



Environmental Health

Panel Discussion on Health Impact Assessment



Department of Health and Community Services

■ Population Health Branch

- Environmental Health
- Healthy Living
- Communicable Disease Control
- Aging & Seniors
- Mental Health and Addictions
- Chief Medical Officer of Health



Assessment of Health Impacts

Policies, Plans, Programs and Projects

- Not required as a component of the decision making process in government.
- May be a part of decision making for projects undergoing environmental assessment.
- My role is to provide health input on projects undergoing environmental assessment.
- May be asked to provide input on policies being considered by Cabinet.
- No formal assessment process – ad hoc.

Assessment of Health Impacts

Policies, Plans, Programs and Projects

- Public health officials review:
 - Project compliance with health regulations (water, sewage, tobacco, food, sanitation).
 - Potential health impacts of environmental change.
 - Potential health impacts of social and economic changes.

For Your Consideration...

- The environments in which we live, work and play influence health outcomes.
- Reasonable to want to integrate health considerations (& our knowledge and experience) into policies, plans, programs impacting those environments.
 - Including those that are not primarily focused on the health of the population.

For your Consideration...

- Decision makers want to make the best decision possible and the HIA is a means for them to make better decisions.
 - Develop HIA tools
 - Build collaboration and relationships
 - Consider regulatory requirement for HIA
 - Consider requiring HIA as a component of Cabinet deliberations related to new public policy decisions.

Health Impact Assessment & Legislation

Between 2003 and 2010, Quebec's Ministry of Health received 327 requests for health impact advice from other government departments or agencies, says St-Pierre. About 54% of those concerned proposed bills and regulations, while 46% involved policies, strategies or action plans.

Section 54 of the *Public Health Act* stipulates that:

The Minister is by virtue of his or her office the advisor of the Government on any public health issue. The Minister shall give the other ministers any advice he or she considers advisable for health promotion and the adoption of policies capable of fostering the enhancement of the health and welfare of the population.

In the Minister's capacity as government advisor, the Minister shall be consulted in relation to the development of the measures provided for in an Act or regulation that could have significant impact on the health of the population (*Public Health Act*, 2001).

Canada's Doctors Urge Health Impact Assessment for all Federal Policies

OTTAWA, May 31, 2012 /CNW/ - The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) is calling on the federal government to conduct a health impact assessment as part of its policy development process to ensure that the health of Canadians is a key factor in every policy decision it makes.

More Information:

- World Health Organization
 - Barriers cited to using HIA in Government policy making.
<http://www.who.int/hia/policy/barriers/en/index.html#>
- National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy
[http://www.ncchpp.ca/54/Health Impact Assessment.ccnpps](http://www.ncchpp.ca/54/Health_Impact_Assessment.ccnpps)