

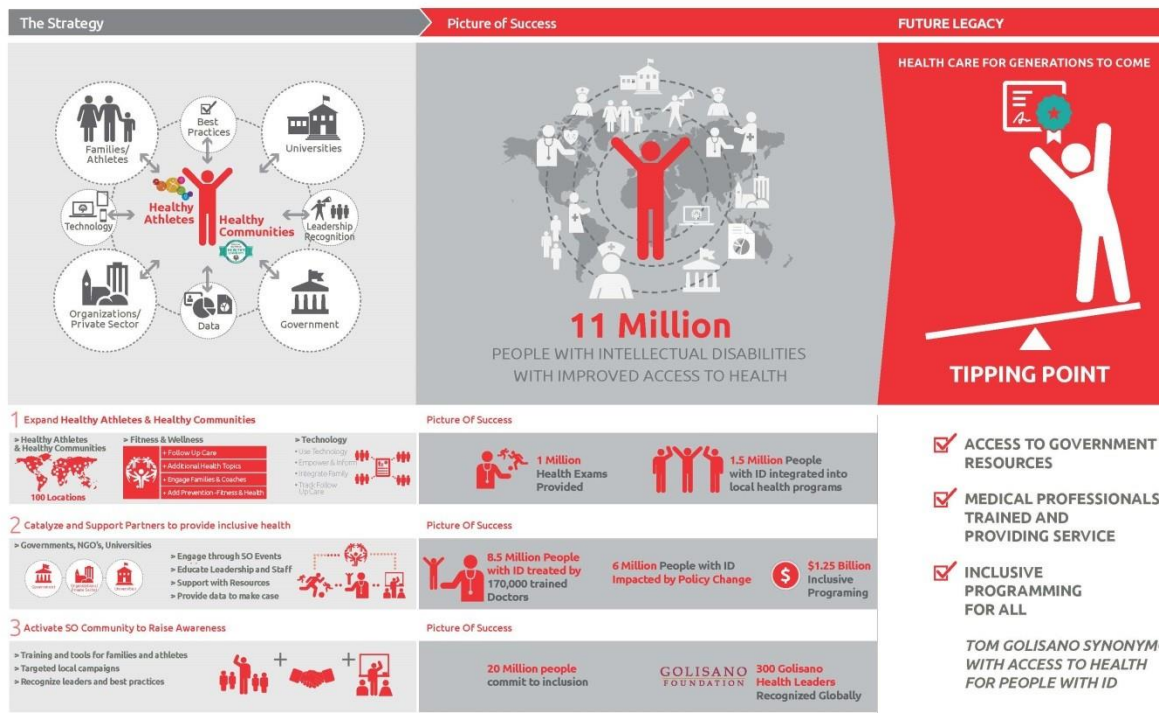
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Overview

The purpose of this guide is to inform Special Olympics Programs how to become recognized as a Healthy Community. In order to help athletes achieve their best performances on and off the field, more and more Programs are providing year round on-going wellness opportunities, follow-up health care, and health education and support for athletes, families and the public as part of the Healthy Communities model. The ultimate goal is to increase access to health care services and improve the health status of people with intellectual disabilities (ID). To achieve this goal, Special Olympics’ approach is to ensure that Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® events and Healthy Communities-related programming are closely-linked and complementary for maximum impact on the health and well-being of athletes. The vision for Special Olympics Health is:

To create communities where Special Olympics athletes and others with intellectual disabilities (ID) have the same access to health and wellness resources – and can attain the same level of good health – as all community members and where there is no “wrong door” for someone with ID to walk through.



Background

Through Healthy Athletes, more than 1.6 million free examinations have been provided to people with ID in seven health disciplines since 1997. Healthy Athletes provides health education and, for some Special Olympics Programs, connects athletes with follow-up health services or professionals. Healthy Athletes also has trained more than 130,000 healthcare professionals on how to treat people with ID. Through this work, SOI has amassed the world’s largest data set on the health status of people with ID. However, while Healthy Athletes has successfully served as a tool for educating healthcare professionals and collecting data that call attention to the needs of our athletes, it has only to a limited extent, connected athletes to treatment and health services. Further, the training of healthcare professionals is limited to the seven Healthy Athletes disciplines and generally does not focus on locally relevant health issues or develop local strategies to ensure athletes receive care. This gap highlighted a need for quality year-round health care and access to follow up services at the community level. To address this, Programs recognized as Healthy Communities are working to extend the principles of Healthy Athletes from a series of events by infusing health throughout the Special Olympics experience and into the community with the goal of creating networks of health and wellness organizations and health care providers so that all people with ID can attain the same level of health and wellbeing as others in the community.

To address the limitations of the Healthy Athletes program, in July 2012, Special Olympics partnered with Tom Golisano and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to expand health services

for people with ID in an effort to reduce the disparities that exist in their access to health services and health status. Fourteen Special Olympics Programs launched Healthy Communities, including Special Olympics: Arizona, Florida, Kansas, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, New Jersey, New York, Peru, Romania, South Africa, Thailand and Wisconsin.

From 2012-2015, these 14 Programs worked actively on extending the impact, relevance, and sustainability of their health programming through (1) partnerships to provide year round access to more health services for athletes, including follow-up care; (2) weaving health throughout all Special Olympics programming by harnessing the Special Olympics network of caregivers, coaches, and athlete peers in support of athlete health year-round; (3) leveraging technology to support athletes in improving their health and well-being and increasing access to health services and; (4) building awareness among Special Olympics Programs of innovative approaches to building Healthy Communities.

In the three years of the Healthy Communities pilots, the Programs piloting Healthy Communities made life-changing differences for thousands of athletes as seen in the [Healthy Communities Year 3 Report](#). Healthy Community pilot sites:

- Conducted 88,785 Healthy Athletes exams with 20,665 exams in 54 new locations, reaching athletes that have not been reached by Healthy Athletes previously.
- Educated 6,042 family members/caregivers, 1,940 coaches/teachers, and 669 athlete leaders to become health educators for other athletes. Healthy Communities also educated 10,213 athletes on health topics, ranging from HIV in Malawi to healthy relationships and sun safety in Wisconsin.
- Trained 15,130 healthcare professionals and students on how to work with people with ID, and 34 universities committed to making changes to their curricula to better prepare health professionals to provide care for people with ID.
- Developed 248 local partnerships providing a total of \$30 million in cash and value in kind (VIK).

The 14 pilot Programs implemented a number of innovative models that contributed to improved health status and access to care for people with intellectual disabilities. Based on the success of the Healthy Communities pilot initiative, Healthy Communities was launched as a recognition program to encourage Special Olympics Programs to adopt the approach while recognizing them for their achievement. Now, Special Olympics is expanding the Healthy Communities model with a goal of activating 100 Programs to develop Healthy Communities by 2020. This guide will explain how a Special Olympics Program can work towards achieving Healthy Communities recognition and the funding opportunities available.

Healthy Community Recognition

In order to receive Healthy Community Recognition by Special Olympics International (SOI), Special Olympics Programs are required to meet six criteria (below) and report on those criteria to SOI. A Special Olympics Program will receive Healthy Communities recognition when they have met all six criteria. Upon receiving this recognition, Programs will be able to assign the Healthy Communities visual identity

throughout its programming. This includes a Healthy Communities seal that can be incorporated to websites, signage, donor pitches, etc. Programs recognized as Healthy Communities also will be promoted online at www.specialolympics.org. Only Programs officially recognized as Healthy Communities by Special Olympics, Inc., may use the visual identity or refer to their Program as a Healthy Community due to the overall brand equity and level of achievement that the term denotes within the organization.

Funding, partnerships and Value-in-Kind (VIK) are essential for a Special Olympics Program to reach Healthy Community recognition. There are two ways in which a Program can work towards becoming a Healthy Community recognition: (1) self-funding and working toward meeting the Healthy Community recognition criteria or (2) receiving a Healthy Community Grant from SOI to work towards the recognition criteria.

Please note, that Programs do not need funding from SOI in order to apply to become a Healthy Community, and it is anticipated that some Programs will be able to meet the criteria with minimal increased financial investment.

Over the next 4 years, SOI will be inviting Programs to apply for 1-year Healthy Community Grants for up to \$20,000 and 3-year Healthy Community Grants of between \$40,000 to \$60,000 USD per year (amount may vary based on need). Programs receiving Healthy Communities Grants will work towards achieving recognition as a Healthy Community with the ultimate goal being to increase access to health care services and improve the health status of people with intellectual disabilities (ID).

1-year Healthy Community Grants from SOI:

1-year Healthy Community Grants will be an open application process for all Programs. Each year, Healthy Communities grant funding (1-year and 3-year) will be issued on 1 April. Special Olympics Programs are encouraged to be creative and design programming that corresponds with the strengths of their Program and the health needs of their athletes. Programs must select Criteria 4 or 5 to work towards, but their objective and activities can be unique and do not need to match the examples provided.

3-year Healthy Community Grants from SOI:

Invitations to apply for 3-year Healthy Community Grants will be extended to Special Olympics Programs who are in good standing, have demonstrated success in health programming and have a commitment to attain Healthy Community Recognition (below). Regional Healthy Athletes Managers will contact a specified number of qualified Special Olympics Programs based on the number of grants available to complete the application to receive 3-year funding. Each year until 2020, there will be additional Special Olympics Programs selected to receive 3-year Healthy Communities grants. These grants will be between \$40,000 to \$60,000 USD per year for three years.

Communicating about 1-year and 3-year Healthy Community Grants from Special Olympics, Inc.

With the movement's goal of reaching 100 Programs recognized as Healthy Communities by 2020, it is important to be clear and consistent with the communication around health work and Healthy Community recognition. Please note that Programs awarded a 1-year or 3-year Healthy Community grant **may not** refer to their programming as "Healthy Communities" until achieving the six criteria needed for official recognition. Programs receiving Healthy Communities grant funding are working towards Healthy Communities Recognition and may call themselves "Healthy Communities Grantees". However, in order to receive Healthy Communities Recognition by SOI and utilize the Healthy Communities visual identity, SO Programs must meet all six Healthy Communities criteria (below). This means that Healthy Communities grantees may promote and publicize their health programs work, and refer to themselves as "Healthy Communities Grantees", but will not be able to use the Healthy Communities visual identity until they have met all six criteria.

The visual identity includes a Healthy Communities seal that can be incorporated into websites, signage, donor requests, etc. Only Programs meeting all six criteria may use the visual identity due to the overall brand equity and level of achievement that the term denotes within the organization. When referring to health work outside Healthy Athletes, Programs receiving a grant should refer to this work as "Special Olympics health work made possible by the Golisano Foundation." Additionally, the Golisano Foundation logo needs to be incorporated into related signage and sponsor recognition associated with the 1-year and 3-year Healthy Community grants.

Resources to support grants:

Toolkits that provide guidance and lessons learned on how to best plan and implement each focus area can be found here:

http://resources.specialolympics.org/Taxonomy/Health/Healthy_Communities_Resources_Center.aspx.

Criteria for Programs seeking Healthy Community Recognition

Going forward, Special Olympics is moving Healthy Communities from a pilot to a model recognizing Special Olympics Programs throughout the movement that are leading health by sustainably delivering programming, partnerships and services to increase access to care and improve the health status of their athletes. Special Olympics Programs that meet certain criteria related to their health programming will be officially recognized as a Healthy Community.

Below are the required criteria for a Program to be recognized as a Healthy Community. The criteria are based on the [Program Quality Standards](#) for Athlete Health and Wellness and span across Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the Quality Standards. The overall goal of Healthy Communities is to reduce the disparities in health status and health access for athletes and others with ID. The criteria listed below were created to guide Programs towards achieving this goal without prescribing what strategies/activities to pursue. This will allow for local adaptation of health programming by Programs based on the differing barriers to care and services that exist. Note: A Program can choose a geographic area (i.e. a district, state or region rather than the whole country or state) within their Program to pursue recognition as a Healthy

Community rather than their whole Program; in which case the criteria need to be met only for the athletes in that area.

To be eligible to obtain recognition as a Healthy Community, Programs must:

- Be an accredited Special Olympics Program in good standing.
- Have no outstanding reports due.
- Meet the following criteria.

Healthy Community - Criteria for Recognition		
	Criteria	Details
1	All health grant requirements met.	This includes former and ongoing Fitness, Family Health Forum, Healthy Athletes, and Healthy Communities grants. For Healthy Athlete events that received grant funding, all Healthy Athletes screening forms need to be entered into HAS within 30 days of the event date.
2	SO Program locally funds at least 50% of Healthy Athletes event costs across all Healthy Athletes® events within the SO Program.	To meet the criteria, no more than 50% of the costs of running SO Program-wide Healthy Athletes events can be supported by Special Olympics International grants. At least 50% of SO Program-wide <i>Healthy Athletes event</i> costs need to be covered by local grants/sponsorship or value-in-kind (VIK) donations of goods and services such as rental space, equipment, giveaways, supplies and materials (not including VIK of volunteer time or SO Program staff time).
3	SO Program offers at least three Healthy Athletes® disciplines per year within the selected Healthy Community geographic area(s)	Requires at least 3 different disciplines to be implemented at least once per calendar year resulting in a minimum of 150 athlete examinations within the geographic area(s) that the Healthy Community project is focusing to qualify for Healthy Communities.
4	70% of athletes who receive referrals at Healthy Athletes® within the selected Healthy Community geographic area(s) have a place to go for follow-up care following a Healthy Athletes examination.	Criteria must be met for at least two disciplines per calendar year. For athletes that are given a referral (as indicated on the HAS form), they either indicate they already have an existing doctor/dentist that they will book an appointment with or the SO Program connects the athlete to a specific health care provider, partner, or place to go to receive the care they need.
5	SO Program offers health, wellness or fitness programming outside of Healthy Athletes events for athletes involving partners, coaches and/or families as appropriate with a minimum of 20% of athletes in the SO Program's selected geographic focus area enrolled in an ongoing wellness program.	Health, wellness or fitness programming is defined as reoccurring health education and/or engagement to improve health or prevent illness. To qualify, athletes must participate in 6 sessions minimum. For example, this could be nutrition lessons at 6 practices, 6 HIV awareness classes or a 6 week weight management program.

6	Sufficient sustainable resources to achieve the above criteria and deliver the project.	Available staff and resources (including partners) necessary to achieve the criteria going forward.
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Benefits to Programs Becoming a Healthy Community

Programs that achieve Healthy Community recognition will be leading the Movement and the world in terms of ensuring that people with ID are receiving equal access to health care and are able to compete to the best of their ability and health. Only Programs that have been granted Healthy Community recognition by SOI will be allowed to call themselves Healthy Communities. Programs that become Healthy Communities or apply to work towards this recognition status will have access to the following support and resources from SOI:

- Recognition by SOI as a leading Program in terms of athlete health programming
- Healthy Communities resources, including sharing of best and innovative practices
- Webinars on specific health topics for Healthy Communities
- Technical support from SOI towards achieving recognition as a Healthy Community
- Monitoring and Evaluation support from SOI

Recognition Process for Self-Funding Programs

If you have received funding outside of SOI to fund your health program and are either working toward becoming a recognized Healthy Community or have met the criteria to become a Healthy Community, read the steps below for the next steps:

1. Review the Healthy Communities criteria outlined above. Determine if your Program is currently meeting these criteria or is committed to working towards meeting these criteria over the next few years.
2. If your Program is committed to working towards meeting these criteria, complete the [Healthy Communities Registration form](#) (Optional resources include the [Project Planning Guide](#) and [Project Planning Template](#)).
3. Submit the [Registration form](#) to your Regional Healthy Athletes Manager. SOI will accept and review Registration forms on an ongoing basis ([see Registration form for submission instructions](#)).
4. Programs that feel they are already meeting the Healthy Community criteria can complete the following report ([click here for report](#)). The reports will be reviewed biannually and should be submitted through the online link (https://specialolympics.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_8J8dwF0gIzfXZft) by April 15 and October 15.
5. Both recognized Healthy Communities and Programs working to meet the criteria will be required to report annually on their achievement towards meeting the criteria. There will be two opportunities in the year to report, reports should be submitted by April 15 and October 15. ([See Healthy Communities Tracking Tool for metrics collection template](#).) To continue to be recognized as a Healthy Community, Programs submit this annual report and continue to meet or exceed the recognition criteria