

Strategic Plan



2023-2026

To our community, stakeholders, board and staff,

It is my pleasure to present the Project of the Quad Cities' Strategic Plan for 2023-2026. This plan is the result of a six-month collaborative effort involving stakeholders from every part of the organization. The resulting document is detailed, comprehensive, and balanced in staying true to our origin while reaching for the future. It lays out a measured and achievable vision for TPQC.

When I arrived at TPQC in early 2022, the organization was coming out of many transitions, not the least which was the pandemic which altered many of our lives and how we operate. I believe this plan complements and builds upon the work done by many before my arrival, and paves a clear path forward for TPQC. I'd like to express my gratitude to our staff, board, clients, and everyone else who helped craft the plan by offering their time and insight. This includes our community partners who helped us gather the right data, and our plan partners at New Chapter Coaching.

Now that it is finalized, the real work begins. As you will see, the plan not only includes what we want to achieve, but also the strategies we believe will help get us there. We have developed important metrics to track our progress and hold ourselves accountable along the way.

Those of us in in the HIV and LGBTQ+ community spaces are facing a number of serious challenges over the next several years including a decrease/shifts in funding and an anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric and political landscape. A solid infrastructure and sustainability plan are necessary to overcome these challenges.

We also have many opportunities as we continue to serve those both in Iowa and Illinois, throughout the Quad Cities metro and beyond. I believe this Strategic Plan will position TPQC to not only weather these challenges, but to advance our position as a leader in the communities we serve.

Sincerely,



Caitlin Wells, MBA (she/her)
Chief Executive Officer

About The Project

Since 1986, The Project has served people living with HIV. As we approach our 40th year, the landscape looks very different than it did when we first opened our doors.

In 1986, most people were not living with HIV/AIDS. Most people were dying from HIV/AIDS, and recognizing the great need for support during this crisis, local advocates and organizations came together in an old motel room to create The AIDS Project of the Quad Cities (APQC). From gathering donations at local gay bars to distributing condoms, services in the early days were truly grassroots.

Following the Food & Drug Administration's approval of AZT in March 1987 and the passage of the Ryan White CARE Act in August 1990, the battle against HIV/AIDS experienced major shifts. Not everyone with HIV was dying, and with that, the support required by the community also shifted. As a result, APQC became The Project of the Quad Cities and expanded services. Today, we offer a comprehensive sexual health clinic with same-day test results and on-site treatment, behavioral health services, and LGBTQ+ specific healthcare.

In everything we do, we work to address the social determinants of health through a holistic approach to healthcare.

Social Determinants of Health



Mission

Transforming *lives*
through remarkable care

Vision

We dream of creating a world of change
by changing one person's world at a time

Values

Leadership is service

Compassion is action

Integrity is doing what is right

Our Process

In the summer of 2022 we launched our strategic planning process, ready to identify our priorities for the next three years. Through a competitive process, we identified New Chapter Coaching as our partners to lead the process.

We formed a core team with members of our senior leadership team, frontline staff, board and CEO.

In partnership with our consultant, we compiled an environmental scan of our community based on quantitative and qualitative data. This included information such as internal data, external epidemiology data, consumer needs assessments, and focus groups.

With data in hand, we pulled together staff and board members through a multi-step, iterative process which allowed us to form our goals, objectives, and action steps.

After final review and consideration, the strategic plan was approved by The Project's Board of Directors in January 2023.

With an official launch on April 1st, our organization is excited to translate this document into action for the good of our clients and our community.



Strategic Priorities



Addressing Health Inequity Among Black and Latinx Communities



Strengthening Organizational Sustainability



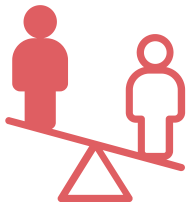
Ensuring a Responsive Approach to Service Delivery



Increasing Organizational Impact through Community Engagement



Priority #1



Addressing Health Inequity Among Black and Latinx* Communities

The Project of the Quad Cities is committed to health and social equity for people of all races and ethnicities. People of color - particularly Hispanics/Latinx, Black, African Americans, and African refugees- are disproportionately impacted by the HIV/AIDS epidemic in our community.

As the only AIDS Service Organization serving the Quad Cities Metro area and outlying counties, TPQC recognizes that it is our responsibility to proactively address the racial disparities among those diagnosed. This means not only providing culturally appropriate outreach and services, but also making intentional efforts to meet the specific needs of people of color infected by or at high risk of contracting HIV.

Action Plan

- 1** Ensure staff, volunteer, and board represent the communities we serve.
- 2** Increase TPQC's capacity to equitably serve Black and Latinx communities.
- 3** Expand service provisions to Black and Latinx communities for all services.

Championing Health Equity for Black and Latinx Communities

Since day one of the epidemic, the disproportionate impact on communities of color has been evident. TPQC must use its resources to build trusting relationships with Black and Latinx communities and provide access to services like STD/HIV testing, PrEP, and other methods of harm reduction.

**Latinx is a non-gendered term used instead of Latina or Latino. The intent of the term Latinx is to further inclusion. The concept is still under discussion.*

Priority #2



Strengthening Organizational Sustainability

Serving our clients, patients, and community is the reason for the work we do at TPQC, but it is our organizational infrastructure that makes this work possible. By prioritizing the development of infrastructure that supports our staff and protects our financial viability, TPQC is also prioritizing the organizational sustainability required for us to continue to serve in this capacity for many years to come.

Action Plan

- 1 Improve workplace culture and environment.
- 2 Improve organizational infrastructure.
- 3 Strengthen financial sustainability.

The Connection Between Service & Infrastructure

Nothing good has ever been built without a firm foundation, and our organization is no exception. For the first 40 years, we weathered substantial challenges on nearly every front fueled by our passion and purpose; but in order for us to weather what is to come next, we have to be sure we are surrounded by the sort of infrastructure that can sustain us. This strategic priority allows us to strengthen the organization in ways that will ensure the vital services we offer are available to the people who need them most for many years to come.

Priority #3



Ensuring a Responsive Approach to Service Delivery

Beginning as a grassroots organization serving those living with, and dying from, HIV at the height of the epidemic, TPQC remains deeply committed to serving this same community as a core component of our organizational identity. As the needs of the community continue to shift over time, the organization must develop a responsive approach that ensures our ability to grow and evolve alongside the people we serve.

Action Plan

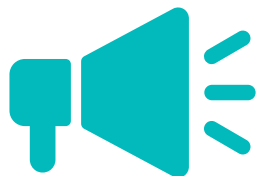
- 1 Improve high-quality, inclusive services for people living with HIV, the LGBTQ+ community, and people who use drugs.
- 2 Explore capacity for expanded behavioral health care.
- 3 Explore future capacity for HIV and LGBTQ+ primary care.

Why Behavioral Health Matters

The behavioral health crisis in this country is also prevalent in our local community, resulting in a lack of timely access for the people who need it most. However, we know that behavioral healthcare is a vital component of what it takes to keep our clients well, and so in response, we have prioritized expansion of these services.

Since 2018, we've added clinicians, we've re-established an intern program, we've expanded our counseling support group offerings, and we're just getting started. We are committed to continuing to expand services in a way that meets the evolving needs of our clients and our community.

Priority #4



Increasing Organizational Impact through Community Engagement

Working for the well-being of our clients and community is at the core of who we are and what we do, but we also recognize that working for their well-being extends far beyond our front doors. For this reason, TPQC intends to increase its organizational impact through advocacy, community education and outreach, corporate partnerships, and community service.

Action Plan

- 1 Increase advocacy to advance equity for our priority populations.
- 2 Expand complimentary partnerships to meet service needs.

The Intersection of Our Work & Advocacy

Across the country state legislatures continue to pass harmful legislation targeted at historically marginalized groups like people living with HIV, Black and Latinx communities, and/or LGBTQ+ individuals.

The Project will assess its own internal advocacy resources while seeking opportunities to partner with organizations that have advocacy experience like the AIDS United, Equality Illinois, Onelowa, Iowa Safe Schools, etc.

The Project, along with other AIDS Service Organizations, has a duty to speak up when public policy harms the communities we serve.



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