



UTAH DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH

Report on COVID-19 Impact

Vulnerabilities Exacerbated by COVID-19

Social Services Appropriations Subcommittee

October 19, 2021



Vulnerabilities Exacerbated by COVID-19

Programs with Increased Demand.

Some highlights include:

- Department operations related to food insecurity
- Increased demand for reporting
- Staff capacity and retention
- Medicaid Home and Community Based Services

Programs with Delayed or Disrupted Services.

Some highlights include:

- Reductions or delays in preventive screenings for HIV, STDs, and cancer
- Decrease in WIC participation
- Decrease in Office of Home Visiting-funded programs

Internal Vulnerabilities.

- Staffing
- Contract and grant writing and management
- Purchasing and payables process
- Information Technology systems



Recommendations

The report provides a summary of the vulnerabilities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the vulnerabilities identified, the Department identifies three main areas where additional funding is recommended to support public health infrastructure and readiness:





Recommended Areas for Further Funding

Investment in workforce. As indicated throughout the report submitted, staffing has been a constant source of concern during the PHE. The Department recommends the following with regards to workforce readiness:

Agile and robust Human Resources system and personnel	•Rapid onboarding •Development and access to comprehensive training resources •Faster and more efficient access to funding for hiring time-limited staff when appropriate.
Investment in programmers and project managers	•IT Programmers •Project Managers •Remote work resources
Community Health Workers	•Investment •Expansion •Support



Recommended Areas for Further Funding

Information Technology Systems. Modernize our public health database systems. The Department recommends a number of investments to upgrade, optimize and enhance the technology system infrastructure for public health, such as:



Utah Statewide
Immunization
Information System

Vital Records
Application Portal

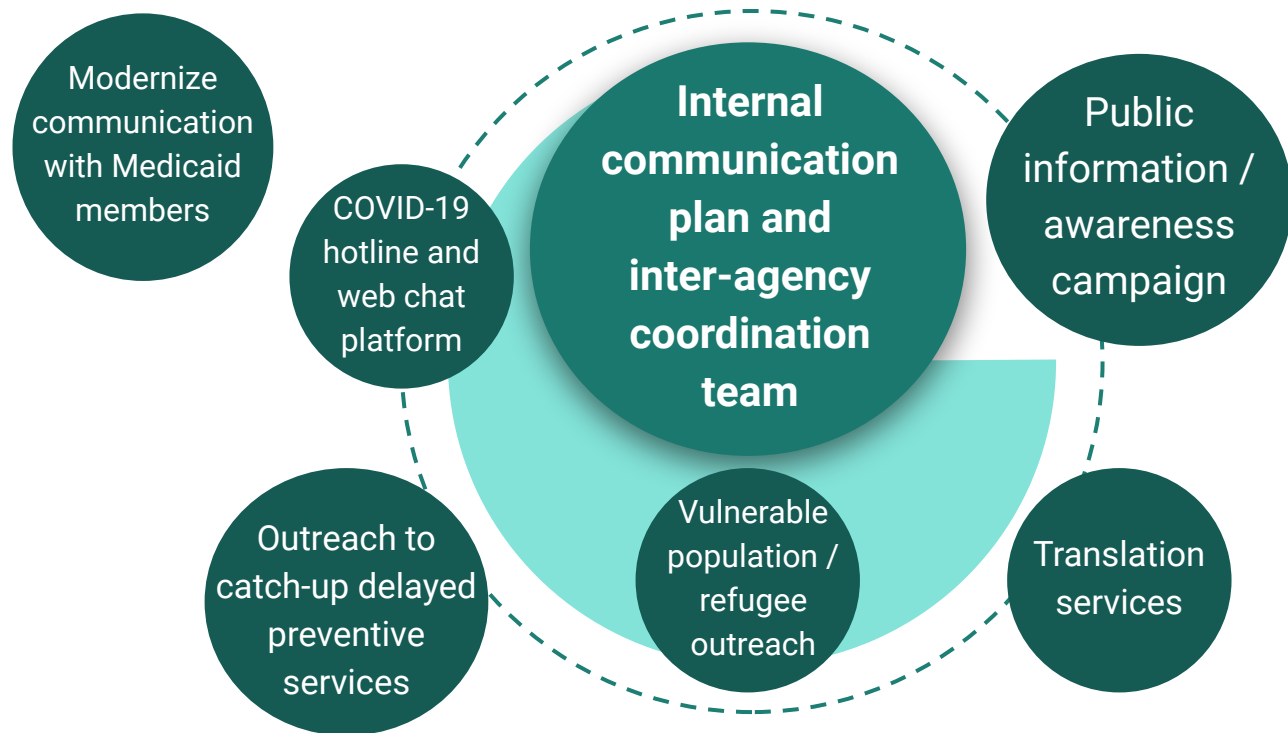


Laboratory Information
Management System



Recommended Areas for Further Funding

Communication. The Department recommends funding and support for more effective and efficient communication strategies, internally and externally.



APPENDIX

QUESTIONS

You recommend more funding for IT projects. How much more funding might be needed beyond the \$20 million recently approved from American Rescue Act Plan funds?

\$20 million for cloud modernization previously approved;
priorities for additional IT projects enumerated in this
proposal

QUESTIONS

For the staff redirected to work on COVID19, were COVID-19 funds used to pay for that staff time? If not, why?

Staff redirected to work on COVID-19 were paid with either COVID-19 funds or existing federal funds with approval from HHS for this use