



The purpose of strategic planning is to create a more desirable future for your coalition and your community by providing a 3-5 year guide that includes a long-term coordinated approach to reducing falls in their community. The real benefit, however, occurs during development of the plan. Many unexpected benefits can be gained during this process, including communicating information to key players in the community, mobilizing support, and exchanging new ideas.

Before beginning the planning process, your coalition should first identify who will be involved and what role each member will have. For example, larger coalitions may want to form a strategic planning subcommittee made up of a core group of members to draft the plan. You will also want to define a decision making process, identify a planning facilitator and primary plan writer, and establish a formal review process.

The Six Major Components To A Strategic Plan:

1. Rationale and Background

This section of the plan helps define the current situation and challenges confronting the community in promoting fall prevention. Several activities can generate information for this stage of planning, such as conducting a community needs assessment, looking at past successes and failures, identifying state or national trend data, and creating and referencing a community resource inventory.

2. Mission and Vision

This section identifies the what, how, and why of the plan. In drafting mission and vision statements, the following questions might be considered:

- What are the current factors in your community that affect fall prevention? What are the challenges, causes, and possible impacts of those issues?
- If your coalition successfully addresses existing fall prevention issues, how will your community benefit?
- How do you envision your coalition will strengthen fall prevention as a community priority?
- Whom are we targeting?

3. Goals and Objectives

Identifying your coalition's goals and objectives helps provide a structure for defining specific results to be achieved. To build momentum and support, the plan should include goals and objectives that address specific problems and solutions and have a reasonable chance of success. They should be tied to attainable and visible activities or tasks that are measurable and can be achieved in a timely fashion. The following questions will help identify coalition goals and objectives:

- Will the focus be to strengthen activities already undertaken or in progress? Or will the goal be to draw attention to gaps in service provision, with the need for new or existing resources?
- Who are the key stakeholders? What resources do they bring to the table?
- What key challenges to fall prevention need particular attention?





4. Creating Priorities

This section should describe specific activities, actions, and strategies designed to achieve the goals and objectives, and assign priorities to each. For instance, the first activity selected should be something with a reasonable chance of success that can be accomplished in the short-term. When selecting activities, it is useful to ask the following questions:

- What is the desired outcome of each activity? What is it expected to accomplish?
- Why should the problem be solved?
- Who will be affected?
- Who (else) should be included in the implementation of this activity?
- What resources will your coalition need to take action?
- How much time will it take?
- What is the likelihood of success?
- What are the steps/strategies must be undertaken?

5. Implementation Tasks

This section of the strategic plan should discuss how the activities and recommendations are going to be carried out. It should: 1) specify who is going to do what and by when; 2) identify relevant leader persons and their roles in resolving challenges; 3) identify strategies for involving consumers; 4) recruit community agencies or organizations that should be involved; 5) establish a process for monitoring and reviewing progress; and 6) acknowledge the need for joint or multi-agency efforts.

6. Sustainability

How the coalition will sustain itself during and after the implementation stage should be included. The coalition should consider several approaches to tap funding and resources: 1) describe a fixed number of annual coalition activities; 2) get co-sponsors to help finance related activities; 3) generate in-kind contributions from coalition members (e.g., media and legislative contacts, hosting meetings, publicity, donated staff time); 4) determine if coalition activities can be incorporated into activities or services of organizations with a similar mission; 5) consider how fundraising and donations of money can be used to support the coalition and its activities; 6) determine if financial support for coalition administration can become a line item in an existing agency's budget; and 7) consider recruiting volunteer groups to help with coalition events and fundraising.

Tips for Strategic Planning:

- Involve individuals in creating the plan who will be responsible for its implementation.
- Assess the plan periodically and update it as appropriate. Step back and ensure that the plan is realistic.
- Organize the overall strategic plan into smaller action plans that possibly involve sub-committees.
- Ensure members' understanding of the need for follow-up, monitoring, etc. every quarter to ensure each assigned task is completed on schedule; set up tracking system.
- Allow for a 30-day review of the initial draft, so key participants can offer input.
- Encourage presentation of the plan for group presentations, town meetings, etc