



Below is a summary of the major strengths and weaknesses of the Local Public Health System (LPHS) based on the LPHS assessment, and key opportunities and threats identified as part of the Forces of Change Assessment (FOCA).

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong health assessment monitoring & surveillance • Robust emergency preparedness & response • Coordination of health messaging • Strong partnerships • Policy development and planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplication of effort • Insufficient communication with policy makers & public on regarding social determinants of health • Insufficient accessibility and understanding of health data • Engagement, especially with vulnerable populations • Lack of systems to monitor progress • Evaluation (or lack there of)
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State budget – situation encourages collaboration • Affordable Care Act • Awareness of transgender issues • Marriage equality • Cook County agency plans (Long-Range Transportation Plan; Planning for Progress; Forest Preserves of Cook County Centennial Plan • Community health benefit requirements of many hospitals, and formation of Health Impact Collaborative of Cook County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Care Act • State budget (services cut) • Climate change • Racism • Residential segregation • Perceived inability to affect change • Influencers of policy (e.g., wealth and large corporations) • Public unaware of “upstream”, non-health determinants

Discussion promoting strategic thinking was based on the following framework.

		Internal to Local Public Health System	
		Strengths	Weaknesses
External Environment	Opportunities	Strategies that use strengths to take advantage of opportunities (S/O)	Strategies that overcome weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities (W/O)
	Threats	Strategies that use strengths to avoid threats (S/T)	Strategies that minimize weaknesses and avoid threats (W/T)



STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

County-Level Coordination

How can sister-County agencies work together to integrate health in all policies (HiAP) and address social determinants of health? There are opportunities for sister-County agencies to coordinate efforts and ensure health is a consideration in policy decisions. Failing to explore and formalize ways for sister-County agencies to take a HiAP approach will result in lost opportunity to implement cross-cutting strategies, leverage resources and impact health inequities in suburban Cook County.

WePLAN participants shared the following:

- Create a coordinating body that includes policy makers to take an HiAP approach and address social determinants of health and evaluate efforts that move upstream (e.g., job creation; community investment; community revitalization; economic growth; cutting costs; and education improvement). This body would also share successes with key stakeholders.

Policy, Systems and Environmental Change

*How can **policy, systems and environmental (PSE) change** become a key approach for addressing prioritized issues impacting health?* PSE change can have far reach that is sustainable, while also addressing health inequities. Failing to not take a PSE approach will result in continued environments in suburban Cook County that do not promote healthy living, nor address health inequities. Additionally, strategies and interventions will not be designed for maximum benefit that expose a broad segment of the population to prevention measure and improves health and health inequities at a population level.

Data Sharing

*How can we build and sustain **infrastructure for data sharing** across sectors?* There is a national trend around data sharing across sectors to support planning, implementation and evaluation to address complex public health issues. Failing to not address this will result in limited data to identify emerging public health issues, to inform strategies and interventions, and to determine what is working and not working in our communities to promote health and address health inequities.

Communication/Messaging

How can the local public health system coordinate and communicate messaging related to social determinants of health, upstream strategies, and value of public health to influence policy? Failing to not determine this will result in fragmented voices, reduced funding, and insufficient impact on policy, systems and environmental changes necessary to promote health and address health inequities in suburban Cook County.

WePLAN participants shared the following.

- Need to develop information and share health impact of current State budget situation.
- Use information (e.g., success stories) and consistent messaging to influence policy.
- Coordinate messages about health issues/threats with a call to action. It is information dissemination with direct engagement that influences policies.
- Use social media with partners (like municipalities) to get message out and be heard as one voice.



- Develop and share successes outside of health community.

Strategic Alliances

What additional partnerships need to be established to support advancement of the WePLAN vision? There are opportunities to strategically leverage and expand partnerships and **form strategic alliances** to address complex public health issues. Failing to broaden our partnerships will result in missed opportunities to strategically align efforts, address social determinants of health, and ultimately promote health and address health inequities in suburban Cook County.

WePLAN participants shared the following:

- Municipalities sharing resources for the residents of regional area (e.g., with immunization clinics & health care).
- Use Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC) as a team with whom to collaborate to share resources to improve health equity throughout Cook County.
- Leverage partnership between LHDs and Hospitals in the HICCC – healthcare; personal health; and community/population health

Funding

How can initiatives to address priority complex public health issues impacting suburban Cook County be funded? Failing to identify and secure funding, including from consistent sources, will minimize what the Local Public Health System can do. This will contribute to gaps not being addressed, disparities widening, and, ultimately, complex public health issues not being addressed.

WePLAN participants shared the following:

- Cannot rely on State budget.
- Find third party tie-ins (e.g., corporate sponsors that support issue) and form strategic alliances.
- Diversify funding streams.

Potentially a question that needs to be addressed if a particular issue is identified as a priority.

- How should the local public health system ensure that individuals who do not qualify for ACA (e.g., undocumented) receive quality health care?