



EMORY

ROLLINS
SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC
HEALTH



DELIVERING ON THE PROMISE OF PUBLIC HEALTH FOR ALL

▶ STRATEGIC PLAN
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
FY 2024–FY 2029

Public health is inherently meant to benefit everyone, everywhere. But barriers—including systemic racism, health disparities, and rampant misinformation—stand in the way of progress. We developed our new five-year strategic plan to break down these barriers and deliver on the promise of public health for all through leadership in public health education, research, and practice.





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To read the full strategic plan, visit strategicplan.sph.emory.edu.



LETTER FROM DEAN FALLIN

The past several years have been an incredible time for public health. Our global society has faced enormous health challenges, and also seen great successes. The common thread across many of these recent public health triumphs is the people—researchers and practitioners who are passionate about making the world a healthy place to live and thrive. Of course, there is much work to be done.

The Rollins School of Public Health is uniquely poised to make significant strides toward this vision. Although our school is just over 30 years old, we have already garnered a deep bench of talented and creative researchers making discoveries and translating findings into scalable practice from molecular to behavioral, environmental, and policy work.

Our location in Atlanta allows us to be an effective partner with local and global public health organizations based in our city, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to county and state health departments to the Task Force for Global Health, the American Cancer Society, and the Carter Center. Being part of the Emory Woodruff Health Sciences Center, along with our collaboration with the other schools of Emory

University and our proximity to other universities in Atlanta and the Southeast make Rollins an ideal location to work, live, learn, and practice. Our work is global, but our research has benefited tremendously from the connections we have made with the diverse communities across Georgia—from its vibrant cities to its dynamic rural areas.

With this backdrop in mind, it is our responsibility to make the most impact possible as a school, and that takes careful, thoughtful, and inclusive preparation. This strategic plan is the product of that work, a process that involved hearing the aspirations of our faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors, and partners to iteratively set our priorities, then develop strategies to achieve our goals. This plan is intended to serve as our center of gravity for directing our energy, spirit, and resources. It will be our North Star as we navigate the ever-evolving public health landscape. The plan is anchored in our shared values and our renewed mission: “To make the world healthier and more equitable through excellence in research, education, and practice.”

We have learned important lessons from the pandemic, and now face a world affected by a climate crisis, disabling infectious and chronic diseases, mental and behavioral health challenges, and persistent health inequities that are too often driven by our nation's racist past and present. In the coming years, we also face a legal landscape that limits access to reproductive and gender-affirming care in parts of our country, as well as new constraints on how we recruit and admit a diverse student body. This plan will guide us in addressing these monumental threats.

This plan will not sit on a shelf or get lost in a digital folder. Instead, we have developed a dashboard to monitor progress on each of the six goals detailed in the plan, including key performance indicators, and a website to share this progress with our community and the public. We will keep these goals and their objectives at the heart of what we do and how we do it—and expect to be held accountable if we go off course.

Importantly, you will see a thread of health equity throughout our goals. If we are successful, everyone who conducts health equity research will seek out Rollins, and everyone conducting any public health research will follow our model for integrating health equity's values into their work. Our city has been the site of many civil rights achievements, and I believe that our work here in Atlanta, and across the globe, can contribute to that legacy by illustrating the enormous value of investing in public health equity.

I am incredibly grateful to the many people in our community who contributed to this effort, and particularly to Dr. Timothy Lash, who generously agreed to chair our steering committee; Lynda Barrett, Rachel Peprah, and Whitney Robinson from the Woodruff Health Sciences Center Strategic Planning Office for their patient and thoughtful support; Dr. Delia Lang and Allie Suessmith,

who provided dean's office leadership; and the dedicated steering committee and working group members who enthusiastically agreed and delivered on an ambitious timeline. The whole school, and the communities we serve, are better for your input and leadership in this process.

I am so proud of the plans our community have set in motion and look forward to how Rollins will continue to shape public health in the years to come. And with the power and passion of our people, we will make meaningful progress toward delivering on the promise of public health for all.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which reads "M. Daniele Fallin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

M. Daniele Fallin, PhD

James W. Curran Dean of Public Health
at the Rollins School of Public Health



I want our school to become the most trusted source of public health information anywhere, as well as a key player in generating that information—so that our wider community looks to us to make critical discoveries, and to help implement those approaches so that they can scale.



M. DANIELE FALLIN, PHD

**James W. Curran Dean of Public Health
at the Rollins School of Public Health**



THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Fall 2022 marked a period of momentous change for the Rollins School of Public Health. It was the third year of operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, the long-awaited opening of the school's R. Randall Rollins Building, and the beginning of M. Daniele Fallin's tenure as dean, following James W. Curran's 27 years of leadership.

The school launched a strategic planning process in November 2022, and selected student, faculty, and staff representatives to serve on the steering committee, led by Department of Epidemiology Chair Dr. Timothy L. Lash. In that first phase, the team spent several months working with Woodruff Health Sciences Center's strategic planning office to lead the goal-setting process, conduct listening sessions and interviews with internal and external stakeholders, design community surveys, review community feedback, and navigate the plan's "big picture" to keep everything on schedule.

In phase two of the planning process, steering committee members reviewed survey responses, website feedback, and notes obtained through listening sessions to refine and prioritize six key goals. In phase three, these goals were assigned to working groups, each of which included at least one steering committee representative, who proposed objectives and tactics to

meet their goal, refining their work with the help of the steering committee and community feedback.

Throughout this process, members of the Rollins community offered vital input, engaging in an inclusive, transparent process critical to the plan's authenticity.

The five-year strategic plan articulated in this document will determine where we devote our energy and how we invest our resources as we address the most pressing public health challenges on our planet, in our country, in our state, and particularly in our own city—Atlanta.

This work is not over—it's just the beginning. Starting six months from now, and every six to 12 months thereafter, Rollins will post updates to strategicplan.sph.emory.edu so faculty, students, and staff can see what we've accomplished, what tactics have shifted in light of evolving circumstances, and what we're planning next.

Our strategic planning process is one of the most critical ways that Rollins expresses its mission, vision, and values to guide our work every day. The tactics of any five-year plan will evolve over time, as conditions change, but these ideas will always serve as our North Star.

OUR MISSION

To make the world healthier and more equitable through excellence in research, education, and practice



OUR CORE PURPOSE

Making a world of difference, one community at a time

OUR VISION

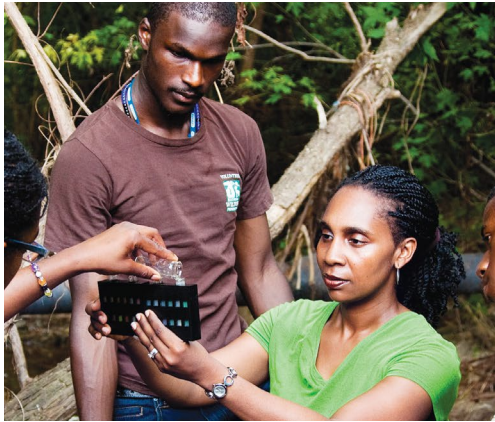
The best possible health for all people in all populations across all communities

OUR VALUES

We are unified in our commitment to:

- ▶ Excellence and rigor in research, education, and public health practice
- ▶ Collaboration, cultural humility, and ethical engagement with domestic and global communities
- ▶ Integrity, humility, empathy, and grace in our work and daily interactions
- ▶ Social justice and anti-racism in our practices and policies
- ▶ An inclusive and equitable workplace and learning environment
- ▶ Diverse ideas and healthy debate foundational to a learning culture

To bring to life our mission, vision, and values, we have developed a plan around six core goals:



RESEARCH

Make discoveries that make a difference

We will advance public health science that improves health and health equity through rigorous, collaborative, and interdisciplinary research.



EDUCATION

Transform our offerings

We will broaden who we teach, diversify how we teach, and enrich what we teach in response to evolving public health priorities and emerging challenges.



PRACTICE AND PARTNERSHIPS

Put research to work

We will build ethical and equitable collaborations with local, regional, and global partners to engage communities and translate our research into mutually beneficial public health practices, policies, and programs.



OUR PEOPLE

Build a thriving workplace

We will cultivate a school where all members of our community have opportunities for professional growth and feel included, respected, and valued.



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion

We will center diversity, equity, and inclusion in our identity through our research, practice, operations, and educational activities.



COMMUNICATIONS

Champion public health

We will promote and strengthen trust in public health information.

RESEARCH

▶ MAKE DISCOVERIES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE



GOAL

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We will advance public health science that improves health and health equity through rigorous, collaborative, and interdisciplinary research.

At a time when the challenges to public health are vast, focusing on high-impact science is essential. Doing this type of work requires the right resources, including top researchers, advanced technology, and leading facilities. That's why we're dedicated to making a significant investment in our infrastructure—empowering our faculty, staff, and trainees to prioritize making discoveries that will truly make a difference in communities locally and globally.

And to make real headway in public health, we must address health equity issues. Our goal as a school of public health is to become a global hub for health equity research, identifying novel areas of impactful investigation and greatly expanding our footprint in this area.

The Rollins School of Public Health is known for developing solutions to deep-rooted public health

problems given our history with and proximity to public health practitioners at the CDC, Carter Center, Georgia Department of Public Health, and many others. We will continue that legacy with a new era of research focused on innovative scientific approaches. We'll partner with local communities, public health agencies, other universities, and for-profit institutions to build mutually beneficial collaborations and align our work with useful and scalable applications that are meaningful to our partners. Our faculty, staff, and students will apply the latest translational research techniques to critical areas of public health to make a difference on the ground.

By reinforcing our research foundation, strengthening our commitment to health equity, and leveraging the latest tools, we can move farther and faster toward solving pressing public health problems.

RESEARCH

OBJECTIVES

Encourage scientific innovation and growth of research that enhances our current strengths and addresses critical and emerging areas of need.

Become the global leader in impactful public health equity research.

Invest in infrastructure that cultivates research success.



EDUCATION

▶ TRANSFORM OUR OFFERINGS



GOAL

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We will broaden who we teach, diversify how we teach, and enrich what we teach in response to evolving public health priorities and emerging challenges.

Rollins is one of the world's top-ranked schools for public health graduate education. If we want to maintain that reputation in a shifting landscape, we'll need to continue our excellent MPH program and student experience while finding new ways to reach the next generation.

To that end, we'll modernize and reshape our offerings, introducing new courses and new teaching formats. We'll reach new audiences, catering to the diverse needs of a broad range of students and professionals. We will develop more flexible learning options that include accelerated and short-term formats, hybrid, and online courses.

Our programs will evolve to include new content areas and interdisciplinary training. That will mean re-envisioning our core curriculum to better integrate

professional public health skills. We will explore other master's degree programs that align with faculty expertise to address emerging public health issues and untapped markets.

We will enhance our pedagogical approach to ensure our curriculum promotes cultural humility, social justice, and anti-racism, preparing students to engage in multisectoral public health practice.

All of these tactics will ensure that we continue to bring the best and the brightest to Rollins. And, this work will ensure that our student population and program goals reflect the diversity of our world today and the diversity required to be a public health leader in our local and global communities. Such diversity is critical to continued excellence and impact in public health.

EDUCATION

OBJECTIVES

Increase access to our educational programs to meet the diverse and evolving needs of a wide range of students and professionals.

Innovate how we teach by leveraging new pedagogical tools and technology to support teaching excellence and inclusive training experiences.

Enhance our educational content so students are prepared to engage in multisectoral public health research and practice, addressing current and emerging public health challenges and prioritizing social justice and health equity.



PRACTICE AND PARTNERSHIPS

▶ PUT RESEARCH TO WORK



GOAL

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We will build ethical and equitable collaborations with local, regional, and global partners to engage communities and translate our research into mutually beneficial public health practices, policies, and programs.

Our work does not end with the lessons we teach our students or the research we conduct in communities. Public health research can't fulfill its potential unless it is relevant to practice and until those who work in academic public health have a deep connection to practice. We will make sure that we infuse practice in all aspects of what we do, particularly in the ways we educate the public health workforce, carry out research, and translate that research into action.

We are also evolving our approach to partnerships. Public health partnerships are often formed in times

of crisis, but not sustained. Partnerships can also be unequal in terms of who has voice and agency. Moving forward, we will set standards for respectful and mutually beneficial partnerships—and we will actively seek to build and sustain those partnerships.

These efforts will better equip the next generation of public health leaders to guide organizations that do public health practice, ensuring our work is grounded in community needs.

OBJECTIVES

Grow institutional and infrastructure support for applied public health practice.

Cultivate diverse, equitable, and mutually advantageous partnerships to enhance responsiveness to local, national, and global public health needs.

Establish a pipeline of initiatives that develop and grow practitioners from both academia and the broader health community.



OUR PEOPLE

BUILD A THRIVING WORKPLACE



GOAL

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We will cultivate a school where all members of our community have opportunities for professional growth and feel included, respected, and valued.

Rollins is known for its culture of kindness and respect. Our school and workplace are seen as particularly open, diverse, and welcoming. But culture is not something we can take for granted—it evolves with every hire, every new initiative, and every annual budget. We strive to make Rollins the best place to work and learn, where people feel valued, included, and are able to pursue their passion and career paths.

To do this, we must prioritize our people in all that we do. We will foster a culture of collaboration and respect for the wide variety of roles reflected across our faculty, staff, and students. We will also enhance professional

training and growth, including high-quality mentorship and peer partnership. And we will support all aspects of people’s lives through more recognition programs, promotion of wellness, and attention to mental health.

A thriving workplace includes a culture of excellence, transparency, and accountability—and leadership that models the mutual existence of expectations of performance and respect for a balanced life.

This school is dedicated to improving health for all people. This must start with our own people—because *Rollins is its people.*

OUR PEOPLE

OBJECTIVES

Enhance resources and create opportunities to ensure that students, alumni, staff, and faculty can reach their professional goals and realize their full career potential.

Build bridges within our community that foster a shared culture of collaboration and belonging.

Strengthen operational excellence to support a culture of effectiveness, accountability, transparency, and trust.



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION



INTEGRATE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION



GOAL

We will center diversity, equity, and inclusion in our identity through our research, practice, operations, and educational activities.

Public health research and practice never stop evolving. Although diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) have long been at the heart of the public health work that we conduct at Rollins, we must continue to push for justice and equity among the communities we work with and for. Equity-centered research and practice—focusing on social justice, anti-racism, and cultural humility—are woven throughout our new five-year strategic plan.

We will focus on recruiting and retaining diverse faculty, staff, and trainees, and adopt an equity-centered transformative framework in all of our research and educational activities. We will also prioritize social justice and equity by recruiting, retaining, and supporting faculty with expertise in health equity.

Over the next five years, we will create a school-wide accountability structure to standardize DEI principles and evaluate progress. This structure will involve setting and communicating minimum DEI goals and standards for all departments, implementing a culture and system of evaluation for leadership and managers, increasing visibility and support for existing DEI work, and fostering a culture of shared responsibility for DEI goals and outcomes.

Our DEI objectives are intricately connected with every other goal in our strategic plan—and are critical to the plan's success and to our strength as a school of public health.

OBJECTIVES

Establish a school-wide accountability structure to achieve our diversity, equity, and inclusion standards.

Integrate values of diversity, equity, and inclusion across all aspects of our mission.



COMMUNICATIONS

▶ CHAMPION PUBLIC HEALTH



GOAL

We will promote and strengthen trust in public health information.

It's fair to say we've rarely seen the public consume public health news as intensely as we have in the last few years. From the impacts of climate change to COVID-19 and so many other realms, our work dominates the headlines and social media. Unfortunately, we've never seen misinformation at this level, either. Which makes our task more critical than ever.

Over the next five years, Rollins will use communications outreach to ground public health discourse and inform better decision-making globally and locally. To achieve this, we will be both a destination for public health information and a champion of public health professionals.

We will position Rollins as a top source of public health information—for evidence-based, easy-to-understand public health facts and cutting-edge research. We will use a mix of traditional and emerging media platforms to reach a wide array of target audiences.

We will ensure Rollins experts are accessible and actively engaging with the media on a regular basis to further promote our research and help people understand how their lives are shaped by matters of public health.

Additionally, Rollins will build a training infrastructure to teach faculty, staff, and trainees how to effectively communicate science and public health information—including creating a certificate program in public health and science communication. Because it is no longer enough to provide information for anyone who seeks it out—we must actively go out and fight disinformation and offer local and national leaders straightforward language and frameworks to understand complex public health issues, so that they can help all communities thrive.

COMMUNICATIONS

OBJECTIVES

Inform public health discourse and decision-making through thought leadership globally and locally.

Increase the reach and impact of our research with new and innovative communications strategies.


Develop a training infrastructure to teach faculty, staff, and students to be trusted and authentic public health communicators.

Deepen relationships with local communities, sharing Rollins' public health findings with Georgia residents to help them advance their own health goals.



▶ HOW OUR OBJECTIVES WORK TOGETHER





So much of what we plan to do—much like public health itself—is interconnected.

A careful read of these goals, objectives, and related tactics will reveal overlapping themes that do not fit solely in one place. This overlap is intentional. So much of what we plan to do—much like public health itself—is interconnected.

We've developed a multi-pronged strategy with intentional cross-fertilization. For example, tactics

related to engagement with communities to provide quick and relevant public health information will ultimately apply to both our Practice and Partnerships goal and our Communications goal. Similarly, training on inclusive and equitable teaching will apply to both our Education and DEI goals.

The graphic helps map the interconnected nature of our objectives and tactics to serve multiple goals of our five-year plan.

 RESEARCH

SPUR SCIENTIFIC INNOVATION  

LEAD HEALTH EQUITY RESEARCH 

BOLSTER RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE  

 EDUCATION

INCREASE ACCESS TO EDUCATION  

INNOVATE HOW WE TEACH   

ENHANCE EDUCATIONAL CONTENT    

 PRACTICE AND PARTNERSHIPS

GROW PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE SUPPORT   

CULTIVATE PARTNERSHIPS    

EXPAND PRACTITIONER PIPELINE  

 OUR PEOPLE

PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL GROWTH 

FOSTER COMMUNITY COLLABORATION     

STRENGTHEN OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE     

 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

ESTABLISH DEI ACCOUNTABILITY  

INTEGRATE DEI VALUES     

 COMMUNICATIONS

EXPAND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP   

REIMAGINE RESEARCH DISSEMINATION  

LAUNCH SCIENCE COMMUNICATIONS TRAINING   

DEEPEN COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS  



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