

# The "Plan Nord": The usefulness of HIA for large economic development projects

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Lyne Jobin, Ministère de la Santé et des  
Services sociaux du Québec

Geneviève Lapointe, Institut national de  
santé publique du Québec

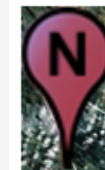
*Institut national  
de santé publique*

Québec 

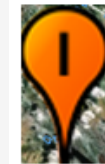
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# Territory covered by the Plan Nord

The Aboriginal communities



Naskapis



Innus



Cris



Inuit



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# HIA written into the action plan

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The 2011-2016 action plan for the Plan Nord

Health and social services axis:

"Implement a process designed to assess the impact on the health of northern populations of development projects under the Plan Nord."

# Development of the HIA mechanism

- Responsibility for coordinating and supporting the development and implementation of the HIA mechanism falls to the department of health and social services
  - Direction générale de la santé publique (public health branch)
- Support from the Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ) intended to inform decision making

Work organized according to 3 priority areas:

- Linking and strengthening current impact assessment procedures (EIA and HIA)
- Producing specific knowledge
- Putting knowledge to use



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# Linking and strengthening current impact assessment procedures

Projects subject to the environmental impact assessment procedure (EIA)  
Southern Québec or in the North  
e.g.: mining, transportation, energy production

Projects, programs and policies not subject to the EIA procedure  
+Government initiatives  
(training, social housing, infrastructure...)

**Strengthened EIA procedure**

**Strengthened HIA procedure**

- ↑ Health impacts taken into account in EIA
- ↑ Ability of the various stakeholders involved in EIAs to identify health concerns (governmental authorities, promoters, consultants, etc.)

- Adaptation of tools to the contexts and concerns of Northern populations (including Aboriginal communities)
- Addition of a citizen participation component
- ↑ participation of governmental authorities

**Development of training programs and production of adapted guides and tools**  
**Coaching**



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# Producing specific knowledge

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- Produce health portraits to improve understanding of the populations involved
- Document, synthesize knowledge about
  - the potential health impacts of projects
  - the effectiveness of attenuation and follow-up measures
  - the impact on health network services
  - practices reinforcing the social responsibility of businesses
- Carry out HIAs on typical examples of projects or programs

# Putting knowledge to use

- Make the information generated by both types of assessment accessible to decision makers
  - Work across sectors, mainly upstream in the process; inform, raise awareness
  - Emphasize the health recommendations of EIAs/HIAs with a view to informing decision making, at the opportune time
    - Clearly show that promoters and communities have everything to gain, and that the process is to their benefit; opt for a win-win approach rather than an "advocacy" approach
  - Support decision making while keeping in mind contextual factors
  - Be capable of clearly presenting the evidence related to the problem and to proposed solutions; communicate effectively