National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy (NCCHPP)

WEBINAR – Building Healthy Public Policy: Measuring Your Progress

January 21, 2026, 1:00 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. EST

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Centre de collaboration nationale sur les politiques publiques et la santé

National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy

Institut national de santé publique Québec

National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy

Our mandate

Support public health actors in their efforts to promote healthy public policies.

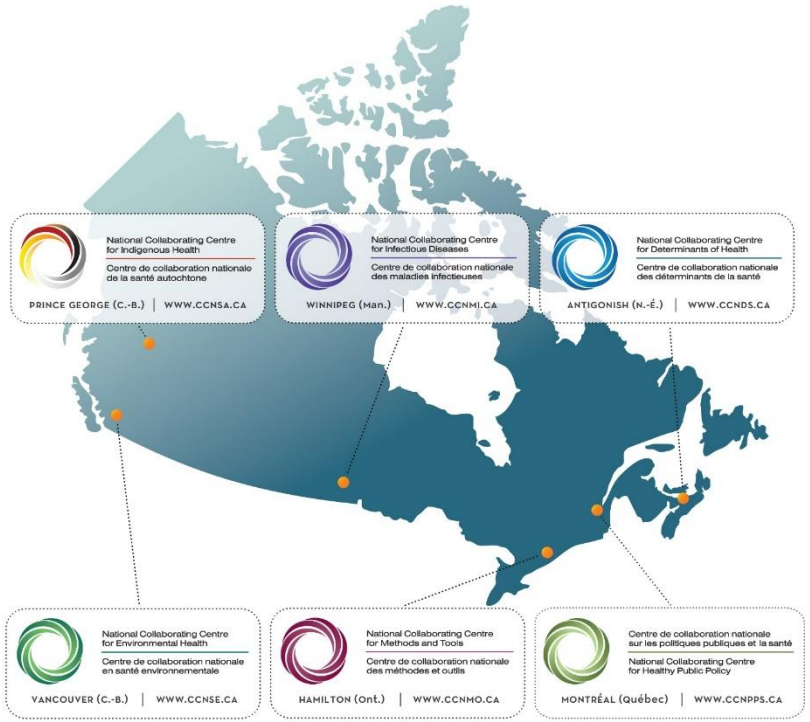
Our work areas

1. Public policy analysis

2. Intersectoral approaches to promoting healthy public policy

3. Emerging and priority issues

Equity
Health of Indigenous populations



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Land Acknowledgment

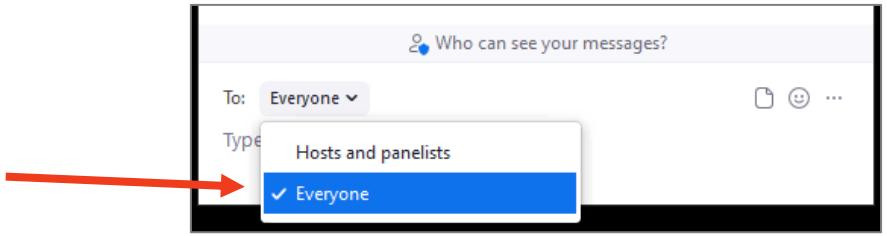
We acknowledge that we are on an age-old Indigenous territory, a place of meeting and diplomacy between peoples and the site of the signing of the Great Peace treaty.

We thank the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) nation for their hospitality on this unceded territory.

Technical information

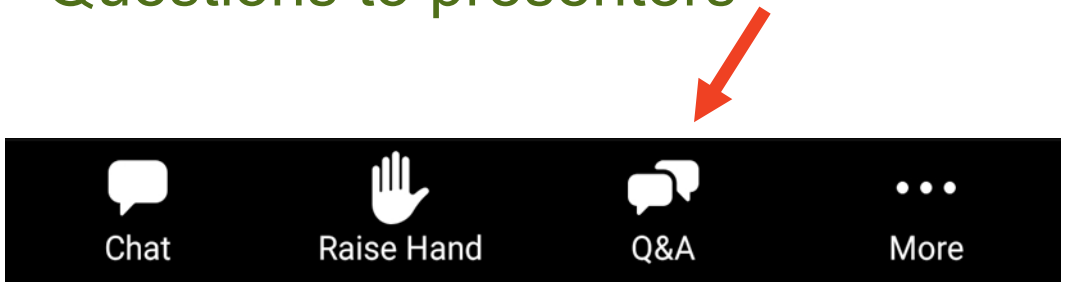
Chatbox

Discussion among all participants, please select Send to: Everyone



Q. & A.

Questions to presenters



- The webinar will be recorded, including the discussion boxes.
- The recording will be made available on our website
- The evaluation form will be shared at the end of the webinar and sent by email

Building Healthy Public Policy: Measuring your progress

NCCHPP Webinar

January 21, 2026

Healthy Public Policy Community of Practice


BAYVIEW AVE.
BLOOR ST.
NEXT EXIT

Building Healthy Public Policy: Measuring your progress Writing Team

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FOCUS ON

Measuring Progress in Healthy Public Policy: Indicators and Tools for Practice

Published: November 2025

Introduction

Building healthy public policy (HPP) is widely recognized as a cornerstone of public health and health promotion practice.[1-4] The process of building HPP involves various partners, multiple sectors and numerous iterative steps.[5,6] As it can also be a lengthy process, it is important to demonstrate the results and achievements of the work in the short-and-medium-term. This Focus On presents a set of measures and tools that can be used to track and communicate progress in building HPP.

Background

HPP aims to improve the conditions in which people are born, grow, learn, work, play, and age.[7] HPP accomplishes this by creating environments that enable people to live healthy lives by putting health on the policy agenda in a variety of sectors such as housing, education, employment, transportation, the environment and at all levels of government.[1,2] The policy-making process involves the coordinated action of a wide variety of interest holders working together to define a problem, the use of evidence to identify potential solutions, assessing readiness for potential policy options, and adoption, implementation and evaluation of the policy.[8] Figure 1 depicts PHO's eight step process for building HPP.

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PLEINS FEUX SUR

Mesurer les progrès réalisés dans l'élaboration de politiques publiques favorables à la santé : Indicateurs et outils pour la pratique

Date de publication : novembre 2025

Introduction

L'élaboration de politiques publiques favorables à la santé (PPS) est largement reconnue comme une pierre angulaire de la santé publique et de la promotion de la santé[1-4]. Le processus d'élaboration de PPS fait intervenir divers partenaires, de multiples secteurs et de nombreuses étapes itératives[5,6]. Dans la mesure où le processus peut se révéler long, il est important de démontrer les résultats et les réalisations du travail effectué à court et moyen terme. Ce document présente un ensemble de mesures et d'outils qui peuvent être utilisés pour suivre et communiquer les progrès réalisés dans l'élaboration de PPS.

Contexte

L'élaboration de PPS vise à améliorer les conditions dans lesquelles les personnes naissent, grandissent, apprennent, travaillent, s'amusent et vieillissent[7]. Pour atteindre cet objectif, elle crée des environnements qui permettent aux personnes de vivre une vie saine en mettant la santé au cœur des programmes stratégiques dans divers secteurs tels que le logement, l'éducation, l'emploi, les transports, l'environnement, et ce, à tous les ordres de gouvernement[1,2]. Le processus d'élaboration des politiques repose sur l'action coordonnée d'une grande variété de détenteurs d'intérêts qui travaillent ensemble pour définir un problème, sur l'utilisation de données probantes pour trouver de possibles solutions, sur l'évaluation de l'état de préparation aux possibilités d'action et sur l'adoption, la mise en œuvre et l'évaluation de la politique[8]. La figure 1 illustre le processus en huit étapes suivi par SPO pour élaborer les PPS.

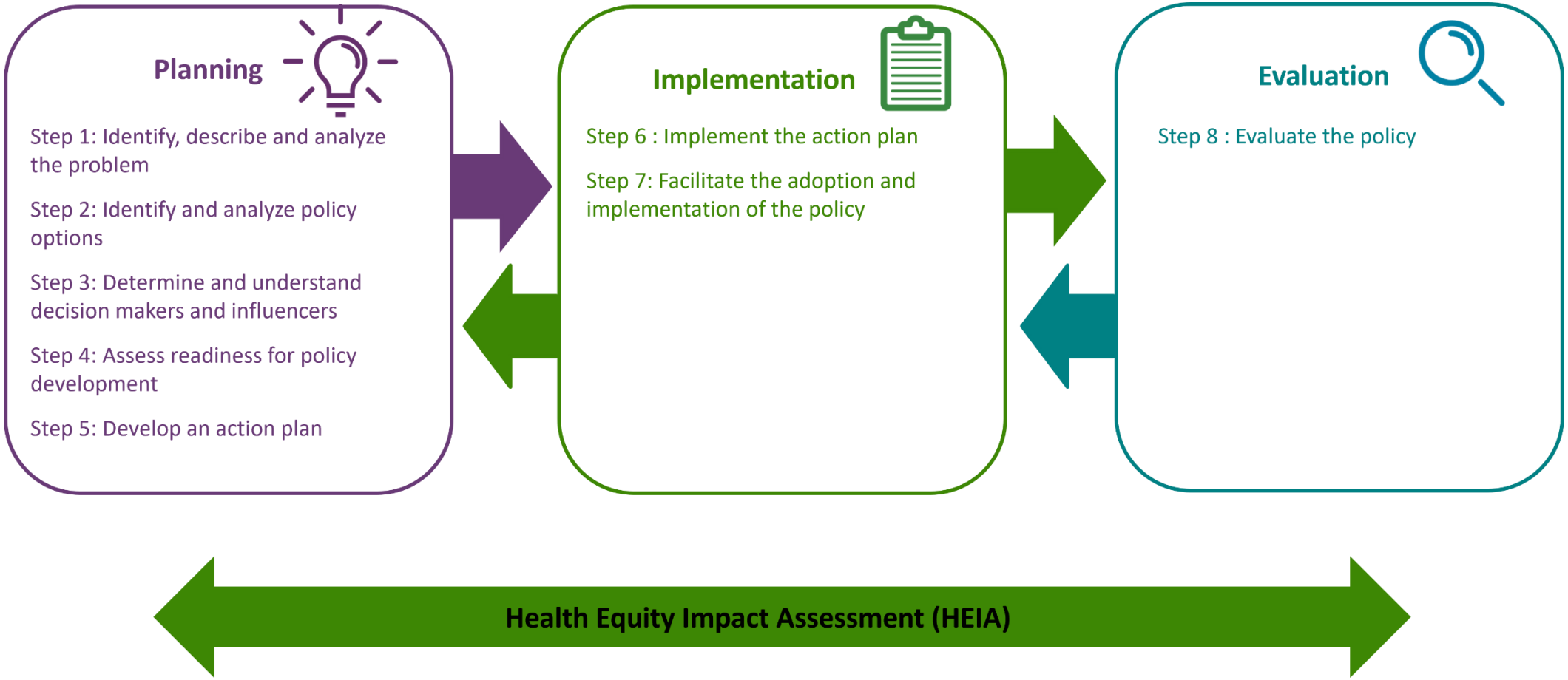
Agenda

- Background
- Systematic Review Methods
- Results
- Case Study
- Next steps
- Key Messages
- Q&A

Background

Why Build Healthy Public Policy?

Eight Steps to Building Healthy Public Policy



Systematic Review Methods

Research Questions

What measures indicate progress towards building healthy public policy?

What tools, resources, processes exist that can support local PHUs in measuring their effectiveness in building HPP?

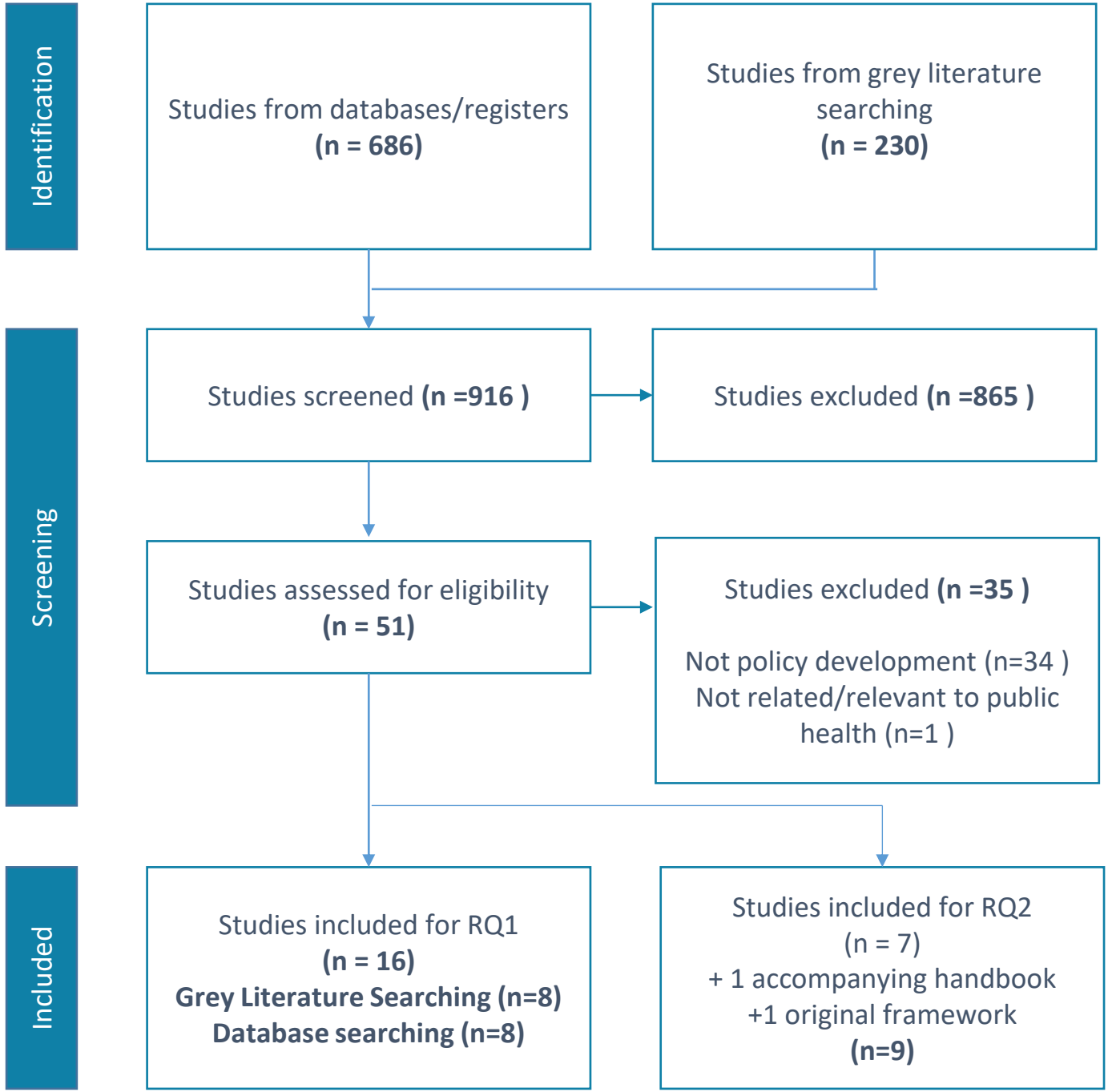
Methods

1. Systematic review of published and grey literature
2. E-scan of CoP members
3. Consultations with key informants

Inclusion criteria

- Published/grey literature that evaluates/measures the planning phases of the policy development process
- Relevant to public health/health promotion

Literature Review



Working with the Data

- A nebulous process!
- Categorized results into outcomes, indicators, strategies, and categories
- Iterative analysis process

Categorizing the Results

Outcomes are the short-to-medium-term changes (positive or negative) that result from the policy development process.

Indicators are quantitative or qualitative variables that provide a simple and reliable means to measure the achievement of the outcome.

Results

Findings: Many indicators and outcomes to measure progress

Categories:

1. Partnership and collaboration
   - 4 outcomes & 13 indicators
2. Sphere of influence
   - 8 outcomes & 31 outcomes
3. Organizational capacity
   - 3 outcomes & 18 outcomes

Limitations:

- A lot of indicators!
- Lack of content relating to local/municipal level work

Partnership and Collaboration: Outcomes and Indicators

Outcome	Examples of indicators
Established mutually beneficial relationships with other organizations or individuals	Quantity and/or profile of new partners supporting a policy
Increased level of collaboration between organizations or individuals	Transparent decision-making process
Increased alignment among organizations or individuals	Improved alignment on HPP agenda
Demonstrated collaborative outputs	Number and/or type of meetings with relevant policymakers

Sphere of Influence: Outcomes and Indicators

Outcome	Examples of indicators
Increased awareness of the policy issue and/or policy options in the audience of interest.	# of audience members with knowledge of the policy issue
Increased salience (the importance the audience of interest assigns the policy issue or policy options)	Prioritization of the policy issue
Increased visibility of the policy issue in the media	Media coverage of the policy issue, evidence or options
Increase in new champions	#of new champions
Strengthened base of support	# of individuals and organizations who actively support the policy issue and/or policy options
Increased public will	Attendance at advocacy events
Increased political will	# of meetings/educative interactions help with policymakers
Shift in social norms	Changes in public behaviour

Organizational Capacity: Outcomes and Indicators

Outcome	Examples of indicators
Increased organizational capacity to advance HPP	Capacity to communicate about policy issue
Increased organizational visibility and recognition	# and/or types of invitations to speak as experts
Increased focus on health equity and the social determinants of health	Personal and organizational awareness and understanding of the social determinants of health and health equity

Findings: Almost 50 tools to measure indicators and outcomes

~50 Tools

- Tools to measure a specific indicator(s) (n=31)
- Guides and step models (n=6)
- Development of logic models and theories of change (n=5)
- Data collection methods and tools (n=7)

Applying in Practice

- ✓ Retrospectively or prospectively
- ✓ Recommend mapping how the planned activities will achieve policy goals
- ✓ Examples: outcome maps and logic models (Tools included in Focus On Appendix A)

Selecting Impactful Measures

- ✓ Select outcomes and indicators that align with HPP goal and associated actions
- ✓ Select a set of indicators that:
  - use multiple data collection methods
  - measures a range of steps and activities
  - Include process, output and outcome indicators
  - are feasible, important and relevant

Case Study

Reflection: Mapping a Project to Policy Indicators

Toxic Drugs in Algoma Report [2024]

Algoma Public Health

Kimberley Aslett, Research Policy Advisor

Algoma PUBLIC HEALTH

Santé publique Algoma

Toxic Drugs in Algoma Project and Policy Alignment

- Context of the drug crisis in the North
- The project and Knowledge Translation
- PHO Policy Outcomes and Indicators
- The Indicators applied
- Lessons learned

Fun fact:

The Algoma Public Health service area is as large as half of Lake Superior - the largest of the Great Lakes, whose surface area spans over 82,000 square kilometers(2).

Algoma Public Health

Lake Superior

Algoma

Algoma Public Health's (APH) boundary covers over 41,000 km^2 and contains 21 municipalities, two large unorganized areas and numerous Indigenous communities(1). The region serviced by the health agency stretches over an eight-hour drive along Highway 17 from Spanish in the east to White River in the north.

Toxic Drug Crisis

How PWLLE and family and/or friends feel society sees people who use drugs

Toxic Drugs in Algoma Report Timeline

Interviews

Community Partners

(2020)

PWLLE

Family & Friends

Additional Community Partners

(2022)

Workshops

Community partner workshop to validate findings

(2023)

Workshop to identify community actions on toxic drugs

(2024)

Draft Report

Summarize community feedback

(2023-24)

Review best practices

(2024)

Finalization

Internal and external review

(2024)

Launch Events

Sault Ste. Marie

(Nov 2024)

Elliot Lake

(March 2025)

Wawa

(May 2025)

Blind River

(TBD)

PHO: The Categories and Outcomes

Category	Outcome
Partnership and Collaboration	Established mutually beneficial relationships with other organizations or individuals
	Increased level of collaboration between partners
	Increased alignment among community and system partners
	Demonstrated collaborative outputs
Sphere of influence (Awareness; Visibility; Base of Support)	Increased awareness of the policy issue
	Increased salience
	Increased visibility of the policy issue in the media
	Shift in social norms or dominate narrative
	Strengthened base of support
	Increased public will
	Increased political will among policymakers and influencers Increase in new champions
Organizational Capacity	Increased organizational capacity to advance healthy public policy
	Increased ability to lead partnerships and collaborations
	Demonstrated credibility of the organization

Indicators: Partnership and Collaboration

Outcome	Indicators	Project Actions/Results
Established mutually beneficial relationships with other organizations or individuals	• Establishment of new or stronger organizational relationships, alliances, or agreements • Involvement of public, target group, and other sectors • Quantity and profile of new partners	• Two workshops, attendees from mental health and addiction, Indigenous communities, social services, legal services, academia, and municipal reps • 11 did SWOT, 40 did goal setting
Increased level of collaboration between partners	• Increased level of collaboration • Improved relationships with partners • Transparent decision-making • Quantity and profile of coalitions • The extent to which organization's participation is valued	• New drug strategy committee in the district • Goal for a smaller rural committee was increasing collaboration between partners • Informal exchange between workshop participants
Increased alignment among community and system partners	• Improved HPP agenda alignment among partners • Increased agreement on the definition of a problem • Improved alignment of partnership efforts	• Community Action on Toxic Drug workshop had partners brainstorm solutions choose highest priority actions • Report is a tool to guide action for local committees
Demonstrated collaborative outputs	• Quantity of collaborative actions taken among organizations • Increased number of partners supporting an issue • Number and type of meetings with relevant policy-makers	• The evidence-informed practices section of the report provides an overview of program and policy options • Drug strategy committee meets monthly • Momentum is building on a variety of projects

Theming Workshop (11)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
• Person-centered care • Building relationships (with clients and between agencies) • Wrap-around services that meet basic needs • Culturally appropriate care • Harm reduction (e.g., naloxone) • Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT)	• Housing (safe, affordable, transitional) • Waitlists • Limited services • System navigation • Stigma • Patients without a primary care provider • Staffing issues • Transportation	• Lower barrier services • System navigation tools • Cultural competency training • Trauma-informed care • Community education and communication • Local data collection • Intersectional collaboration	• Staff burnout • Inadequate funding • Feelings of helplessness • Concerns about staff and client safety • Social media • Stigma and social polarization • More people without a primary care provider

Community Action on Toxic Drug Workshop (40)

February 2024

Priority	Action
Advocate to all levels of government for improved funding and policies	Fund supervised consumptions sites Create policies and funding that support basic needs Provide funding that is less restrictive to benefit more people Implement guidelines and limitations on out-of-town landlords Create a sanctioned space for encampment
Create opportunities to work together and share information	Develop universal intake and consent forms Create an online forum to facilitate communication between agencies Provide networking services
Provide wrap-around services in one location	Operate a supervised consumption site Make services lower barrier and accessible Address transportation
Address staff shortages and burnout	Measure burnout Embed support for work-life balance and debriefing into organizations Leverage scope of practice among different professionals
Increase knowledge and support for best practices	Identify strategies for upstream prevention (e.g., Icelandic Prevention Model) Organize a conference via the Sault Ste. Marie and Area Drug Strategy

Indicators: Sphere of Influence

Outcome	Indicators	Project Actions/Results
Increased awareness of the policy issue, problem, or solution	• # of audience members with knowledge of the issue • Quantity and profile of decision-makers that were exposed to new evidence • Improved relationships with people who influence policy	• Municipal representative included events • Presented the report to the Algoma District Mayors Association (about 25 people from 20 municipalities/townships) • Planned presentation to SSM Council
Increased salience	• Percentage of audience members saying the issue was important to them	• Indirect: 4 quotes from partners at the beginning of the report
Increased visibility of the policy issue in the media	• Increased media coverage/visibility of the message • Quantity and quality of media coverage • Number of spokesperson citations in the media	• 8 media articles/videos about the final report • 6 presentations about the final report to Board of Health members, community partners, local drug strategy committees, and municipal representatives
Increase in new champions High-profile individuals who adopt and issue and publicly advocate for it	• # new high-profile champions recruited • New constituencies represented among champions	• Increasing involvement from municipal leaders in conversations (e.g., at the workshops as a partner at the table) • New co-chair of the drug strategy has lived experience, participated in the workshops, and provided external review of the report
Strengthened base of support	• Problems are defined and proposals generated from those who are most affected • Increase in grassroots organizations support	• Increasing involvement of grassroots organization SOYA • Community partners had a role in development of the report and identifying solutions
Increased public will		• Stigma continues to be a big barrier
Increased political will	• # of meetings and educative interactions held with policy-makers • Increased awareness of policy influencers of the policy environment	• Increased municipal support for grassroots organizations • Mayor of SSM requested a presentation from the Drug strategy after presentation to the board
Shift in social norms: Dominant narrative	• Decreased resistance to challenging status quo • Changes in how an issue is presented, discussed, or perceived	• Increasing community support for grassroots organizations

Salience

"Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma region are facing a challenge that no community is ever fully prepared for. Among all the statistics and ratings a town could receive, we have unfortunately seen some of the worst in recent years. However, through collective effort and community support, APH and its partner agencies have the power to change the way we address these issues—with education and proper resources. This report highlights the data needed to address the systemic problems we face, providing a clear path forward to build a better future and bring hope to our community. With this report, we can educate, raise awareness, and help break the stigmas surrounding these issues, paving the way for meaningful change."

Nathan Mondor
Alcohol & Drug Prevention Worker
Indigenous Friendship Centre
Sault Ste. Marie

"I view this report as a reasonable attempt to corral the many issues that contribute to the scourge of harmful drug use in Sault Ste Marie and Algoma. This effort will guide future strategizing amongst local and regional stakeholders."

Dr. Robert Maloney
Addiction Physician
Sault Area Hospital

"Be kind. TOGETHER WE CAN assist so many."

Connie Raynor-Elliott
President
Save Our Young Adults (S.O.Y.A)

"I am confident that the information in this report will help to equip everyone from management to front line with the necessary knowledge to make informed decisions not only when it comes time for funding proposals, but also with creation of programming and individualized case planning as well. It is important that staff have an understanding of what's working, what's not working, the needs and the service gaps to better serve a population that looks to us for help. Particularly valuable is the information included by people with living and lived experience, as this voice should be the loudest but can often go unheard. I greatly appreciate the efforts of Algoma Public Health and their partners for compiling this report that will be a valuable resource for our community going forward."

Taylar Piazza
Housing and Homelessness Coordinator
Social Services

Report and Media

***Views**: 718*
***Downloads**: 321*

Indicators: Organizational Capacity

Outcome	Indicators	Project Actions/Results
Increased organizational capacity to advance healthy public policy	• Increased knowledge about healthy public policy, mobilizing, or organizing tactics • Improved capacity to communicate and promote advocacy messages • Improved media skills and contacts • Increased ability to get and use data	• Report helps increase capacity of drug strategy committee and partners by providing local statistics, identifying community SWOTs, and offering recommendations for action • Links to additional tools and training included in report • Higher profile of expertise for media contacts
Increased organizational ability to lead partnerships or collaborations	• Increased organizational and personal capacity for intersectoral work • Organizational ability to lead partnerships or alliances	• APH co-chairs 2 drug strategy committees and the report is helping guide actions taken by these groups
Demonstrated credibility of the organization	• Number and types of invitations to speak as experts • Viewed by policy-makers as a partner with something to offer • Increased and/or maintained perception of organization as credible voice in reform	• APH invited to speak about the report at the Algoma District Mayors Association • APH helps lead drug strategy committees • APH continues to be a credible source of epidemiological surveillance data and information on evidence-informed practices • Contributed to successful HART Hub applications

Organizational Capacity

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Ethics Review Board

Our Ethics Review Board (ERB) reviews projects conducted on behalf of Public Health Ontario and Ontario's public health units.

The ERB is an independent board that includes members who are public health professionals and researchers from PHO and other public health, health care and academic organizations. Collectively, ERB members have expertise in a broad range of public health disciplines and methodologies, ethics, law, and community perspectives.

The ERB helps to ensure that projects are consistent with the **Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, Second edition (TCPS 2)**, PHO's **Framework for the Ethical Conduct of Public Health Initiatives**, as well as other relevant regulations, policies and guidelines. The ERB has the authority to approve, reject, propose modifications to or withdraw approval of any eligible projects submitted for review.

The ERB also participates in the development of best practices for addressing emerging ethical issues in the conduct of public health evidence-generating initiatives across the province.

Lessons Learned

- Seek ethical review for all projects involving vulnerable populations, even if you don’t expect to publish
- Using an external facilitator allowed the health unit to be a partner at the community table
- In large geographic areas, it’s helpful to include local conversations where needs and resources are very different
- Think outside the box for partners to invite; many are eager to gather and contribute to the discussion
- Involve PWLLE and budget to pay them for their participation; get feedback from these contributors.

Questions?

Algoma PUBLIC HEALTH
Santé publique Algoma

Contact Kim Aslett

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Toxic Drugs in Algoma

https://www.algomapublichealth.com/media/j5hky1k3/toxic-drugs-in-algoma-community-assessment-and-next-steps.pdf

Community Health Profile

https://www.algomapublichealth.com/about-us/community-health-profile/chapter-7-substance-use-health/

Next steps

Key Messages

- Indicators can be used prospectively or retrospectively
- Select the outcomes/indicators which will measure the results of your planned policy work
- Select a set of indicators to tell the story of your progress over time

Q&A

You're interested in this topic?

Visit ncchpp.ca

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