

# DRAFT Health Action Plan



Hillsborough Township  
April 2024

# Background: Who we are

**This effort is led by the Hillsborough Health Collaborative:** A group of local stakeholders with the goal to identify and address key issues related to community health and wellness. Members include representatives from township departments, local organizations and businesses, faith-based groups, health care providers, senior citizens, college students, and community residents. This is an open community collaborative.

We are supported by the following groups/organizations:



**Hillsborough Township  
Health Department**  
This township department  
provides and supports essential  
public health services.



**Sustainable Hillsborough**  
This committee implements best  
practices to contribute to a sustainable  
future. Hillsborough has been certified  
with Sustainable Jersey for 12 years.



**Mayors Wellness Campaign**  
This community health initiative is led  
by the New Jersey Health Care  
Quality Institute with the New Jersey  
State League of Municipalities,  
promoting healthy, active living and  
wellness as a way of life.

Want to get involved?  
Email us at  
*healthcollaborative*  
*@hillsborough-nj.org*

# Background: Local Health Assessment conducted in 2023

- **Goals:**

- Collect data about local health issues
- Engage community members and key leaders in discussing health
- Develop an action plan to improve priority health issues
- Earn a “[Gold Star in Health](#)” through [Sustainable Jersey](#), demonstrating Hillsborough’s commitment to a healthy community

- **Focus:** health outcomes and behaviors, community conditions that impact health (“social determinants of health”), priority populations most affected

- **Data Sources:**



# Results of local health assessment (summary)

## Hillsborough Highlights:

- Recreation
- Education
- Community

## Top health concerns:

- Mental health
- Substance use
- Chronic disease

## Top concerns among community conditions / “social determinants of health”:

- Transportation and infrastructure
- Safety
- Economic stability
- Healthcare access
- Community engagement/isolation
- Communication
- Food access

## Priority Populations:



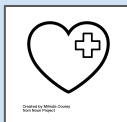
People with low income and limited assets



Seniors, children, young adults



People with difficulty accessing information



People with chronic health conditions



People who are isolated (cultural, geographic, or social)



Click [here](#) to view a detailed report of all of the findings.

# Top priority areas for Health Action Plan



- **Mental Health and Substance Use** - Mental health concerns are common, and it is hard to access treatment services due to stigma and availability of providers. There are substantial concerns about substance use and vaping, especially by youth.



- **Chronic Disease** - Residents are concerned about conditions like diabetes, cancer, and heart disease, especially in certain regions.



- **Access to Healthy Food** - Although survey data indicate people are able to access (by car only) and afford healthy food, there are sub-groups of residents who have difficulty getting to grocery stores and affording food.



- **Community Engagement** - Community engagement was a common topic in focus groups and interviews. Concerns include lack of connection and support, lack of representation of diverse groups, and a desire for more events and programming.



- **Communication about Resources** - Residents are looking for better communication about community resources and services. Many do not know about existing programs, resources, and services.

The Hillsborough Health Collaborative selected the top priority areas based on the following criteria: Significance, Impact, Partnerships, and Feasibility.

# Health Action Plan Strategies





# Mental Health and Substance Use

Click [here](#) to see the full Action Plan document.



Current strategies	Future strategies
<p><b>Sustainable Jersey Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Building Healthier Communities</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Tobacco-Free Community</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Creative Assets Inventory</a></li></ul> <p><b>Increased awareness/education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School, community, and family-based programming</li><li>• “Hope for Tomorrow” Mental Health Fair</li><li>• Stigma-Free Community, Mayors Wellness Campaign</li></ul> <p><b>Trainings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mayors Wellness Campaign grant planning to offer Mental Health First Aid trainings</li><li>• Naloxone training and kit distribution</li></ul> <p><b>Creative arts programming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Hillsborough Express Yourself” (creative team), Art in the Park at AVM”</li></ul>	<p><b>Short-term (1-2 years)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Promote existing mental health resources</b> (also under Communication about Resources) <i>We plan to do this by developing an “Ask the Mayor” video, writing articles for the local paper, increasing our outreach at schools, adding a Township Podcast episode, and conducting specific outreach with our Spanish-speaking and South Asian populations.</i></li></ul> <p><b>Long-term (3+ years)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Tobacco/vaping <a href="#">ordinance</a></b> (Sustainable Jersey Action, also under Chronic Disease) <i>To address youth vaping, we plan to adopt a point-of-sale ordinance restricting sales. This ordinance would have both a regulatory and educational aspect.</i></li></ul>



# Chronic Disease

Click [here](#) to see the full Action Plan document.



Current strategies	Future strategies
<p><b>Sustainable Jersey Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Improvement Projects</a></li> <li><a href="#">Integrating Health into Municipal Decision Making</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Educational Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diabetes Prevention Program through YMCA and Rutgers Cooperative Extension</li> <li>Chronic disease self-management programs</li> </ul> <p><b>Others</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Diabetes resources</a> on township website</li> <li>Blood pressure screenings</li> <li>Free community fitness programs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Short-term (1-2 years)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Complete &amp; Green Streets for All Policy</a> (Sustainable Jersey Action) <i>“Complete and green streets” are roads that enable safe, equitable, and convenient travel for all users, while also allowing stormwater runoff to soak into the ground.</i></li> <li><a href="#">Safe Routes to School</a> (Sustainable Jersey Action) <i>Safe Routes to School programs not only teach children safe pedestrian and bicycle behaviors, but also promote the health and environmental benefits of active transportation.</i></li> <li><b>Community support for physical activity</b> (also under Community Engagement) <i>Programs could include community walking challenges, group hikes and bike rides, yoga sessions, walking clubs, organized time slots for pick-up games, and more.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Long-term (3+ years)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Tobacco/vaping ordinance</a> (Sustainable Jersey Action, also under Mental Health and Substance Use) <i>To address youth vaping, we plan to adopt a point-of-sale ordinance restricting sales. This ordinance would have both a regulatory and educational aspect.</i></li> <li><b>Childcare/preschool nutrition and physical activity interventions</b> (also under Access to Healthy Food) <i>Strategies may include changes that address foods and beverages provided, infant and child feeding practices, screen time, physical activity opportunities, and staff training.</i></li> <li><b>Expansion of Mobile Outreach</b> (also under Community Engagement) <i>We will provide outreach to meet our priority populations where they are, including health education, screenings, and wellness programs.</i></li> </ul>





# Access to Healthy Food

Click [here](#) to see the full Action Plan document.



Current strategies	Future strategies
<b>Sustainable Jersey Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Buy Fresh, Buy Local Programs</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Farmland Preservation Plans</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Farmers Markets</a></li></ul> <b>Improve food access</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Food pantries (Hillsborough CAN, Feeding Hands)</li><li>• Produce donations from local farms to food pantries</li><li>• SNAP outreach</li><li>• Promote Good Food Bucks (available at Norz Hill Farm)</li></ul>	<b>Short-term (1-2 years)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Community garden</b> <i>The Neshanic Garden Club is working with our Social Services Department and Senior Clubs to create the gardens. The indoor garden will be used year-round, growing vegetables and herbs hydroponically, while the outdoor garden will produce during the warmer months. Hillsborough CAN will be distributing the produce to their pantry clients and others in need.</i></li></ul> <b>Long-term (3+ years)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Childcare/preschool nutrition and physical activity interventions</b> (also under Chronic Disease) <i>Strategies may include changes that address foods and beverages provided, infant and child feeding practices, screen time, physical activity opportunities, and staff training.</i></li></ul>



# Community Engagement

Click [here](#) to see the full Action Plan document.



Current strategies	Future strategies
<p><b>Sustainable Jersey Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Building Healthier Communities</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Improve Public Engagement in Municipal Government</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Improve Public Engagement in Planning and Zoning</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Community Education &amp; Outreach</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Green Challenges</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Programming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yoga series with Mayors Wellness Campaign</li> <li>• Senior programming</li> <li>• Activities through recreation and library</li> </ul> <p><b>Diversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of holidays by township committee</li> <li>• ESL classes</li> <li>• Event for Hispanic Heritage Month</li> </ul>	<p><b>Short-term (1-2 years)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Community Equity &amp; Diversity Profile</a> (Sustainable Jersey Action) <i>Data is being collected to better implement programs that benefit all residents, especially those who are marginalized due to race, ability, financial status, etc.</i></li> <li>• <b>Community support for physical activity</b> (also under Chronic Disease) <i>Programs could include community walking challenges, group hikes and bike rides, yoga sessions, walking clubs, organized time slots for pick-up games, and more.</i></li> <li>• <b>Welcome newsletter/packet for renters</b> (also under Communication about Resources) <i>We plan to develop materials for renters that will include important local resources.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Long-term (3+ years)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Expansion of Mobile Outreach</b> (also under Chronic Disease) <i>We will provide outreach to meet our priority populations where they are, including health education, screenings, and wellness programs.</i></li> <li>• <a href="#">Diversity on Boards and Commissions</a> (Sustainable Jersey Action) <i>We will seek to better understand how the makeup of our township-wide boards and commissions match the demographic profile of the town. We will plan efforts to recruit and solicit a more representative sample of residents to sit on our boards and commissions, and bolster efforts to encourage public participation at township meetings by a wider array of residents.</i></li> </ul>



# Communication about Resources

Click [here](#) to see the full Action Plan document.



Current strategies	Future strategies
<p><b>Sustainable Jersey Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Municipal Communications Strategy (Hillsborough checklist)</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Online Municipal Public Service Systems</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Vulnerable Population Identification for Emergencies</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Emergency Communication Planning</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Digitizing Public Information</a></li></ul> <p><b>Channels for Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated <a href="#">Community Resource Guide</a></li><li>• Township website</li><li>• Email newsletter: Mayor's eNewsletter, Experience Hillsborough, HTPS Hillsborough Happenings, Hillsborough Business Association</li><li>• Social media (township accounts, community groups, etc.)</li><li>• Emergency alerts</li><li>• Annual paper newsletter that goes out with tax bills</li><li>• Hillsborough Patch</li></ul>	<p><b>Short-term (1-2 years)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Promote existing mental health resources</b> (also under Mental Health and Substance Use) <i>We plan to do this by developing an "Ask the Mayor" video, writing articles for the local paper, increasing our outreach at schools, adding a Township Podcast episode, and conducting specific outreach with our Spanish-speaking and South Asian populations.</i></li><li>• <b>Welcome newsletter/packet for renters</b> (also under Community Engagement) <i>We plan to develop materials for renters that will include important local resources.</i></li></ul>

We want to hear from you!



Please share your feedback about the  
Draft Health Action Plan in one of 3 ways:



Complete a  
short [survey](#).



Write an email to:  
[healthcollaborative@  
hillsborough-nj.org](mailto:healthcollaborative@hillsborough-nj.org)



Call Tiffany Neal at  
(908) 308-2299

# Thank you!

## Want to get involved?

Email Robin Vlamis at

*[healthcollaborative@hillsborough-nj.org](mailto:healthcollaborative@hillsborough-nj.org)*



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

