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New York State Association for Rural Health

**Strategic Plan**

2021-2023

*Summary*

NYSARH plans to maintain continuity of current operations with strategic emphasis on collaboration with other associations and organizations. The focus areas of this

Strategic Plan are advocacy, capacity building, education and membership.

*Steering Committee Consultants*

Allison Coates Helen Stepowany

Helen Evans *HPR Consulting*

Claire Parde Sara Wall Bollinger

Jack Salo *SWB Consulting Services*

Mary Zelazny

*Board of Directors*

Ann Morse Abdella

Ann Battaglia

Barry Brogan

Allison Coates

Charlotte Crawford

Anthony D’Agostino

Scott Emery

Helen Evans

Richard Kazel

Nancy McGraw

Bryan O’Donovan

Gertrude O’Sullivan

Claire Parde

Michael Pease

Paul Pettit

Mandy Qualls

Victoria Reid

Carrie Roseamelia

Jack Salo

Mary Zelazny

*Process*

NYSARH’s current Strategic Plan expired at the end of

2020. The Board of Directors began planning for

this Strategic Plan in June. The Steering Committee

held five facilitated meetings and conducted a

stakeholder survey during June and July. They performed a self-assessment and identified

potential goals which were shared with the full

Board of Directors at a Retreat in August.

The Board refined these goals and referred them to

Committees for action plans. The Steering,

Membership, Education and Policy Committees

developed the remaining sections of the plan during

the fall. The final plan was adopted by the Board of

Directors on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2021.

*History*

NYSARH is 20 years old. It was decided to write a brief History to document the early growth of the Association. This is provided as an addendum to the Strategic Plan.

*Strategic Challenges and Priorities*

The goal of the strategic planning process is to increase NYSARH’s momentum toward being a strong and vibrant association. The Steering Committee found that the strategic plan developed in 2017 had moved the organization in the right direction and this plan is intended to continue this trajectory.

NYSARH used the Nonprofit Lifecycles™ self-assessment tool. It revealed that organizational capacity is limited by financial resources and that volunteer Board members provide more operational support that is ideal. For example, the Board President serves as *de facto* CEO and the Conference Co-Chairs essentially take on a part-time job for six months each year.

A theme of collaboration with other statewide associations emerged early in the process. Collaboration was described as a ‘means to the mission’. Working with partner organizations will offset some of NYSARH’s limited resources. These partner organizations are ‘stakeholders’ but not members.

A Stakeholder & Member Survey was distributed in June and results were discussed in July. A strategic priority for NYSARH is to provide routine communication with influential ‘stakeholders’ who are not members. It is also essential to communicate regularly with members.

NYSARH is a membership organization, but the Steering Committee struggled to define the ‘value proposition’ for new organizations, individuals and students to join. The Steering Committee decided to focus on a few benefits for members that NYSARH has the capacity to deliver effectively rather than a scattershot of great ideas with little follow-through. At the Board Retreat in August the two areas that were identified as priorities were Advocacy and Education.

Paradox:

* NYSARH needs to have valuable programs and services before it can grow membership
* NYSARH needs to grow membership in order to have the resources to provide valuable programs and services

NYSARH’s work is not the health of individuals, but rather the **systems that promote individual health.** These systems blend to form ecosystems, allowing synergies to happen. It is hard work to bridge across systems and silos; it requires personal relationships and trust. NYSARH needs to identify our ‘best partners’ and then work at developing strong relationships.

**Long Term Focus Areas**

*Member Diversity/Networking/Collaboration*:

Make a ‘bigger tent’; partner with other organizations/associations; broaden our appeal...

* Be explicit so people can ‘find themselves’
* Create a more inclusive tagline and use it regularly
* Create an ‘advisory board’ of other Associations for coordinated action
* Be intentional re: Stakeholder engagement
* As we move to a more mature Lifecycle Stage, we need different skills/connections/ talents among our members

*Policy/Advocacy*

Highly valued by Members...

* Coordinate with other groups to bring more ‘clout’ to Rural NY

*Education/Innovation/Exchange*

Education is a core service of NYSARH. There are opportunities to modernize our offerings and be more engaging with Members and other Stakeholders.

* Omni-directional exchange
* Community of practice
* Use technology
* Collect best practices nationally
* Curate relevant research
* Technical Assistance

*Focus Areas*

Collaboration

An overarching theme for this Strategic Plan is a focus on enhancing collaboration and

partnerships with other statewide and regional associations with overlapping missions.

* Other State Associations [CHCANYS, NYSPHA, NYSACHO, HANYS, Leading Age etc.]
* Broader Scope [New England RHA, national organizations, veterans]
* Other Constituencies [EMS, Public Safety, Food, Housing, Transportation, Economic Development, Education, American Federation of Teachers, NYSED, Association of Counties, USDA, Farm Net, Cornell, Environmental, Independent Living Centers, Long Term Care, NYSHFA-NYSCAL]

Advocacy

NYSARH will continue to prioritize advocacy with New York State through direct contact with legislators, letters and testimony. NYSARH members will participate in activities sponsored by the National Rural Health Association such as the Policy Institute. The plan includes NYSARH applying for a Fellow from the Upstate Institute to help with policy research.

**Advocacy Focus Areas for 2021**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| action step | details | responsible | measurement | timeframe | outcome | impact |
| Albany Advocacy | Annual Budget Outreach to Legislators  Zoom visits this year | * Policy Committee Legislative * Commission on Rural Resources * Coordination with other Associations | * # of NYS legislators met with * Positive legislative actions taken * Funding in budget for Rural Health * Scorecard on the issues we have identified | Fall-Winter | * Inform NYSARH members thru Brief from Partner Associations * Inform Key legislators thru visits with NYSARH members | * Coordinated Priorities with aligned organizations * Consistent messaging to Legislators from Rural Health advocates * Improved rural health outcomes |
| Policy Institute | NRHA event  Zoom visits this year | Policy Committee | * # of NYS legislators met with * Positive legislative actions taken * Funding in budget for Rural Health | Winter 2021 | Inform Key legislators and staff members thru visits with NYSARH members | * Coordinated Priorities with aligned organizations * Consistent messaging to Legislators from Rural Health advocates |
| Letters | Sign-On with aligned organizations | Policy Committee with Partner Associations | # of times NYSARH is included in a sign on campaign | Year-Round | Alignment with Partner Associations | Increase chances of preferred legislation & regulations |
| Testimony | * NYS Budget * Other Opportunities | Policy Committee with Partner Associations | # of times NYSARH submits Testimony | Year-Round | Alignment with Member Priorities | Increase chances of preferred legislation & regulations |
| Rural Health Council | Coordinate with Commission on Rural Resources | Policy Committee with Partner Associations | * # legislators nominated * Governor to appoint | 2021 | Understand issues | Rural Representation |
| Enhance Alliances | Solidify relationships with current partners | Policy Committee & Sara | Identify areas of shared policy priorities | 2021 | Align messaging | Increase chances of preferred legislation & regulations |
| Apply for Intern | Upstate Institute of Colgate University | Barry & Sara | Application submitted in compliance with requirements | Winter 2021 | Deep dive into a Rural Health research topic  [Summer 2021] | * White Paper * Publicity re: findings |

**Advocacy Focus Areas for 2022-2023**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| action step | details | responsible | measurement | timeframe | outcome | impact |
| Expand Alliances | Choose one new association each year to develop relationship | Policy Committee & Sara | * Identify areas of shared policy priorities | 2022 & 2023 | * Align messaging | * Increase chances of preferred legislation & regulations |
| Albany Advocacy | Annual Budget Outreach to Legislators | Policy Committee with support from the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources | * # of NYS legislators met with * Positive legislative actions taken * Funding in budget for Rural Health | Fall-Winter | * Inform NYSARH members thru Brief from Partner Associations * Inform Key legislators thru visits with NYSARH members | * Coordinated Priorities with aligned organizations * Consistent messaging to Legislators from Rural Health advocates |
| Policy Institute | NRHA event | Policy Committee | * # of NYS legislators met with * Positive legislative actions taken * Funding in budget for Rural Health | Winter 2022 | * Inform Key legislators and staff members thru visits with NYSARH members | * Coordinated Priorities with aligned organizations * Consistent messaging to Legislators from Rural Health advocates |
| Letters | Sign-On | Policy Committee with Partner Associations | * # of times NYSARH is included in a sign on campaign | Year-Round | * Alignment with Partner Associations | * Increase chances of preferred legislation & regulations |
| Testimony | * NYS Budget * Other Opportunities | Policy Committee with Partner Associations | * # of times NYSARH submits Testimony | Year-Round | * Alignment with Member Priorities | * Increase chances of preferred legislation & regulations |
| Apply for Intern | Upstate Institute of Colgate University | Barry & Sara | * Application submitted in compliance with requirements | Winter 2022 | Deep dive into a Rural Health research topic   * [Summer 2022] | * White Paper * Publicity re: findings |

Capacity Building

During the planning process it became clear that NYSARH’s business model does not generate the

desired level of revenue. NYSARH will seek philanthropic support and an AmeriCorps Member to

enhance available resources. In the future NYSARH plans to apply for federal grants in conjunction with member organizations.

**Capacity Building Focus Areas for 2021**

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| action step | | details | responsible | measurement | | timeframe | | outcome | impact | |
| Secure funding | | Craft a ‘value proposition’ to present to foundations | Steering Committee | * Foundation interest * Resources secured | | Fall-Winter | | Resources to build capacity | Increase organizational visibility & impact | |
| Fund Development Strategy | | Analyze past, current & potential revenue sources | Executive Committee, Ashleigh  & Sara | SWOT analysis for funding | | Winter-Spring | | Fund Development plan | Roadmap for going forward | |
| Apply for AmeriCorps Member | | VISTA Member slot available from RHNSCNY | Ashleigh & Sara | * Application submitted in compliance with requirements * NYSARH selected for Member | | Fall - Winter | | Full-time person to work on communication, fund development & membership | Enhanced member engagement | |
| Apply for Fellow | Upstate Institute of Colgate University | | Barry & Sara | | * Application submitted in compliance with requirements * NYSARH selected by Fellow | | Winter 2021 | Deep dive into a Rural Health research topic  [Summer 2021] | | * White Paper * Publicity re: findings |

**Capacity Building Focus Areas for 2022-2023**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| action step | details | | responsible | measurement | | timeframe | | outcome | | | impact | |
| Build Relationships with Universities | Connect with Rural Health programs: R-Med, MPH, Rural Institute | | TBD | * Interns * Student Members * Research | | Winter - Spring 2022 for Intern Fall 2022 & 2023 | | * Regularly place Interns * Build student membership * Enhance research | | | Increase organizational visibility & impact | |
| HRSA Rural funding in partnership with others  hhs-rural-action-plan.pdf | Seek a role for NYSARH with others to participate in federal grants | | TBD | TBD | | TBD | | TBD | | | Increase organizational visibility & impact | |
| Fund Development Strategy | Fund Development plan | Executive Committee, Ashleigh & Sara | | | * Proposals submitted * Funds secured | | Fall 2021-Winter 2022 | | Stronger financial capacity | | Increase organizational visibility & impact | |
| Apply for AmeriCorps Member | If a VISTA Member slot is available from RHNSCNY | Ashleigh & Sara | | | * Application submitted in compliance with requirements * NYSARH selected for Member | | Fall 2021- Winter 2022 | | | Full-time person to work on communication, fund development & membership | | Enhanced member engagement |
| Apply for Fellow | Upstate Institute of Colgate University | Molly & Sara | | | * Application submitted in compliance with requirements * NYSARH selected by Fellow | | Winter 2022 | | | Deep dive into a Rural Health research topic   * [Summer 2022] | | * White Paper * Publicity re: findings |

Education

Perhaps the greatest change included in this plan is to move away from producing the annual Rural Health Conference. NYSARH will join the Public Health Partnership conference instead. NYSARH will continue the current webinar series and add additional educational opportunities as resources permit. NYSARH will celebrate National Rural Health Day each November with presentation of the annual Rural Health Awards.

**Education Focus Areas for 2021**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| action step | details | responsible | measurement | timeframe | outcome | impact |
| Enhance Webinar Series | * Marketing * Collaboration * CEU/CMEs | Webinar Sub- Committee; joint with NERHA | * Attendance * Feedback | Fall-Winter | Engage regular participants | Enhance awareness of NYSARH |
| NYSARH part of 2021 Public Health Partnership conference | * Planning * Marketing * Sponsorships * CEU/CMEs * Posters * Exhibitors | Partnership Sub- Committee | * Registrations * Feedback * Revenue * Student participation | Fall-Winter | Positive learning experience | Give members an experience they value |
| National Keynote Speaker at the Annual Meeting | * Planning * Marketing * Sponsorships | Annual Meeting Sub-Committee | * Attendance * Press Coverage | Spring-Summer | Positive learning experience | Give members an experience they value |
| National Rural Health Day | * Planning * Marketing * Sponsorships | Awards Sub-Committee | * Attendance * Press Coverage | Summer – Fall | Recognize best practices | Enhance awareness of NYSARH |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Education Focus Areas for 2022-2023**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| action step | details | responsible | measurement | timeframe | outcome | impact |
| Learning Community | Message board/ blog/ Facebook group/Slack/ communication tool  Clustered by areas of interest:   * Chronic disease management * Food security * Transportation * Farm workers | Education Committee | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD |
| Curated content on website | Research on Rural; best practices; etc. | Education Committee | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Membership

NYSARH will initially focus on member management and communication. This plan articulates a goal for NYSARH to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion. In the future NYSARH will focus more on networking and recruitment.

**Membership Focus Areas for 2021**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| action step | details | responsible | measurement | timeframe | outcome | impact |
| Management | Align information systems to provide accurate membership info in real-time | HWNY | Consistency | Winter 2021 | Accurate information | Greater confidence in NYSARH |
| Member Directory | Populate the Member Directory in the Member Portal  [after password] | HWNY | Complete &  Maintain | Winter | Allow member-to- member communication | Easier networking among members |
| Communication | Articulate Value Proposition | Communication Sub-Committee | Board Approval | Winter | Strategic direction for Membership Committee | Clear messages to Members |
|  | Increase member engagement with communication channels   * Newsletter * Facebook * Website   Others? | Communication Sub-Committee | Analytics | Spring-Summer | Information received and understood by members | Greater engagement |
|  | Apply for AmeriCorps Member VISTA Member slot available from RHNSCNY | Ashleigh & Sara | * Application submitted in compliance with requirements * NYSARH selected for Member | Fall - Winter | Full-time person to work on communication, fund development & membership | Enhanced member engagement |
| Networking | Interest groups   * Regional   Topical | Membership Committee | Enrollment | Spring-Summer  2021 | * Members self-assemble into Interest Groups * Interest Group members use Slack channels | Greater sense of belonging among members |
|  | Identify Member special interests | Interest group members | Interests shared with Membership  Committee | Summer - Fall  2021 | Some Topical areas gain traction among members | NYSARH prioritizes these issues for future work |
| Increase Diversity | Set a goal to increase diversity within NYSARH | Board of Directors | Set DEI goals | Winter 2021 | Form Diversity Equity & Inclusion Sub-Committee | Greater confidence in NYSARH |
|  | Identify minority/ underrepresented populations in rural NYS | DEI Committee | US Census | Summer 2021 | Target populations, locations & potential partner organizations | Actionable plans |

**Focus Areas for 2022-2023**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| action step | details | responsible | measurement | timeframe | outcome | impact |
| Management | Maintain Member Database | HWNY | Consistency | On-going | Accurate information | Will facilitate networking & collaboration |
| Communication | Apply for AmeriCorps Member VISTA Member slot available from RHNSCNY | Molly & Sara | * Application submitted in compliance with requirement * NYSARH selected for Member | Fall - Winter | Full-time person to work on communication, fund development & membership | Enhanced member engagement |
| Networking | Interviews/Webinars with Key Decision Makers related to the Topic areas identified | Logistics: HWNY | * Agreement of Key Decision Makers to participate * # of participants at the sessions | Spring - Summer  2022 | NYSARH provides members-only access to Key Decision Makers | Members get answers to their questions/  advance/  inside information |
| 4. Diversity | 4.3 Outreach to minority/ underrepresented communities | DEI Sub-Committee | * More diversity of NYSARH members * More diversity of NYSARH board members | 2023 | NYSARH more representative of ALL rural voices | More effective advocacy |
| Recruitment | Target ‘lapsed’ and ‘missing’ organizations | Membership Committee | # of returned/ new members | Fall 2021-Winter 2022 | Engage organizations similar to existing members | Build NYSARH  membership |
|  | Develop & implement a Membership recruitment campaign | Membership Committee | # of new members | Fall 2022-Winter 2023 | Engage organizations/ individuals & students that expand the membership | Diversify NYSARH membership |