

Strategic Plan Recommendations

Mission Statement: *Lead the way for a healthy tomorrow throughout Rural Tennessee.*

**Partnership *Advocacy *Education *Resources*

- Discussion – There were some conversations about:
 - Dropping the word “rural” – There were some comments on perceived competition between rural and urban issues.
 - Dropping the “Partnership, Advocacy, Education, Resources”
- Recommendations – The following recommendation was presented to the board:
 - Leave the mission statement as it is written: *Lead the way for a healthy tomorrow throughout Rural Tennessee.*
 - Leave the “Partnership, Advocacy, Education, and Resources” but clarify that it is meant more as a “tag line” than part of the statement.
- Rationale
 - Overall, the members interviewed and responding to surveys expressed support of the mission statement, with specific comments about the appreciation of the word “lead” and acknowledgment of partnerships.
 - While rural and urban communities are interdependent on each other, the fact remains that rural people and communities have special needs, environmental, economic, and cultural considerations that need to be represented in policy work. Removing rural would be a disservice to the people and communities who have been without voice and representation for generations.
 - Throughout the strategic planning process, concern was voiced over capacity of the organization that has grown so quickly in a short period of time. Removing “rural” would further spread the organization thin.
 - In regards to the tagline – 90% of survey respondents mentioned partnerships, advocacy, education, and/or resources in their response to the question “What attracts you to the organization” signifying that the organization has done a great job communicating these things into its brand.

Vision Statement: *For Tennessee to become among the healthiest states in America.*

- Discussion – There were some conversations about:
 - There was division on whether to update the vision statement, with supporters of the current statement saying that it provides a measurable goal given that Tennessee ranks poorly in health outcome measures and supporters of adopting a new statement saying that it feels a little ambiguous.
 - Through the process an alternative statement was drafted:
“For every rural community to have the resources and support needed to achieve health and prosperity.”
- Recommendations – The board to vote on one of the below.
 - *For Tennessee to become among the healthiest states in America.*
 - *For every rural community to have the resources and support needed to achieve health and prosperity.*
- Rationale
 - Current: If all health advocates joined together to focus on improving health outcomes, Tennessee could improve the health of communities and thereby the state, the same as we’ve seen happen at the local level.
 - New: This statement is a reflection of the goals and work RHA has pursued over the past 3 years that is meant to support access to resources, providers, and other opportunities that are researched based approaches to improving health and quality of life.

Values

Current: Rural Health Association of Tennessee is dedicated to the following values:

- **Diversity:** Maintain a diverse membership representative of the rural and underrepresented communities we serve and foster an inclusive environment through respect of people and thought.
- **Health Equity:** Promote the overall health of rural Tennesseans through the removal of barriers attributed to social drivers of health and increasing affordability and accessibility of quality, compassionate care in rural areas.
- **Health Education:** Support and deliver evidence-based education and information to professionals and communities to improve overall health.
- **Collaboration:** Partner with engaged communities, partner organizations, and policymakers to identify and address the healthcare needs in rural Tennessee.
- **Ethics:** Adhere to the highest standards of professional integrity in all interactions and encourage others to do the same.
- **Sustainability:** Maintain financially sound practices and good stewardship to achieve the long-term goals of improved social, physical, and emotional well-being of the rural and underserved citizens of Tennessee.

Recommended updates: (all the same, only wordsmith to provide detail and clarity.)

- **Diversity:** Cultivate a membership that reflects the diversity of rural and underrepresented communities we serve. Foster an inclusive environment that values respect for both people and diverse perspectives, ensuring that all voices are heard in shaping solutions.
- **Health Equity:** Advance the health of rural Tennesseans by leveraging community-based strategies to remove barriers linked to social drivers of health. Prioritize affordability, accessibility, and quality care for all rural residents, promoting fairness in health outcomes.
- **Health Education:** Deliver research-based education to professionals and communities, empowering them with accurate data and information to improve health outcomes across rural Tennessee.
- **Collaboration:** Build strategic partnerships with communities, organizations, and policymakers, using data and rural perspectives to identify healthcare gaps and drive solutions that address the unique needs of rural Tennesseans.
- **Ethics:** Uphold the highest standards of professional integrity, guided by transparency and accountability in all interactions, while fostering ethical practices across all sectors that impact rural health.
- **Sustainability:** Ensure financial and operational sustainability through sound practices and responsible stewardship, focusing on long-term improvements in the social, physical, and emotional well-being of rural and underserved populations.