

Division for Health Services in the Years 2022-2025

Introduction

This document is intended to highlight specific initiatives where the knowledge demand is significant and where the Division for Health Services can contribute in the coming years. The focus will be on leveraging the expertise and experience already present in the Division. Key tasks and deliverables are extensively described in each Cluster's plans and are therefore not included in this document.

Goals of the Division

Aligned with the Norwegian Institute of Public Health's (FHI's) societal mission, our primary goal is to produce, summarize, and communicate research based knowledge for better decision-making in public health and healthcare, both nationally and globally. The knowledge we generate should form the basis for shaping the future health care services, in line with the FHI strategy for 2019-2024. Our primary interest groups include decision-makers in the health care sector in Norway and selected low- and middle-income countries. Success for us means improved, more equitable, and more efficient health care services, leading to better public health nationally and globally.

Methods

To generate knowledge useful for health care services, our main methods include systematic reviews of existing knowledge, health technology assessments (HTAs), quantitative research, and communication, including efforts to implement knowledge and implementation in the health care services. Close collaboration with the services is necessary to ensure our efforts align with their needs, achieved through network meetings, qualitative research, and assessments of how users perceive our deliveries. Documenting the relevance and quality of our outputs, we aim for our publications to be used in normative products of health management, central policy documents, scientific journals, and other decision-making documents.

Organization

To enhance our deliveries of high-quality and relevant work, most activities are carried out in autonomous teams with varying members from different parts of the Division. Collaboration with other relevant professional environments within and outside of FHI, particularly with services and the university sector, is crucial. The Division is largely organization in Clusters by method applied, especially concerning HTAs, quantitative methods on large datasets (administrative data and patient surveys), and knowledge dissemination to healthcare professionals in Norway (Digital Health Library). The Division also has some thematic responsibilities, especially in migration health, breastfeeding and global health, and the Centre for Epidemic Interventions Research (CEIR).

Fields to Strengthen in the Next 1-5 Years

Our goal is to contribute to FHI's societal mission by leveraging our existing expertise to improve research-based knowledge for policymakers where it is not provided by others. It is advantageous to focus on specific methods and fields where we can become leaders, rather than spreading ourselves thin. Based on this, we aim to strengthen the following selected fields:

1. Knowledge support for municipalities:

- Develop a knowledge support system for decision-making in municipal health care services.
- Create management tools and models adaptable to different needs in various municipalities.

- Contribute to autonomous learning in municipal services, by initiating and supporting trials and implementation of measures.
- 2. Knowledge about interventions:**
- Conduct studies on causal effects of interventions in healthcare, emphasizing research on epidemic measures (CEIR).
 - Enhance assessments of methods applied in the services using administrative, registry, and patient-reported data.
 - Build empirically-based models for projections and simulations of interventions.
- 3. Future data foundation for knowledge:**
- Be a national leader in utilizing and connecting existing registry data and adopting new data sources.
 - Develop and test data collection methods to improve representability of various population groups.
 - Work towards making health-related information more accessible for statistics, analyses, and research.
- 4. Collaboration to strengthen public health institutions and systems in other countries:**
- Be a key contributor to Norway's international work in areas where FHI is a national competence organization.
 - Deliver research, evaluations, analyses, advice, and communication in collaboration with selected low- and middle-income countries, European countries, and the Arctic/Northern regions.

Measures to Strengthen These Fields

To strengthen these fields, we need to improve our ability to seek and secure external funding. Tasks currently undertaken should be redirected as much as possible towards these selected fields.

Increased collaboration within the Clusters, between the Clusters in the Division, among different Divisions within FHI, and with external colleagues, including the Health Directorate and academia, is crucial. Efficiency, potentially through automation, will be necessary to allocate resources to the selected fields, even if it may alter or even somewhat reduce the quality of our other deliveries.

Strengthening the selected fields will also require new skills. The new competencies include, but are not limited to:

1. Autonomous employees taking co-responsibility for Division leadership by undertaking new initiatives, proposing new projects, and seeking external funding.
2. Competence in project management (including some legal knowledge) and new methods such as machine learning and other automation, longitudinal and quasi-experimental methods, and handling large and unstructured datasets (including programming/coding).

Vision for the Division

To effectively prioritize these fields, we need a clear direction in our work. A concise vision statement can serve as a guiding principle to:

- Allocate time to the selected fields, including building new expertise, by gradually reducing some tasks.
- Create a stronger sense of community around common goals in the Division's work.

- Foster greater expertise in the fields we are involved in.
- Enable a better understanding of each other's tasks, making us more flexible in supporting each other when needed.

FHI's vision is "Better health for all," and a possible sub-vision for our Division will be considered in the future.