

NAM

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024–2028



NATIONAL
ACADEMY
of MEDICINE

Preface

The National Academy of Medicine (NAM), founded in 1970 as the Institute of Medicine (IOM), is uniquely trusted as a source of evidence-based guidance on health, medicine, biomedical science, and related policy in the United States and around the world. In 2023, the NAM assembled a committee of members, fellows, and staff to guide the development of a new strategic plan. As part of this process, the committee reviewed the NAM’s first strategic plan, *Goalposts for a Healthier Future* (2018–2023), which was completed shortly after the IOM was reconstituted as an Academy alongside the National Academy of Sciences and National Academy of Engineering. This plan provided a roadmap for the NAM to reinforce its role as an innovative, resourceful, dynamic organization that is adaptive, resilient, and effective in a rapidly changing environment.

Five years later, the current public health and health care ecosystem is marked by tremendous promise and opportunity but also intensifying challenges and complexity. Since 2020, COVID-19 has killed and sickened millions; revealed vulnerabilities and inequities in health care, public health, and supply chains; and fueled the rise of dangerous misinformation that undermines the missions of science and health institutions. Meanwhile, the rapidly intensifying and inequitably distributed impacts of climate change are eroding the health of entire populations and testing the resilience of the systems on which human well-being depends. These existential threats call for unprecedented leadership, collaboration, and innovation across health and social sectors.

Yet, simultaneously, we have witnessed unprecedented breakthroughs in science and technology with the rapidly advancing capabilities of artificial intelligence and the potential to accelerate progress in health and prosperity—as long as they are deployed responsibly and equitably.

The incredible need and opportunity inherent in this moment require a nimble and anticipatory strategic plan that calls for the NAM to lead boldly and innovatively, with unswerving commitment to science and integrity. The new strategic plan (2024–2028) builds on the strengths that positioned the Academy for impactful leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and delineates our role in addressing the complex set of evolving and intersecting challenges that shape health and well-being for people everywhere. Further, in this context, the plan lays out critical opportunities for the NAM to deepen and extend its capabilities for even greater impact.

Executing this plan will require commitment, input, and action from a broad array of collaborators. It will require new resources and tactics to sharpen the Academy’s ability to anticipate and respond to emerging challenges; effectively harness technology and data; and diversify its audiences and relationships. An implementation plan will accompany the strategic plan to operationalize the goals and strategies to ensure impact and measure our progress.

Achieving our vision of health for everyone, everywhere, requires us all to play a role. The NAM appreciates the time and insights of strategic planning committee members (listed on page iv) in developing this plan, as well as skillful facilitation by McKinley Advisors. We are grateful for the passion, skills, and commitment of members, expert volunteers, sponsors, fellows and scholars, and staff.

—**Victor J. Dzau, MD**, President, National Academy of Medicine

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Vision, Mission, and Values

VISION: Health for everyone, everywhere.

The NAM envisions a world in which everyone, everywhere can be healthy, no matter their background or resources. Achieving this vision requires a bold commitment to stewarding growth in the science and evidence base for health and health care, as well as to confronting the structures and systems that impede application of evidence and perpetuate inequitable health outcomes.

MISSION: To advance science, inform policy, and catalyze action to achieve human health, equity, and well-being.

Our mission is not only to achieve health and well-being, but also to drive progress in equity. We accomplish this mission by advancing scientific discoveries and innovation, building the evidence needed to shape effective policies, and fostering collaboration and momentum across sectors for positive change based on the evidence.

VALUES

Scientific Excellence, Integrity, and Accountability

For more than 50 years, the NAM has been dedicated to science and evidence as the foundation of sound policy and progress in health and health care. In an era of growing mistrust in scientific institutions, we redouble our commitment to promoting integrity and accountability within our own organization and among the health care, public health, and biomedical science communities at large.

Innovation, Adaptation, and Anticipation

The rapid evolution and complexity of the challenges we face, alongside a wave of new tools and technologies with the potential to address these challenges, necessitates strengthening capacity for readiness and adaptation within the NAM as well as across organizations, systems, and national and global structures that safeguard health.

Community Engagement and Collaboration

In the spirit of “nothing about us without us,” a phrase first popularized by disability rights activists, the NAM pledges to not only consult the communities affected by health challenges, but also engage them as leaders and equal partners in the design of solutions. This is especially true for historically underrepresented communities who disproportionately experience health inequities.

Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity

Structural and systemic racism and other embedded forces exclude people from positions of power, deprive them of resources, and perpetuate disparities in health and well-being. As part of a journey toward rectification, the NAM commits to advancing inclusion, diversity, and equity within the Academy and beyond.

Goals and Strategies

The 2024–2028 strategic plan positions the NAM as a science-driven organization with the vision to lead in times of crisis and opportunity, leverage innovations to fuel better health, and propel collective action toward evidence-informed solutions. In parallel, we will support the transformation of the U.S. health system to meet the needs of society and to drive a culture of equity and resilience within our own organization and the health sector at large. The plan is designed to be dynamic and flexible to steer the NAM through unforeseen circumstances, prepare us to capitalize on new opportunities, and enable us to address a wide variety of critical issues.

Goal 1: Science

Advance science, technology, and innovation as a foundation for health and medicine.

In an era of unprecedented progress in science and technology, marked by the rapid advancement and evolution of artificial intelligence, it is imperative to harness opportunities responsibly, effectively, and equitably. Strong ethical frameworks and inclusive practices prevent innovations from cementing inequities, damaging social cohesion, and introducing unanticipated risks—while fostering breakthroughs with potential to drive health solutions at scale and move the needle on challenges once considered intractable. Amid an explosion of new tools and approaches, the NAM will work both internally and externally to advance practices that earn and sustain trust in scientific institutions.

Strategy 1a: Evaluate and address societal implications, mitigate risks, and ensure equity in emerging science, medicine, technology, and innovation.

The NAM will build on the work of the Committee of Emerging Science, Technology, and Innovation in Health & Medicine (CESTI)—which developed a straw framework for multisectoral governance to ensure equity, operationalize ethics, and mitigate societal risks around new developments—as well as our follow-on 2023 report, *Toward Equitable Innovation in Health and Medicine: A Framework*. We will advance the learnings of CESTI and support implementation of the report's recommendations through an Action Collaborative designed to foster change in innovation culture and advance a governance framework across the innovation lifecycle that ensures equitable progress and benefit. Importantly, building on the foundation of our Culture of Health Program, we will also undertake a major initiative to conceptualize, define, and advance the science of health equity. Finally, we will evaluate and foster ways to enhance the success, global competitiveness and leadership of the US biomedical research enterprise.

Strategy 1b: Rigorously examine how emerging data sources, digital tools, and artificial intelligence can be leveraged to promote data-informed decision-making for population health, equity, and well-being.

Exponentially expanding data sources and the unprecedented computing power of AI applications hold great promise to identify and deliver real-time innovative health solutions with population-level impact. The NAM will convene actors to enhance collaboration and accelerate momentum toward realizing this promise. For example, the Health & Health Care Artificial Intelligence Code of Conduct, stewarded by the NAM Leadership Consortium, will provide a guiding framework to ensure that AI algorithms and their application in health, health care, and biomedical science perform accurately, safely, reliably, and ethically in the service of better health for all.

Strategy 1c: Innovate in science communication and meaningful engagement with all partners, including the public, to advance trust in science.

The NAM will increase its investment in communication and outreach strategies to broaden and build trust with audiences and build authentic, productive relationships with a wide array of collaborators. The NAM is establishing an innovative, external communications advisory group to help ensure currency with developing communications tools and approaches and shape their use for NAM initiatives; steer our application of strategies to strengthen trust; build bidirectional relationships at the community level; and advise on effective approaches for the NAM's response and engagement on rapidly emerging health and health care challenges. These strategies will enable more proactive, informed, and effective communication in support of our mission.

Goal 2: Action

Lead, inspire, and catalyze evidence-informed action on urgent, critical issues and long-term societal challenges to health.

Leveraging a greater than 50-year reputation for integrity, objectivity, and nonpartisanship, the NAM is uniquely capable of bold and constructive leadership even and especially when the issues that affect human health are complex and divisive. Climate change, one of the largest-scale threats to human health and prosperity of our lifetimes, is such an issue, and the NAM is moving aggressively to mobilize solutions among health, science, global communities, and supply chain organizations. Structural racism, violence, and misinformation are additional examples of entrenched societal challenges that require collaborations and leadership equally from health organizations and those experiencing impacts in communities. Impactful solutions rely on cross-sectoral partnerships and co-creation of innovative strategies.

Strategy 2a: Address climate change as an urgent, existential threat to human life, health, and well-being as a top priority.

The NAM has an unwavering commitment to leading change across the health sector to slow the pace of climate change and mitigate its impacts. We have chosen to highlight climate change apart from other major challenges affecting human health due to its scale, urgency, and inequitable impacts on people already experiencing poverty, marginalization, and instability. We will rapidly codevelop and deploy evidence-informed solutions with partners to aid the health sector in reducing its own carbon footprint while building resilience, caring for people impacted by climate change, and serving as a strong proponent of progress among other sectors. The NAM's Grand Challenge on Climate Change, Human Health, and Equity—the largest program in our history—will improve and protect human health and equity by transforming systems that both contribute to and are impacted by climate change. The grand challenge has five strategic goals: 1) communicating the climate crisis as a public health and equity crisis; 2) developing a roadmap for systems transformation towards a climate- and health-sustaining economy; 3) catalyzing the health sector to reduce its climate footprint and ensure its resilience; 4) accelerating research and innovation at the intersection of climate, health, and equity; and 5) reducing climate-related health inequities. Together, these activities will leverage the Academy's unparalleled independence, objectivity, convening power, and community of experts to advance the evidence, catalyze national and global communities, and accelerate transformation.

Strategy 2b: Anticipate and address critical issues affecting health and medicine across the United States and globally.

In recognition that health is largely determined by factors outside the clinical setting, the NAM has long been committed to addressing large-scale, intersecting societal challenges that threaten health and well-being—including pandemics, climate change, misinformation, and inequity. Going forward, in order to better anticipate these issues and respond with speed, we will apply a variety of methods to surveil and forecast emerging challenges and health impacts across scientific, social, and environmental dimensions, both within the United States and globally. These include challenges already mentioned in this plan—such as pandemics, violence, and the impacts of new science and technology—and others, such as critical shortages of health workers and other essential resources.

Strategy 2c: Inspire and catalyze bold, visionary action with transformational partnerships.

The complexity and global nature of the challenges affecting health today require outside-the-box solutions and nontraditional collaborations. The NAM will leverage pathbreaking programmatic mechanisms, such as Grand Challenges and global innovation competitions, as well as partnerships with government, philanthropy, industry and sectors beyond health and medicine, to unlock approaches that were previously unimagined. Further, we will work to develop networks of partners at all levels—beginning internally, leveraging the vast multidisciplinary expertise of the National Academies—and extending to localities, states, regions, and national and international actors. Such partnerships will enable timely co-development and deployment of solutions to complex and crosscutting health challenges. To further NAM's global reach and leadership, we will continue to participate and lead discussions at international forums and venues including the United Nations General Assembly, G7 and G20 summits, World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting, World Health Summit, Climate Week NYC, and the Conference of the Parties (COP), among others. We will also continue to collaborate with institutions such as the International Academy Partnership, WEF, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and other global development banks.

Strategy 2d: Mobilize public-private partnerships and engage impacted communities to co-create actionable solutions.

No single sector can act alone to solve a major societal challenge affecting health. The NAM will leverage public-private partnerships, such as Action Collaboratives, to facilitate collective action toward shared goals. At every step, we will engage members of impacted communities as leaders in designing and implementing solutions. For example, the NAM will expand programmatic approaches, such as our Climate Communities Network (CCN), which brings together leaders from communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate change to collaboratively identify and develop solutions to climate-related health inequities both within and across member communities, and to inform the strategic direction and outcomes of NAM's climate grand challenge. CCN members work alongside representatives from government, philanthropy, academia, and industry to catalyze innovation, inform policy, drive funding, and co-design solutions.

Goal 3: System Transformation***Catalyze transformation toward a health system that is effective, efficient, equitable, affordable, and continuously learning.***

Three years after the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the fractures within the U.S. health system have become clearer than ever. The disconnect between our public health and health care systems, record levels of health worker burnout, inefficient data sharing and utilization, unaffordable care, and inequitable outcomes misaligned with patient values are just a few of the major challenges that prevent the system from serving the nation and its communities at an optimal or even adequate level. The NAM will deepen its dedicated focus on marshaling multiple stakeholders to promote the strategies and actions necessary for health and health care effectiveness, efficiency, and equity that approaches what is possible from the size of the nation's systemwide health investment.

Strategy 3a: Foster understanding and action on strategies that reduce costs and fragmentation and yield maximum value for health system performance and outcomes.

The NAM, through the work of our Leadership Consortium (LC), is the only national-level entity specifically dedicated to improving alignment across sectors by advancing collaboration on common-ground issues presenting obstacles to achieving overall health system performance that is effective, efficient, equitable, and continuously learning. Comprised of leading national public and private health organizations and agencies, the LC will expand their networked activities. For example, our *Emerging Stronger from COVID-19: Priorities for Health System Transformation* initiative offered a real-time assessment of the pandemic's impact across nine health system sectors: clinicians; patients, families, and communities; care systems; payers; public health; quality, safety, and standards

organizations; research; digital health; and health product manufacturers and innovators. The report highlighted three fundamental challenges in play across all sectors: systemwide fragmentation, misaligned incentives, and systemic & structural inequities—plus a growing measure of distrust. To build on these learnings, the NAM has assembled the Commission on Investment Imperatives for a Healthy Nation to identify opportunities and priorities for creating the broad, cross-sector alignment necessary to overcome these core health system fragilities and reverse alarming setbacks in health system performance.

Strategy 3b: Advance population health by integrating personal health, health care, public health, and social strategies so individuals and communities can reach their full, equitable health potential.

To improve health at the population level, health care must collaborate with public health and other systems to share and interpret data, co-create solutions, and deliver comprehensive services. The NAM will convene clinical, public health, social services, and community actors to design and evaluate integration models and approaches. For example, the NAM Commission on Investment Imperatives is charged with identifying health financing, data, and digital health levers to integrate financial incentives and accountability measures that forge better health–health care linkages. Similarly, implementation of NAM-developed community engagement measures will facilitate these linkages. In addition, we are working with federal and state governments, public health, healthcare systems, academia and private sectors to develop a set of feasible, meaningful, collaborative action steps across health care, public health, and community supports to help people in the United States stay healthy. A core element of this effort is harmonizing related work across federal agencies in support of key common priorities.

Strategy 3c: Steward novel and transformative approaches in health research to address rapidly changing needs, opportunities, and technologies.

As technology and innovation accelerate in multiple arenas related to health and health care, so do the possibilities for unintended consequences. Perhaps most striking in this respect are developments in the capabilities of large language models (LLMs) and generative AI to revolutionize many aspects of health and health care delivery, including implications ranging from the organization and use of data sets of unprecedented sizes and sources to the automation of previously labor-intensive activities, to managing the potential for large-scale democratization of many health and health care activities. Activities to ramp up related NAM leadership include our initiative on permissioning practices to enhance health data sharing; the collaborative development of a Health & Health Care Artificial Intelligence Code of Conduct framework; and convening series for vendors, health professionals, and government agencies to improve the exchange testing and information exchange related to LLMs and generative AI.

Goal 4: Equity

Lead by integrating inclusion, diversity, and equity in all we do.

Structural and systemic barriers that exclude specific groups from positions of power and decision making – particularly people of color—have sustained starkly inequitable outcomes throughout our nation’s history and persist to this day. As part of an ongoing journey toward greater equity, the NAM will embed both an operational and programmatic focus on inclusivity and representation and seek to build evidence and advance policies that dismantle the effects of structural and systemic racism and marginalization in the United States. In keeping with this commitment, we will redouble efforts to learn from and diversify our network of NAM members and emerging leaders across all dimensions—including gender, sexuality, geographic location, affiliation, disability, age, and other factors in addition to race and ethnicity.

Strategy 4a: Intentionally engage people, communities, and perspectives that are underrepresented in our work.

The NAM will invest in learning, developing, and deploying new strategies in community and audience engagement to ensure that work and work products are codeveloped by, relevant to, and acted on by the people with whom we engage. Codevelopment and bidirectional engagement—in contrast to models in which national-level organizations independently develop and deliver guidance to be acted on by recipients—are critical in the development of solutions that account for the realities of living experience and are supported and driven by the people they impact.

Strategy 4b: Advance evidence-informed social policies that accelerate solutions to structural and systemic barriers to health, focusing on addressing racism.

Given the enormous influence of social determinants of health and public policies on health outcomes, the NAM will extend its health equity work to address root causes of social inequities. This includes assessing the evidence for policy interventions that remove or reduce systemic barriers and contend with the long-term impacts of racism at the society level across multiple systems, including and beyond the health system. As noted earlier in this plan, we will leverage our longstanding Culture of Health Program to define and advance the science of health equity. For example, we will examine the historical and current context of how systemic and structural racism perpetuate oppression via unequal power relationships; identify ways that marginalization flows through systems to perpetuate inequities; and identify opportunities to dismantle structural and systemic racism for improved health outcomes for all.

Strategy 4c: Internally, deepen our commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility across NAM policies, programs, and procedures.

The NAM will work to deploy Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism (IDEA) Principles and an IDEA Action Plan developed by the NAM's Staff Committee on Advancing Racial Equity. In the coming years, the NAM will continue to develop the infrastructure and capacity to advance IDEA internally; foster a culture that centers diversity, equity, inclusion anti-racism, and authenticity among staff, volunteers, and members; apply an IDEA lens to NAM programs, initiatives, and internal policies and procedures; and increase accountability and transparency toward IDEA goals.

Strategy 4d: Build and sustain a diverse and active membership and foster the development of an inclusive network of emerging leaders and scholars.

The NAM will strive to cultivate a body of members and experts that reflect the diverse experiences and needs of the U.S. and global population, focusing on dimensions such as academic/professional discipline, geographic location, affiliated institutions, age, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and ability, among others. The NAM has been developing and implementing strategies to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion among its elected membership for more than a decade, yielding steady progress. Yet, further progress is needed, and the NAM has a responsibility to emphasize the importance of sustained commitment to DEI both internally and among peer organizations.

Goal 5: Readiness***Ensure that the NAM and the nation are ready to shape the future of health and medicine.***

The consistently rapid pace of change in our society necessitates building the capacity of the NAM and the broader health and medical sectors to quickly respond and adapt to unexpected developments and promptly integrate novel tools and insights with the potential to accelerate solutions. In recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic, our national reckoning with racism, the intensifying effects of climate change, escalating social tensions and violence, increasing misinformation and mistrust, and the dawn of consumer artificial intelligence are among the major trends that have shaped health and well-being in the United States and globally. Achieving success also requires that we more fully leverage the skills and networks of our members, fellows, and emerging leaders. Readiness and adaptation must be embedded as core values across science, education, and clinical practice to meet the health needs of the future.

Strategy 5a: Lead efforts and inspire education in foundational science and transdisciplinary and convergence approaches to health to accelerate progress and meet the nation's health needs.

As health challenges and opportunities evolve as rapidly as the tools and technologies to address them, our research and health systems must keep pace. This requires deliberate and sustained communication, collaboration, and innovation and across fields, disciplines, and roles. The NAM will convene multidisciplinary experts to ensure that basic and translational science, including interdisciplinary and convergence approaches, evolve alongside technologies and societal needs—and that researchers, learners, and health workers understand and contribute to this evolution.

Strategy 5b: Bolster the nation's workforce to be innovative, prepared, diverse, and inclusive to address future health challenges.

As this plan has noted, the societal challenges impacting health are complex, evolving, and sometimes unpredictable. Protecting health in an uncertain environment requires a workforce that is nimble, resilient, and well-prepared. In this context, record levels of health worker burnout in the United States constitute a significant detriment to readiness. The NAM will continue to advance the goals of its 2022 *National Plan for Health Workforce Well-Being*, which outlines key actions across seven priority areas to ensure that patients are cared for by a workforce that is thriving in an environment that fosters their well-being as they improve population health, enhance the care experience, reduce costs, and advance health equity. We will also look beyond issues of well-being alone to ensure the workforce has the tools, training, experience, and composition needed to support health in an evolving world. In this context, we will leverage and expand our networks of fellows and Emerging Leaders in Health and Medicine Scholars.

Strategy 5c: Enhance the capacity and technical capabilities of the NAM to be agile, anticipatory, responsive, and proactive.

The NAM will invest in tools and resources, including the effective and responsible use of artificial intelligence applications, to ensure that we are nimble, prepared, and fully informed as advisors to the nation and global community amid emerging and evolving challenges. The NAM will apply cutting-edge tools in horizon scanning, predictive analytics and other advanced technologies that allow real-time adaptive capacities and ensure that our capabilities match the expectations of our sponsors and collaborators and the needs of society. In addition, we will continue to evolve our approach to deliver advice and provide the groundwork for action through outputs and vehicles that are not only timely but uniquely effective.

Strategy 5d: Continuously evolve as a learning institution by activating NAM members, fellows, emerging leaders, and experts in new ways to solve persistent societal health challenges.

The complexity of the challenges that influence health around the world require ongoing innovation, flexibility, and learning. Further, they require organizational humility, introspection, evaluation, and accountability. The NAM will intentionally cultivate a culture of continuous improvement among its staff, members, and expert networks and commit to openly sharing our goals and progress.

Strategic Plan at a Glance

Vision	Health for everyone, everywhere.
Mission	Advance science, inform policy, & catalyze action to achieve human health, equity, & well-being.
Values	<p>Scientific excellence, integrity, & accountability.</p> <p>Innovation, adaptation, & anticipation.</p> <p>Community engagement & collaboration.</p> <p>Inclusion, diversity, & equity.</p>

Goals

Science	Advance science, technology, & innovation as a foundation for health & medicine.
Action	Lead, inspire, & catalyze evidence-informed action on urgent, critical issues & long-term societal challenges to health.
System Transformation	Catalyze transformation toward a health system that is effective, efficient, equitable, affordable, & continuously learning.
Equity	Lead by integrating inclusion, diversity, & equity in all we do.
Readiness	Ensure that the NAM & the nation are ready to shape the future of health & medicine.