Health Impact Assessment:
A Practice for Supporting “Health in All Policies”

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What is Health Impact Assessment (HIA)?

“…a combination of procedures, methods and tools that systematically judges the potential, and sometimes unintended, effects of a policy, plan, program or project on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population. HIA identifies appropriate actions to manage those effects. (International Association of Impact Assessment).”
HIA Objectives

- To integrate health considerations into all public decision-making.
- To highlight the unanticipated and hidden health impacts of public decisions.
- To help integrate community insights, knowledge and voice into public decision-making processes.
- To create shared responsibility for population health.
- To narrow health disparities by ensuring that public decisions create social conditions (i.e., where people are “…born, grow, live, work and age…”) that promote population health.
Public decisions and population health

- Decisions undertaken at *any level of government* (e.g., local, county, state, regional, federal, international).

- Decisions taken in *any sector or area of government activity* (e.g., housing, transportation, land use, economic [e.g., fiscal, monetary, trade], criminal justice, education, environmental, economic development, employment/labor, social welfare, natural resources, open space) *excluding the health sector*.

- *Implementing body* (e.g., government agency, educational institutions, and other not-for-profits).
HIA – The Steps

- Screen
- Scope
- Assess
- Recommendations
- Reporting
- Evaluate/Monitor

An Illustration:  
U.S. EEOC Policy Guidance

SDOH → mental health → physical health
“coping mechanism”

Unemployment → depression → sexual activity → STDs & pregnancies
rejection

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HIA is a tool for helping to execute SHIP recommendations

• **Public Health System Priority:**
  • To Address Social Determinants of Health and Health Disparities.

• **Priority Health Concerns:**
  • Alcohol/Tobacco, Use of Illicit Drugs/Misuse of Legal Drugs, Mental Health, Natural and Built Environment, Obesity: Nutrition and Physical Activity, Oral Health, Patient Safety and Quality, Unintentional Injury, and Violence.
HIA Resources

- International Association of Impact Assessments - www.iaia.com
- Human Impact Partners - www.humanimpact.org/
- Health Impact Project - http://www.healthimpactproject.org/
- San Francisco Department of Public Health - http://www.sfphes.org/
- International Health Impact Assessment Consortium - http://www.liv.ac.uk/ihia/
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