

Public health policy for Östergötland 2011-2014

Health is key to people's lives, and a prerequisite for sustainable societal development. Good health among residents of Östergötland is one of the most important factors for growth, development and well-being in the county. This is a joint policy for public health work in the municipalities and County Council of Östergötland as well as for the Regional Development Council Östsam.

The policy is based on the national goal

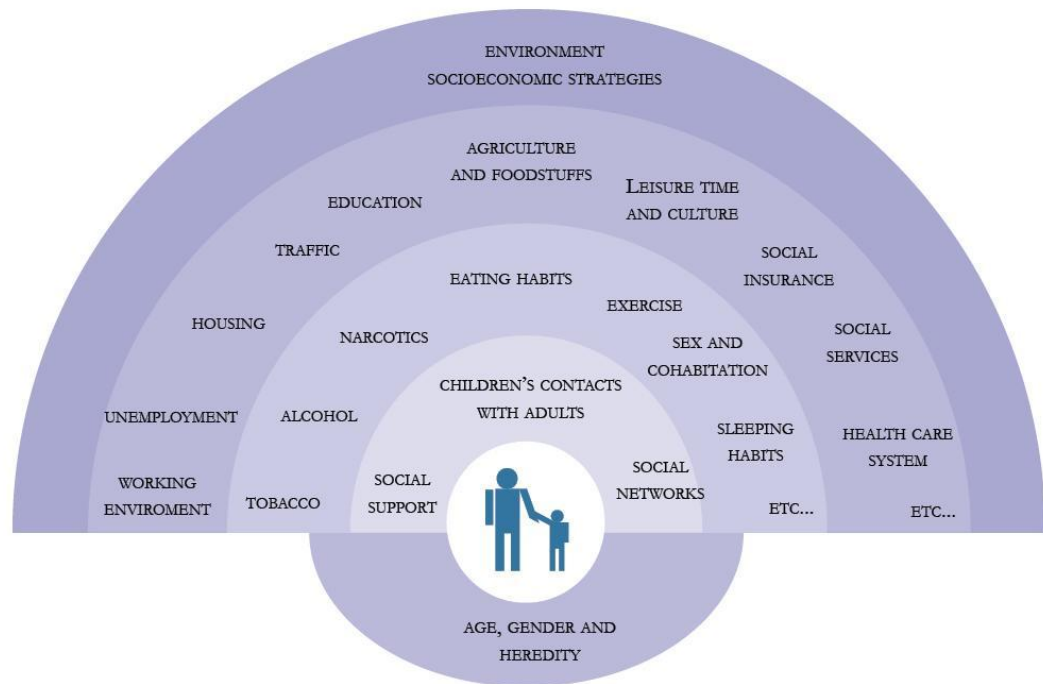
The public health work in the county is based on the national goal for public health policy *to create societal conditions for good health on equal terms for the entire population*¹ and will be implemented within the framework of the eleven national target areas:

1. Participation and influence in society
2. Economic and social conditions
3. Child and adolescent issues
4. Health in the workplace
5. Environments and products
6. Health-promoting healthcare and nursing care
7. Protection against spread of disease
8. Sexuality and reproductive health
9. Physical activity
10. Dietary habits and food products
11. Tobacco, alcohol, narcotics, drug abuse and gambling

Public health is an aspect of social planning

Public health policy in the county should be based on knowledge of the health of the population and on those factors that determine health; see the figure below. The health of Östergötland residents is the result of a complex interplay among many factors and participants. Public health is an issue both for the individual and for the whole society. The economic, social and environmental conditions in society influence the individual's opportunities to take responsibility for his or her health. A public health policy perspective should therefore be included in community planning.

¹ The government's bill 2007/08:110 A renewed public health policy



This figure is a schematic image of health determinant factors, i.e. what affects health. Adapted from the original by Göran Dahlgren and Margret Whitehead (1991).

Vision

Östergötland - A Health Region 2020

Goals

The overall common, measurable goals for the public health process in Östergötland are to

- improve the conditions in society for sound and equal health for all(new)
- increase the number of years of good health and quality of life
- narrow the gap in differences in health by strengthening health amongst the most vulnerable (new)

Strategy

The municipalities and the County Council of Östergötland as well as the Regional Development Council Östsam shall develop *management, knowledge and methods* regarding public health policy through:

Management

- manage and follow up in the area of public health from the highest political level
- include a public health perspective in political decisions
- decide on operative goals and efforts for public health in plans and governing documents
- allocate resources, time and expertise to the public health policy process

Knowledge

- strengthen expertise among public officials and staff members about health determinant factors and increase the capacity to handle them
- increase knowledge among public officials and staff members about the extent to which decisions and actions contribute to equal health
- increase knowledge and awareness of prerequisites for good health among everyone who lives and works in Östergötland

Methods

- use and develop methods that integrate public health in all agencies
- ensure that there are common regional and local indicators for health and for equity in health
The indicators should be developed in collaboration with national and international participants.
- link the regional and local indicators to budgets and governing documents in the respective agency
- develop a sustainable structure for regional coordination of public health policy and public health work within the Regional Association Östsam in which other public authorities, civil society, the business community, etc. are also involved
- consider starting an Östergötland Public Health Commission

Regional coordination of public health policy and public health work

The Regional Development Council Östsam, in collaboration with the municipalities and the County Council of Östergötland, shall develop a sustainable structure for regional coordination and collaboration that supports the public health policy and public health work in the county. This work shall be based on the regional development programme, on this policy, on the public health situation and ongoing public health work in the county. In the three-year plans, the Regional Association's authorized representatives shall decide on sub-goals and resources for the regional work. In addition, the representatives shall decide on activity goals and resources for the regional coordination function in the agency plan for the years in question.

Mission of the regional coordination function is to:

- develop a sustainable structure for regional coordination and collaboration about public health among affected public authorities, civil society and the business community
- support public health policy and organize and develop public health work in the county
- contribute to integrating a public health perspective into the local and regional planning and development process
- develop proposals on indicators for public health in Östergötland that the particular organisation can use in planning and follow-up. The indicators should comprise “lowest common denominators” for tracking the development of public health in the county as well as at the municipal and neighbourhood level
- arrange data collection, analyse the health situation, present environmental analyses and distribute knowledge and methods in collaboration with relevant research and development
- work to increase the county's resources for public health by supporting and coordinating applications for funding
- be the secretariat for the Östergötland Public Health Commission².

Organization

Public health issues shall be integrated in the Regional Development Council Östsam's entire operation. The ambition will be to develop a cross-sectoral approach with public health as one of the perspectives. In the Regional Development Council, the regional coordination function will be part of the Community Planning operations area, which is responsible for the regional development programme, infrastructure, mass transit, environment and energy, agricultural development, etc.

Costs and financing

The municipalities and the County Council of Östergötland plus the Regional Development Council Östsam shall agree no later than August 2010 on the extent, costs and financing regarding the coordination function in the Regional Development Council. Under the assumption that the parties make such an agreement, the Regional

² Under the assumption that such a commission is formed

Development Council Östsam shall decide on the coordination function in its operations plan for 2011.

An Östergötland Public Health Commission

Purpose

An Östergötland Public Health Commission, according to the model from WHO³, shall analyse the health situation in the county from a cross-sectoral knowledge and experience perspective. The commission shall proceed from the national public health policy goal areas and operate during the years 2012-2014. The commission shall analyze the health situation based on socioeconomic, environmental, gender, diversity/non-discrimination and life-cycle perspectives. The commission shall propose efforts at the county, municipal and neighbourhood level that create conditions for better health on equal terms for everyone who lives and works in Östergötland. Furthermore, the commission shall present its results in annual preliminary reports as well as a final report in the last quarter of 2014.

Principal

Östsam's Board of Directors shall be the principal for the Östergötland Public Health Commission and appoint the members. The municipalities and the County Council in Östergötland, the political parties, public authorities, Linköping University, non-profit organizations, etc. shall be given opportunity to propose individuals to serve on the commission.

Participants

The Östergötland Public Health Commission should be composed of committed, knowledgeable and experienced individuals from research, the public sector, politics and civil society. There may be 10-15 participants on the commission.

Secretariat

The Regional Development Council Östsam, the regional coordination function for public health policy and public health work shall be responsible for the secretary function on the commission. An important task is to prepare the start of a commission and recruit participants.

Costs and financing

The Regional Development Council Östsam shall in collaboration with the members and other interested parties work for the financing of an Östergötland Public Health Commission.

³ In 2008 WHO published the report "Closing the gap in a generation: health equity through action on the social determinants of health". An independent commission of 19 researchers from all over the world, chaired by Sir Michael Marmot, epidemiologist and public health researcher, prepared the report. Swedish translation of the report: <http://www.fhi.se/sv/Publikationer/Alla-publikationer/Utjamna-halsoskillnaderna-inom-en-generation1/>

Follow-up/evaluation

The work of the commission shall be followed up during the course of the process. In planning for the commission, resources for follow-up and evaluation should be included.

Follow-up of the policy

The municipalities and the County Council of Östergötland and the Regional Association Östsam shall follow up the policy in annual reports. The follow-up shall show to what extent the goals and strategies in the policy have been achieved and lead to decisions on remedying any deficiencies. The Regional Development Council Östsam shall describe in its annual report how the regional coordination is functioning and being developed based on the intentions.

Time period

The policy applies to the years 2011-2014. After that it is planned that Östergötland will become part of a new, larger regional organisation.