

# Webinar – The Wellbeing Policy Turn: Four Central Government Initiatives and the Role of Public Health

## Chatbox conversations

This webinar introduced the recent trend toward wellbeing policy making by looking at how this change has emerged, and reported on the wellbeing policies of the governments of Scotland, New Zealand, Finland, and Wales. It was an opportunity to look at how these policies connect with public health concerns and the role that public health played in these cases. It was held on December 13, 2022.

This webinar was presented by the National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy.

To watch the webinar recording, [click here](#).

Below, you will find the content of the chat box conversations held during this webinar, **please note that they have not been edited for content.**

- **NCCHPP/CCNPPS**27:28

Good afternoon everyone and welcome to the webinar entitled: The Wellbeing Policy Turn: Four Central Government Initiatives and the Role of Public Health. Please note that this webinar is being recorded and that the recording and the PPT presentation will be made available online afterwards. We will start at 2:00 p.m. Thank you!

- **Trevor Hancock**43:07

The field of ecological economics has argued against GDP as a measure of social progress for decades. See the work of Herman Daly (who died in October), Robert Costanza etc - or even further back to The Other Economic Summits in the 1970s and 1980s and EF Schumacher's book Small is Beautiful.

- **Melissa Caravan**43:22

NL is working on a social well being initiative/plan

- **Trevor Hancock**44:31

In Canada, see the decades-old work of the Canadian Index of Wellbeing

- **Richard Gould**45:09

Some years ago work was done on developing the Genuine Progress Index in NS. To move beyond use of GDP

- **NCCHPP/CCNPPS**47:30

Don't hesitate to use the Q&R to ask your questions

- **Lisa Paterson**48:19

Often difficult to get those higher up to understand this approach. A disconnect from grassroots findings and experience

- **Richard Gould**49:05

Some info on GPI - <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/>

- **NCCHPP/CCNPPS**50:23

Thank you for sharing these resources!

- **Trevor Hancock**01:05:58

This is the best source for what an overview of what governments are doing - Wellbeing Economy Governments - <https://weall.org/wego> The Wellbeing Economy Governments partnership (WEGo) is a collaboration of national and regional governments promoting sharing of expertise and transferrable policy practices. The aims are to deepen their understanding and advance their shared ambition of building wellbeing economies. WEGo, which currently comprises Scotland, New Zealand, Iceland, Wales and Finland, is founded on the recognition that 'development' in the 21st century entails delivering human and ecological wellbeing.

- **Michael Rachlis**01:07:05

Thank you for this. In your discussion of governance challenges, you mentioned it can be confusing who is responsible for what. However, Canadian central agencies such as cabinet offices, Ministries of Finance/Treasury Boards, and First minister's offices all see themselves as fulfilling the functions we're suggesting be given to others. In Quebec the Ministry of Finance simply doesn't follow section 54 of the Public Health Act. I would be interested in your views about how to deal with these powerful agencies who don't want to give up what they see as their roles.

- **Shannon Turner**01:11:09

The definition of indicators is a powerful process for shaping the changes desired. This is often a contentious and circular process and unless it is actually applied becomes an exercise rather than an intervention. The central leadership must maintain commitment to the process.

- **Trevor Hancock**01:12:36

On World Health Day this year, 38 national health organisations (including CAPE, CANE, the CMA, the CNA, the CPHA etc) and dozens of leading professionals sent

an open letter to the First Ministers calling for the creation of Wellbeing societies (viz the 2021 WHO Geneva Charter), a Wellbeing Secretariat in the PCO or Cabinet Offices, and a Wellbeing budget and Commissioner for Future Generations. A national workgroup is now working to further this work.

- **Michael Rachlis**01:13:32

For keeners who want to understand why this stuff is so hard, I recommend UK policy analyst Paul Cairney's "Why Isn't Government more Preventative?" It's a detailed analysis over a couple of decades of moving to well being policies in the UK. Cairney is one of the most prolific authors these days on policy analysis. See his website: <https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/>. It's amazing.

- **Lisa Paterson**01:14:12

How do you move from short term planning (ie election cycles) to long term prevention planning as in Finland

- **Trevor Hancock**01:14:37

Here is the link to the Open Letter - <https://cape.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/World-Health-Day-Letter-to-First-Ministers-Final-April-7-2022-1.pdf>

- **Lisa Paterson**01:15:59

As I understand it in Finland there are certain well being aspects enshrined in law e.g. the baby boxes continue to be distributed (since the 70s)

- **Trevor Hancock**01:16:16

Important to link this to the WHO Geneva Charter for Wellbeing, which is all about Wellbeing societies

- **Lisa Paterson**01:19:03

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21594937.2018.1437378?journalCode=rjip20>

- **Trevor Hancock**01:25:04

A key tool for framing a Wellbeing budget is Doughnut Economics

- **Lisa Paterson**01:25:52

leikkipuisto, every sub division builds housing with this included in Finland

- **edward xie**01:26:23

Relatedly, are there examples of avoiding notions of 'trading off' among sectors (in agreement with previous question)

- **Trevor Hancock**01:26:51

If you want to know more about ecological economics and public health, see my primer, published by the NCC on Healthy Public Policy a couple of years ago.

- **NCCHPP/CCNPPS**01:27:24

<https://ccnpps-ncchpp.ca/ecological-economics-and-public-health-an-interview-with-dr-trevor-hancock/>

- **Trevor Hancock**01:27:25

At the local level, the framework is Healthy Communities

- **NCCHPP/CCNPPS**01:27:57

<https://engagenovascotia.ca/>

- **Heather Mathur**01:28:35



- **Richard Gould**01:28:50

We (PH) can achieve many of these broader goals by working with other partners such that not only do they achieve outcomes of their own mandates but also positively affect health. Sometimes that can be more practical than trying to develop a national framework.

- **Alexandra Espin Espinoza**01:29:21

Please take a few minutes to complete an evaluation of the webinar, available here: <https://ca1se.voxco.com/SE/100/WebinarWellbeingPolicyTurn/>

- **NCCHPP/CCNPPS**01:29:44

Thank you very much for your participation!

- **Heather Mathur**01:29:46

Thank you

- **Tim Takaro**01:29:46

Thanks!

- **Christine Stich**01:29:52

Thank you!

- **Melissa Caravan**01:29:53

Thanks

- **Kelsie Dale**01:29:56

Thanks!