



April 14, 2022

Emmeline Ochiai
Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
1101 Wootton Parkway, Suite 420
Rockville, MD 20852

Re: Healthy People 2030 Champion Statement of Interest

Dear Ms. Ochiai:

The American Lung Association appreciates the opportunity to submit a statement of interest to become a Healthy People 2030 Champion.

The American Lung Association is the oldest voluntary health organization in the United States. For more than 110 years, the Lung Association has been working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy and research. The Lung Association works on behalf of more than 36 million Americans living with lung diseases including lung cancer, asthma and COPD as well as those at risk for them.

The Healthy People 2030 Objectives set the country's public health priorities for the decade. The American Lung Association's mission, to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease, is aligned with these the priorities laid out in the Healthy People 2030 Objectives, and our work strives to support the vision that Healthy People 2030 lays out. The Lung Association has been engaged with Healthy People 2030 and have previously expressed our support in our comments on the proposed Healthy People 2030 Objectives in January 2019.¹

The Lung Association work mainly falls into five of the Healthy People 2030 issue areas. They are: Tobacco Use, Respiratory Health, Cancer, Environmental Health and Access to Care.

Tobacco Use

One of the Lung Association's strategic imperatives is to create a tobacco-free future. In this effort, our organization's goals are aligned with several of the Healthy People 2030 objectives related to ending tobacco use. The Lung Association's work has long focused on helping people recover from their addiction to tobacco products.

The American Lung Association is actively working to support the Healthy People 2030 objective of reducing tobacco use in adolescents. The Lung Association is very concerned about the increased number of adolescents who use tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. The Lung Association advocates removing all flavored tobacco products from the marketplace, including flavors that attract and addict young people to tobacco. We will continue to advocate for these policies and encourage the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to remove these products from the marketplace, starting with menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars. The presence of these products on the marketplace and the industry marketing targeted at racial

and ethnic minority groups as well as members of the LGBTQ+ community exacerbates existing disparities in tobacco use rates, and subsequently, tobacco caused death and disease.

The American Lung Association also supports other policy measures that have been proven to reduce tobacco use among adolescents. These include higher taxes on cigarettes and tobacco products, including e-cigarettes; funding for state tobacco control programs to prevent and reduce tobacco use; and smokefree environments in homes and public places. Progress on implementation of all these proven policies is outlined in the most recent Lung Association's annual ["State of Tobacco Control" report](#), released on January 26, 2022.

The Lung Association supports the Healthy People 2030 Objective of increasing Medicaid coverage of evidence-based treatment to help people quit using tobacco (TU-16). The Lung Association collects and makes public state Medicaid programs' coverage of and barriers to tobacco cessation treatments. These data serve as the source for CDC's State Tobacco Activities Tracking and Evaluation (STATE) System which is the TU-16 Healthy People 2030 Objective's source.

Continuing professional education among healthcare professionals to address emerging tobacco trends also remains a driver for the Lung Association. The 2020 U.S. Surgeon General's Report presents findings that underscore the challenges we face to further reduce smoking in that over 40% of adults who smoke do not receive advice to quit from a healthcare professional and fewer than one in three adults who smoke use cessation counseling or FDA-approved medications when trying to quit. These findings are particularly worrisome and prompted the Lung Association to develop a training geared towards healthcare professionals to help increase healthcare provider intervention and increase cessation program referral and enrollment. Our free [Ask, Advise, Refer to Quit Don't Switch training](#) is based on the CDC's Ask-Advise-Refer model. It utilizes updated tools and strategies for carrying out an effective, brief tobacco intervention for patients using any tobacco product, including e-cigarettes. This training promotes evidence-based, proven-effective cessation strategies with real life case scenarios to further skill sets in conducting the brief intervention in different settings among varying populations. To date, over 1,000 professionals across the nation have taken advantage of this training opportunity.

Since 1980, the American Lung Association has helped hundreds of thousands of Americans quit smoking with Freedom From Smoking®. This proven-effective, evidence-based program continues to help people end their addiction to tobacco. The Lung Association is working to improve access to this program, including offering an online version of the program along with in-person and virtual group clinics in communities across the country. The Lung Association also is actively training Freedom From Smoking® facilitators and encouraging people who use tobacco products to participate in the program. These efforts support the Healthy People 2030 Objectives of reducing tobacco use in adults and increasing past year quit attempts.

Finally, the American Lung Association recognizes the importance of helping kids and teens who are already addicted to tobacco products to quit. The Lung Association has partnered with the Ad Council to educate parents about youth e-cigarette use with the *"Get Your Head Out of the Clouds"* [campaign](#). The Lung Association also plans to further promote its Not On Tobacco® and INDEPTH programs that educate young people on the dangers of tobacco use and offer effective interventions to help them quit. Both of these programs support and advance the Healthy People 2030 objective of reducing adolescent tobacco use.

The American Lung Association will continue to work to support various other measures related to eliminating commercial tobacco product use. Both from a policy and a programmatic lens, the Lung Association engages with states to increase the number of patients that get advice to quit tobacco from their provider. We have worked with various states and health systems to implement systems change to increase the number of people screened and offered treatment for tobacco use. This work supports the Healthy People 2030 objective to increase the number of people who receive advice from their provider to quit.

Respiratory Health

The American Lung Association works to improve the lives of people with lung disease, including asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD).

One way the American Lung Association's work supports the Healthy People 2030 objectives is by enabling patient access to guidelines-based care. Not all diagnoses of asthma or COPD are of equal severity. Ensuring all patients have access to guidelines-based care is vital to making sure individuals are receiving appropriate treatment to manage their disease and can avoid trips to the emergency department as well as hospitalization.

As part of our work on advancing access to guidelines-based asthma care, the Lung Association collects and makes public state Medicaid programs' coverage of treatment and services recommended by the recently updated National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (NAEPP) guidelines. By identifying gaps in coverage, we and other stakeholders can work with states to improve their coverage. This work supports the Healthy People 2030 objectives of reducing asthma attacks, emergency room visits and hospitalizations.

The American Lung Association actively works to reduce asthma-related emergency department visits and hospitalizations by connecting patients and caregivers to asthma self-management education (AS-ME) programs, preparing a workforce to deliver AS-ME, promoting screening for tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke, connecting people with asthma to home visiting programs, preparing health professionals to deliver asthma guidelines-based care, working with health systems and clinics to provide asthma quality improvement programs, connecting people with asthma to support services, convening partners to coordinate care for people with asthma, and educating communities and establishing policies for outdoor sources of air pollution and indoor sources at home, work or school.

As for COPD, the Lung Association works to reduce emergency department visits and hospitalizations for patients through provider training, patient-friendly educational programs and information-sharing through our COPD Trends Brief that digs into COPD morbidity and mortality at the state level.

Cancer

Another strategic imperative of the Lung Association is to defeat lung cancer. As part of our LUNG FORCE initiative, we educate the public about lung cancer, emphasizing the fact that it is the leading cancer killer of both women and men.

The Lung Association created the "[Lung Health Barometer](#)," a survey of public awareness and gaps in understanding related to lung cancer. The results of this survey allow the Lung Association to create resources to better educate the public on the high prevalence of lung

cancer and the importance of lung cancer screening among individuals who are at high risk. One recent finding was that only 36% of respondents knew that lung cancer screening was available.

Another approach that the American Lung Association has undertaken is to increase the knowledge and availability of lung cancer screening through the “Saved by the Scan” [campaign](#) in partnership with the Ad Council. This campaign raises awareness of lung cancer screenings and directs people to a quiz to see if they are eligible for screening. Early detection through low-dose CT screening can decrease lung cancer mortality by up to 20% among the high-risk population.

High risk individuals (as identified by the United States Preventive Services Task Force) enrolled in the Medicaid program are an especially important population to be screened for lung cancer. The American Lung Association collects data on fee-for-service state Medicaid program coverage of lung cancer screenings for the high-risk population. These important public health data show which states provide lung cancer screenings for the Medicaid population and which states can improve their coverage.

Through its research program, the American Lung Association has funded more than \$22 million in lung cancer research for earlier detection, better treatments and cures to defeat lung cancer.

The American Lung Association’s [“State of Lung Cancer”](#) report shows the toll lung cancer takes on each state in the country. Examining rates of new cases, survival, early diagnosis, surgical treatment, lack of treatment, and screening, this report finds states must do more to protect their residents from lung cancer. In 2020, the “State of Lung Cancer” report began to explore the lung cancer burden among racial and ethnic minority groups at the national and state levels.

The Lung Association’s efforts are directed at the general public and those at high risk of lung cancer, including individuals in populations of focus. We plan to continue our Lung Health Barometer, promote lung cancer screening for the high-risk population, collect state Medicaid coverage data, release our “State of Lung Cancer” report and fund research for the next decade. We believe these efforts show our commitment to the Healthy People 2030 goals related to the lung cancer objectives, specifically reducing lung cancer deaths and increasing the proportion of adults who are screened for lung cancer.

Environmental Health

The American Lung Association is working to ensure that all individuals breathe clean air both outdoors and indoors through its Healthy Air Campaign. The work under this Campaign aligns with the objective under Environmental Health to reduce the number of days people, particularly vulnerable populations, are exposed to unhealthy air.

Through our Healthy Air Campaign, the Lung Association addresses outdoor air pollution by advocating for more stringent long-term and short-term, primary and secondary standards for criteria pollutants (ozone, particulate matter, and nitrogen dioxide) under the Clean Air Act. Through its flagship [“State of the Air”](#) report released annually for the past 22 years, the Lung Association continues to present the current state of and trends in ozone and particulate matter pollution at the state, county, and metropolitan area levels. The report is based on the analysis

of data acquired from official air quality monitors and is a useful resource for policymakers and citizens to take action to improve local air quality and limit exposure to unhealthy air. In addition to engaging the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) policies, we are also educating citizens through fact sheets and by outlining simple steps in personal behavioral changes to reduce ambient air pollution.

The Lung Association works to mitigate indoor pollutants by educating the public on the dangers of radon by holding a [Radon Action Month](#), providing mitigation resources such as the [National Radon Action Plan](#) and making available both short-term and long-term [Radon Test Kits](#). The Lung Association is also addressing methane pollution to improve indoor air quality and mitigate climate change. Given that methane is the primary component of natural gas, the Lung Association advocates for stringent standards to curb its fugitive emissions and leakages from oil and natural gas extraction and transmission operations as well as for reduced natural gas consumption indoors by the end user. We also advocate for energy efficiency measures as part of demand side management of fossil fuel use in improving air quality both outdoors and indoors.

Access To Care

The American Lung Association recognizes that access to healthcare is vital to ensure that all individuals can live lives free of all lung diseases. We strongly support measures to increase the number of people who get the flu vaccine each year and to increase the proportion of people who have insurance.

The American Lung Association has long encouraged every eligible individual to get the flu shot. We plan on continuing our support for all individuals to get the flu shot, supporting the relevant Healthy People 2030 objective.

The Lung Association also recognizes that quality and affordable healthcare is key to ensuring lung disease patients, or those at risk of lung disease, can access the care they need to stay healthy. The Lung Association encourages eligible individuals and families to enroll in healthcare plans during the annual open enrollment season. We have educational resources at www.lung.org/openenrollment to help patients and consumers choose the most appropriate plan for them. We will continue this work in future years to help support the Healthy People 2030 objective to increase the proportion of people who have insurance.

Conclusion

As demonstrated, the American Lung Association has and will continue to support the Healthy People 2030 goals and objectives. The Healthy People 2030 Objectives very closely align with our mission “to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease... through education, advocacy, and research.” We believe the Healthy People 2030 designation is appropriate due to the work of our organization and our commitment to the Healthy People 2030 Objectives.

For additional information, please contact Anne DiGiulio (anne.digiulio@lung.org), National Director, Lung Health Policy. We can also be reached at any of our offices located throughout the country, including at 55 W. Wacker Drive, Suite 1150, Chicago, IL 60601, or via our website at: www.lung.org.

Thank you for your consideration of the American Lung Association for this designation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harold Wimmer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Harold Wimmer
President and CEO

¹ American Lung Association Comments to Secretary Azar, Department of Health and Human Services re: Proposed Healthy People 2030 Objectives. January 17, 2019. Accessed at: <https://www.lung.org/getmedia/6382327d-6cad-4ba3-b7ac-1ced6e8073cc/american-lung-association-27.pdf.pdf>