

III. Components of the Application/Annual Report

III.A. Executive Summary

III.A.1. Program Overview

Hawaii is the only island state in the U.S. comprised of seven populated islands organized into four major counties: Hawaii, Maui, Honolulu (Oahu), and Kauai. Spanning nearly 11,000 square miles with a land mass of 6,422 square miles, the state is home to 1.4 million residents with 70% living in Honolulu, the most populous county.



Hawaii is one of the most ethnically diverse states with no single majority race (39% Asian, 25% White, 11% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 2% Black) and a large heterogeneous Pacific Islander and Asian population. Nearly 23% of the population is mixed race with indigenous Native Hawaiians comprising 20.1% of the population (when combined with other races). Also, about 19.3% of all residents are immigrants—mostly from Asia and the Pacific.

The state government is responsible for functions usually performed by counties or cities in other states. Hawaii is the only state, for example, with a single unified public school system. Similarly, Hawaii has no local health departments but has county health offices on the 'neighbor islands' to assure services statewide.

The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) works to protect and improve the health and environment for all people in the state. The DOH Family Health Services Division (FHSD) administers the federal Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block Grant (Title V) to improve the health of women, infants, and children, including those with special healthcare needs. The four guiding pillars of MCH are: 1) delivery of services using the ten Essential Public Health Services framework; 2) data-driven performance accountability; 3) partnerships with agencies, community providers, and individual families/youth; and 4) health equity for all MCH populations to achieve their full health potential. To help expand its capacity and reach, FHSD leverages state and federal grant funds with community partners.

To set priorities for the state MCH program, a comprehensive needs assessment is conducted every five years. For FY 2022, Hawaii identified ten Title V priorities, adding four additional state priorities in 2021 based on assessment efforts during the COVID pandemic. The priorities are listed below across the six Title V MCH population domains.

Population Domain	State Priority Need
Women's/Maternal Health	Promote reproductive life planning
Perinatal/Infant Health	Promote food security through WIC services
	Reduce infant safe sleep conditions
Child Health	Improve the percentage of children age 0-5 years screened early and continuously for developmental delay
	Reduce the rate of child abuse and neglect, with special attention to children ages 0-5 years
	Promote child wellness visits and immunizations among young children ages 0-5 years
Adolescent Health	Improve the healthy development, health, safety, and well-being of adolescents
Children with Special Health Care Needs	Improve the percentage of youth with special health care needs ages 14-21 years who receive services necessary to transition to adult healthcare
Cross-Cutting	Address health equity by expanding pediatric mental health care access in rural and underserved communities
	Address health & digital equity by expanding access to telehealth services in underserved communities

COVID Emergency Response 2020-2022

Hawaii managed the COVID-19 pandemic better than many other states. This was reflected in consistently low COVID case numbers, hospitalizations, and deaths. Aptly, the Commonwealth Fund ranked Hawaii number one among states in

managing COVID response in 2022.

Policy: Hawaii's success relied on the ability to restrict all travel early in the pandemic and the State's close adherence to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) safety guidelines and cautious loosening of safety restrictions. Over the course of the pandemic, Hawaii's governor issued over 20 COVID-related emergency proclamations that included mandatory shutdowns of non-essential services; stay-at-home orders; self-quarantine for all travel within and entering the state; limitations on gatherings; mandated mask wearing; and physical distancing to reduce disease spread. With community partners, the State also implemented active COVID-19 testing, contact tracing, and systematic vaccination rollout. The State cautiously relaxed COVID restrictions to reopen the economy lifting all COVID restrictions in March 2022, making Hawaii the last state to end an indoor mask mandate.

COVID: The community spread of COVID-19 remains low yet steady through June 2023 with 296,454 cumulative cases and 1,884 deaths since the beginning of the pandemic. Positive case numbers are considered an underestimate since many residents now test from home. Fatalities are largely among the elderly (80%). COVID disparities continue with Native Hawaiians, Filipinos, and Pacific Islanders experiencing higher rates of infection and death. Roughly 25% of the state's population has not contracted COVID (43.5% among those 65 and older).

Vaccinations: As of June 2023, 78.8% of Hawaii's population was fully vaccinated, a relatively high vaccination rate. Those receiving a booster or bivalent shots is 23%, like the national average.

Disease Management. In 2022, the State transitioned from a COVID emergency response to disease management. HDOH continues to collect and publicly release COVID data weekly, although the CDC discontinued reporting, making national comparisons more difficult. HDOH continues to issue advisories on current COVID-19 recommendations and works with key partners to ensure the most accurate guidance and information is being shared.

As Hawaii transitions to a new pandemic phase, surveys show Hawaii residents are becoming more confident that the worse of the pandemic is over, perhaps keeping COVID-19 booster uptake low. However, significant health consequences of the pandemic remain including long COVID, mental health issues, and other comorbidities which pose significant healthcare challenges.

Economic Impact of COVID: The COVID shutdown saw an unprecedented contraction of the state's economy in 2020:

- A 98.8% decrease in travelers to the state.
- An unemployment rate that rose from 2.1 % to 21.9% in one month (the lowest to the highest unemployment rate in the U.S).
- Food banks reported a 60% increase in services.
- Enrollments for government assistance soared.

Recovery. After Hawaii's cataclysmic fiscal collapse, the economy made an equally astounding turn around in 2021 driven by an unexpected rebound in domestic tourism, with visitor arrivals returning pre-pandemic levels in 2022. Unemployment returned to 3.5% in 2022, although businesses still report hiring challenges.

An unprecedented level of federal spending also provided essential support for the state economy. Direct aid to state and local governments offset significant budget shortfalls. Direct stimulus payments, expanded unemployment insurance, entitlement supports, and rent/mortgage subsidies helped maintain personal income through 2020-21. Although 2022 saw the end of many federal supports, there was a slight increase in average earnings reflected in real income recovery to near pre-pandemic levels. In 2023, economists report Hawaii's inflation appears to be decreasing faster than for the U.S.

Despite these bright spots, affordability remains an enormous challenge for many residents. Data for 2021 shows that Hawaii goods and services were 13% higher than the U.S. average, making Hawaii the most expensive state in the country. Home prices rose by 40% in April 2022. Affording a single-family home now takes twice the income compared to a decade

ago (\$190,000 annually). During the same period, median household income increased by only 27%. Hawaii's job market continues to be dominated by low-wage, service industry jobs.

Increased domestic out-migration over the past five years may be due in part to the state's high cost of living as well as greater job opportunities in other western states.

New Governor: In November 2022, Hawaii elected a new democratic governor, Josh Green M.D., who ran on a bold, progressive, action-oriented platform to address the state's most difficult problems. He promised to address Hawaii's housing crisis, homelessness, affordability issues through tax reform, and expand subsidized pre-schools while protecting the state's natural resources. As an emergency room doctor from Hawaii County, Governor Green is keenly aware of the needs of rural/neighbor island communities and committed to strengthen the state healthcare workforce and infrastructure. His agenda was bolstered by a substantial budget surplus.

Title V Programs/Services: Through the pandemic, Title V programs continued to embrace flexibility in response to changes in service delivery, population needs, and new norms. Programs shared relevant guidance, resources, and messaging to help community partners and families as the state moved out of the public health emergency. Although hampered by vacancies, FHSD staff soldiered on, creating new partnerships to address service shortfalls. Programs increased focus on addressing health disparities highlighted by COVID. FHSD also acknowledged existing public health and healthcare workforce needs to minimize burnout.

In 2021, Title V programs, as reported in Form 5a, continued to see declines in direct client services with a 32.7% reduction over 2019 numbers. The 2021 decrease was not consistent across all program and population groups. The major decrease resulted from the loss of federal Title X Family Planning funding. Other public health services, as reported in Form 5b, reflect a 37.4% increase in outreach to adults and a 47.5% increase in outreach to children compared to 2019. This was largely due to more media initiatives to promote services and health messaging.

5-Year Plan Highlights for 2021-2025

FY 2023 marks the third year of the Title V 5-year project period. Four new state priorities were added in 2021 in response to COVID needs and new federal funding opportunities: Food Insecurity through WIC services, Telehealth expansion to underserved communities, Pediatric Mental Health Access and Child Wellness Visits/Immunizations. Some planned activities experienced delays or changes due to COVID including workforce turnover and vacancies. Key highlights are provided by domain and priority health issue.

DOMAIN: WOMEN'S/MATERNAL HEALTH

Promote reproductive life planning

- In partnership with the Hawaii Maternal Infant Health Collaborative (HMIHC), Hawaii continues to implement two evidence-based strategies to improve access to healthcare and reproductive decision-making: promote use of the One Key Question® (OKQ) screening approach and increase access to Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC). More than 1,000 health care providers statewide were trained on OKQ. Hawaii birthing hospitals now stock LARC for same-day insertion after delivery.

DOMAIN: PERINATAL/INFANT HEALTH

Promote safe sleep practices

- Media messaging campaigns continued using TV, radio, and digital ads to promote safe sleep messaging and resources available through the statewide The Parent Line (TPL). Safe sleep information materials are now available in 11 languages to reach those with limited English proficiency. Families may also access safe sleep online workshops.

Address Food Insecurity through Improving WIC services

- In partnership with the Hawaii Children's Action Network, work was completed on a Partnership for Children grant to help identify improvements in WIC services. A Community Advisory Committee was convened comprised of community/agency partners, university researchers, and WIC parents to develop recommendations. Additional grant funding was secured to implement the committee's recommendations.

DOMAIN: CHILD HEALTH

Improve early and continuous screening for developmental delay

- In partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics on a Centers for Disease Control Act Early grant to promote

developmental screening through trainings of pediatric and family service providers. Projects included training of WIC clinical staff to pilot a developmental checklist, launching a social media campaign with parent social media influencers, translating education information to reach Pacific Islander populations, and complete service maps for each county.

Reduce the rate of child abuse and neglect (CAN)

- Forged critical partnerships to promote evidence-based prevention practices in collaboration with the state's Child Welfare Services (CWS), Judiciary, Department of Education (DOE), and community service providers.
- Supported implementation of the CWS five-year Service Plan, establishment of DOE Family Resource Centers (FRC), the formation of a statewide FRC network, and joined Native Hawaiian organizations to address over-representation of Hawaiians in the foster care system.
- Issued over \$800,000 in state/federal funding to community-culturally based programs to provide critical services for family and parenting support.

Increase Child Wellness Visits

- Launched a media campaign to promote child wellness visits in partnership with AAP-Hawaii, state Medicaid program, and Hawaii Children's Action Network. Resources and a website were developed to assist families without regular sources of care. Families from the Parent Leadership Training Institute tested messaging and appeared in the tv spots.

DOMAIN: ADOLESCENT HEALTH

Improve adolescent health and well-being

- Partnered with TeenLink Hawaii, a youth-driven, empowerment program, to conduct a survey to identify health issues/concerns for youth during the pandemic. Based on the survey findings, website resources were developed to address priority issues, and a media campaign was launched to promote the website using popular social media 'influencers.'
- Developed a scope of work to partner with the Micronesian Pacific Islander community to identify needs/resources to support well-being of Micronesian youth.

DOMAIN: CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS (CSHCN)

Improve transitions to adult healthcare

- Developed a system for transition planning for enrolled Children and Youth with Special Health Needs Section youth using the evidence based Six Core Elements of Health Care Transition, including guidelines, educational tools, workbook, and database tracking. The system model is being adopted by Kaiser Permanente Hawaii for adolescent services.
- Supported development of an active statewide network of agency/community partners that promote transition services, including the state DOE, Vocational Rehab, and family service organizations through popular in-person events. Many programs are now conducted virtually or use hybrid formats as more events are returning to in-person.

DOMAIN: CROSS-CUTTING/SYSTEMS BUILDING

Expand telehealth services to underserved rural communities

- Implementation continues on a \$5M CDC Health Equity grant award to establish 15 new telehealth access points with health and digital navigators in public libraries located in underserved communities statewide. Locations have been established, training of personnel began, and piloting of the healthcare hub model was completed.

Expand pediatric mental health care access to underserved rural communities

- Support integration of behavioral health into pediatric primary care practice by establishing a pediatric mental health teleconsultation service, training, and care coordination so pediatric providers can better diagnose, treat, and/or refer children and youth with behavioral health conditions to available services.