



HEALTH BRINGS WELFARE
2020
WELFARE BRINGS HEALTH

*The strategy of the National Institute
for Welfare and Health 2011–2020*

HEALTH BRINGS WELFARE 2020 WELFARE BRINGS HEALTH

*The strategy of the National Institute
for Welfare and Health 2011–2020*

FOREWORD	2
ABOUT THL	4
OUR VISION, MISSION STATEMENT AND VALUES	5
PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY	6
STRATEGY GOALS	8
SUCCESS FACTORS	16
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY	20
EVOLUTION OF THE STRATEGY	24

VALUES UNDERLYING OUR ACTIONS

- Effectiveness
- Partnership
- Responsibility
- Independence

SUCCESS FACTORS

- Success factors ensuring we reach our goals
- Responsible, inspiring and visionary leadership
 - A highly respected field of work and a good image as an employer
 - Highly skilled staff from a broad selection of disciplines
 - Strategic reform
 - Sustainable and strategically focused funding
 - Effective and interactive collaboration
 - Products, services, information and expertise which correspond to the needs of the general public and specific client groups
 - Up-to-date information management in support of operative reform

STRATEGIC GOALS

1

Improvements in public health, functional capacity and welfare

3

Capacity to prevent global and national threats to health and welfare to be maintained at a high level

5

Data resources in the field of social welfare and health care applied extensively in promoting health and welfare and the functioning of the service system

2

Reduced health and welfare inequalities

4

The needs of the population and society efficiently served by the social welfare and health care services

6

Health and welfare issues exerting a powerful impact on decision-making at different levels

EFFECTIVENESS TARGETS

OUR VISION AND MISSION

Our vision

A just and sustainable society for all where people in Finland live a good and healthy life.

Our mission

THL is an effective expert agency, committed to protecting and promoting health and welfare in Finland.



In what kind of environment is THL working to promote health and welfare in Finland?

Global change is rapid and it impacts the health and welfare of all. New countries are taking their place alongside the traditional powers. All-encompassing global phenomena include global population growth, population ageing, transnational trade and marketing, climate change and the sustainability of natural resources. These phenomena are reflected in economic fluctuations, migrations, and international mobility of corporate operations and people. Developments in information and communications technology are changing world views and operating environments.

Finland can succeed in the 2010s provided that we invest in public health and welfare, in education and skills, and in productivity and innovations. Health, welfare and wellbeing, education, and social cohesion contribute to a socially and economically sustainable society, which in turn generates more health and welfare for the population. Consequently a virtuous circle of health and welfare can emerge.

Many current changes call for constant monitoring and preparedness. Inequalities in health and welfare should be reduced. Lifestyle-related diseases are a key concern for public health. Infectious diseases and environmental health risks also call for action to safeguard public health. The social welfare and health care service system is facing great pressures: both the needs for and costs of services are increasing, while recruitment of personnel is becoming increasingly difficult. Clients represent an increasingly heterogeneous population while technological development will change operating practices. Efficiency, effectiveness, and equal access to services are key issues for social welfare and health care services. The position of high-level expertise as the foremost source of information regarding health and welfare is increasingly being questioned.

The Nordic welfare model, which is time-honoured and appreciated in Finland, faces challenges. Constant re-evaluations are taking place regarding the mandates and responsibilities of central and local government, regarding public and private services, markets versus the public sector, as well as about the role of citizens.

The strategy of the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) up to 2020 sets out effectiveness targets for THL in its work to promote the health, welfare and wellbeing of people in Finland in the context of the changing world described above.

Pekka Puska

Director General

National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL)



About THL

The National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) started its work on 1 January 2009, following the merger of the National Public Health Institute (KTL) and the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES). Work by more than a thousand experts in the health and welfare research fields and the social welfare and health care sectors is being carried out across Finland, with THL bases in Helsinki and six other Finnish cities. The key aim is to promote health and welfare throughout Finland.

THL's statutory duties

The purpose of the National Institute for Health and Welfare is to promote health and welfare, prevent diseases and social problems, and to develop social welfare and health care activities and services. The Institute is subordinated to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

The Act on the National Institute for Health and Welfare (668/2008), Section 1.

Our vision

A just and sustainable society for all where people in Finland live a good and healthy life.

Our mission

THL is an effective expert agency, committed to protecting and promoting health and welfare in Finland.

Values

Effectiveness

We influence work that protects and promotes the health and welfare of people in Finland by actively providing expert knowledge for use in the field and in decision-making.

Partnership

Our work is built on co-operation with many different partners and stakeholders.

Responsibility

We emphasise the importance of human dignity and justice in issues of health and welfare. Ultimately, we are responsible to all people in Finland for progress in health and welfare.

Independence

We are an autonomous expert institute and our work is based on research knowledge. We are deeply involved in international collaboration and we maintain expertise at the highest level.



**THL WORKS TO INNOVATE
AROUND ITS OPERATIONS IN
THE SERVICE OF PROMOTING
HEALTH AND WELFARE IN FINLAND**

This strategy document, entitled Health brings welfare – 2020 – Welfare brings health, describes the key development areas that THL's operations will focus on in the 2010s, including some new areas for development. Important global phenomena have been taken into account, with new initiatives. THL's experts are encouraged to network and to create effective operations in key fields of work.

In all its activities, THL strives for effective, high-level protection and promotion of health and welfare in Finland.

THL's own fundamental work must be maintained particularly in partnership with decision-makers, professionals working in social welfare and health care, the business sector, and with the general public – so as to enable us to strengthen and innovate our operations; this helps to facilitate the best initiatives and actions for the attainment of the proposed goals. The same applies to our research operations and building a knowledge base and expertise for developing social welfare and health care services. Health and welfare in Finland can only be improved if all the relevant actors work together.

THL has been assigned numerous expert and official duties in direct support of the operations of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. These duties provide an additional incentive for THL's work, characterised by activity, initiative and renewal.



**SIX ITEMS
FORM THL'S
STRATEGIC GOALS**

1

Improvements in public health, functional capacity and welfare

Preventing public health threats and ensuring welfare are as essential as ever in the 2010s. This will also help people stay at work for longer. It is important to understand the physical, psychological and social factors which contribute to diseases, functional capacity and welfare.

Effectiveness targets

- THL identifies changes in public health, work ability and functional capacity, as well as the factors that underlie these changes.
- THL benefits from a growing body of knowledge on the mechanisms and risk factors behind public health threats and social inequality. In its work, it uses this knowledge to prevent diseases, improve the population's functional capacity and promote social equality. In this way, THL will exert an influence on the social and physical environment of the general public and help people remain in work for longer.

2

Reduced health and welfare inequalities

Health and welfare inequalities between population groups and regions are threatening to grow in the 2010s. The background factors underlying these inequalities – for instance differences in living conditions or access to services between different population groups – have an impact that begins in childhood and extends to people of working age and older.

Effectiveness targets

- THL provides information, compares policy alternatives and proposes operating models for the improvement of health and welfare in all population groups. Particular attention is focused on measures to reduce poverty and on the provision of adequate basic security and minimum income security.
- THL reduces health and welfare inequalities by promoting services for the population as a whole.
- In reducing inequalities, THL takes into account vulnerable groups, particularly families, children and young people.

3

Capacity to prevent global and national threats to health and welfare to be maintained at a high level

In the 2010s, prevention of infectious diseases and environmental health threats, not least climate change, will demand even more attention than up till now. The social and health-related consequences of globalisation will demand action and preparedness in all sectors.

Effectiveness targets

- THL has taken adequate precautions against biological and environmental threats to the population. THL is responsible for long-term public health protection.
- THL contributes to mitigating those global threats that have relevance to health and welfare in Finland, to social sustainability, and to population group differences.

4

The needs of the population and society efficiently served by the social welfare and health care services

The cornerstones for improving health and welfare in Finland include social welfare and health services that are efficient, effective and available to all on equal terms. In the 2010s, there will be an emphasis on the functional and economic sustainability of services and of the service system as a whole.

Effectiveness targets

- THL provides up-to-date overviews of the service system, its structure and functioning, and also alternative solutions for improving access to services and for strengthening innovations.
- THL promotes the effectiveness of services by providing information on their current state and by expanding the examination of cost effectiveness to the core social welfare and health care services.
- THL promotes improvement of information management within the social welfare and health care services and engages in collaboration to ensure application of the results in the service system.

5

Data resources in the field of social welfare and health care applied extensively in promoting health and welfare and the functioning of the service system

Finland's highly developed data and biological sample resources offer growing opportunities for supporting health and welfare and for conducting research. In the 2010s, expanding ICT capacity and developing analytical methods in various sectors will augment the potential even further.

Effectiveness targets

- The information produced and compiled by THL is openly and freely available and efficiently used.
- Products and materials based upon THL data resources are up to date and of a high quality, while also corresponding to client needs.

6

Health and welfare issues exerting a powerful impact on decision-making at different levels

Knowledge-based operations are one of the key ideas in social welfare and health care policy. Health and welfare depend on decision-making in different sectors of society. In the 2010s, the different policy areas and their information needs will become even more intertwined than they are at present. Information also has an impact on the action taken by individual citizens to promote their own health and welfare.

Effectiveness targets

- THL expertise and information produced by THL are used in national, regional and municipal decision-making, influencing public debate in various sectors of Finnish society.
- THL bolsters the use of its information and expertise so as to ensure socially sustainable development and in support of individual citizens' efforts to improve their own health and welfare.
- THL draws on extensive international co-operation in its work to promote health and welfare in Finland, and supports global advances in the field.



THL'S SUCCESS FACTORS

The fundamental premise of THL's work is to promote health and welfare in a broad sense, as factors that extend into all areas of life. In order to be successful in this work, THL relies on its present and future success factors. The success factors are subject to constant development.



Responsible, inspiring and visionary leadership

Leadership at THL is visionary and promotes health and welfare in Finland. The leadership is professional and builds the future of THL.

A highly respected field of work and a good image as an employer

THL's field of operations is highly respected and offers opportunities for influential work to promote health and welfare in Finland. THL's leadership and field of operations combine to make THL an attractive workplace.

Highly skilled staff from a broad selection of disciplines

THL's effectiveness is the result of a high level of expertise, knowledge sharing and teamwork. Co-operation between THL's different units will be strengthened so as to promote synergies.

Strategic reform

THL operates in a flexible manner, anticipating changes in the operating environment through interactive strategic planning. THL develops and reforms its own mode of operations, processes and organisational structure.

Sustainable and strategically focused funding

THL uses funding from various sources to the best advantage. Funding is focused with optimal effectiveness on strategic targets, with sustainability of funding ensured. THL's operations are organized in a productive and financially viable manner and THL possesses solid expertise on funding issues.

Effective and interactive collaboration

THL is engaged in active interaction with strategic partners and key client groups. THL is familiar with the expectations and information needs of its client groups, i.e. decision-makers, social welfare and health care professionals, commercial actors in the sector and the general public. THL is in possession of adequate tools and channels for its interactive activities. The full utilisation of electronic channels and utilities presents a specific challenge.

Products, services, information and expertise which correspond to the needs of the general public and specific client groups

On the basis of its wide perspective on health and welfare issues, THL is able to offer a sufficiently broad range of expertise, products and services to answer the needs of different client groups.

Up-to-date information management in support of operative reform

THL information management as a whole is well organised. Information systems are constructed and planned for durability and flexibility. Development of THL's information management is integrated with the overall development of Finnish government-sector IT systems development.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY 2011–2015



THL's strategy up until 2020, entitled *Health brings welfare – 2020 – Welfare brings health*, will be a guideline for all THL operations, from actions encompassing the entire institute to the launch of individual projects.

The strategy will guide annual operational planning throughout THL. Annual operational planning is also the foremost arena for implementation of the strategy. THL's four divisions, and the departments and units within them, occupy a key position when it comes to strategy implementation.

A strategy implementation plan will be drafted for the first half of the strategy period and will be reviewed halfway through the period. Strategy implementation will be subjected to thorough scrutiny in connection with the annual performance review.

Alongside the decisions made during the annual planning cycle of THL's operating units, strategy implementation is also supported by focusing particular attention on certain specific strategy measures on the level of the institute as a whole. The aim is to achieve tangible results in these areas immediately in the first half of the strategy period.

Strategy actions at the institute level are controlled by THL's Management Group and all divisions participate in them. Each of the four divisions and the Information Department and the Department of Communications and PR have named one key strategic action that they have main responsibility for, with co-operation from the rest of the institute. In addition, strategic actions will be taken according to a separate programme in order to develop THL's success factors.

General strategy actions at THL co-ordinated by the Management Group up until 2015

THL will operate to ensure that...

- prevention of inequality begins already in childhood.
- scrutiny of the cost-effectiveness of services is expanded beyond specialized medical care to cover all key social welfare and health services.
- decision-makers and the general public are made even more clearly aware of the overall picture of the social welfare and health care system.
- use of THL data resources is facilitated, i.e. statistical and register data, research data sets and biological sample collections.

Joint strategy actions on the responsibility of divisions and individual departments up until 2015

THL will apply a micro-simulation model that will enable evaluation of the adequacy and functioning of basic security and minimum income security, compare proposed measures and provide policy alternatives with new methods for ensuring fairness and preventing exclusion.

Division of Welfare and Health Policies

THL's expertise will focus on putting a stop to weight gain to reduce obesity in the general population to improve public health and promote functional capacity and longer working careers. This will be attained through nutrition and exercise, and by means of information campaigns and partnership.

Division of Welfare and Health Promotion

THL will improve the monitoring system for infectious diseases to ensure rapid detection of epidemics and to enable monitoring of the impact of the national vaccination programme.

Division of Health Protection

THL will improve patient safety by supporting social welfare and health care units in their development work and by focusing special attention on combating health care associated infections.

Division of Health and Social Services

THL will efficiently implement reforms in the ICT systems of the social welfare and health care sector and introduce reforms in its statistics and registers.

Information Department

THL's expertise will be made available for efficient use by clients and the general public through active deployment of online communications channels and novel solutions.

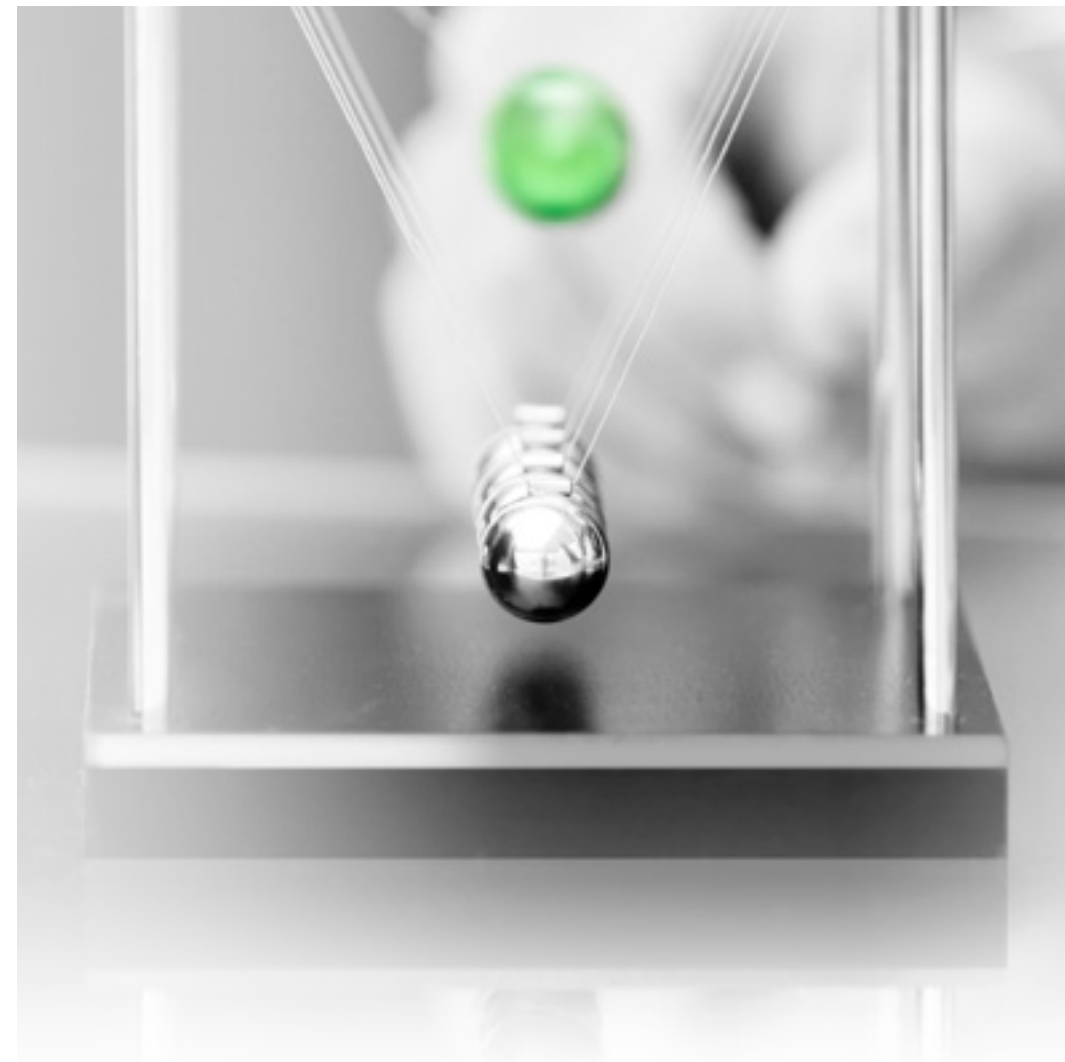
Department of Communications and PR

Evolution of the strategy

THL was formed on 1 January 2009, with the merger of the National Public Health Institute (KTL) and the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES). The Act on the National Institute for Health and Welfare was adopted in 2008 and defined the field of operations and the organisational structure of the new Institute. In June 2008, during the merger preparations, a merger strategy was drafted. The merger strategy offered guidelines for the further development of the fields of operations of the new Institute's predecessor organisations. The main new content of the supplemental strategy *Health brings welfare – 2020 – Welfare brings health*, published at the beginning of 2011, focuses on the effectiveness of THL's operations.

The strategy provides clearer definitions for effectiveness targets that were drafted at a general level in the merger strategy. Hundreds of experts from THL's own staff participated in preparing the strategy at different stages of the work and in different working groups. The strategy has been on the agenda at numerous staff information meetings, both for all THL staff and for the staff of individual departments. The National Institute for Health and Welfare council, made up of representatives of key stakeholder groups and influential figures in the social welfare and health care sector, participated actively in all stages of strategy preparation.

In preparing the THL strategy for 2020, THL took into account both the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health's new strategy, completed in early 2011 and entitled *A Socially Sustainable Finland 2020*, and the new strategy of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, published in autumn 2010 and entitled *Well-being through work*.





NATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE

www.thl.fi