

HIA: health at the heart of policy-making and its implementation

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Health at the heart of policy-making

The title of this talk prompts us to ask:

- Why is health important?
- Why should health be at the heart of policy-making?

Health at the heart of policy-making

There is an American proverb that says:

“A nation’s health is a nation’s wealth”

Health at the heart of policy-making

Health is the foundation of any life, whether it be that of:

- An individual
- A group in society
- A community
- A population
- A nation

Health at the heart of policy-making

Sustainable communities is one of the goals of most governments, whether national, regional or local

- Sustainable development can be a mechanism to improve health, well-being and quality of life
- Health is a resource to ensure sustainability

Health at the heart of policy-making

A healthy community is a viable community:

- Economically
- Socially
- Environmentally

A healthy community is a sustainable community

Health at the heart of policy-making

- ✓ Health impact assessment (HIA) can help to introduce, maintain and promote health at the heart of policy-making and its implementation
- ✓ HIA is one methodology that can help us attain sustainable communities

What is HIA? Different ways in which the term can be used

- Concept
- Process
- Methodology
- Model
- Tool
- Approach

What is HIA?

The definition

“a combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, a program or project may be *judged* as to its potential effects on the health of a population and the distribution of effects within the population”

WHO Gothenburg Consensus Paper, 1999

What is HIA?

Judging impacts on health

There are two main types of impact on health:

- 1.** Direct – reflecting biomedical model of health
- 2.** Indirect – through the determinants of health, reflecting the social or socio-economic model of health

HIA helps to address health impacts using both models

HIA: investigating impacts on health

Proposal

Indirect Effects

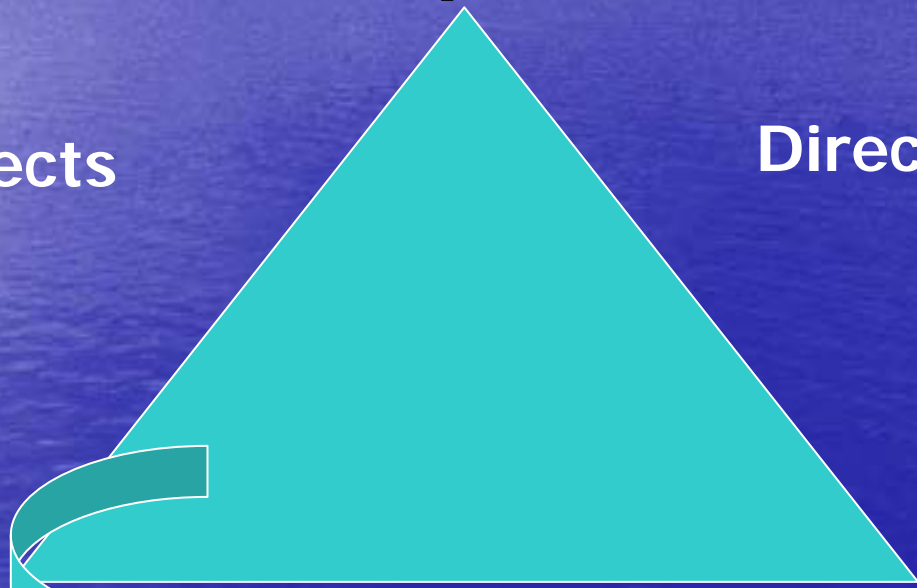
Direct Effects



HEALTH



**DETERMINANTS
OF HEALTH**



What is HIA? The full process

5 stages	6 stages
Screening	Screening
Scoping	Scoping
Appraisal, including reporting	Appraisal
	Reporting
Supporting decision-makers	Supporting decision-makers
Monitoring & evaluation	Monitoring & evaluation

What is the point of HIA?

- To provide information about health and health-related issues with respect to specific proposals to politicians and other decision-makers during the decision-making process
- To give guidance about what may be done to optimise health gain through the design and implementation of a specific proposal

Status of HIA

- In almost all countries, HIA is not statutory – in Switzerland, some cantons are working on HIA (GE, JU, TI)
- For EU countries, health is a component of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- In countries where Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is statutory, some studies investigate health under impacts on human beings

HIA in the UK

- First HIA conducted in 1998 by Ardern et al. on Manchester airport
- Much experience at local level in England - development of tools, guidance and other resources (HIA Gateway website)
- Undertaken at a regional level in England
- Promoted by the Welsh Assembly
- There is a Scottish network
- In the early years of development in Northern Ireland

HIA in the UK

Most popular types of proposals for HIA are:

- Spatial development and urban planning
- Redevelopment and regeneration
- Transport and transport infrastructure
- Housing

Problems with the introduction of HIA in the UK

HIA has been seen as:

- A brake on economic development
- A way of stopping or obstructing a proposal, particularly proposals related to spatial planning

Despite statements in Government policy, these perceptions may reflect the way HIA was taken up enthusiastically by public health workers at a grassroots level when it was first introduced

Health at the heart of strategy development in London

- Mayor of London has made a political commitment to conducting HIA on *all* the mayoral strategies
- HIAs are undertaken by the London Health Commission, which is independent, for the Mayor of London
- London Health Commission submits HIA results to the Mayor, the Greater London Assembly and the team responsible for the strategy

HIA on London's Mayoral Strategies

- Transport
- Economic development
- Spatial development
- Waste management
- Noise
- Energy
- Biodiversity
- Air quality
- Culture
- Older people

HIA on London's Mayoral Strategies

Preparation

- Scoping the main topic areas of the strategy that the HIA will focus on
- Literature review of potential impacts on health and effective interventions relating to the strategy

Appraisal

- Rapid appraisal techniques used
- HIA stakeholder workshop before public consultation period – stakeholders from the private, public and voluntary sectors
- Reporting the results

HIA on London's Mayoral Strategies

Questions addressed in stakeholder workshop on the Noise Strategy

- What parts of the strategy need to be kept on the basis of the impacts on people's health and well-being? How can we increase those positive effects?
- What parts of the strategy need to be changed because of their impacts on health and well-being? How can we change the proposal to reduce/avoid those negative effects?
- What could be added to the strategy to promote health and well-being?

HIA on London's Mayoral Strategies

Evaluation of HIAs undertaken on London's Mayoral Strategies

"The HIAs have raised awareness of the social model of health and public health amongst those whose primary roles are not health related ... Most importantly [they] have influenced strategy."

Opinion Leader Research, 2002

How HIA at a local level can influence policy development

HIA of redevelopment at King's Cross involved 6 proposals:

1. Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL)
2. Expansion of London Underground
3. Expansion of King's Cross Railway Station
4. Relocation of Thameslink Station
5. High-density mixed-use development at King's Cross Central
6. Regent's Quarter high-density mixed-use development

How HIA at a local level can influence policy development

Channel Tunnel Rail Link – political context

- Governed by an Act of Parliament – first “provider-sponsored act” in UK
- Very little control for Camden Borough Council
- Developers responsible to 2 government departments:
 - Transport
 - Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

How HIA at a local level can influence policy development

CTRL: Impacts on surrounding communities

- Construction started in 2000 and scheduled to finish end 2006
- Started after disruption from construction of the British Library
- Work starts at 0700 and finishes at 2000 every week day
- Some communities, particularly on western border of site, live very close to the works
- All communities surrounding the site are deprived with poor levels of health and well-being, low incomes, relatively high unemployment and poor living conditions

How HIA at a local level can influence policy development

CTRL: Application for 24-hour working

- CTRL were 3 months behind schedule
- Applied to Camden Borough Council for permission to do 24-hour working for 3 years
- HIA team made a submission to the council about impacts on health
- Council refused permission taking into account all objections

How HIA at a local level can influence policy development

CTRL: Application for 24-hour working

- CTRL appealed, and appeal was granted for a “fast-track” Planning Inquiry
- HIA Team gave evidence on behalf of Council about health impacts of 24-hour working
- Planning Inspector refused permission for 24-hour working – first time impacts on the community have been cited as one of the reasons for refusing permission

How HIA at a local level can influence policy development

Implications of Planning Inquiry Result

- Decision sets a precedent in English case law for planning
- Department of Transport at hearings because there will be other provider-sponsored acts in future, especially for major transport infrastructure projects
- Subsequently, developers of Crossrail, another large-scale transport infrastructure project for London, commissioned a rapid HIA

What does HIA offer?

- A methodology to achieve added value – that is, health gain – from non-health proposals
- A mechanism for addressing health and other inequalities in policy development
- A model of health that has the potential to cover all the determinants of health, and impacts on all stakeholder groups
- A tool for bringing together explicit and tacit knowledge about health – “evidence” & experience, quantitative & qualitative data

What does HIA offer?

Benefits of methodology

- Provides a systematic framework
- Openness and transparency
- Flexibility
- Adaptability

Opportunities for HIA in Switzerland

HIA being introduced at a cantonal level provides an opportunity:

- to embed health at the heart of policy-making
- to learn from experience in other countries and not repeat their mistakes
- to make your own mistakes and share with others the experience of bringing HIA into the heart of policy-making

Health at the heart of policy-making

There is an English proverb that says:

“What comes from the heart goes to the heart”

- Using HIA to put health at the heart of policy-making can help us maintain and promote health at the heart of our society
- If health is at the heart of our society, we will have the capacity to build sustainable communities