Building the Future of Healthy Housing

NCHH Strategic Plan • 2020-2025

National Center for
HEALTHY HOUSING

Authorization and Acknowledgements

The NCHH Board of Directors (named below) voted unanimously to authorize this strategic plan on July 30, 2020. The plan was officially launched on September 4, 2020.

Dr. C. Patrick Chaulk, Board Secretary
Assistant Commissioner, HIV/STD Services, Bureau of Communicable Disease, Baltimore City Health Department (retired)

Mr. Read Holman, Board Treasurer
Director of Network Development (West Coast), Unite Us

Dr. Christopher Jones, Board Chair
Executive Director, Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub

Mr. Michael Meyerstein
Founder, The Aleph Group, Inc.

Ms. Elyse Pivnick, Board Vice Chair
Director of Environmental Health, Center for Energy and Environmental Training, Isles, Inc.

Ms. Sarah Robinson Enaharo
Product Sustainability Manager, Tarkett North America

Ms. Amy Zimmerman, Esquire
Assistant Vice President for State Government Affairs, Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago

We also gratefully acknowledge the contributions of past board members who contributed to the development of this plan:

Ms. Joan Cleary
Dr. Joycelyn Elders
Ms. Marcheta Gillam
Ms. Sandra Jibrell
Ms. JoAnne Liebeler
Mr. Saúl Ramirez, Jr.
Mr. Mike Rizer

Finally, we are deeply indebted to Tracy Washington Enger for her masterful, loving, and impactful facilitation of our October 2019 strategic planning retreat.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary....4

Organizational Description....6
- Our Mission....6
- Our Vision....6
- Our Purpose....6
- Our Values....6
- Our Strengths....7

The Landscape....8

Our Response: Strategic Goals and Activities....9
- Action Area 1. Identify and disseminate practical and proven steps for creating healthy homes for all....10
- Action Area 2. Advocate for evidence-based healthy homes practices and programs....10
- Action Area 3. Equip communities and practitioners to overcome barriers and improve their capacity....11
- Action Area 4. Provide a platform for exchange on a broad range of healthy housing issues....12
- Action Area 5. Communicate broadly and effectively to mobilize action on healthy housing....12
- Action Area 6. Strengthen NCHH as an institution in service to the field of healthy housing....13

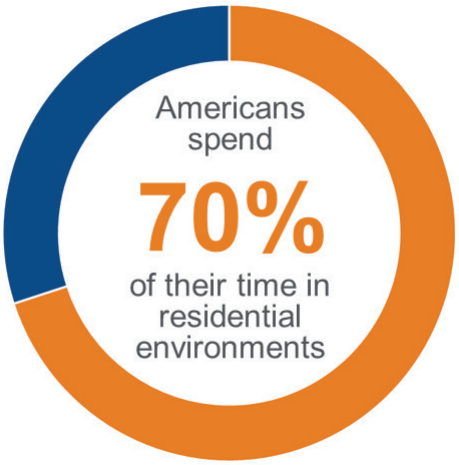
Our Impact....14

Appendices....15
- Appendix A. Overview of Strategic Planning Process....15
- Appendix B. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan....16
- Appendix C. Communications Plan....18
- Appendix D. Strategic Plan Infographic....19

Executive Summary

In 1992, the Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning and the Enterprise Foundation founded the National Center for Lead-Safe Housing, with funding from Fannie Mae. Nearly three decades later, NCHH continues to be a leader in securing healthy homes for all and is a passionate advocate for the idea that better housing can be a powerful platform for better health. NCHH remains committed to the elimination of childhood lead poisoning, but over the past 28 years our mission has also expanded to tackle a range of residential hazards and housing-related illnesses and injury, with an emphasis on eliminating disparities in both. We achieve impact through a combination of research, that helps us to understand both the problems we face and how we can prevent or mitigate many of those problems; advocacy at the federal, state, and local levels; and capacity-building to ensure that our partners working on the front lines of healthy homes are equipped with the right data, tools, policies, and best practices to get the job done.

National events, including the Flint water crisis, hurricanes in Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico, wildfires in California, and an international pandemic, have reinforced the importance and relevance of NCHH's work in recent years but also challenged us to expand our thinking about the role of housing in solving a wider range of public health problems. As we embark on a new decade of healthy housing work, we are mindful that we cannot solve these problems alone and that if we are serious about taking the field of healthy housing to the next level, one where we imagine eradicating hazards and disparities instead of just improving them, we must also be serious about partnership, collaboration, and community capacity building. We also understand that in order to make progress, we can't just acknowledge the historic and ongoing racial and economic disparities that make this work necessary—we must address them head on.



National Human Activity Pattern Survey

To mark this expanded understanding of our unique role, we have unveiled an updated statement of our mission and vision. Moving from "securing healthy homes for all" to "transforming lives by transforming housing" more accurately captures the potential for safe, healthy and affordable housing (internationally recognized as a human right) to be transformative for an individual, a family, or a community. Similarly, we have modified our vision statement to focus on NCHH's strengths in leveraging effective partnerships, practical research, community capacity and awareness building, and data-driven advocacy to create both immediate impact and long-lasting systems change (see page 6 for additional detail on NCHH's mission, vision, and purpose).

This plan is organized around six action areas. We've articulated specific goals and example activities for each action area (for additional detail and example activities, see pages 10-14).

Action Area 1. Identify and disseminate practical and proven steps for creating healthy homes for all.

- Goal 1.1. Identify and fill gaps in the scientific understanding of hazards in the home environment and their impact on health.
- Goal 1.2. Identify and fill gaps in the scientific understanding of how to prevent or fix hazards in the home environment and associated costs and benefits of these solutions.
- Goal 1.3. Consider a diverse range of communities and populations in designing research and translating and disseminating findings.
- Goal 1.4. Translate both NCHH- and partner-led research into accessible and actionable resources.

Action Area 2. Advocate for evidence-based healthy homes practices and programs at the federal, state, and local levels.

- Goal 2.1. Organize and support local advocates' participation in setting and influencing policy at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Goal 2.2. Organize and support efforts to maintain or increase funding for key federal programs and

provide support for similar efforts at the state and local levels.
- Goal 2.3. Advocate with allied organizations for policies that prevent housing-related illness and injury.

Action Area 3. Equip communities and practitioners to overcome barriers and improve their capacity to create healthier housing.

- Goal 3.1. Provide and mobilize context-specific tools and resources.
- Goal 3.2. Provide timely and responsive coaching and technical assistance to communities.
- Goal 3.3. Facilitate connections to peers and experts and attract new talent to the field.
- Goal 3.4. Provide support to communities seeking to improve housing quality and reduce the burden of housing-related illness and injury.

Action Area 4. Provide a platform for exchange on a broad range of healthy housing issues and be prepared to respond to emerging needs within the field.

- Goal 4.1. Provide a range of opportunities for practitioners to share information about healthy housing.
- Goal 4.2. Actively recruit partners to share information on diverse and emerging topics.
- Goal 4.3. Participate in meetings, conferences, workgroups, and events that challenge and expand our understanding of healthy housing and our role in it.

Action Area 5. Communicate broadly and effectively to mobilize action on healthy housing.

- Goal 5.1. Create a simpler and more compelling story for NCHH and the field of healthy housing.
- Goal 5.2. Share tools and resources to help partners and communities improve their communications capacity and effectiveness.
- Goal 5.3. Improve range, efficiency, and timeliness of communications tools
- Goal 5.4. Serve as a voice for the healthy housing movement.

Action Area 6. Strengthen NCHH as an institution in service to the field of healthy housing.

- Goal 6.1. Strengthen, equip, and activate NCHH's Board of Directors.
- Goal 6.2. Invest in and expand staff capacity and diversity.
- Goal 6.3. Shift from a focus on diversity toward a commitment to anti-racism.
- Goal 6.4. Create a reserve fund.
- Goal 6.5. Identify new revenue streams.
- Goal 6.6. Maintain efficient and effective operations.

We know from our past successes that this combination of bold vision with practical steps is the perfect stepping stone for meaningful and lasting impact. We are also resolute in our belief that housing is among the most powerful platforms for improving and transforming the health and lives of all Americans; as such, we are ready to put this plan into action in service to that end.

Organizational Description

The National Center for Healthy Housing (NCHH) is a leading national nonprofit founded on the premise that better housing is a powerful platform for better health. Since 1992 NCHH has served as a highly regarded and credible change agent, successfully integrating healthy housing advocacy, research, and capacity building under one roof to reduce health disparities nationwide. NCHH is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation based near Washington, DC.

Our Mission

Transforming lives by transforming housing.

Our Vision

Through meaningful partnership, practical research, community capacity building, and data-driven advocacy and awareness building, we create systems and structures that reduce disparities and transform lives by transforming housing.

Our Purpose

Better housing for all means better health for all. We bridge the divide between housing and health to solve critical public health and societal problems.

Our Values

NCHH's work is grounded in the belief that our organizational culture is critical to our success, and in carrying out our mission, we embrace our core values. We are:

Practical and Passionate
Our team is enthusiastic, hardworking, and energized by our mission. Our passion is authentic, and so is our desire to ensure that our work has real-world, practical impact, that our research and resources are accessible to all who can benefit, and that our solutions are useful for those who wish to employ them.

Credible and Trustworthy
Data and evidence drive our work. We acknowledge and are accountable to the people, partners, and funders that we serve and work alongside. We believe in transparency, in robust science, and in ethical and honest conduct. We also believe in the wisdom and value in lived experiences that don't make it into peer-reviewed publications. We take our role as an objective evaluator seriously.

Collaborative and Inclusive
We believe in teamwork, collaboration, and the open sharing of knowledge, resources, and insights, both internally and externally. We believe that honest, open exchange broadens our overall perspective and

NCHH AT WORK

Partnerships

Our partnerships are a fundamental ingredient to our success. Our achievements are shared with a diverse set of collaborators who share our commitment to healthy housing. Our team seeks out willing partners at the local, state, and national level and works to support their success through lasting and meaningful relationships.

Community Capacity Building

NCHH is a valuable resource to housing, health, governmental, and other organizations due to its unique ability to identify and convert credible science, technical expertise, and over 25 years of practical experience into accessible and useful information for dissemination, local adaptation, and program growth. Through these efforts, we've helped programs and communities develop needed and effective cross-sector partnerships, and led community efforts to promote healthy housing through services to residents, policy changes, innovative funding, and impact evaluation. We've also amassed a wealth of resources, tools, model codes, best practices, expertise, data, and diverse expert partners that can be deployed to scale up these efforts in communities across the country.

Practical Research

NCHH designs research and evaluation activities with both policy and practice in mind and embarks on projects that are timely, relevant, and oriented toward implementation. NCHH translates credible, science-based research into practical solutions. Numerous research studies conducted by NCHH scientists have made valuable contributions to understanding the connections between housing and health and have shaped federal and state regulations and practices.

Advocacy and Awareness Building

NCHH provides expertise, facilitation, and support to government agencies, legislative bodies, and advocates as they establish policies and procedures to create healthier homes through laws and regulations. NCHH is widely acknowledged as the go to resource for credible and practical healthy housing information and we actively work to increase awareness among key stakeholders and decision makers.

promotes diversity, inclusion, and equity across all levels of our work. We trust that welcoming other voices, learning from each other, challenging the status quo, and sharing in successes will not reduce our individuality or inherent uniqueness but instead elevates the value of all involved. We are committed to improving the racial diversity of our staff, board, partners, and vendors.

Curious and Evolving
We value innovation, and as a result, we value learning. Our environment is dynamic, creative, encouraging, and synergistic. We ask tough questions and allow ourselves to grow and evolve to meet the changing needs of the field of healthy housing and gain a deeper understanding of the communities we serve.

Grateful and Resilient
We appreciate each other, our partners, and the communities we serve and work alongside. We understand both the enormity of the task in front of us and the collective power and potential of our combined resources and wisdom.

Our Strengths

For nearly three decades, NCHH has demonstrated its unique ability to:

- Convene and lead the healthy housing movement
- Conduct practical research and evaluation into housing innovations that improve health
- Translate and disseminate credible science into useful tools
- Equip and mobilize communities into action to create healthier home environments
- Garner broad cross-sectoral support for better housing
- Advocate for and with routinely marginalized populations

An overview of NCHH's history and key accomplishments is available online at https://nchh.org/who-we-are/history-and-accomplishments/.

SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- NCHH staff have been involved in many major advances related to healthy housing and lead poisoning prevention, including playing key roles in the passage and implementation of Title X, the groundbreaking Rochester Blood and Dust Study, the first *Guidelines for the Evaluation and Control of Lead-Based Paint Hazards in Housing*, the congressionally chartered Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction and Financing Task Force, the first National Evaluation of the HUD Lead Hazard Control grant program, and the development of the *10 Policies to Prevent and Respond to Childhood Lead Exposure* report. Since 1992, NCHH has managed over 100 multidisciplinary projects and **published or contributed to over 150 articles and reports** on environmental health and housing issues.

- NCHH has been instrumental in work at the intersection of energy efficiency and healthy housing, including **NCHH-led research on the impacts of green rehabiltation** and contributions to reports summarizing the health and cost benefits of residential energy improvements, *Home Rx: The Health Benefits of Home Performance* for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and *Occupant Health Benefits of Residential Energy Efficiency* for E4TheFuture.

- Through multiple training networks, NCHH has helped to train more than 50,000 healthy housing professionals.

- Since 2009, NCHH has convened and staffed the **National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition**. The coalition has over 600 members representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, and Puerto Rico.

- NCHH has served as a **go-to resource for healthcare financing of healthy homes services**, contributing to the evidence base of the return on investment, documenting the landscape, spreading best practices, and providing coaching to communities seeking investment from the healthcare sector.

- NCHH has partnered with communities across the country to strengthen local housing codes, implement proactive rental inspection programs, and improve enforcement. Since 2017, NCHH has provided **technical assistance** and a **half-million dollars in mini-grants** to over 75 communities spanning all 10 federal regions, providing opportunities for spread of best practices. These coaching relationships mean that NCHH can guide communities through the process of policy development and implementation instead of expecting communities to act based on a single report, webinar, or meeting.

- NCHH serves as the **World Health Organization's Collaborating Center for Research and Training on Housing Related Disease and Injury Prevention**.

The Landscape

As we embark on a new decade, we are mindful that our work is shaped by important factors, opportunities, and challenges in the landscape around us. These factors necessarily contributed to the development of our strategic goals and activities, and as the landscape evolves, our activities may require adjustment; however, many of the factors identified have been a persistent part of the healthy housing landscape for decades and are likely to remain important throughout the duration of this strategic plan. These factors include:

Local opportunities and challenges

- Communities face different types of challenges (e.g., an overabundance of vacant lots and buildings in some and gentrification and rapid development in others) and need different types of solutions.
- Environmental health professionals have limited regulatory authority to assess housing and recommend/implement corrective actions.
- Community power-building is a vital tool in achieving health equity.
- Many communities struggle with key workforce shortages (e.g., contractors, community health workers) that may impede efforts to scale up healthy homes services.
- There has been a resurgence of interest in proactive rental inspections and code enforcement as tools to improve housing quality; however, there are also continued barriers related to enforcement, and there is uneven access to effective and equitable code enforcement to prevent home environmental exposures.

Partnership opportunities and challenges

- The perceived tension between housing affordability and housing quality persists despite decades of partnership and examples demonstrating that this is a false and needless choice.
- Other industries (healthcare, green building/energy efficiency, education) continue to be important players, and healthy housing needs to emphasize its role in creating a bridge for these sectors to invest in housing.
- Healthy housing efforts remain heavily siloed at the federal, state, and local levels, and this leads to missed opportunities.

Opportunities for new relationships

- There are opportunities to bring our knowledge to other settings (e.g., child care, schools, military housing, immigrant housing, office buildings, hotels, Airbnbs, retirement communities) and populations (e.g., rural communities, tribal communities, older adults, millennials) that can benefit from our science and tools to improve indoor environments.
- There are important emerging public health issues that can benefit from our knowledge, expertise, and partnership (e.g., drinking water, pandemic preparedness and response, climate change, accessibility/universal design).
- Safe and healthy housing will only increase in importance as the impacts of climate change intensify (e.g., through increased extreme weather events, increase in the amount of time spent indoors).
- There are important connections between healthy housing and other social determinants of health that may benefit from being addressed together (e.g., transit, food security, education, labor/workforce issues).
- There is a need to stay vigilant and engage in cross-sector conversations to help us anticipate important issues on the horizon for healthy housing (e.g., the role of healthy housing before, during, and after a pandemic).

Uncertainty about the solutions/evidence

- Healthcare organizations, medical professionals, and other stakeholders (including decision makers and the general public) have a general and growing understanding of the impact of housing on health and its importance as a public health priority, but additional work is needed to articulate and frame this issue for some audiences.
- While there is an increased understanding of the connection between housing and health, there is an inadequate understanding of the solutions available to address and prevent problems before they occur.

Resource challenges and opportunities

- Funding for healthy housing work remains heavily siloed, and some critical activities remain under-resourced and overlooked.

- There continue to be misaligned incentives between sectors investing in and benefitting from healthy housing.
- We have a diverse and growing set of examples of how communities are sustainably financing healthy homes services.

Systemic challenges
- Racist and discriminatory housing policies (both historic and ongoing) have prevented communities of color from building wealth and accessing safe, high-quality housing, worsening disparities in health and other outcomes. This inequality must not only be acknowledged but directly addressed by effective housing policy.
- Housing is distinct from other key social determinants of health because it is both deeply personal and complex, involving a wide array of individuals, institutions, systems, policies, and environmental conditions.
- Because housing is so personal, there may also be a tendency to rely too heavily on individual responsibility or to blame residents for the poor housing conditions to which they are exposed.
- A mistrust of government (among undocumented residents, for instance) and differences in cultural practices around housing are also important factors to consider in developing and implementing policies and programs.

Our Response: Strategic Goals and Activities

If NCHH tried to work on every housing and health problem, we would solve none. In previous strategic plans, we have taken a portfolio approach—investing in a variety of areas to identify the most promising strategies and activities. We have found that this approach allows us to concentrate on the places where we can make a unique impact and focus with precision on getting discernible results in those areas. We prioritize our activities by asking:

- *Is it a scientifically important environmental health challenge, not being sufficiently addressed by others, with the potential for systems-level change?*
- *Is it the kind of work NCHH is best at, a situation where science, convening, training, or practical solutions are needed?*
- *Do we already have, or can we attract, the resources needed to solve the problem—in terms of talent, influence, and funding?*

We will continue to use these three criteria as we execute and refine our strategic plan in response to a changing landscape. They will help us to identify where we need to maintain focus and which emerging focus areas merit increased attention, taking into consideration NCHH's skills and expertise, as well as people and places that could benefit from NCHH's help and involvement.

In some instances, this means continuing work in our traditional "sweet spot": the nexus between health and housing. In other cases, this means shifting a bit and working with other experienced partners and agencies who are leaders in other arenas—such as those working on the quality of schools, workplaces, and child care centers. We will maintain a supportive role for these organizations, while keeping our focus on the places people live. In some cases, it may mean assessing and possibly updating our definition of what constitutes a home environment to be more inclusive of a wider range of residential environments (e.g., shelters, assisted living facilities). NCHH will remain focused on the United States as a priority for its work but will contribute to the healthy housing work of the World Health Organization, provide guidance as requested and feasible to colleagues in other countries, and stay abreast of research and practices from abroad that will advance our U.S. efforts.

We also recognize that our programmatic work is only a part of what makes our organization strong and have been very intentional during this strategic planning process to set goals related to board development, staffing, financial health, and communications.

Using this framework, our action areas and strategic goals for 2020-2025 are outlined below.

Action Area 1. Identify and disseminate practical and proven steps for creating healthy homes for all.

Housing is one of the best-documented social determinants of health, both in terms of the impact on health and in the potential for interventions to improve physical and mental health, safety, and well-being; however, there are still important gaps in our understanding of both the problems and solutions we face and new challenges on the horizon (e.g., climate change and resiliency). NCHH's advocacy and capacity-building work are fueled by this evidence base, and it is vital that NCHH continues to focus on questions of practical significance and to improve in our ability to translate findings into action.

• Goal 1.1. Identify and fill gaps in the scientific understanding of hazards in the home environment and their impact on health.
Example activities: Update child lead exposure pathways models using current data (MI CHILD project), evaluate radon testing requirements in multifamily housing (EARTH study), examine the relationship between proactive rental inspection policies and population health outcomes, and update the State of Healthy Housing.

• Goal 1.2. Identify and fill gaps in the scientific understanding of how to prevent or fix hazards in the home environment and associated costs and benefits of these solutions.
Example activities: Identify minimum interventions necessary to sustain low dust lead levels over time (HOME/ABATE study), study the effectiveness of kitchen range hoods to reduce moisture and gas stove-generated contaminants, document the costs and benefits of interventions to reduce lead in tap water, provide information on the impacts of rental ordinance change on housing supply, collaborate with others on the role of healthy housing in a broader affordable housing strategy (Detroit project), and evaluate the effectiveness of CAPABLE implementation in diverse communities across the country with varying types of housing, older adult populations, and implementation structures.

• Goal 1.3. Consider a diverse range of communities and populations in designing research and translating and disseminating findings.
Example activities: Document healthy housing needs for tribal populations, examine the specific healthy housing needs of rural communities, work with specific populations to design communications plans for research findings, and work with partners to create toolkits and outreach to home-based child care providers about lead poisoning prevention and other environmental hazards (Lead-Safe Home-Based Child Care Toolkit).

• Goal 1.4. Translate both NCHH- and partner-led research into accessible and actionable resources.
Example activities: Create video abstracts describing research findings in plain language, generate briefs on potential policy implications of research findings, translate the evidence base into interactive tools (e.g., create practical tools to help organizations adopt the CAPABLE program to help older adults age safely in their own homes), and develop tools to assist with implementation of the WHO Housing and Health Guidelines.

Action Area 2. Advocate for evidence-based healthy homes practices and programs at the federal, state, and local levels.

Supportive, evidence-based policy is critical to achieving NCHH's vision of creating systems and structures that reduce disparities and transform lives by transforming housing. Different opportunities exist at the federal, state, and local levels, and we will maximize our impact by working across these levels to inform decision makers, support and equip local advocates, and work with partners to leverage and amplify advocacy efforts.

• Goal 2.1. Organize and support local advocates' participation in setting and influencing policy at the federal, state, and local levels.
Example activities: Develop a policy agenda for new administration or new lawmakers at the federal/state/

local level, serve as go-to resource for Hill staff in creating and reviewing legislation, provide support letters for legislation at the state or local level, connect constituents to their congressional offices to provide district-specific stories and facts, train advocates on how to meet with congressional offices, provide sample agendas and story templates, team with local and regional coalitions to support the development and implementation of policy agendas, and develop model local ordinances.

• **Goal 2.2. Organize and support efforts to maintain or increase funding for key federal programs and provide support for similar efforts at the state and local levels.**
Example activities: Testify before key legislative and regulatory bodies, organize an annual Hill Day, provide support to partners in organizing and participating in in-district meetings with decision makers, create and circulate sign-on letters, develop and disseminate agency factsheets, and provide updates to greater healthy housing movement on appropriations news.

"What we do echoes through generations."

Barack Obama

• **Goal 2.3. Advocate with allied organizations for policies that prevent housing-related illness and injury.**
Example activities: Coordinating comments on proposed federal rule or guideline changes, supporting sign-on letters initiated by other organizations, collaborating on Hill Days or congressional briefings, and continue to convene the National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition.

Action Area 3. Equip communities and practitioners to overcome barriers and improve their capacity to create healthier housing.

Housing provides a unique and powerful platform for transforming communities and resident health and well-being. There are many proven strategies for improving the supply of affordable, safe, and healthy housing and an abundance of evidence that comprehensive housing strategies that address all of these interrelated dimensions will improve not only resident health and well-being but also a range of other important social outcomes and provide a positive return on investment to a range of sectors (health, education, housing, and criminal justice, to name a few). An increasing number of communities across the country have developed and implemented best practices in this arena; many have developed and implemented innovative solutions to improving housing conditions and using housing as a vehicle to improve the health and well-being of residents. Meanwhile, other communities are actively seeking these types of solutions and could benefit from the best practices already in place across the country. Still others have started on the path toward creating healthier and more affordable home environments but need assistance in transforming sporadic action into a sustained strategy. While this high demand and growing interest across sectors provides a unique opportunity for public health action, additional action is needed to pave the way for change in most communities.

• **Goal 3.1. Provide and mobilize context-specific tools and resources.**
Example activities: Develop and disseminate state-specific fact sheets, partner to develop municipal-level estimates of the benefits of lead poisoning prevention interventions (e.g., partnership with Altarum), share curated lists of resources with new communities, publish case studies on state and local sustainable financing mechanisms, and promote an online tool to compare local code provisions to the National Healthy Housing Standard.

• **Goal 3.2. Provide timely and responsive coaching and technical assistance to communities.**
Example activities: TA Your Way, 1,000 Communities, Lead Legal Strategies Partnership, online learning, rapid-response TA (TA SWAT teams), New York State Childhood Lead Poisoning Primary Prevention Program, learning communities like Aging Gracefully, create toolkits for home-based child care providers to reduce lead exposure (Lead-Safe Home-Based Child Care Toolkit project), support communities that implement the National Healthy Housing Standard, and contribute to or organize training for HUD or CDC grantees.

• **Goal 3.3. Facilitate connections to peers and experts and attract new talent to the field.**
Example activities: Launch the 1,000 Communities portal, host convenings of partners or communities,

create and deploy a technical assistance pool for specialty coaches, host a hackathon to bring IT and healthy housing sectors together to solve data challenges, inform communities of funding opportunities from partners and federal agencies, and partner with investigators from underrepresented groups (e.g., women, people of color) as co-investigators on research projects.

• Goal 3.4. Provide support to communities seeking to improve housing quality and reduce the burden of housing-related illness and injury.
Example activities: Provide mini-grants to support healthy housing work at the local level, offer scholarships for partners to attend major conferences, provide communities with letters of support for funding applications, and work with partners to improve national standards for home-based child care environments.

Action Area 4. Provide a platform for exchange on a broad range of healthy housing issues and be prepared to respond to emerging needs within the field.

NCHH is an established leader in the field of healthy housing, but one of the achievements we're most proud of is serving as a convener for the movement. As the already-broad field of healthy housing continues to expand, that role will take on increased significance. This will include creating a space for exchange and forward momentum on a wide range of topics as well as hearing from a diverse set of voices who may experience healthy housing differently.

• Goal 4.1. Provide a range of opportunities for practitioners to share information on healthy housing.
Example activities: Host or co-host webinars, facilitate listservs (Leadnet, Healthyhomesnet), host and participate in Twitter chats, coordinate the National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition, and use conferences to provide in-person technical assistance or coaching opportunities.

• Goal 4.2. Actively recruit partners to share information on diverse and emerging topics.
Example activities: Engage partners to share information, expertise and resources related to climate change, rural health, universal design, affordable housing, radon, fire safety, carbon monoxide exposure, injury prevention, gun violence, emergency preparedness, cleaning, and more.

• Goal 4.3. Participate in meetings, conferences, workgroups, and events that challenge and expand our understanding of healthy housing and our role in it.
Example activities: Participate in national workgroups and coalitions, such as the Lead Service Line Replacement Collaborative, National Environmental Health Partnership Council, Disaster Recovery Work Group, Children's Health Budget Coalition, National Home Safety Home Modification Work Group, APHA Climate Changes Health Work Group, APHA Aging and Public Health Section, WHO Collaborating Center, faith-based groups, and environmental justice groups.

Action Area 5. Communicate broadly and effectively to mobilize action on healthy housing.

Effective communication will be vital to our success. Strong communication is essential to our goals of translating and mobilizing evidence into policy and practice as well as establishing and strengthening partnerships and motivating investment in healthy housing.

• Goal 5.1. Create a simpler and more compelling story for NCHH and the field of healthy housing.
Example activities: Enhance storytelling, develop a strong and concise elevator pitch, create better documentation and improved dissemination of successes and achievements, engage new strategic partners in the conversation about healthy housing, and explore recruitment of a celebrity spokesperson.

• Goal 5.2. Share tools and resources to help partners and communities improve their communications capacity and effectiveness.
Example activities: Develop and launch web pages with communications tools and host webinars or coaching calls on communications (e.g., tips on participating in your first Twitter chat).

• **Goal 5.3. Improve range, efficiency, and timeliness of communications tools.**
Example activities: Expand outreach to other social media platforms, increase video content, and develop bank of social media content that can be adapted to meet emerging needs.

• **Goal 5.4. Serve as a voice for the healthy housing movement.**
Example activities: Serve as keynote speaker at key national, regional, and local conferences, deliver presentations at a diverse range of conferences, conduct media interviews and serve as a resource to the media in covering healthy housing issues, contribute to books, op-eds, and other thought pieces, publish research findings, and teach healthy homes content and/or contribute to curriculum for students of all ages.

Action Area 6. Strengthen NCHH as an institution in service to the field of healthy housing.

NCHH's public successes are programmatic in nature, but they are only possible if our organization is strong and healthy. As such, we commit to strengthening and diversifying NCHH's finances, continuous improvement of our operations, and investment in our most important resources (staff, board, and partners).

• **Goal 6.1. Strengthen, equip, and activate NCHH's Board of Directors.**
Example activities: Analyze board gaps, ongoing board recruitment, launch new onboarding process, revitalize committee structure, implement a more frequent meeting schedule, institute a new process for setting board giving goals, train board members to talk about NCHH, set specific committee goals for fundraising and recruitment, provide equity training for board members, and create emeritus board.

• **Goal 6.2. Invest in and expand staff capacity and diversity.**
Example activities: Invest in ongoing equity training for staff, revise recruitment, hiring and onboarding practices (with a goal of attracting and retaining a wider range of talent), adopt and embrace a culture where people of color feel they can thrive, increase utilization of professional development budget line, provide regular opportunities for staff feedback and input, increase investment in our internship program, recruit junior staff, expand staff (particularly for under-resourced areas like operations and communications), and recruit staff with new skill sets or expertise.

• **Goal 6.3. Shift from a focus on diversity toward a commitment to anti-racism.**
Example activities: Provide anti-racism training for staff, revise recruitment, hiring and onboarding practices (with a goal of attracting and retaining a wider range of talent), adopt and embrace a culture where people of color feel they can thrive, embed time for personal anti-racism work into our culture, explore opportunities to initiate a financial relationship with a Black-owned bank, and establish a mentorship program to create a safe and supportive space for staff to talk about their experiences of race and racism at NCHH or within the healthy housing field.

• **Goal 6.4. Create a reserve fund.**
Example activities: Train staff and board in cultivating and managing donor relationships, explore opportunities for ethical corporate sponsorship, explore opportunities for large donors, explore grant opportunities for operating expenses/unrestricted funds, and assess the viability of a profitable subsidiary.

• **Goal 6.5. Identify new revenue streams.**
Example activities: Explore opportunities for ethical corporate sponsorship, explore opportunities for large donors, explore grant opportunities for operating expenses/unrestricted funds, and assess the viability of a profitable subsidiary.

• **Goal 6.6. Maintain efficient and effective operations.**
Example activities: Complete an annual review of vendors and potential emerging needs (e.g., IT services, accounting, legal services, web developer), continue to maintain (and expand) competitive benefits packages while containing costs, and work with all departments to ensure that diversity policies are being applied to selection of vendors, consultants, grant recipients, and partners.

Finally, as noted in the landscape section above, we recognize that as the landscape around healthy housing shifts, our activities may need to as well. As such, we commit to active monitoring and refining of this plan so that our focus remains on our mission and achieving our impact (see Appendix B for additional details on how we plan to maintain and update this plan).

Our Impact

Appendix B describes our plan to actively monitor and evaluate our progress towards these objectives. These objectives have been carefully selected to achieve impact and the benefits of many of these specific interventions and activities are already well-documented. We also recognize that the nature of our systems change work means that the timeframe for documenting population impact may not align perfectly with this timeline of this strategic plan. Whatever challenges this poses for evaluation, this approach is consistent with our strategic vision. With that in mind, our evaluation plan (Appendix B) is focused on monitoring our progress towards our stated objectives.

We are also confident that by executing this plan, with its emphasis on systems change, we will improve the health of communities today and for generations to come. As a result of our work, we will see in 5-10 years:

- Increased expectations and accountability for safe and healthy housing.
- Amplified local capacity to build the systems needed to support and advance local efforts to improve housing quality and health.
- A shift toward investment in prevention of housing-related health problems.
- A reduction in housing-related health disparities.
- Better housing and better health in communities across the country.

Appendix A. Overview of the Strategic Planning Process

NCHH is grateful to staff, board members, and partners who have participated and contributed ideas throughout this strategic planning process.

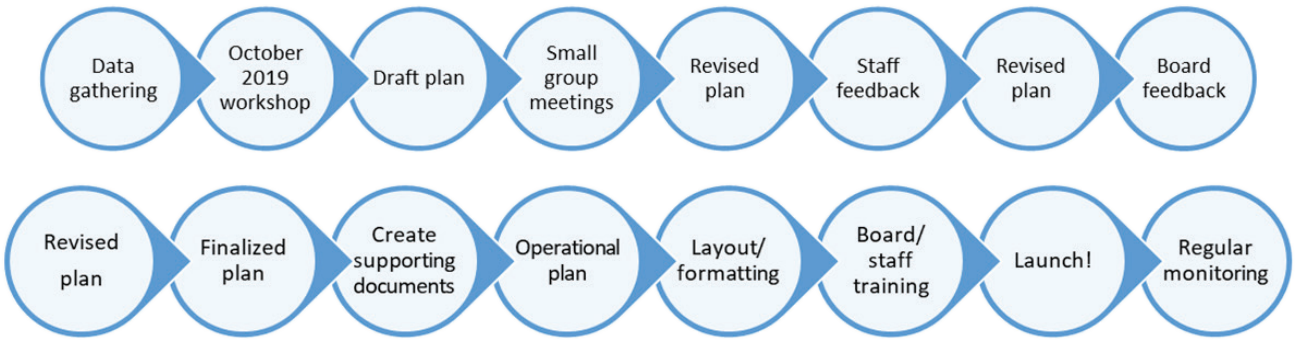
NCHH staff began the process of data gathering during the final 18 months of the previous strategic plan. Key activities included:

- September 2017: Staff participate in a "stop/continue/start exercise" to assess our current portfolio of activities
- December 2018: Board participate in a visioning exercise about the long-term future and impact of NCHH.
- Spring 2019: NCHH works with Edelman to receive pro-bono analysis of board strengths and NCHH messaging.
- July 2019: Staff participate in a visioning exercise about NCHH's long-term future and impact.
- October 2019: Staff complete a landscape analysis.
- Throughout: NCHH increased evaluation of products and services (e.g., through exit surveys).

Information from these and other activities helped to lay the foundation for the rest of NCHH's strategic planning process. In October 2019, NCHH staff and board participated in a multiday retreat. The meeting was professionally facilitated and involved a set of interactive exercises and discussions to generate the basis for a new strategic plan.

NCHH board members and staff at the October 2019 strategic planning retreat.

Following the October 2019 meeting, NCHH's Executive Director created a first draft of the strategic plan, whichwas shared with a small workgroup of staff representing NCHH's leadership and functional areas. The small workgroup discussed and revised the plan over the course of a month. During the February 2020 staff meeting, the draft strategic plan was presented to the full staff, and all staff were invited to discuss and provide comments (both during the meeting and in the week following). Staff feedback was incorporated into a new draft, which was shared with the NCHH board in mid-February 2020. Board members provided feedback on the draft plan during the March 2020 board meeting. This feedback was incorporated into a new draft and shared with staff, board, and key partners in April 2020. A new draft was circulated to board and staff in May 2020, and the NCHH board voted to adopt the new strategic plan in July 2020, with a formal launch on NCHH's anniversary in September 2020.



Appendix B. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

We commit to regularly reviewing, refining, and monitoring progress towards our stated objectives. Staff leadership (ED, CFO/DD, COO) will meet at least twice per year to review progress and with full staff and board at least once per year. As we begin to operationalize this plan, we may modify this scorecard, but our general approach will include:

- Reviewing the list of tasks/activities and any specific goals, where applicable
- Reporting on the status of our work related to each task/activity/action area
- Generating a color-coded score or rating for our progress for each task/activity/action area so that progress can be easily assessed at a glance (where green equals *good/excellent*, yellow equals *adequate*, and red equals *needs improvement*)
- Documenting any special notes or considerations (e.g., proposed modifications, edits, additions, special circumstances)

In keeping with our commitment to transparency, this summary will be developed in partnership with staff and made available to board and staff.

Task/Activity	Goal (if applicable)	Status	Score*	Notes
Monitoring				
Regularly review strategic plan progress with staff leadership	Twice per year			
Regularly review strategic plan progress with full staff	Annually			
Regularly review strategic plan progress with board	Annually			
Communications				
Plan is up to date on website	At launch and every time a change is made			
Blog	At launch, then annually			
Initial communications plan completed	See Appendix C			
Staff trained	At launch, then annual refreshers			
Board trained	At launch, then annual refreshers			
Objectives				
Action Area 1. Identify and disseminate practical and proven steps for creating healthy homes for all.				
Goal 1.1. Identify and fill gaps in the scientific understanding of hazards in the home environment and their impact on health.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 1.2. Identify and fill gaps in the scientific understanding of how to prevent or fix hazards in the home environment and associated costs and benefits of these solutions.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 1.3. Consider a diverse range of communities and populations in designing research and translating and disseminating findings.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 1.4. Translate both NCHH- and partner-led research into accessible and actionable resources.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Action Area 2. Advocate for evidence-based healthy homes practices and programs at the federal, state, and local levels.				
Goal 2.1. Organize and support local advocates' participation in setting and influencing policy at the federal, state, and local levels.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 2.2. Organize and support efforts to maintain or increase funding for key federal programs and provide support for similar efforts at the state and local levels.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			

Task/Activity	Goal (if applicable)	Status	Score*	Notes
Goal 2.3. Advocate with allied organizations for policies that prevent housing-related illness and injury.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Action Area 3. Equip communities and practitioners to overcome barriers and improve their capacity to create healthier housing.				
Goal 3.1. Provide and mobilize context-specific tools and resources.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 3.2. Provide timely and responsive coaching and technical assistance to communities.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 3.3. Facilitate connections to peers and experts and attract new talent to the field.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 3.4. Provide support to communities seeking to improve housing quality and reduce the burden of housing-related illness and injury.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Action Area 4. Provide a platform for exchange on a broad range of healthy housing issues and be prepared to respond to emerging needs within the field.				
Goal 4.1. Provide a range of opportunities for practitioners to share information on healthy housing.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 4.2. Actively recruit partners to share information on diverse and emerging topics.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 4.3. Participate in meetings, conferences, workgroups, and events that challenge and expand our understanding of healthy housing and our role in it.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Action Area 5. Communicate broadly and effectively to mobilize action on healthy housing.				
Goal 5.1. Create a simpler and more compelling story for NCHH and the field of healthy housing.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 5.2. Share tools and resources to help partners and communities improve their communications capacity and effectiveness.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 5.3. Improve range, efficiency, and timeliness of communications tools	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 5.4. Serve as a voice for the healthy housing movement.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Action Area 6. Strengthen NCHH as an institution in service to the field of healthy housing.				
Goal 6.1. Strengthen, equip, and activate NCHH's Board of Directors.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 6.2. Invest in and expand staff capacity and diversity.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 6.3. Shift from a focus on diversity toward a commitment to anti-racism.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 6.3. Create a reserve fund.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 6.4. Identify new revenue streams.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			
Goal 6.5. Maintain efficient and effective operations.	*See example activities and/or operational plan.*			

*Green=Good/Excellent, Yellow=Adequate, Red=Needs Improvement

Appendix C. Communications Plan

NCHH is committed to putting this plan into action, including training of all staff and board members to talk about our strategic plan and understand how each component of our work connects to our important mission, vision, and purpose. Here is an overview of some key communications activities that will help us to affirm that commitment.

July 2020	Board vote on final draft of strategic plan
July/August 2020	NCHH finalizes layout of strategic plan and development of communication materials (e.g., infographic version)
August/ September 2020	Staff training on how to talk about strategic plan Updates to website and communications materials to ensure brand consistency
September 2020	Official launch of new strategic plan on NCHH's anniversary: • Live on NCHH's website (web page, blog) • Announced on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and with a YouTube video
Fall 2020	Social media posts Direct communications with funders Direct communications with key stakeholders
November 2020	Board training on how to talk about strategic plan
Annually 2021-2025	Refresher training for board and staff about how to talk about the strategic plan Explore annual or midpoint blog(s) updating our progress on our strategic plan

Appendix D. Strategic Plan Infographic

National Center for HEALTHY HOUSING

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025

OUR ROLE

OUR MISSION

Transforming lives by transforming housing

OUR VISION

Through meaningful partnership, practical research, community capacity building, and data-driven advocacy and awareness building, we create systems and structures that reduce disparities and transform lives by transforming housing.

OUR PURPOSE

Better housing for all means better health for all. We bridge the divide between housing and health to solve critical public health and societal problems.

OUR RESPONSE

Action Area 1. Identify and disseminate practical and proven steps for creating healthy homes for all.

Goal 1.1. Identify and fill gaps in the scientific understanding of hazards in the home environment and their impact on health.

Goal 1.2. Identify and fill gaps in the scientific understanding of how to prevent or fix hazards in the home environment and associated costs and benefits of these solutions.

Goal 1.3. Consider a diverse range of communities and populations in designing research and translating and disseminating findings.

Goal 1.4. Translate both NCHH- and partner-led research into accessible and actionable resources.

Action Area 2. Advocate for evidence-based healthy homes practices and programs at the federal, state, and local levels.

Goal 2.1. Organize and support local advocates' participation in setting and influencing policy at the federal, state, and local levels.

Goal 2.2. Organize and support efforts to maintain or increase funding for key federal programs and provide support for similar efforts at the state and local levels.

Goal 2.3. Advocate with allied organizations for policies that prevent housing-related illness and injury.

Action Area 3. Equip communities to overcome barriers and improve their capacity to create healthier housing.

Goal 3.1. Provide and mobilize context-specific tools and resources.

Goal 3.2. Provide timely and responsive coaching and technical assistance to communities.

Goal 3.3. Facilitate connections to peers and experts and attract new talent to the field.

Goal 3.4. Provide support to communities seeking to improve housing quality and reduce the burden of housing-related illness and injury.

Action Area 4. Provide a platform for exchange on a broad range of healthy housing issues and be prepared to respond to emerging needs within the field.

Goal 4.1. Provide a range of opportunities for practitioners to share information about healthy housing.

Goal 4.2. Actively recruit partners to share information on diverse and emerging topics.

Goal 4.3. Participate in meetings, conferences, workgroups, and events that challenge and expand our understanding healthy housing and our role in it.

Action Area 5. Communicate broadly and effectively to mobilize action on healthy housing.

Goal 5.1. Create a simpler and more compelling story for NCHH and the field of healthy housing.

Goal 5.2. Share tools and resources to help partners and communities improve their communications capacity and effectiveness.

Goal 5.3. Improve range, efficiency, and timeliness of communications tools.

Goal 5.4. Serve as a voice for the healthy housing movement.

Action Area 6. Strengthen NCHH as an institution in service to the field of healthy housing.

Goal 6.1. Strengthen, equip, and activate NCHH's Board of Directors.

Goal 6.2. Invest in and expand staff capacity and diversity.

Goal 6.3. Shift from a focus on diversity toward a commitment to anti-racism.

Goal 6.4. Create a reserve fund.

Goal 6.5. Identify new revenue streams.

Goal 6.6. Maintain efficient and effective operations.

OUR IMPACT

In 5-10 years, as a result of our work, we want to see in place:

- Increased expectations and accountability for safe and healthy housing.
- Amplified local capacity to build the systems needed to support and advance local efforts to improve housing quality and health.
- A shift toward investment in prevention of housing-related health problems.
- A reduction in housing-related health disparities.
- Better housing and better health in communities across the country.

National Center for HEALTHY HOUSING

Better Housing. Better Health.

www.nchh.org

facebook.com/HealthyHousing

twitter.com/NCHH (@NCHH)

linkedin.com/company/national-center-for-healthy-housing/

instagram.com/nchhorg/ (@nchhorg)

youtube.com/user/healthyhousing