



HNJ ACTION TEAM KICKOFF MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 2, 2025

ATTENDANCE

Karen Acker	Jennifer Hopkins	Kety R Rosario
Manisha Agarwal	Julie Kalabalik-Hoganson	Christine K. Scalise
Alec Ayers	Colleen Kendrick	Christine Schell
Jacqueline Bavaro	Denise Lanza	Karen Shapiro
Katie Bisaha	Kristy Li	Pauline Thomas
Suzanne Borys	Donna Lisi	Robin Vlamis
Serena Collado	Erika Lobe	
Kandice Cooper	Ellen Maughan	<u>HNJ Coordinating Team</u>
Ashley Costello	Darby McDermott	Maria Baron
Amy Faus	Natasha Moore	Camilla Comer-Carruthers
Melissa Hernandez	Osa Osemwegie	Loretta Kelly
Elizabeth Hill	Sreelekha Prakash	

MEETING

Camilla welcomed former and newly recruited Action Team (ACT) members to the meeting. In the interest of time, ACT members were asked to introduce themselves by putting their name and organization in the chat.

Camilla explained that the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) is the accrediting body for public health departments in the United States. PHAB promotes the use of evidence and forward-thinking approaches to strengthen public health infrastructure, improve performance, and support health departments and their partners in delivering high-quality programs and services. Camilla further noted that local, state, and Tribal health departments are required to conduct internally focused planning efforts and collaborative, partner-driven processes.

To strengthen agency operations Internally, DOH routinely undertakes the following actions:

1. Conducts an Organizational Assessment to evaluate DOH's strengths and opportunities for improvement, enhance program effectiveness, and strategically plan improvements to better meet community health needs and outcomes.
2. Develops, implements, and monitors progress of a Strategic Plan with Department-wide staff participation, revising the Plan as needed to respond to emerging priorities and improve performance.
3. Uses the findings of the above processes to identify quality improvement projects, allocate resources strategically, and guide organizational priorities.

Externally, the partner-led process is known as the Healthy New Jersey (HNJ) initiative and serves as the state's health promotion and disease prevention agenda. As part of the external process, DOH works with community partners and stakeholders to:

1. Conduct a community health assessment (State Health Assessment) to identify and describe factors that affect the health of New Jerseyans and opportunities to leverage available resources to address those factors.
2. Collaborate with the community to collect, analyze, and use data from multiple sources to identify and prioritize the health needs and assets.
3. Apply findings to shape the development of the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP), a plan of action that describes how the DOH and community partners will work together to improve community health; and
4. Leverage community partnerships to implement, monitor, and revise the SHIP to improve community and health conditions, improve health outcomes, and eliminate health disparities.

The previous State Health Assessment (SHA) was published in 2018 and was used in the development of the 2020 State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). In the HNJ2020 cycle, there were 20 topic areas with 136 objectives ---too many objectives to address effectively. Ultimately, the 2020 SHIP contained 6 chapters focused on the highest priority areas. At the end of the decade, there were 4 topic areas for which fewer than half of the objectives improved: Immunization, Nutrition and Physical Activity (rebranded as Healthy Eating and Active Living), Public Health Infrastructure, and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). As part of the 2020 SHIP, the Community Health Improvement Plans from the 21 counties in NJ were reviewed and assessed for alignment with the State priorities. Most of the 2020 SHIP priority areas remain the state's core public health priorities and will be included in the 2026 SHIP, except for strategies to address public health infrastructure, which are included in the 2025-2030 DOH Strategic Plan.

Camilla presented a timeline of HNJ2030 activities starting in 2019 to the present day. She explained that DOH worked with the HNJ Advisory Council during that time to establish the HNJ2030 framework, priority areas (Access to Quality Care, Healthy Communities, Health Families, and Healthy Living) and the cross-cutting issues (Equity, Policy and Resilience) to be addressed in the SHIP. She then presented the objectives for each priority area. ACT members included questions/comments in the chat, and they will be reviewed and discussed at the November meetings.

There was a review of the calendar of meetings for the remainder of 2025 and all of 2026. Each Action Team will meet in November and December to plan and finalize the action plans for implementation starting in 2026. The Action Teams will meet quarterly in 2026.

The meeting was called to a close at 2:14pm.