staff presentations and requests for presentations.
2. Submit abstracts for presentations.

Performance Measure

By 2015, double the number of presentations by OWH staff at conferences and meetings.

STRATEGY C. Generate key women's and girls' health messages to be incorporated into speeches by OWH staff and talking points for speeches by DHHS Senior Officials.

Action Steps

1. Develop a list of OWH priorities and programs.
2. Establish a process for collecting, updating and electronically storing quick facts and data (key points) for each priority area and program.
3. Establish a process for disseminating key points to OWH staff and DHHS Senior Officials.
4. Develop "issue prompts" on key women's and girl's health issues.

Performance Measure

Annually, develop at least five "issue prompts" on key women's and girl's health issues.

STRATEGY D. Collaborate with other Federal agencies, national organizations, academic institutions and professional associations to ensure women and girls receive appropriate care within the healthcare system.

Action Steps

1. Educate primary care providers about appropriate healthcare for women and girls as part of health care reform.
2. Educate the public about symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of the key health conditions of women and girls as part of health care reform.

Performance Measure

Increase the number of primary care providers who are educated about symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of key health conditions that impact women and girls.

Efficiency Measure (OMB PART)

Increase the number of girls ages 9–17 and women ages 18–85+ who participate in OWH-funded programs (e.g., information sessions, website user sessions and outreach) per million dollars.

OBJECTIVE 2: Develop collaborations and partnerships with individuals; public health, mental health, and social services professionals; and institutions in support of women’s and girls’ health.

STRATEGY A. Forge partnerships to leverage resources and expand the number of advocates for women’s and girls’ health.

STRATEGY B. Collaborate with other Federal agencies, national organizations, academic institutions and professional associations to ensure women and girls receive appropriate care within the healthcare system.

Action Step

Identify, form and cultivate partnerships for OWH initiatives and programs.

Performance Measure

Ensure that all OWH programs and initiatives have a partnership plan.

GOAL 4. INCREASE OWH'S ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND PERFORMANCE

OBJECTIVE: Develop and implement OWH processes for efficient and effective programs.

STRATEGY A. Align OWH operations with the OWH Strategic Plan (i.e., budget, human capital resources).

Action Steps

1. Use the OWH Strategic Plan to develop new program ideas and initiatives.
2. Use the OWH Strategic Plan guidance to make funding decisions.

Performance Measures

1. By October 2008, the OWH Strategic Plan is finalized and distributed to all staff.
2. Effective October 2008, all new programs, activities, initiatives, etc., that are supported with OWH dollars must be linked to a goal, objective, and strategy identified in the OWH Strategic Plan.

STRATEGY B. Train, mentor, educate and empower OWH staff to be leaders in women's and girls' health.

Action Steps

1. Assess staff skills, capabilities and interests.
2. Support staff through mentoring and training to enhance their skills and develop their leadership potential.
3. Ensure opportunities for staff to learn new program areas.
4. Provide opportunities for staff to participate or give presentations at meetings and to write or co-author papers.

Performance Measures

1. By November 2008, develop a staff matrix that lists staff skills and current programs.
2. By 2010, ensure that all staff has completed training assignments in skills development.

STRATEGY C. Constitute teams, as needed, comprised of staff from across OWH to recommend improvements to OWH operations and procedures.

Action Steps

1. Perform annual progress reviews on the implementation of the OWH Strategic Plan.
2. Provide OWH staff with the most recent policies and procedures regarding training, travel, program funding requests, leave, etc.

Performance Measure

Convene an annual strategic planning meeting.

STRATEGY D. Track OWH programs and activities and their results.

Action Step

1. Develop and maintain a database to track OWH program accomplishments.
2. Document program accomplishments.

Performance Measures

1. Beginning in FY 2010, all program announcements and contract solicitations will include language about the data items needed to populate the Program Performance Measuring System (PERMS).
2. By June 2009, hire an evaluator whose primary responsibility is maintaining the PERMS database.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Map of 10 OPHS Regions

