



At-A-Glance

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Established - 2018

Statutory Authority: Conn. Gen. Statutes, Chapter 368dd, Sec. 19a-754a and other provisions

Central Office - 450 Capitol Avenue, MS#51OHS, P.O. Box 340308, Hartford, CT 06134-0308

Number of Employees (All Funds) - 37

Recurring operating expenses:

FY 19 budget: \$5,752,936

General Fund: \$2,031,585

Insurance Fund: \$3,721,351

Organizational structure

Central Office includes business and administrative purposes, Health Systems Planning Unit, Healthcare Innovation Unit, Health Data and Analysis Unit and the Community Engagement and Outreach Unit.

Mission

OHS's mission is to implement comprehensive, data-driven strategies that promote equal access to high-quality health care, control costs, and ensure better health outcomes for all Connecticut residents.

Statutory Responsibility

The Office of Health Strategy (OHS) was created in 2017 and formally established in February 2018 by a bipartisan effort of the Connecticut General Assembly. The legislation organized existing state resources into one body and centralized healthcare policymaking to advance health reform initiatives that will drive down consumer costs and support modernization efforts made possible by advancements in technology and communication. Through collaboration with consumers, providers, payers, employers, and other stakeholders, the Office of Health Strategy is leading work to forward high-quality, affordable, and accessible healthcare for all Connecticut residents, including:

- Developing health policy that improves health outcomes, ensures better access to healthcare, and identifies and addresses health inequities;
- Reining in Connecticut's high per-capita healthcare spending; stabilizing consumer costs across all sectors of healthcare; and promoting growth and job creation through healthcare reform initiatives;
- Modernizing how healthcare providers communicate and share data in order to improve patient experience, reduce costly redundant testing, and strengthen the value of each dollar spent on healthcare; and

- Developing and supporting multi-payer healthcare payment and service delivery reforms that improve population health, focus on the root causes of health conditions, and prevent those conditions from occurring.

Public Service

The Office of Health Strategy is committed to its mission to implement comprehensive, data driven strategies that will promote equal access to high quality health care, control costs and ensure better health for the people of Connecticut. We do this through consumer engagement and outreach, including listening sessions, public forums, advisory councils; by establishing partnerships with consumers, providers, payers, and employers; and through working with other government agencies to develop the best ideas to improve health and healthcare in Connecticut. We do this in the most transparent and collaborative way possible. We work to ensure that Connecticut remains one of the top-ranked states in healthcare in our country.

Improvements/Achievements 2018-2019

Organizing a new agency 2018-2019

During 2018-2019, we built our agency and organizational structure while continuing the work streams already underway in our programs and meeting the statutory responsibilities of each of the agency units. We created a new organizational structure which includes a **Health Systems Planning Unit**, (formerly the Office of Health Care Access) a **Health Innovation Unit (State Innovation Model or SIM)** and a **Health Data and Analysis Unit (Health Information Technology)**. We crafted and disseminated our mission statement pursuant to our statutory mandates. We also moved the agency into a new office space in order to bring together staff and resources that used to reside in other programs and agencies. Among the many agency components unified under one roof were our consumer engagement advisory councils.

They include the:

- Healthcare Cabinet which was established in 2011 to advise the Governor on issues related to federal health reform implementation and development of an integrated healthcare system for Connecticut.
- All-Payers Claims Database Advisory Group established in 2011 which shall develop a plan to implement a state-wide multi-payer data initiative to enhance the state's use of health care data from multiple sources to increase efficiency, enhance outcomes and improve the understanding of health care expenditures in the public and private sectors.
- Consumer Advisory Board which was established in 2013 under a State Innovation Model (SIM) grant to advocate for consumers and provide for strong public and consumer input in healthcare reform policies in Connecticut for the SIM.
- Health Information Technology Advisory Council which was established in 2015 to advise the executive director of the Office of Health Strategy and the Health Information Technology Officer to develop priorities and policy recommendations for advancing the state's health information technology and health information exchange efforts and advise in the development and implementation of the state-wide health information technology plan and the state-wide Health Information Exchange.

OHS provides a content-rich website for the residents of Connecticut. The site is a gateway to the operation of our agency and the various units, as well as providing information on our public meetings and outreach activities, RFPs and contracts, and news and social media. Main program pages on our site include:

- State Innovation Model <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Services/State-Innovation-Model>
- Health Information Technology <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Services/Health-Information-Technology>
- Healthcare Cabinet <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Services/Healthcare-Cabinet>
- Health Systems Planning <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Services/Health-Systems-Planning>
- Healthcare Affordability Standard Advisory Committee <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Pages/Healthcare-Affordability-Standard-Advisory-Committee>
- Reports and Data <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Services/Reports-and-Data>
- News and Press Releases <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Press-Room>
- Open Solicitations/Request for Proposals <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Services/Open-Solicitations>

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

OHS is required to report or disclose on a number of statutory requirements:

- The state wide health information technology plan, the establishment of the health information exchange and recommendations for policy, regulatory and legislative changes to promote the state's health information technology and exchange goals. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Content/Health-Information-Technology>
- Facility Fee notices from hospital systems. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Health-Systems-Planning/Notifications/Facility-Fees>
- Actual Facility Fees charged or billed by hospital systems. <https://ohsnotificationandfilings.ct.gov/Home/Index>
- Report to the Governor and Legislature, by June 30th in the year it's conducted, the biennial study on state-wide health care facility utilization. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Press-Room/Press-Releases/2019-Press-Releases/Facilities-and-Services-Plan>
- Report to the Legislature on the financial stability of Connecticut's hospitals by September 1st of each year. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Health-Systems-Planning/Hospital-Financial-Data/Hospital-Reporting-System> and <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Health-Systems-Planning/Hospital-Financial-Data/Select-Data-Items-from-Hospital-Filings>
- Consumer website-health information including quality, price and cost of health care services and a cost estimator tool that reports on billed and allowed amounts paid to health care providers according to insurance plans, and out of pocket costs for certain services and procedures. <https://healthscorect.com/>
- Community health workers and recommendations for certification of these workers, report to the Legislature. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/SIM-Work-Groups/CHW-Advisory-Committee>

Health Systems Planning Unit

The major functions of Health Systems Planning (HSP) include the administration of the Certificate of Need (CON) program; preparation of the Statewide Health Care Facilities and Services Plan; health care data collection, analysis and reporting; and hospital financial review and reporting. The Health Systems

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Planning Unit made a number of advancements during the past year with goals of creating efficiencies and improving state services. This year our focus and attention has been to bring enhanced consumer service in many areas of our section:

- A YouTube Channel was created to facilitate viewing of OHS CON Public Hearing recordings in an accessible connection via the OHS Portal: <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS> or YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwZo-zOORky_4ZvIQBKTMHg/videos
- Proactively expanding public engagement and educational outreach by holding public forums in communities affected by hospital ownership changes and updating these communities with OHS's role in regulation and compliance of the changes.
- HSP issued its *Statewide Health Care Facilities and Services Plan-2019* Supplement which is statutorily mandated to be completed every two years. This publication focused on use trends related to CON activity, inpatient/outpatient utilization including opioid-related statistics, health care systems, inpatient bed distribution and occupancy rates, emergency department use, preventable hospitalization statistics/demographics and outpatient surgery activity. This provides insight into how residents use healthcare in Connecticut. The report uses a combination of sources including data submitted to OHS through the regulatory Certificate of Need process, hospital utilization and financial data reported annually to OHS, and Connecticut Hospital Association Emergency Department. <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/OHS/HSP/Facilities-and-Services-Plan-2018.pdf>
- A new Certificate of Need (CON) portal with all CON related materials in one location on our website. <https://www.portal.ct.gov/OHS/Pages/Certificate-of-Need/CON-Portal/>
- CON Community Education and Information Program which informs and educates people on what the CON process is, how they can access information, provide comments at CON hearings and stay informed.
- An updated Hospital Reporting Systems portal on our website. <https://www.portal.ct.gov/OHS/Health-Systems-Planning/Hospital-Financial-Data/Hospital-Reporting-System>
- The *Annual Report on the Financial Status of Connecticut's Short Term Acute Care Hospitals*. This report highlights Connecticut's statewide hospital trends and includes individual hospital profiles of financial performance. It is intended to provide information that will enhance knowledge of the financial status of Connecticut's hospitals. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Health-Systems-Planning/Hospital-Financial-Data/Select-Data-Items-from-Hospital-Filings>
- Freedom of Information (FOI) portal viewable by the public in an easy, transparent and accessible way on our website. Requests for the All-Payers Claims Database (APCD) data are also now available through the FOI portal. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Health-Systems-Planning/FOI/FOI-Requests>

Health Innovation Unit

The Health Innovation Unit focuses on the goals of improving population health in communities in our state, improving healthcare quality and outcomes for residents, controlling growth in the cost of care with smarter spending, and improving primary care. The Unit supports a number of consumer advisory groups, and stakeholder engagement efforts in developing policy, strategy and innovation in Connecticut's healthcare landscape.

Highlights of the past year include:

- The new HealthscoreCT.com website allows consumers to compare healthcare quality ratings and cost in Connecticut. This free public scorecard has interactive tables and graphs that allow consumers to search, sort, and filter by entity, quality measure, health topic, and rating of accountable care organizations in Connecticut. . <https://healthscorect.com/>
- Successful creation of Community Health Worker certification and a Community Health Worker Advisory Body. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/SIM-Work-Groups/CHW-Advisory-Committee>
- Expanded primary care modernization efforts by engaging over 600 stakeholders in a collaboration to improve access to providers, quality care and patient experience, and cost reduction. <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/OHS/SIM/HISC/2019/02-14-19/PCM-Capabilities-Compendium-updated.pdf> and <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Content/State-Innovation-Model-SIM/PCM-Advisory-Groups>
- A new Prevention Service Initiative with the Department of Public Health to link community based organizations with providers. It focuses on delivery and expansion of diabetes and asthma self-management programs in community-based settings. https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/OHS/SIM/HISC/2017/07-13/Prevention_Service_Initiative_Overview_20170706.pdf
- Launching a new Health Enhancement Communities (HEC) initiative that fosters community-wide, multi-sector collaboration, and accountability to promote health equity and broad systemic change in Connecticut communities. HEC will focus on child well-being and healthy weight and fitness for all our citizens. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/SIM-Work-Groups/Population-Health-Council/Resources>
- Expanding Value-Based Insurance Design that helps support self-insured employers interested in saving money in employer sponsored insurance (ESI) plans. Past efforts have saved over \$1 million and maintained high quality health plan choices. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/SIM-Work-Groups/VBID-Consortium>

Health Data and Analysis

Health Data and Analysis takes the most up-to-date information about health and health care and analyzes it in useful ways to deliver better care in Connecticut. This Unit includes the All-Payer Claims Database (APCD), the Health Information and Technology program, and the Health Information Exchange. Like other OHS Units, this section has a large consumer engagement component that includes groups like the Health IT Advisory Council, and the APCD Advisory Group. This past year is the first year these state divisions are consolidated in one agency.

Here are some highlights:

- The All-Payers Claims Database transferred from Access Health CT to OHS. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Services/Health-Information-Technology/All-Payer-Claims-Database>
- Medication Reconciliation and Polypharmacy Work group was established by statute to report on ways to achieve stability and safety for patients who have multiple medications. A final report and recommendations were issued. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/HIT-Work-Groups/Medication-Reconciliation-and-Polypharmacy-Work-Group>

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- Building and developing a Health Information Exchange (HIE). The HIE will establish a “neutral and trusted” non-profit, nongovernmental entity to deliver necessary health data exchange services for the state. The Health Information Alliance, Inc. (HIA, Inc.) was incorporated for this purpose. The federal government has recognized the state’s unique approach in the architecture of the HIE and is using it as an example for other states. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Content/Health-Information-Technology>
- Core Data Analytics Solutions (CDAS) and Electronic Clinical Quality Measures (eCQM) established. CDAS enables in-depth data analytics, including electronic Clinical Quality Measures (eCQMs) to support payment and practice reforms. Clinical Quality Measures are useful because they can help measure and track the quality of health care services.

Consumer Engagement and Outreach

A new unit started this past year with a purpose to direct the design, development and implementation of a statewide consumer engagement plan for OHS. The Office of Health Strategy has embedded consumer engagement in all of its operations and this new unit will inform, engage, educate and obtain feedback across all OHS divisions and units. Some of the Consumer Engagement programs and innovations are:

- Primary Care Modernization Consumer Engagement- the PCM project includes developing a new model for primary care in Connecticut. It engages consumers with plain language materials and presentations to obtain feedback and input into the design of this project.
- Reorganization of the Consumer Advisory Board to advise the whole agency on healthcare innovation, ensure meaningful consumer participations and promote community input in health care innovation planning and implementation. <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Pages/Consumer-Advisory-Board>
- Consumer Engagement and Outreach attended 35 outreaches and events connecting with over 1,500 people in Connecticut just this year.