Symposium – What Can Public Health Organizations do to Improve Their Capacities to Act on Healthy Public Policies?

CPHA Conference in Halifax, NS, Thursday April 25, 2024

Laure Baglinière, Expert Scientific Advisor, NCCHPP
Martin Renauld, Expert Scientific Advisor, NCCHPP
Kari Barkhouse, Healthy Communities Manager, Science and System Performance at Nova Scotia Health, Public Health
Melinda Markey, Manager, Healthy Public Policy Unit, Vancouver Coastal Health

Moderator: Natalia Carrillo Botero, Scientific Advisor, NCCHPP
Land Acknowledgment
National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy

Our mandate

Support public health actors in their efforts to develop and promote healthy public policies

Our projects

- Analyzing Public Policies
- Climate Change
- Health in All Policies
- Health Inequalities
- Health Impact Assessment
- Knowledge Sharing
- Population Mental Health and Wellness
- Public Health Ethics
- Public Health Infrastructure
- Wellbeing Policies
Plan of the presentation

1. NCCHPP: Exploring organizational capacities to act on healthy public policies: overview of results from the literature

2. Vancouver Coastal Health Healthy Public Policy Unit: Innovation for public policy capacity in the public health system

Exploring Organizational Capacities to Act on Healthy Public Policies: Overview of Results from the Literature

Laure Baglinière, Expert Scientific Advisor, NCCHPP
Martin Renauld, Expert Scientific Advisor, NCCHPP
SPEAKER NAME: Martin Renauld

I have no conflict of interest to declare in relation to this presentation.

SPEAKER NAME: Laure Baglinière

I have no conflict of interest to declare in relation to this presentation.
Why conduct such an analysis?

Little work has been done to examine the concrete actions favoured by public health organizations.

What were our objectives?

1. To list and categorize strategies put in place by public health organizations in Canada and internationally to act on HPPs.
2. To provide information that can be shared between organizations wishing to strengthen their capacity for action in this field.
• Exploratory analysis of the scientific literature to identify strategies for public health organizations to build capacity to act on HPPs.

• Selection of 106 articles from 2004 to 2022.

• Analysis of content, identification of strategies and examples of implementation using an analysis framework.
FRAMEWORK: 5 DIMENSIONS

- Partnerships
- Organizational structure & resources
- Workforce
- Knowledge development
- Leadership and governance

RELEVANCE OF THE FRAMEWORK

- Identify and categorize strategies under each dimension
- Define public health organizations’ activities
- Facilitate communication with partners and other sectors.
Strategies available to public health organizations

- Inventory and map the ecosystem of actors
- Participate in or set up collaboration spaces
- Maintain ongoing connections with actors outside public health
- Involve knowledge brokers or external consultants
- Prioritize participatory approaches

Collaboration among organizations and various public health stakeholders, as well as with organizations and stakeholders from other governmental and non-governmental sectors.
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

• The infrastructural capacity of the system to contribute to the goals of the public health system: organizational capacity, program execution, structures, and processes.
• Allocation and provision of human, financial, and intellectual resources necessary for the implementation of public health activities.

Strategies available to public health organizations

• Create teams or positions dedicated to HPPs
• Promote sustainable financing
Strategies available to public health organizations

- Map skills and collaborations within organizations
- Support "boundary spanning" initiatives within organizations
- Provide training to improve individual capabilities.
Knowledge: provides information about population health and supports the implementation of evidence-based HPPs.

Strategies available to public health organizations

- Gather local data to support the progress of HPPs
- Set up relevant indicators to leverage data favouring HPPs
- Make public health data and knowledge accessible and usable
- Develop customized tools for other actors
- Inform decision making and influence the political agenda.
LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The capacity and willingness of public health organizations to improve public health by developing and implementing effective policies and demonstrating leadership qualities and strategic thinking.

- Prioritize health equity in organizational governance
- Clarify the roles of public health in governance
- Involve leaders committed to HPPs within organizations
- Underscore the advocacy role of public health.
CONCLUSION

• A variety of strategies exist for public health organizations to strengthen their capacities.

• An upcoming NCCHPP report will present both strategies and implementation examples found in the literature.
References

You are interested in this topic?

Visit ccnpps-ncchpp.ca

laure.bagliniere@inspq.qc.ca
martin.reauld@inspq.qc.ca

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VCH Healthy Public Policy Unit:
Innovation for public policy capacity in the public health system

Melinda Markey, Acting Executive Director Population Health Manager, Healthy Public Policy Unit, Vancouver Coastal Health

CPHA Conference
Halifax, Nova Scotia | April 25, 2024
I have no conflict of interest to declare in relation to this presentation.
Territorial Acknowledgement

Vancouver Coastal Health is committed to delivering exceptional care to 1.25 million people, including the First Nations, Métis and Inuit, within the traditional territories of the Heiltsuk, Kitasoo-Xai'xais, Lil'wat, Musqueam, N'Quatqua, Nuxalk, Samahquam, shíshálh, Skatin, Squamish, Tla’amin, Tsleil-Waututh, Wuikinuxv, and Xa’xtsa.

The VCH physical head office is located on the traditional and unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.
Our theory of change relies on a HiAP approach

- Strengthen ability to influence public policies, enhance team member and partner experience, and improve team effectiveness
- Ensure that decisions taken by other sectors incorporate a Health in All Policies approach
- Enhance the living conditions shaping the health and wellness of residents (determinants of health)
- Improve population health outcomes & Reduce health inequities
Healthy public policy renewal at VCH

Enhanced pop health program (white paper)

Internal validation

Core competencies & systems

Research, testing & validation (ongoing)

HPP Pathways Framework

External validation (ongoing)

Environmental scan of policy-influencing orgs.

Team design & job descriptions

Recruitment & onboarding

Initiate strategic planning

Policy Monitoring Framework

Strategic planning

Operational planning

Impact pathways

2019
Vision

2020
Validate

2021
Design

2022
Launch

2023
Plan/Do

Pandemic redeployment

Healthy Public Policy Unit
## Healthy public policy renewal at VCH

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Vision</th>
<th>HPP Scholars</th>
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<td>Enhanced pop health program (white paper)</td>
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<td>Internal validation</td>
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<td>Validate</td>
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<td>2021</td>
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<td>Research, testing &amp; validation (ongoing)</td>
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<td>2022</td>
<td>Launch</td>
<td>Test &amp; validate systems, tools, and practices; How to evaluate influence (Lynn Ying)</td>
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<td>How to monitor policy (Joshua Codd)</td>
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<td>Equity and regional planning (Abbey Morgan)</td>
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<td>Child and youth mental health emerging from pandemic (Erin Bullen)</td>
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<td>AI and Public Health (Pedram Agand)</td>
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<td>2024</td>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>Pandemic redeployment</td>
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**2023** Plan/Do

**2024** Evaluate
What do public health teams need for policy work?
A mandate
In BC Public health has a mandate for healthy public policy

BC Public Health Act | Section 73(3)  
Local Public Health Issues  
Advise local government on public health (promotion & protection) issues, bylaws, policies

BC Public Health Act | Section 83  
Role of Local Government  
Must delegate liaison for health, report health hazards, and consider advice provided by health officer

MHO Duties & Responsibilities

Provide evidence-based opinions.  
Collaborate across sectors.  
Advocate for public health and vulnerable groups.  
Communicate with the public and elected officials on local health issues.  
Contribute to regional health planning.

Community Charter | Section 8(3)  
Public Health Bylaws  
Protect health & enhance well-being with public health bylaws. Must consult health board or MHO

Local Government Act | Part 13  
Regional Growth Strategies  
Must consult provincial governments and agencies about Regional Growth Strategies
...with the expertise to fulfill our key functions and services

- Identify and monitor local or regional population health issues with data-driven and evidence-based approaches
- Monitor and analyze policy and program options and apply an evidence-based systems approach to support implementation
- Collaborate with partners and communities to co-create policy initiatives in a culturally relevant and equity-oriented way

**Health equity & Population health**

- Monitor & analyze data
- Develop model policies
- Mobilize policy
- Communicate strategically
- Convene & collaborate

**Public health leadership**
Bridge capacity gaps and advance healthy public policy practices that promote population health and wellbeing

- Co-create standardized policy frameworks and templates for adapted use in various community contexts
- Monitor policy windows, co-design campaigns, and effectively champion healthy public policies and services across the region
- Visualize data and share information tailored to reach diverse audiences and enable impactful policies and initiatives
Collaborative ways of working across settings and sectors

Policy Monitoring + Windows of Opportunity
Ongoing monitoring of policy windows of opportunity, policy funding opportunities, community response

Context, Governance + Key Players
Maintain in-depth understanding of the setting, including context, governance structures, key players, issues affecting the setting (funding, capacity, etc.)

Population Health Data to Influence Decisions
Maintain strong familiarity with setting/population health data and key health issues in the VCH region

Oversight + Support for OCMHO Staff and MHOs
Provide oversight, strategy development & support to HPPU & OCMHO staff working in this setting, including the regional MHO lead

Connections with Subject Matter Experts
Develop strong connections with subject matter experts for setting-based health data & evidence-based interventions

Knowledge Exchange
Develop, facilitate & coordinate opportunities with OCMHO & external partners for knowledge exchange in relation to issues that affect the setting/sector
How do we go about working on policy?
Use a strategic framework to guide and assess policy influence

Enable *Share* information, expertise and resources
- Raise awareness and contribute to agenda-setting by inspiring interested or impacted groups.
- Bridge capacity gaps to support key sectors to understand issues, salience, and relevance.

Influence *Broker* interpretation of information via relationships
- Enable partners to mobilize by articulating where, why, and how they can have impact on an issue.
- Convene collaborations and partnerships that create opportunities for cross-sector influence and action.

Contribute *Drive* long term change by leveraging policy windows
- Participate in collaborative decision-making tables that create and/or enact policy.
- Directly influence policy, program or systems changes that promote health and health equity.
Anticipate and create windows of opportunity for policy action

Policy Monitoring Framework

- Legislative cycle and media monitoring of priority policy areas
  - Government and advocacy coalition activities, news, social media
- Allows team to be proactive, take advantage of policy windows, develop and mobilize informed policies, and track policy outcomes
- Tableau dashboard (PAM)
- CRM for engagement and network development
Figure 1. Municipal council data count of policy proposals by theme over time

Table 1. List of Municipal council policy proposals (N= 13,233)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Policy Proposal</th>
<th>Theme</th>
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<td>New Business</td>
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How do we continue to develop healthy public policy as a core public health practice?
Cast a wide net to enhance capacity for healthy public policy

Diverse team training & experience
Public health & health sciences
Public engagement & planning
Policy analysis & advocacy
Governance & politics

Leveraging & building tools & competencies
Public health data & mandate
Policy monitoring
KT & engagement
Data vis & communications

Leadership support & organizational buy-in
Chief MHO as champion
Internal validation from outset
Broad support for upstream population health approach

Collaboration with HPP leaders & innovators
NCCHPP & other NCCs
GNHiAP/CNHiAP
Health agencies (e.g. BCCDC)
Non-profit organizations
Develop skills in policy processes

Capacity Building Programming
Facilitated interactive sessions

Healthy Public Policy Packages
Strategic guidance on priority topics

**Local Government 101, Understanding Power, Working with MHOs, Framing**

### PART 1 | The issue
- Relevance to population and public health
- Theory of change for healthy public policy influence
- Issue statements
- Evidence for health impacts
- Data sources

### PART 2 | HPP approach
- HPPU position
  - Frames to consider, and for whom
  - Frames to avoid, and why

### PART 3 | VCH/HPPU actions
- Contributions, activities, and participation
- Lessons learned

### PART 4 | Key partners and potential allies
- Allies and organizations
- Provincial Context
- Federal Context
Convening collaborators to identify needs, gaps, and opportunities to improve mental well-being for children and youth

- **Build knowledge**: research report
- **Raise awareness**: Best Brains Exchange
- **KT for policy**: engage local governments and support with tools
- **Mobilize policy action**: convene regional networks and provincial policy groups
Leveraging the powerful influence of local governments to promote child and youth mental well-being

**Protective factors** in four realms that
1) local governments can significantly influence
2) emerged as priorities during the COVID-19 pandemic

**Grants** to enable local initiatives:
- Youth Climate Corps Initiative (Squamish)
- Community Belonging (qathet)
- OCP Renewal Youth Engagement (SCRD)
- Quality After School Opportunities for Youth (Richmond)
Thank you!

Contact:
melinda.markey@vch.ca
Healthy Public Policy: Recovery and Rebuilding a Strengthened Approach

Kari Barkhouse, Science and System Performance, Public Health CPHA, 2024
I have no conflict of interest to declare in relation to this presentation.
Healthy Public Policy Capacity in 2020

Leadership & Governance

Legitimizing the Role:
- Provincial Standards & Policy Protocol
- NSH Population Health Framework & HPP (Advocacy) Guidelines

Organizational Structures & Resources

- Dedicated HPP Positions Provincially, Regionally and Front-line
- Provincia unit (SSP) established

Knowledge Development

- Development of HPP public health data tools, evidence briefs, framing and key messages

Partnerships

- Provincial and Local Coalitions
- Municipal Engagement and Partnerships
- Partnership Guidelines
- Partnership Mapping
Dedicated Positions for HPP

Provincial: Senior Policy Analysts, Public Policy Analysts, Program Specialists, Health Equity Lead

Regional: Policy and Social Action Consultants, Health Equity Consultants, Partnership and Engagement Consultants

Community: Health Promoters, Public Health Nutritionists
HPP Context 2022

- Healthy Communities and HPP Paused 2 to 2.5 years
- Staff with capacity and passion for HPP left organization
- New staff hired during the pandemic without orientation to Healthy Communities and HPP work
- Leadership re-assignments created a domino effect
- Competing pressure to restart other public health programs and services that had also been paused
- Returning staff expressed lack of confidence in previous knowledge and skill
- Partners and relationships needed to be rebuilt
- Work in community had changed or moved forward
Re-developing HPP as a Core Area Of Work

- Focus on People
- Orientation & Re-orientation
- Rebuild Zone Healthy Communities Teams
Building Individual Knowledge and Capacity

- Presentations:
  - Issue Specific Data profiles
  - Evidence Synthesis
  - Emerging Issues
- Theory and Practice Sessions
  - “Laying the foundation for policy work in public health”
  - Interactive, discussion case studies
Provincial Healthy Public Policy Teams

• Three areas of focus:
  • Income policy
  • Housing policy
  • Substance Use Policy (Alcohol, Tobacco, Vaping)

Create Teams Dedicated to HPP
Examples of Policy Team Outputs

Describing the Issue

• Housing and Health Evidence Brief
• Review and understand provincial and local data

Understanding The Social and Political Context

• Developed searchable housing stakeholder inventory available to zone HC teams
• Invited guests and organizations to discuss research, strategic goals and policy approaches.
• Policy monitoring on income policy landscape
• Sharing municipal and local opportunities and issues

Seek to Influence

• Developed key messages to share with partners and engaged in local Provincial Housing Action Needs Assessment consultation
• Supported National Advisory Council on Poverty consultation – convened change agents
• Developed an organizational submission to a federal consultation on Tobacco and Vaping Products Act (TVPA)
Household Food Insecurity

Food insecurity occurs when an individual or household cannot access the food that they need due to financial constraints. The negative health outcomes of food insecurity reach far beyond just nutrition and diet. Someone is having to make compromises in the quality of their diet or reduce their food intake, they are likely also struggling to cover the costs of other essential resources that determine health, such as the cost of housing or medications.

Food insecurity is a serious public health issue. Adults living in food insecure households are at greater risk for:

- Infectious Disease
- Chronic Conditions
- Poor Oral Health
- Injury
- Premature Death

Experiencing food insecurity, especially early in life, can also lead to poor mental health outcomes for children and youth, including increased risk of anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation.

The connection between food insecurity and health remains true even when accounting for other factors, such as level of education or household income.
Strengthening HPP

PH Priority
- Foundational documents and organizational processes in public health to implement HPP guidelines.
- Ongoing capacity building and training plan for HPP

Provincial Evaluation and Monitoring System
- Consistent process and system to collect local data and monitoring of policy windows
- Reporting Provincialy using relevant indicators
- Sharing success stories and KPI reporting

Alignment and Coordination
- Maintain collaborative structures to coordinate technical support and local action
- Apply Planned and Coordinated Approaches to Policy Windows
- Apply Strategic Framing
Questions/Feedback
Thank You
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