

D. What does good planning look like?

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet's *Strategic Planning Toolkit* defines planning as an ongoing process that seeks to answer four key questions:

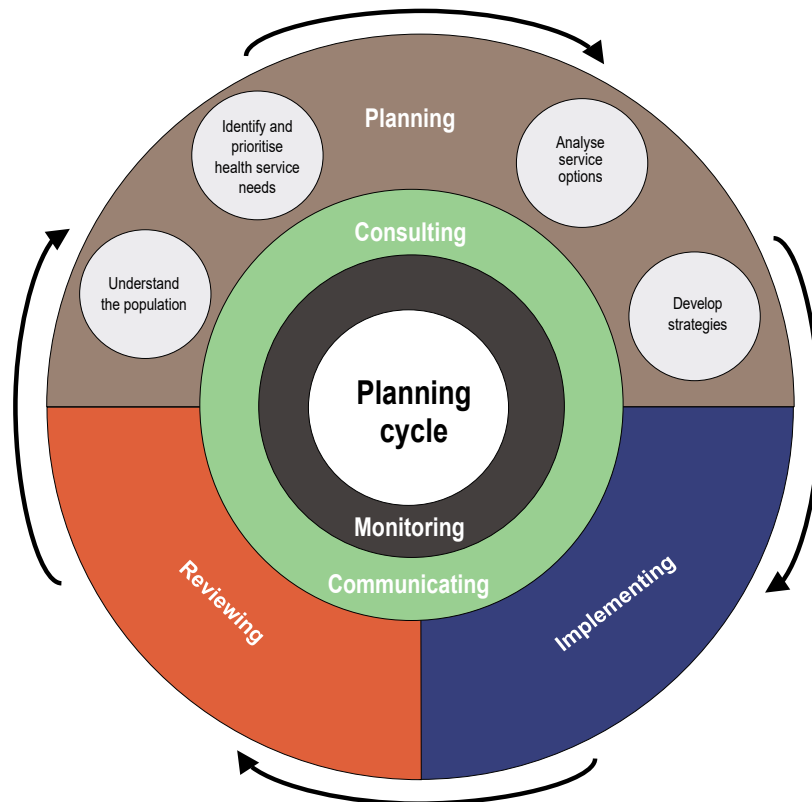
1. Where are we now?
2. Where should we be?
3. How will we get there?
4. How will we know we have made it?

In a health system, the focus is on understanding the population's current and future health status, working out how to best meet those needs, implementing strategies, and then consistently measuring whether they are working. Plans should be flexible and updatable. Previous plans should be evaluated, and current data analysed to inform future planning.

Planners should consult with stakeholders throughout the planning process to understand the needs, identify strategies, be clear about constraints, ensure integration of plans, and establish clear roles and responsibilities for implementation and evaluation.

The Department of Health has developed a framework, which is explained in its *Guide to Health Service Planning*. Figure D1 shows the planning process from this guide.

Figure D1
Health service planning process



Source: Queensland Audit Office, adapted from Queensland Health Guide to Health Service Planning.

