Policy Priority-Setting Process

Summary

As we implement our Strategic Plan, our Public Policy Program bridges our ongoing advocacy—in health, housing, income —and our path toward ensuring that 100% of the people we serve have timely access to quality, whole-person health care and affordable housing. In setting our public policy priorities, we build on the momentum of the previous year's advocacy work while continuing to move forward the issues we know affect our community.

The agency has developed a reputation for being a powerful ally, a knowledgeable resource and a voice for the underserved. Our tactics in achieving our policy goals maximize our power by leveraging the expertise of our providers and lived experiences of our clients.

Our process for forming priorities includes (see flow chart attached):

1. Review stakeholder input (see Stakeholder Categories), screen rising issues and consider context*
2. Compile issues into three categories of health, housing and income
3. Rank based on six distinct criteria for each issue and generate return on investment
4. Prioritize issues based on ROI comparisons

Stakeholder Categories

We screen issues from stakeholders as they arise, but seek specific input from a diverse set of stakeholders for when setting the following year's priorities. We review stakeholder input taking into account political and economic contexts, the Agency's existing multi-year initiatives, and strategic top priorities.

Our priority-setting stakeholders include:

- Clients
- Staff
- Coalitions

- Decision-makers
- Public Policy Partners
- Board and Advisory Committee

*In 2020, external political realities will affect our tactics, including, but not limited to the focus on Kirwan funding, and election-year dynamics in the General Assembly (possible reluctance to do study bills, form task forces and work groups, and make leadership changes, e.g.).

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1. Identify draft list based on input & context

2. Categorize each issue: health, housing or income

3. Rank issues based on six criteria & assign ROI

4. Compare rankings

Arrive at priorities

Policy Priority-Setting Process STEP THREE:

Six Criteria and Ranking Process
Public Policy Committee, October 31, 2019

Six criteria help to discern the issues (or bills) that provide the agency with the biggest return on investment (ROI) in advancing our strategic goals.

1. **Financial or operational impact on the Agency**

2. **Direct impact on a strategic plan goal or mission**

   Will it improve access to *health care* or *housing*? Consider degree of impact as measured by:

   - Immediacy of impact
   - Number of clients impacted
   - Level of impact
   - Size of impact

3. **Agency's ability to make a difference**

   What role can <u>we</u> play that will have a substantive impact on moving the issue forward:

   a. Is there an established coalition on this legislation and, if so, how robust is it?
   b. Is the coalition or legislation is funded?
   c. Which agency tactics will impact the likelihood of the bill's passage and why? (For instance, does the bill simply need strength in numbers, does it need social media attention, does it need oral or written testimony?)

4. **Ability/Likelihood of the bill/initiative to pass**

   Questions include:

   a. Has the bill been introduced before?

      i. Did it pass in committee/one or more chambers?
      ii. How many years has it been introduced or passed in committees and/or chambers?
      iii. Why did the bill not pass?

   b. Are there procedural, political or policy hurdles that will be removed to allow passage this year?
   c. If the bill has passed, what is the likelihood that the Executive will sign the bill or let it go into law?
   d. Has the executive or their office spoken publicly about it?

5. **Agency capacity or brand-building opportunity or, conversely, impact on reputation if we fail to weigh in**

   a. How much of a positive impact on our capacity or brand might there be?
   b. How much of a risk (political, partnerships, e.g.) is there to <u>not</u> weighing in?

6. Level of agency resources required

How much *energy or effort* do we project will be needed? Consider the following range of tactics:

a. Inclusion on coalition partner list
b. Social media campaign
c. Oral testimony
d. Written testimony
e. Media/external communications
f. Speaker or broader participation at rally
g. Participation at outreach event or conference
h. Other

Determining ROI

We use a five-point scale: 1-5 to each of the six criteria (highest score is **30**):

1. Low
2. Low-medium
3. Medium
4. Medium-high
5. High

The highest total value shows us which initiatives are likely to have significant return, and therefore to be a higher priority for us during the year. (Note that a score of 5 on "level of agency resources" is indicative of *less* resources needed to move the initiative forward.)

One note: With regard to legislative session bills, we also ask the question, "*Is the issue ripe for Lobby Day (excites staff and/or clients)?*" A bill's potential to be a Lobby Day issue is not reflected in the ROI score. We felt that we should choose which issues on which we work for Lobby Day from among the legislative priorities, not the other way around. After the ROI is determined, that ROI is ranked against the numerical score of the Lobby Day Question, then scored in a separate chart.