

2023-2025 Strategic Plan

The Health Policy Institute of Ohio's Board of Directors last approved a strategic plan in April 2020, at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the strategic planning process, the decision was made to adopt a strategic plan that would cover six years, with the possibility of revisiting the plan at the mid-point of this period to determine if there was a need to update any aspects of the plan.

Given the impacts of the pandemic, a shifting policy environment and a deep commitment to health, equity and sustainable healthcare spending, the Board decided in 2021 to adopt a new mission statement and to refresh the strategic plan.

HPIO was created in 2003 by a collaborative of philanthropic leaders. These funders recognized the need for a statewide organization focused on independent, non-partisan health policy analysis. HPIO will celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2023, making this an ideal time to look back at the organization's successes and look forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Mission, vision and roles

HPIO is a nonprofit, independent and nonpartisan organization. Its new mission, adopted by our Board of Directors in 2021, is to advance evidence-informed policies that improve health, achieve equity, and lead to sustainable healthcare spending. HPIO's vision is that Ohio is a model of health, well-being and economic vitality.

HPIO uses its expertise on a comprehensive range of health policy issues to perform three key roles:

- Translate complex data into actionable policy insights
- Connect diverse perspectives to inform policy decisions
- Offer expertise to navigate the changing policy environment

Long-range outcomes, goal and vision

Policies and strategies implemented in both the public and private sectors contribute to whether every Ohioan reaches their full health potential. HPIO is one of the many organizations across our state that diligently pursues this goal.

HPIO's long-range outcomes, shown in figure 1, are that:

- Public policymakers at the federal, state and local levels implement evidence-informed policies and strategies
- Other stakeholders, including healthcare providers, health insurers, public health organizations and philanthropy, implement evidence-informed policies and strategies

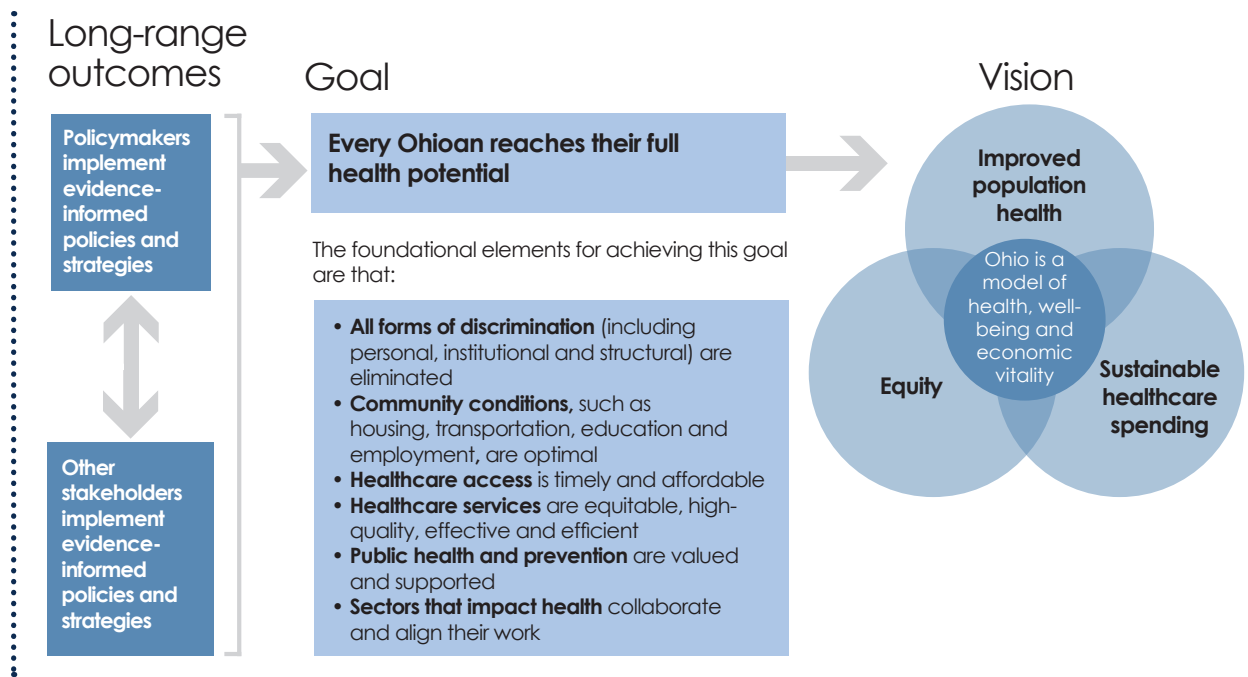
There are many factors outside of HPIO that affect Ohio's progress toward the long-range impacts, including the political, social and cultural climate and economic trends.

In addition, public-private partnerships and coordinated efforts strengthen the likelihood that policies and strategies will lay the foundation for every Ohioan being able to reach their full health potential. The six foundational elements for achieving this goal are that:

- All forms of discrimination (including personal, institutional and structural) are eliminated
- Community conditions, such as housing, transportation, education and employment, are optimal
- Healthcare access is timely and affordable
- Healthcare services are equitable, high quality, effective and efficient
- Public health and prevention are valued and supported
- Sectors that impact health collaborate and align their work

There are many factors outside of HPIO that affect Ohio's progress toward these long-range outcomes and the goal of all Ohioans being able to reach their full health potential, including the political, social and cultural climate and economic trends.

Figure 1. HPIO's long-range outcomes, goal and vision



Values

HPIO embraces these values:

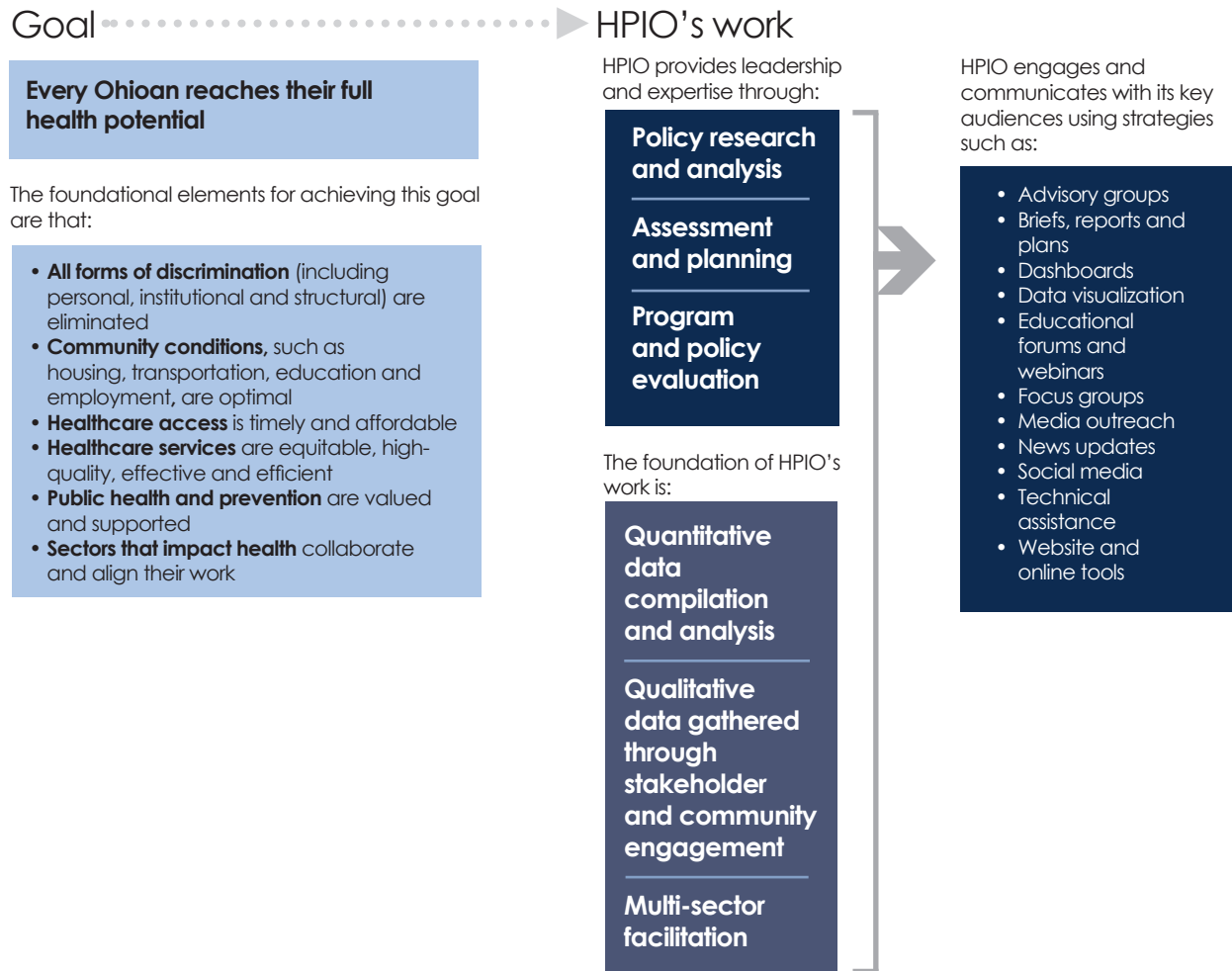
- **Health:** We are champions for physical, mental and social health, and recognize that the conditions of our communities, as well as our access to clinical care and the decisions we make, all contribute to our health.
- **Equity:** We believe that every Ohioan should have the opportunity to reach their full potential. We know that systems, policies and beliefs unfairly favor some Ohioans over others and create obstacles to good health.
- **Objectivity:** We elevate pro-health policies and programs that are informed by data and research evidence, and we are independent of any particular sector or political party.
- **Prevention:** We value approaches that get to the root causes of poor health and disparities and reduce unnecessary and wasteful healthcare spending.
- **Diversity and inclusion:** We pursue and integrate diversity across perspectives, lived experiences and identities to strengthen the effectiveness of our organization and the work that we produce.

Work

There are many organizations, stakeholders and sectors that also embrace the vision that Ohio is a model of health, well-being and economic vitality. However, HPIO is Ohio's only nonpartisan organization dedicated solely to informing state health policy decisions. HPIO's independence from any particular sector, strong financial support from philanthropy and its knowledgeable staff enables the organization to be objective, responsive and driven by data and evidence.

HPIO's overarching goal of ensuring that every Ohioan reaches their full health potential, as well as the six foundational elements of this goal, influences the types of work in which we engage and the tactics we use (Figure 2). For many years HPIO's work has centered on all of the factors that influence health, including racism and discrimination, community conditions, healthcare access and services, public health and prevention and collaboration among sectors. This strategic plan continues this evidence-informed approach.

Figure 2. The relationship between HPIO's goal and work



HPIO's focus areas continually evolve and are influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include capacity, funding and expertise. External factors include relevance, political/policy environment and data.

HPIO provides leadership and expertise through:

- **Policy research and analysis:** HPIO translates complex data and evidence into actionable policy insights. We dig deep into trends and consider the policymaking landscape to inform comprehensive analysis, focusing attention on key health needs through data snapshots and visualizations.
- **Assessment and planning:** HPIO assesses the strengths and needs of our state and communities and creates actionable plans. We excel at tapping into data from public sources and insights gathered through advisory committees, focus groups, listening sessions and surveys.

- **Program and policy evaluation:** HPIO conducts both process and outcome evaluations to articulate and measure progress toward program and policy goals. HPIO also facilitates improvement processes and creates tools that enable other organizations to efficiently assess outcomes.

The foundation of HPIO's work is:

- Quantitative data compilation and analysis using publicly available data sources
- Qualitative data gathered through stakeholder and community engagement
- Multi-sector facilitation

Engagement and communication

HPIO defines public policymakers as its primary audience. This includes:

- State legislators and legislative staff
- The governor, the staff of the governor and state agency leadership and staff
- Local governments, including health, aging and alcohol, drug and mental health departments and agencies
- Health-related boards and commissions

HPIO also identifies many other stakeholder groups as being secondary audiences, including:

- Healthcare providers (hospitals, primary care, mental health and addiction, oral health, etc.)
- Health plans/private insurers
- Nonprofit/non-governmental organizations
- General public, grassroots organizations and advocates
- Public health organizations
- Stakeholders in other sectors beyond health that have an impact on community conditions
- Researchers and academic institutions
- Health foundations and other philanthropic entities
- Business leaders
- Media

Policymaker engagement: HPIO strategically builds relationships with state policymakers and staff who serve in both the executive and legislative branches of Ohio government.

- **Executive branch.** HPIO meets with the governor's office staff, agency directors and staff in state agencies. HPIO participates in groups convened by leaders in the executive branch and leverages their expertise in advising HPIO's work. HPIO also seeks contractual work with state agencies.
- **Legislative branch.** HPIO meets with key members of the Ohio General Assembly, particularly those who serve on health-related committees and who are in leadership positions in the legislature. HPIO tracks the activities of the General Assembly and testifies as an interested party on topics about which HPIO has developed expertise. HPIO delivers electronic and hard copies of HPIO briefs and reports to all members of the General Assembly. HPIO provides technical assistance to state policymakers on health policy issues as requested and as capacity allows.
- **Local governments.** HPIO fosters relationships with local policymakers, including local public

health departments, alcohol, drug and mental health boards, area agencies on aging and county commissioners. HPIO seeks contractual work with local government entities focused on health improvement.

Stakeholder engagement: Stakeholder groups both inform and use HPIO's work. HPIO builds relationships with these stakeholders so that they use the information produced or disseminated by HPIO to influence the policymaking process and to guide their own work. This includes providing presentations, holding individual meetings, convening advisory groups and attending meetings convened by other groups, prioritizing engagement that could result in or influence policy change.

Community voice: HPIO seeks the perspectives and knowledge of everyday Ohioans, especially those who are most impacted by negative health outcomes, health disparities and inequities and unsustainable healthcare spending. HPIO engages Ohioans with these lived experiences through a variety of strategies including community listening sessions, focus groups and inclusion on advisory groups. HPIO ensures that people with lived experiences are compensated for their contributions and expertise.

HPIO disseminates products to policymakers and other stakeholders through face-to-face meetings, social media, hard-copy distribution and email outreach. The HPIO database includes over 5,000 stakeholders representing a wide variety of sectors.

HPIO uses engagement and communication strategies such as:

- Advisory groups
- Briefs, reports and plans
- Dashboards
- Data visualization
- Educational forums and webinars
- Focus groups
- Media outreach
- News updates
- Social media
- Technical assistance
- Website and online tools

HPIO developed a comprehensive Communications Plan in 2021 and creates a complementary annual communications plan to highlight a select set of focus areas for the year. HPIO also created a communications manual

in 2022, a tool for staff that combines guidance on style, writing and framing, graphic design and branding. In 2023, HPIO has also begun undertaking a complete overhaul of its website with the goal of improving ease of access to HPIO resources for our audiences.

- Other stakeholders use HPIO's work to influence the policymaking process and guide their own work

HPIO's **mid-range outcome** is that policymakers use HPIO's work when creating health policy.

This outcome contributes to the long-range outcome of public policymakers at the federal, state and local levels implementing evidence-informed policies and strategies.

HPIO acknowledges that when other stakeholders use HPIO's work to guide their own work, the result may be that they also implement evidence-informed policies and strategies. To achieve the goal and vision of this strategic plan, it is important that policymakers and other stakeholders work together to implement policies, programs and services that improve health, achieve equity and lead to sustainable healthcare spending.

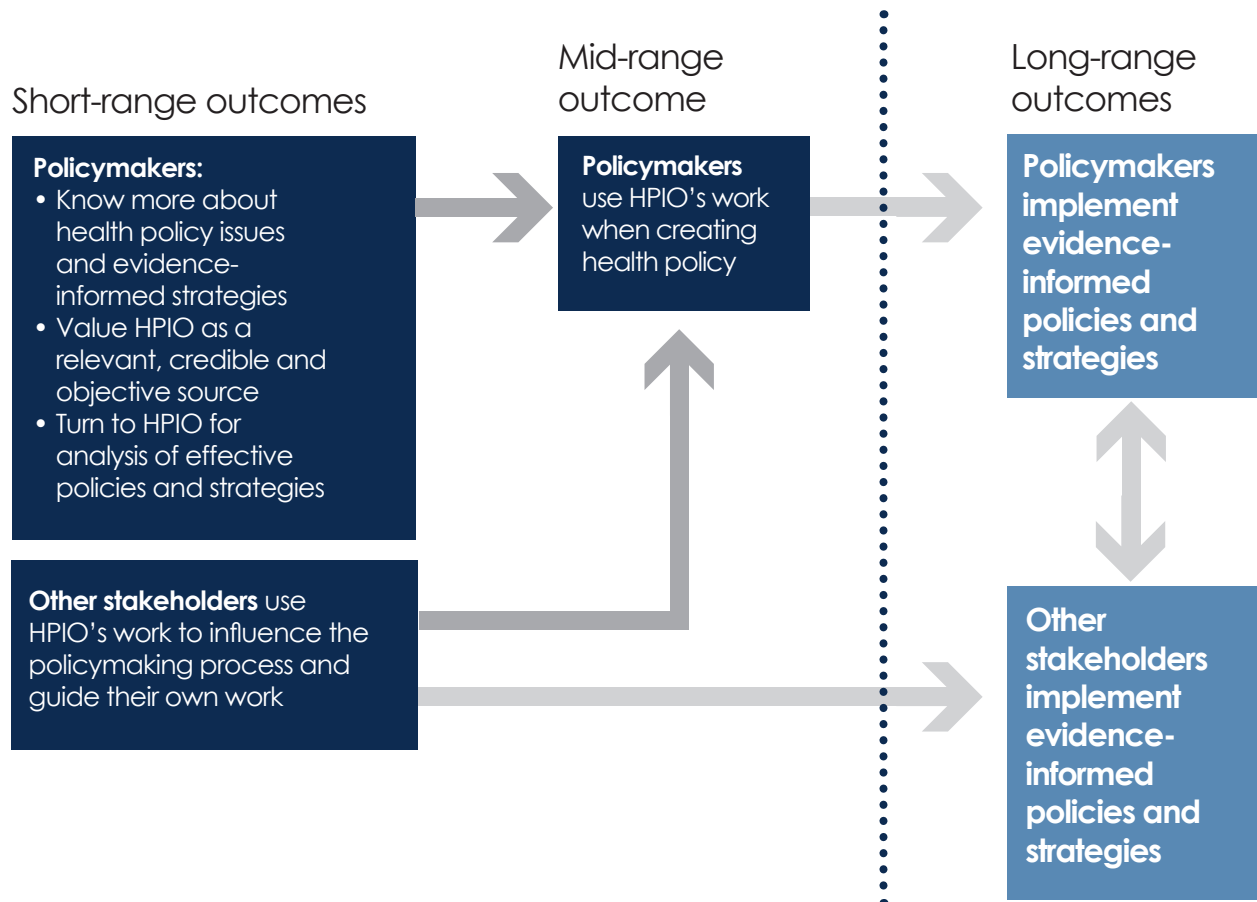
Short- and mid-range outcomes

HPIO intends to achieve four short-range outcomes and one mid-range outcome (Figure 3).

HPIO's **short-range outcomes** are that:

- Policymakers:
 - Know more about health policy issues and evidence-informed strategies
 - Value HPIO as a relevant, credible and objective source of information
 - Turn to HPIO for analysis of effective policies and strategies

Figure 3. Relationship between short- and mid-range outcomes and long-range policy outcomes



Management

Operational management

HPIO is committed to deliberate implementation of this strategic plan. HPIO creates annual operations plans for the work to be produced, including reports, policy briefs, fact sheets, data visualizations and educational events. Operations plans are flexible documents that clearly define the process of producing and communicating the work of the organization. Through operations plans, HPIO ensures that work aligns with HPIO's vision, mission and goals, that staff time and expertise is well distributed and that products are released and communicated in a timely and effective way.

Annual operations plans include:

- Detailed workplans for each project, including start date, completion date, staffing and deadlines for each task
- A Gantt chart of all work to be completed in the year, including deadlines for all major deliverables associated with each project
- Staffing assignments across all projects, including which staff members are serving as project leads, project team members and project assistants
- An editorial calendar, which notes when HPIO products will be released via the Institute's weekly newsletter, Health Policy News, and our stakeholder listserv
- A list of potential educational events, topics and estimated timing

Operations plans are informed by HPIO's programmatic evaluation work, including continuous quality improvement plans and the communications plan.

Financial management

HPIO is a responsible steward of the resources granted by funders and revenue generated by consulting work and fees. HPIO completes the tasks outlined in the organization's internal financial control policy. This policy includes processes for managing cash receipts, cash disbursements, payroll and review of monthly financial statements by the contract Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and President. HPIO engages an independent accounting firm annually to audit the organization's financial statements and prepare its IRS Form 990.

HPIO employs an office manager, with job responsibilities that include bookkeeping, assisting

with human resources, resource development, audit/taxes and governance. The office manager works closely with a contract CFO. The CFO works on-site monthly to verify bank reconciliations and payroll and reviews the quarterly financial reports prepared by the office manager. The CFO also reviews compliance with internal financial controls and assists with the annual audit preparation.

Financial statements are presented to both the Audit and Finance Committee of HPIO's Board and the entire Board of Directors quarterly. The audited financial statements are presented to, and approved by, the Board of Directors. The IRS Form 990 is reviewed by the Board of Directors prior to submission to the IRS.

HPIO presents a draft operating budget to the Audit and Finance Committee in September or October of each year. The Board reviews and approves this budget in October for the upcoming fiscal year (January-December).

Resource management

HPIO strategically ensures financial stability and growth by:

- Retaining the support of current core funders
- Engaging additional core funders and forum sponsors
- Competing for contracted projects

Eight core funders (HealthPath Foundation of Ohio [formerly known as Anthem Foundation of Ohio], Interact for Health [formerly known as The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati], Mt. Sinai Health Foundation, George Gund Foundation, St. Luke's Foundation, Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton, Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland and the Cleveland Foundation) partnered to create HPIO in 2003. Twenty years later, many of these foundations are among the sixteen foundations and organizations that continue to invest in HPIO's work by providing general operating support.

HPIO's high-quality work has attracted many additional **funding partners**. In 2012, HPIO began to seek sponsors for educational forums, creating a successful forum series sponsorship program in 2014. In addition to providing financial support for HPIO's educational events, forum sponsorships provide an opportunity for HPIO to develop relationships with partners and offer the potential to convert forum sponsors into core funders over time.

HPIO continues to seek out new core funders, particularly for project-specific work, and forum series sponsors. HPIO maintains strong relationships with funders and sponsors and continually communicates the impact of the organization's work through a number of means, including **HPIO Impact** and one-on-one meetings. HPIO establishes relationships and explores prospects as key resource development strategies.

HPIO also engages in contracted projects with state agencies, local government entities and private sector partners. HPIO explores ideas for projects with potential clients and bids on requests for proposals that align with HPIO's mission and vision.

Evaluation

HPIO values evaluation because it provides an opportunity for the organization's staff and Board of Directors to reflect on what's working and what needs to be improved. The Board and staff of HPIO embrace a culture of continuous improvement and frequently identify and implement strategies to strengthen processes and increase effectiveness. In addition, evaluation is a critical way for HPIO to demonstrate accountability to funders.

HPIO evaluates both programmatic and organizational performance. Programmatic evaluation focuses on the tactics, outcomes and impact of HPIO's work. Organizational evaluation focuses on the effectiveness of staff and the Board of Directors in contributing to the mission of HPIO.

Programmatic evaluation

HPIO conducts internal evaluation activities to assess progress toward outcomes specified in the strategic plan. Evaluation results are used to:

- Guide internal continuous quality improvement (CQI): Quarterly staff reviews and CQI plans
- Update the Board of Directors on performance strengths and challenges: Annual performance dashboard
- Demonstrate accountability to funders: Reporting to funders on grant reports and proposals

The Evaluation Committee reviews the annual performance dashboard and recommends strategies for improvement. At the beginning of each calendar year, the staff set quarterly and annual targets for 40+ metrics regarding performance on work products (outputs), short-range outcomes and mid-range outcomes.

HPIO uses the following evaluation methods to collect performance data:

- Stakeholder surveys: Online survey conducted in January each year and mid-year mini-survey
- Forum evaluation surveys: Surveys administered to forum participants
- Output and outcome tracking: Staff-documented data on HPIO activities, products, outcomes and impact

HPIO periodically engages an external firm to conduct key informant interviews with stakeholders.

Board evaluation and development

The HPIO Board of Directors recognizes that a highly effective board performs the required legal duties (duty of care, duty of loyalty, duty of compliance and duty to maintain accounts) and identifies additional measures of success to optimize governance of the organization. The organization, guided by the Governance Committee, occasionally assesses current Board performance and makes recommendations. The Board also engages in education and learning sessions facilitated by both external and internal experts. The Board is encouraged to attend HPIO's educational forums both to show support for the organization and to learn about relevant and timely topics.

Staff evaluation and development

While feedback is provided throughout the year, formal evaluation of staff job performance occurs at least annually during the first quarter of the calendar year. Objectives are developed by both the employee and the supervisor and are in alignment with the strategic plan. The purpose of staff evaluation is to guide an employee's progress, to discuss ways in which performance can be improved and, when appropriate, to explore potential for advancement. The HPIO President is evaluated by the Board of Directors in a similar manner. More information on performance evaluations is included in HPIO's Employee Handbook.

HPIO staff are offered opportunities to build knowledge through professional development. HPIO occasionally engages external consultants to build skills in key areas. The HPIO management team meets regularly to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the organization.



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