

Chapter 6

Responsible Stewardship and Effective Management





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Effective Human Capital Management

Effective Information Technology Management

Effective Resource Management

Effective Planning, Oversight, and Strategic Communications

This section of the *Strategic Plan* highlights the means and strategies employed by HHS's operating and staff divisions to support the achievement of the Department's goals. Many of these functions and activities are not seen by the citizens we serve; however, they are critical to our stakeholders and the HHS employees who implement our programs.

As the goals of this *Strategic Plan* make clear, HHS's core mission is to protect the health of all Americans and provide essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves. Signs of the positive results of this mission come to light every day, as HHS employees develop cures for devastating diseases; research critical trends in public health; assist children, families, and older adults in living better lives; and perform countless other services for the Nation and the world. Less visible is the framework of planning, administration, and management that facilitates all of these accomplishments. The success

of HHS's scientists, researchers, caregivers, inspectors, and technicians depends on the solid foundation provided by managers, contracting officers, analysts, accountants, human resource specialists, attorneys, and all the other support staff across the Department. A robust and reliable system of administrative support provides the necessary groundwork for the Department to remain dedicated to, focused on, and unhindered in its programmatic work.

A critical factor in the Department's achievement of its mission and goals is its ability to formulate, implement, execute, and manage effective administrative support for its programs—from exercising responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars to managing employees effectively. Our underlying approach will be an interactive, ongoing effort to formulate policy and strategies, monitor progress and results, reward excellence, correct mistakes, and adjust to changing circumstances.



HHS continuously reviews and refines management practices as needed to ensure that the Department has the resources to provide first-rate administrative support. Through aligning its strategic plans, budgets, and performance plans and establishing measures that assess our progress and results, HHS clearly defines its intended outcomes, and effectively projects and manages resources required to implement programs.

This section of the *Strategic Plan* outlines the management means and strategies that HHS will employ to facilitate program success. In carrying out these strategies, the Department places the utmost importance on fostering a culture of leadership and accountability. All employees are expected to assume leadership roles in their areas of responsibility by exhibiting a willingness to develop and coach others, a commitment to teamwork and collaboration, and a drive to meet challenges with innovation and urgency.

Effective Human Capital Management

Recruit, develop, retain, and strategically manage a world-class HHS workforce.

Implement rigorous recruiting strategies to ensure the hiring of top talent. Approximately a quarter of all HHS nonsupervisory employees, and about half of all HHS managers, will be eligible for retirement within the 5 years covered under this *Strategic Plan*. To ensure that future workforce needs are met, HHS has identified its mission-critical and core competencies and will continue highly targeted recruitment efforts. Among the strategies the Department will use are *Cooperative Education Programs*, the *Direct-Hire Program*, the *Federal Career Intern Program*, the *HHS Emerging Leaders Program*, the *Presidential Management Fellows Program*, and the *Retired Annuitants* hiring process. HHS will aggressively identify robust technology systems that will enable the Department to compete with private industry for top talent. In addition, HHS will continually examine recruitment processes to ensure that it improves the quality of the candidates recruited and is able to hire them in the quickest timeframe possible.

Strengthen the workforce by developing staff skills, improving competencies, and retaining talent. HHS will develop an effective learning and development strategy that leverages current capabilities at HHS University and also takes advantage of training opportunities in the operating divisions. Emphasis will be placed on achieving better results through more effective utilization of the Department's training-related financial resources. To ensure that resources are allocated to produce maximum effectiveness in an optimal timeframe, HHS will support this activity through traditional classroom training, online self-study, development programs, and career counseling. In addition, the HHS Web-based, Departmentwide Learning Management System supports closing competency gaps (core and technical) in mission-critical occupations.

Ensure that the HHS workforce reflects the diversity of the Nation it serves. A diverse workforce capitalizes on the contributions of persons of distinct ethnicities, races, cultures, and backgrounds. Leveraging these differences enhances the social and business workplace environment, helps to eradicate discrimination, and increases organizational efficiency and productivity. Through personal leadership and involvement, all HHS employees will proactively support and promote the Department's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Diversity Management programs to achieve a more diverse workforce and promote a workplace free of discrimination. Through program accountability, training, outreach, recruitment, and use of flexible hiring techniques, HHS will ensure that representation of minorities and persons with disabilities at HHS reflects the Nation as a whole.

HHS has some specific initiatives to recruit underrepresented populations. HHS, through its partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program and the U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Recruitment Program, plans to leverage these resources to increase hiring of people with disabilities. In addition, HHS minority outreach initiatives include participation in a number of student intern programs, such as the

Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies, Bilingual/Bicultural Program, Federal Career Intern Program, HHS Emerging Leaders Program, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities National Internship Program, International Leadership Foundation, and the Organization of Chinese Americans Government Internship Programs. In the area of training, HHS has developed the EEO and Diversity Academy, which offers courses designed to instill in hiring managers, as well as all in HHS employees, recognition of the intrinsic value a diverse Federal workforce brings to a Department with a diverse customer base.

Ensure the highest level of efficiency and effectiveness of HHS organizations, through regular competition with the private sector. In accordance with OMB Circular A-76,^{xi} HHS will continue to ensure that the most efficient organization carries out the Department's commercial functions. HHS will utilize a combination of standard studies, streamlined studies, and restructuring efforts to implement competitive sourcing. The savings generated from competitive sourcing studies will continue to provide benefits to HHS programs and the American taxpayer.

Ensure that all HHS employees are accountable for results. Guided by the Department's Human Capital Accountability System Policy, HHS will continue to monitor, manage, and evaluate its formal Departmentwide, integrated human capital accountability system to ensure mission-aligned human capital goals are achieved effectively, efficiently, and within merit system principles and related regulations. All HHS employees will have an approved performance plan in place within 30 days of hire and will receive at least one midyear progress review annually. The *Senior Executive Service and Organizational Performance Management System* and the *Performance Management Appraisal Program* will connect expectations to mission and link performance ratings with measurable outcomes. Performance plans for all HHS employees are designed to cascade from the goals and objectives outlined in the *Strategic Plan* and operating division strategic plans, to ensure that performance expectations

throughout the entire agency are aligned with the HHS mission and oriented toward achieving results.¹⁸

Effective Information Technology Management
Provide a well-managed and secure enterprise information technology environment.¹⁹

Development of a comprehensive plan that optimizes the use of resources in support of all strategic and management goals and objectives. The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-106) requires that every Federal agency develop an Enterprise Architecture (EA). EA ensures that the business and technical architectures for the Department support the HHS mission and outcome objectives by establishing relationships between and among business operations and the information systems and resources that enable those operations. EA takes a comprehensive view of the enterprise, including strategic planning, organizational development, relationship management, business process improvement, information and knowledge management, and operations. EA will enable the Department to achieve more effective planning and control over investments for information technology by enhancing flexibility and interoperability across information systems; reducing redundancies; and improving access to accurate, timely, and consistent information.

Maintain a secure environment in which all aspects of security, privacy, and confidentiality are addressed. HHS is an attractive high-profile target for hackers and those with malicious intent seeking sensitive medical information, homeland security first responder information, patent and intellectual property worth billions of dollars, and much more. In order to address these immediate challenges and comply with Federal legislation, HHS has developed a proactive, enterprisewide information technology (IT) security program (*Secure One HHS*) to help protect the HHS IT infrastructure against potential threats and vulnerabilities. The *Secure One HHS IT Security Program* was designed to increase the

¹⁸ Appendix C, Performance Plan Linkage, provides additional information on these strategies.

¹⁹ Additional information about HHS's information technology strategies is included in the Information Technology section.

baseline IT security posture across all HHS operating divisions while reducing reporting burdens for compliance with Federal mandates. The creation of this new security program, which spans the HHS IT community, Headquarters, and the operating divisions, is an important step in protecting HHS's ability to provide mission-critical services and maintain the public's trust and confidence in the quality of HHS services and business operations.

Manage information technology projects and investment to demonstrate results and consistently provide the value intended. This activity will require the successful completion of all aspects of project and investment management rigor that are described in the *HHS Enterprise Performance Life Cycle* (the integration of management, business, and engineering life-cycle processes that span the enterprise to align IT with the business). This success will be measured by the *HHS Capital Planning and Investment Control* process, which structures budget formulation and execution, ensures that investments consistently support the strategic goals of the agency, and includes the evaluation of effective earned value management.

Effective Resource Management
Use financial and capital resources appropriately, efficiently, and effectively.

Ensure the integrity of HHS financial management processes. Financial management systems that meet *Joint Financial Management Improvement Plan* certification standards will be in place Departmentwide by 2010, with all but Medicare Parts C and D covered by the beginning of FY 2010. HHS also will address all identified outstanding material weaknesses and internal control deficiencies.

Manage financial resources wisely and appropriately through the reduction of improper payments. According to the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-300), improper payments occur when funding is provided to the correct recipient in the incorrect amount, when the wrong recipient receives funds, or when funds are used by the recipient improperly. HHS will continue its efforts to reduce the rates of improper payment in three of its largest

programs, Medicare, Head Start, and Foster Care. At the same time, the agency will develop improved information on payment error rates for other large programs such as Medicaid, State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Strategically manage the acquisition, leasing, construction, operation, maintenance, and disposal of HHS's real property assets. HHS will oversee effective real property acquisition and operations and maintenance practices, right size the real property portfolio, and realize cost savings through increased efficiency and strategic investments. Efficiency and effectiveness of real property assets will be maximized by disposing of excess property and reducing underutilization and overutilization. HHS will improve both the condition of HHS's buildings and facilities and environmental management through greater energy conservation, enhanced occupational safety and health, and sustainable development.

Create a seamless integration of acquisition policies, procedures, systems, and contract vehicles to better serve employees, customers, and vendors. Through the *Acquisition Integration and Modernization* initiative, HHS will develop a uniform way of conducting business, minimize duplication and improve efficiency, and provide excellent customer service to HHS stakeholders. In addition, HHS will facilitate mobility among HHS acquisition personnel as well as personnel interfacing with the acquisition community, leverage spend opportunities and drive cost savings, capture knowledge and share best practices within the acquisition community, ensure sufficient resources to conduct acquisition activities, and ensure an optimal allocation of these resources as efficiencies are realized.

Improve coordination of grant activities across the Department. HHS will implement a grant announcement planning and review process (linked to budget plans) that ensures alignment of planned grant announcements with Departmentwide priorities, identifies opportunities for collaboration across the Department, and gives the public advance information on grant announcement plans.

Effective Planning, Oversight, and Strategic Communications

Improve the management of HHS by providing ongoing oversight, evaluation, and analysis of policies and programs and by ensuring effective strategic communications.

Provide ongoing oversight, evaluation, and analysis of policies and programs. We will monitor our programs to ensure that the Department is fulfilling its statutory, regulatory, and fiduciary responsibilities and intergovernmental commitments in an ethical and legal manner. In addition, we will conduct independent and objective audits, evaluations, analysis, and investigations to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of policy and program implementation.

Improve communication with the public, employees, and stakeholders about HHS's mission, goals, and performance, as well as the benefits and services that the Department provides. We will improve communications by proactively developing, maintaining, and widely disseminating comprehensive and accurate information about our plans, activities, and accomplishments in a timely manner to our employees, stakeholders, and customers. In addition, we will endeavor to respond promptly to requests for information from members of the U.S. Congress, our other stakeholders and partners, local and national media, and the public regarding HHS policies and programs.

Effective human capital, information technology, resource management, and management oversight and communications are HHS's most critical means to provide support for the Department's goals and strategies. HHS will continue to analyze its practices and procedures to ensure that the management strategies defined for the future meet the needs of the Department and, most importantly, its customers: the American people.