



Strategic Plan 2010-2015

*In response to Christ's love,  
Lutheran Social Services  
Serves and cares for people in need.*



***CHARTING A COURSE FOR THE FUTURE  
LSS STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-2015***

In response to Christ's love, Lutheran Social Services serves and cares for people in need.

As LSS works to improve the lives, health and well being of the people we are called to serve, we must also attend to the well being of our organization and ensure that it has a healthy future. To accomplish this, our governing board of directors and senior staff have completed a comprehensive process addressing issues of operations, structure and long-term planning.

The strategic planning process was facilitated by the Rev. Bill Snyder, Vice President of System Leadership and Collaboration, of Lutheran Services in America. This process was informed by data collected from regional focus groups convened in the fall of 2008 along with national trend data. This data was then aligned to the strengths and assets of the organization. The outcome of this alignment is the six pathways found in this plan. It will guide our focus and efforts for the next five years.

The pathways speak to the 'what' as well as the 'how' of living out our mission for these next five years. The focus data emphasizes several areas of service concentration when considering program development: 1) expand our in-home care program and community based services to seniors; 2) provide additional affordable housing to older adults and persons living with chronic mental and physical disabilities; 3) offer financial/credit counseling; and 4) expand and enhance our services to refugees and immigrants. The challenge set before us is to ensure that we develop a plan to fund this next wave of impact as well as provide the highest level of care.

It is our intent that this document will help our friends, clients and partners better understand our strategic direction and the plans we will develop to journey down the six pathways. Our leadership team will continually review these plans, update them annually and integrate them within our annual operating plans. The addendum to this plan highlights the pathway points affirmed during the board and senior staff working sessions. Staff and board can utilize this information to evaluate our success toward implementation of the plan as well as to establish their operational specific outcomes.

## ***The Pathways:***

- I. Organize with intentionality around preexisting LSS synergies emphasizing communities where LSS programs and services have converged and where there is potential for high social impact**
  - II. Provide comprehensive community based services**
  - III. Organize for excellence in operations**
  - IV. Organize for programmatic viability (quality measurements) and financial viability (financial benchmarks)**
  - V. Provide staff development and cross training**
  - VI. Cultivate and enhance relationships with donors, volunteers and other partners**
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- I. LSS board pathway: organize with intentionality around preexisting synergies emphasizing communities where LSS programs and services have converged and there is potential for high social impact**  
***Staff label: Intentional Service Cluster, "ISC"***

*Strategic pathway: Intentional Service Line Convergence (ISLC) will drive LSS programmatic viability by facilitating program development and a strong community presence. LSS will determine opportunities for service development and enhancement specific to each area of existing synergy.*

Our array of services has a reputation for making a positive difference in our communities. Our multiple site structure is a resource for enhancing our ability to efficiently serve and partner in communities where we see an opportunity to address additional critical needs. As LSS seeks to respond to opportunities for new programs and new ways of delivering existing programs, we will leverage already existing community resources.

- II. LSS board pathway: provide comprehensive community based services**  
***Staff label: integrated community services***

*Strategic pathway: LSS will be known as the leading community provider of quality services. We promote independence/self-sufficiency by providing a continuum of care throughout the span of life.*

This pathway speaks to LSS's commitment to this value system for service delivery. Traditionally, services are centralized and delivered through a limited number of offices or institutional settings. LSS will continue to offer residential care options when most appropriate; however, LSS will strive to provide services at the least intrusive access point. It is expected that this will improve the independent living and community integration of the vulnerable populations we serve.

**III. LSS board pathway: intentional organization with excellence in operations; measurable results**

***Staff label: strategic organization***

*Definition: LSS will organize intentionally to take advantage of the size and scope of the organization, resulting in operational excellence.*

The plan recognizes that we will need funding from operations, debt and the foundation to meet this pathway. We will use a continuous quality improvement process to help us measure and manage the quality of client services, business processes and policy compliance. Staff will be able to use an online policy manual to guide their activities and facilitate compliance with the Council on Accreditation standards.

Administrative and clinical staff will have access to online internal management reports and external research, allowing for faster decision making and more competitive marketing. Staying current with new methodologies and research will allow us to continue to champion initiatives that improve the systems of care for the diverse population we serve. Best practices will align with satisfaction service measurements.

**IV. LSS board pathway: programmatic viability based on quality measurements; financial viability based on benchmarks**

***Staff label: viable programs managed with financial competence***

*Definition: LSS will maximize its financial and human capital by effectively managing programs as evidenced by measurable outcomes/client impact.*

The plan calls for service expansion, balanced growth and infrastructure upgrades. Administrative functions will be reviewed with special emphasis placed on staff training. In addition, we will be sensitive to which services will generate sufficient revenue through an examination of service types, funding modes, program size and location. Over the decades, LSS has stayed current with the evolving needs of the people we are called to serve and the corresponding imperative to develop programs that open doors to brighter futures and new opportunities for us.

**V. LSS board pathway: staff development and cross-training**  
***Staff label: first class workforce***

*Definition: LSS will foster an environment where continuous learning and leadership excellence are expected and rewarded. We will create an integrated system of recruitment, training, measurement and compensation that attracts and retains the right employees for the right jobs.*

Over the next five years we will take advantage of a major internal source – an annual employee satisfaction survey. We will use the ideas we generate to make working at LSS more satisfying, rewarding and productive. One thing we will look at to measure success in this area is turnover. We want to increase the length of time good employees stay with us. This can only work if we continue to hire people who enjoy their work at LSS. To keep great employees, we will pay competitive rates, reward exceptional service and offer a flexible benefits package. Through training, leadership development and employee certification programs, we will ensure that employees understand the career path open to them in the organization and what kind of future they can expect.

**VI. LSS board pathway: build mutually beneficial relationships with donors, volunteers, and partners**  
***Staff label: become a relational organization; be good partners in community***

*Definition: LSS will cultivate many partners to help us develop the programs and services for people in need that resonate with our highest ideals and values.*

This pathway calls for a comprehensive volunteer management plan along with specific focus on our ecumenical and interfaith partnerships.

With support from the LSS Foundation, LSS will be able to enhance the quality of our service delivery to the people we serve, along with activities not supported by government, but still within the mission of the organization.

Building upon our comprehensive development strategy we will ensure the agency's ability to effectively meet its mission throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This effort will raise substantial funds from annual gifts, bequests and foundation and corporate grants.

## ***Addendum: Pathway Points***

### I. Pathway points:

- A. Intentionality of services
- B. Viability
  - i. Programmatic
  - ii. Financial
  - iii. Strong community presence (reputation in community)
- C. Realize economies of scale
- D. Inter-link programs and staff
- E. Define geography clearly
- F. Share resources internally and externally within community
- G. Modify synergy based on competitive analysis
  - i. Look at what is already in that region (do we do it better?)
  - ii. Identify gaps and fill them
- H. Leverage assets
- I. Strategize communication/marketing/advancement based on cluster model

### II. Pathway points:

- A. Become New England in-home care provider of choice (clinical and non clinical)
- B. Provide excellent community based service realized through ISCs
- C. Provide a continuum of residential and other services
  - i. Youth at risk
  - ii. Older adults (also with dementia)
  - iii. People with disabilities
  - iv. Children and families
- D. Understand the continuum of funding
- E. Provide economic empowerment programs for new Americans and economically distressed persons characterized by flexibility of response
- F. Advocate for the people we serve
- G. Integrate public and private funds to support a variety of needs
- H. Assure appropriate pricing (regulations)
- I. Provide opportunities for community involvement in service by clients and staff; integration.
- J. Implement LSS-wide participation/knowledge: organizational integration
  - i. Away from silos and towards continuum of care and service
  - ii. Sharing assets among programs

### III. Pathway points:

- A. Assure excellence in operations
- B. Implement best practices
- C. Establish benchmarks
- D. Benchmark performance against peers (recognized standards)
- E. Assure management of assets as core competency

- F. Document and systematize knowledge of best practices:
  - i. Intellectual property
  - ii. IT
  - iii. Risk management
  - iv. Quality assurance
  - v. Policies and procedures
- G. Employ a highly professional and competent staff with depth and breadth strength
  - i. Recruit and retain to become employer of choice
  - ii. Implement leadership development plan for all levels with opportunities for purposeful advancement
- H. Create an organizational culture that supports all employees
- I. Encourage effective communication and build trust
- J. Achieve accreditation in all applicable areas

IV. Pathway points:

- A. Advocate for clients from neighborhood to Congress
- B. Identify gaps in service
- C. Increase private pay payor mix
- D. Programmatic flexibility and modification based on competency analysis
- E. Develop and share resources
- F. Employ best practices
- G. Move all clients groups towards economic empowerment/self-sufficiency
- H. In-home Care services
- I. Support systems
  - i. Volunteers
  - ii. Fundraising
  - iii. Collaboration with peer agencies
- J. Provide consulting/management services
- K. Organize strategically
  - i. Excellence in operations
  - ii. Focus on what we do well
- L. Manage financial and human capital with competency
- M. Budget for maintenance of assets
- N. Cultivate healthy relationship with funders
- O. Develop successful track record of local, state, federal grants
- P. Assure fiscal responsibility and accountability
- Q. Foster success in fundraising

V. Pathway points:

- A. Provide cross training
- B. Implement leadership development at all levels (purposeful advancement)
- C. Promote depth and bench strength with highly professional and competent workforce
- D. Become employer of choice (recruit and retain)
  - i. Pre-screening and hiring the right applicants

- ii. Pre-employment screening
- E. Treat employee as customer
- F. Treat board members and volunteers as customers
- G. Increase philanthropic share
  - i. Staff involvement
  - ii. Volunteers
  - iii. Donors
- H. Base performance management on a positive model
- I. Attend to organizational culture
  - i. Compensation strategy
  - ii. Training strategy
  - iii. Continuing education strategy
  - iv. Employee appreciation strategy
- J. Promote career and leadership development
  - i. LSS university (internal and external candidates)
  - ii. Leadership competency model and assessment (360 degree review)
  - iii. Leadership ladders
- K. Identify and utilize "native talent," expertise within our own ranks

VI. Pathway points:

- A. Cultivate collaborative partnerships
- B. Train staff and volunteers, including board and committees, to work as partners
- C. Establish a healthy and open dialogue with government/state funders (legislative and regulatory)
- D. Increase philanthropic share of support revenue through integrated volunteer and donor tactics, staff development and participation
- E. Develop altruistic partnerships with expert providers who deliver high quality services not provided by LSS -- a cooperative continuum
- F. Establish comprehensive marketing to increase brand recognition among all constituents: volunteer and donor base, clients, collaborators, partners, funders, church, public
- G. Build bridges to for-profit business community
- H. Create organizational culture that embraces external constituents
- I. Cultivate congregational partnerships (Lutheran and other)
- J. Position LSS as leader for expertise, knowledge, advice, guidance in service