Mission
Promote and protect the health and safety of Idahoans

Vision
Provide leadership for a sustainable, integrated health and human services system

Director’s message
Our duty to the Idahoans we serve is to offer our best work and our uncompromising compassion. To honor our responsibilities and our mission, the Department of Health and Welfare (DHW) has spent the past year focusing on becoming a customer-centric organization devoted to improving our customers’ journeys every step of the way.

Above all, we have held ourselves accountable to the goals in our strategic plan:
• Ensure affordable, available healthcare that works.
• Protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
• Help Idahoans become as healthy and self-sufficient as possible.
• Strengthen the public’s trust and confidence in the Department of Health and Welfare.

This annual report is the story behind our strategic plan. It emphasizes the details of our work, and highlights what drives us every day – a passion for our mission and dedication to the Idahoans we serve.

Director Dave Jeppesen
We will ensure Idahoans have affordable, available healthcare that works.
It’s easy to fall in love with Idaho’s diverse landscape and areas of remote wilderness. But when rural Idaho residents need access to healthcare services, their lives can be impacted by additional hardship if they live in an area where there is a shortage of services.

To improve access to healthcare in rural and underserved areas of Idaho, we are collecting data that identifies the areas where there are not enough healthcare professionals to provide quality services. We are using this data to administer grants where they can make the most difference and promote partnerships to make sure every Idahoan has access to services.

Our efforts include programs that aim to attract more physicians to rural Idaho. The programs – the Rural Physician Incentive Program and the State Loan Repayment Program – provide medical education loan repayment awards for physicians who qualify.

When Idahoans access healthcare services, providers will consider the overall picture of their unique health needs and circumstances. To achieve this, we are expanding our “whole-person” model of care - the patient-centered medical home. In this model, a primary care provider or a healthcare team works with the patient to provide comprehensive, continuous medical care focused on keeping the patient healthy or improving their health.

Our new Healthy Connections Value Care contracts will bring 20% of the Medicaid population into a more comprehensive and sustainable value-based approach.

Provide affordable, accessible healthcare

Idahoans should feel confident that healthcare services in Idaho are affordable and accessible. It is our responsibility to hold healthcare providers accountable for providing quality healthcare services while reducing the cost of healthcare. To achieve this, we are rolling out a new payment structure called Healthy Connections Value Care. The new program begins July 1, 2020, with several contracts already in place with both large hospital systems and primary care providers. These providers are already working to reduce healthcare costs and improve health outcomes in the Medicaid program.

Improve access to primary care in rural areas

Today, more Idahoans have access to healthcare services through Medicaid expansion. We have successfully implemented Medicaid expansion for eligible adults who earn up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level.

Idahoans enrolled in Medicaid expansion as of Thursday, Feb. 20, 2020

$1.5 million
Annual funding to support loan repayment

72
Number of loan repayment awards

$21,000
Average amount of loan repayment awards

$194,900
Average medical education debt of physicians receiving loan repayment

Since 2016, the number of patients being served in a patient-centered medical home environment increased from 24% to 64%.

Our new Healthy Connections Value Care contracts will bring 20% of the Medicaid population into a more comprehensive and sustainable value-based approach.

Provide a “whole-person” model of healthcare

When Idahoans access healthcare services, providers will consider the overall picture of their unique health needs and circumstances. To achieve this, we are expanding our “whole-person” model of care - the patient-centered medical home. In this model, a primary care provider or a healthcare team works with the patient to provide comprehensive, continuous medical care focused on keeping the patient healthy or improving their health.
We will protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
We believe that children who have experienced trauma deserve permanency in their living situations. This will help them heal, develop, and thrive, whether that is in their own homes with their biological parents or with an adoptive family if they can’t safely return to their homes. We are committed to placing children who have experienced neglect or abuse in safe and permanent homes as quickly as possible.

Support Idahoans with severe disabilities within a community setting

With the right treatment and services, many Idahoans who have severe, complex, and persistent behaviors caused by developmental and intellectual disabilities can successfully transition back into their communities. With our new treatment model, these Idahoans, who are stabilized at the Southwest Idaho Treatment Center (SWITC) in Nampa, will more quickly transition safely from in-patient care to a community setting, where they can receive long-term services.

The new treatment model addresses challenges faced by staff as they provide services to help these Idahoans successfully live in the least restrictive environment possible. These services include separate stabilization and step-down units to enable SWITC residents to progress toward living in the community at their own pace, with minimal disruption from clients with less stable behaviors.

Transform the child welfare system

Children in neglectful or abusive situations are now better supported by caseworkers who can focus their efforts on creating better outcomes. Our new business processes have enabled us to improve the efficiency of safety assessments and the processes for permanent placements. We also redesigned and improved foster care licensing processes and training support, and we will be implementing those processes in SFY 2020. Our new, innovative child welfare case management system will allow caseworkers to focus more of their time on the children, and less time struggling with an outdated system. The system uses new technology to standardize and automate processes in a secure, mobile-friendly way.

Our new business processes have:

- Reduced the time to safety decision and documentation from an average of 66 days in the first six months of SFY 2019 to 22 days in the last six months of SFY 2019.
- Reduced the number of unresolved open safety assessments from 2,700 open assessments to 600 open assessments.
We will help Idahoans become as healthy and self-sufficient as possible.
Connect Idahoans with resources to make healthy food choices

We are committed to building strong families who have access to healthy food, nutrition, and education. In addition to providing financial assistance to buy groceries, SNAP connects customers to nutrition courses and programs that are provided by our partner organizations throughout Idaho. Through SNAP, we bring together resources to help Idahoans thrive as they live a nutritious and healthy lifestyle.

Save the lives of Idahoans in crisis

We help Idahoans stay safe and manage suicidal crises by working collaboratively with statewide partners to provide suicide prevention resources and services for individuals in distress, as well as for their family and friends. The Suicide Prevention Program coordinates efforts throughout Idaho to increase suicide awareness, as well as suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

Help Idahoans find jobs

We help Idahoans who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to support themselves and their families by connecting them with the resources they need to find a meaningful job. We are growing the Employment and Training Program to better support and educate Idahoans and help more individuals and families in Idaho become successful in what they do. We believe dependable employment and a livable wage are critical to their success on the path to self-reliance.

Help Idahoans be tobacco free

We offer free QuitLine and web-based cessation services to help individuals stop using tobacco products and live healthier lives. Services include counseling, education, patches, lozenges or gum, and helpful resources. Our new service – My Life, My Quit – provides education and resources to help teens stop vaping.

Idaho QuitLine for cessation resources

42% to 52%

Increase in those who gained employment or employment related skills

149,537

Monthly average of Idahoans served through SNAP

Idaho reached out to the Idaho QuitLine for cessation resources

7,127

In 2019, Help Idahoans find jobs

Help Idahoans be tobacco free

Our goal is to reduce death by suicide 20% by 2025

Help Idahoans find jobs

Idaho QuitLine for cessation resources

42% to 52%

Increase in those who gained employment or employment related skills

149,537

Monthly average of Idahoans served through SNAP

Idaho reached out to the Idaho QuitLine for cessation resources

7,127

In 2019,
We will strengthen the public’s trust and confidence in the Department of Health and Welfare.
Deliver a customer-centered innovation culture

It has become the new norm for customers to expect innovations that improve their lives and make it easier to accomplish goals. This expectation applies to every organization customers interact with – including government agencies. We are focusing on innovation by developing journey maps (a visualization of how Idahoans use our services) to identify pain points in their interactions with us. In 2020, we will begin a customer-centered innovation project to improve one journey of our customers. We will measure our success using a Customer Effort Score, which will help us to make sure we have improved the lives of Idahoans. It’s only the beginning of our innovation efforts.

Communicate pro-actively

We are committed to communicating with the public and our stakeholders about the work we do to help Idahoans live their best lives. We have developed communications strategies to highlight our successes and demonstrate our compassion and trustworthiness. These communications include the monthly legislative update, an employee newsletter, new social media accounts, increased presence on existing social media accounts, and improved communications with employees about news releases, branding rules, and communication standards.

Simplify administrative rules

Excessive government regulation can be costly for businesses, inhibit economic growth, and have a negative impact on the public’s perception of the department’s transparency and efficiency. To make sure the department’s regulations are relevant and effective, we have met and exceeded the requirements of the Red Tape Reduction Act by substantially simplifying and reducing the administrative rules chapters.

Improve customer experience

Our focus on customer experience (CX) is about far more than customer service. We are working to understand and improve every interaction with our customers and clients. We will be redesigning processes from the customer’s perspective. We have established a Customer Experience Steering Committee, and together, we are leading efforts to find our customers’ pain points — and to solve those issues.
We are caregivers. We are leaders. We are innovators. We are strategists. We are your neighbors. We are your friends. We are Idahoans.

We are DHW.
Our leaders are committed to helping themselves and others do the right thing. They are setting direction and inspiring change. They are committed to the success of all, and they are dedicated to working together as a team.

We lead by example

Our culture sets us apart

We demonstrate passion for our work and compassion for the people we serve. Every day, we are engaged in the implementation of strategy, and we hold ourselves accountable to our goals. Together, we are focused on continuing what works and addressing what does not work for Idahoans. We strive to achieve our full potential, while we help Idahoans achieve theirs.

The future of DHW

We deliver the services that provide for the safety and well-being of all Idahoans as effectively and efficiently as possible. We think differently and flex our imaginations to innovate our processes and technologies. We embrace new ways of working that help us achieve our goals. Together, we help the people of Idaho live their best lives.