

Strategic Plan Summary



FOUNDATION FOR
**COMMUNITY
HEALTH**

What brought us here.

In December 2019, Foundation for Community Health (FCH) launched a strategic planning process to develop a framework that would guide the foundation's grantmaking strategies, practices, and procedures. Through community conversations, analysis of our previous grantmaking, numerous reports, articles, and data sources the foundation decided to turn its focus towards the underlying conditions which impact health, well-being, and equity.

We used the following criteria, to weigh different strategic options for the foundation:

- Opportunity to **build organizations' capacity** in our region
- To be **responsive** to community partners' input and needs
- Opportunity to deepen community **collaboration and partnership**
- Opportunity to make a **measurable impact**
- Opportunity to use a **systems approach**

To be successful in our mission, FCH determined that we must address the social, economic, and physical environment factors within the communities we serve, tackling the external factors in our homes, schools and workplaces and neighborhoods that create the opportunities for health. Specifically, we've chosen to focus our efforts towards strengthening the sector that serves our community, leveraging our community's assets, such as our town halls or schools as health access points, and working alongside local decision-makers to create a culture of health within municipalities that partners with community to develop and implement solutions.



50 Reports, Articles,
and Data Sources



17 Feedback Sessions
with **30** Nonprofit Leaders
and Community Stakeholders

Going all in on trust.

We've long recognized that true, long-term impact requires developing trust-based partnerships with grantees. We now recognize that this value, must permeate all facets of our practices and procedures, so that our processes are flexible, take minimum time and resources of our grantees to complete, and are structured in a way that is more responsive to the needs of community-based organizations.

To pursue our vision and ground our work in our values and the collective wisdom of our community and partners, FCH has committed to practice *Trust-Based Philanthropy*, a practice first formulated by The Whitman Institute.

With this commitment FCH staff will undertake significant changes to the foundation's grantmaking processes. Operational changes will include:

- Simplifying applications & reports
- Increasing our transparency regarding the foundation's grantmaking process
- Utilizing grantee surveys to assess FCH's effectiveness
- Providing more unrestricted funding and technical assistance

Our strategic plan comes at a time when the movement for black lives has driven national attention to the persistence of injustice and inequity for black people, as well as other communities of color. This period has also been defined by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exacerbated existing inequities and resulted in an economic crisis that strains the community-based organizations that serve our rural region.

This moment has served as a catalyst to FCH as we revisited our strategies, policies, and practices. As our community begins to recover from the health, economic and social justice crises, it is our intent to continue to learn from those we serve and contribute to recovery efforts that build a more resilient and equitable place.

Our mission and vision

The power of community to create **health** is far greater than any physician, clinic, or hospital.

Mark Hyman

MISSION

We work together with people and organizations to improve the health and well-being of residents in our community, especially those that have historically been under-resourced.

VISION

All aspects of our community support the conditions required for health, well-being, and equity.

Our values

COLLABORATION

Collaboration comes from trust, authentic relationships, transparency, responsiveness, professionalism and two-way engagement. We strive to do 'with' and 'as,' not 'to'.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We listen and learn. We understand local needs by asking people about their experiences and perspectives. We recognize that we're stewards of the foundation's resources and commit to being transparent in how we use them.

RIGOR

Rigor comes from analysis and learning, iteration and discovery, embracing ambiguity, sustaining humility, seeking truth and questioning assumptions. We seek continuous improvement and uphold high standards of professionalism in all that we do.

EQUITY

We understand and address disparities in health and health access in terms of race, geography and socioeconomic status. We account for barriers to equity and use an asset-building approach to address them. We focus our resources on those who need them most.

Our priorities

STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATIONS

- Build resiliency and effectiveness of nonprofit organizations
- Support nonprofit organizational health
- Create opportunities for leadership development
- Seed pilot initiatives of bidirectional collaborative efforts

IMPROVE COMMUNITY ASSETS

- Leverage existing community assets, such as schools and libraries, to advance health access and well-being
- Invest in local infrastructure needs related to broadband, food, and housing
- Support school-based oral health and rural transportation operational resiliency and effectiveness

SUPPORT LOCAL DECISION-MAKING

- Strengthen engagement between decision-makers and those most impacted by policy decisions
- Make community health needs information accessible and actionable for local decision-makers
- Support planning, pilot, and demonstration projects of our municipalities that are participatory and consider the social determinants of health



478 Cornwall Bridge Rd Sharon, CT 06069
Phone: (860) 364-5157
Fax: (860) 364-6097
www.fchealth.org

The Foundation for Community Health (FCH) is a private, non-profit philanthropy dedicated to improving the health and well-being of people living in the northern Litchfield Hills of Connecticut and the greater Harlem Valley of New York, through grantmaking, advocacy, and community leadership. FCH was initially funded from the net assets of the sale and conversion of Sharon Hospital in 2003 and is a supporting organization of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley and Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation.