



# ***Assessing Health Impacts: Tools for practice***

Never Stand Still

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THE HEALTHY BUILT ENVIRONMENTS PROGRAM

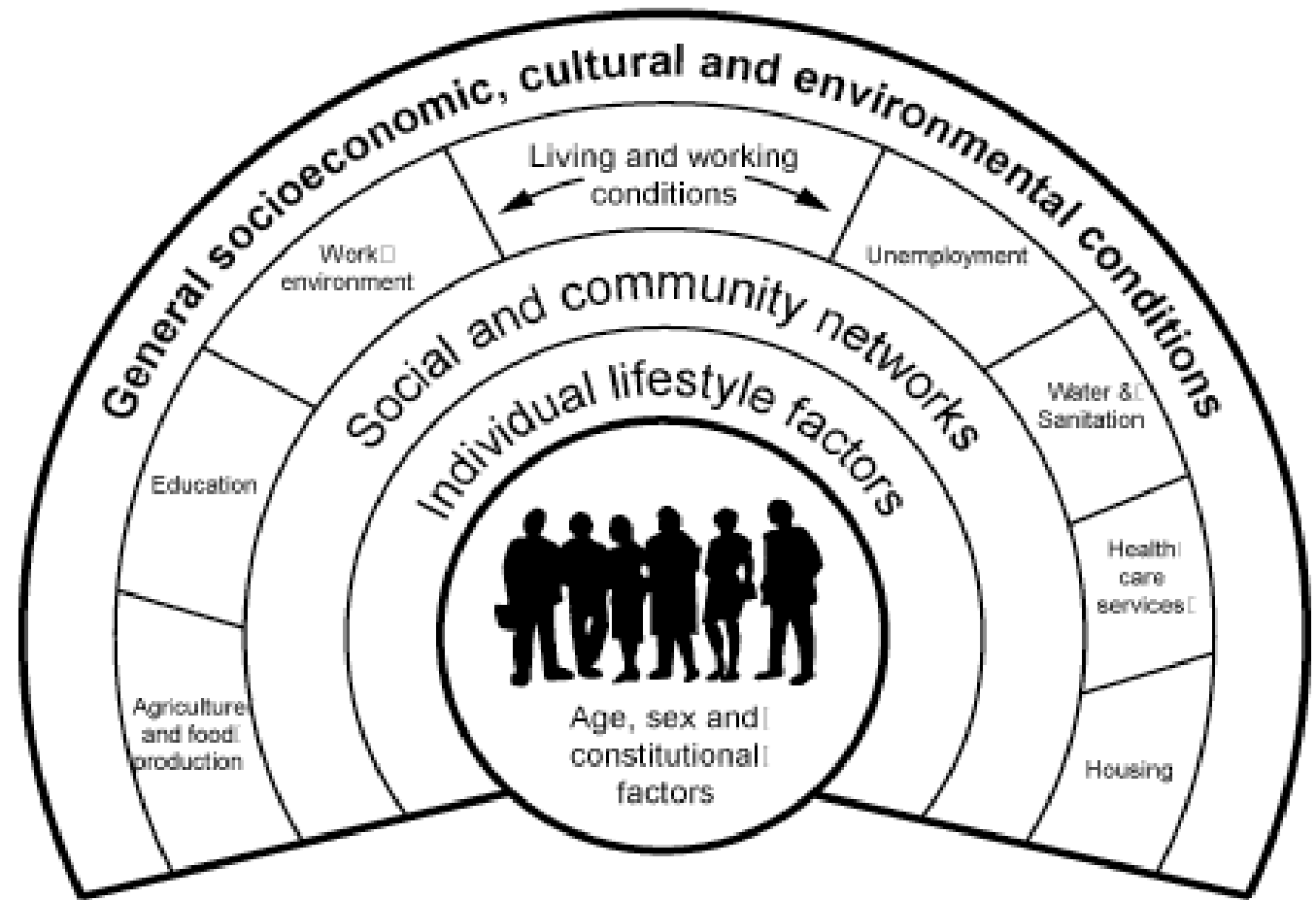
# Outline

- The issue of equity
- What is health impact assessment?
- HIA, SIA, EIA
- Processes
- Key examples
- Concluding thoughts



## The determinants of health

Recognising the role of environmental, economic & socio-cultural factors on an individual's health and well being



Dahlgren G, Whitehead M. *Policies and Strategies to Promote Social Equity in Health*. Stockholm: Institute of Futures Studies, 1991

## Equity implications for health assessments

- Systematic / differential distribution
  - who wins and who loses?
- Fairness/justice
  - value judgement
- Avoidability / modifiability
  - ability to make changes that are achievable and realistic



Source: P Harris Lecture 2011

# *What is health impact?*

We must consider:

**Direct health impacts**

**Indirect health impacts** – related to the determinants of health and equity

## *Defining HIA:*

“A tool to increase partnerships and communication between public health professionals and planners and other decision-makers.”

**Andy Dannenberg 2012**

## *Defining HIA:*

“HIA is a systematic process that uses an array of data sources and analytic methods and considers input from stakeholders to determine the potential effects of a proposed policy, plan, program, or project on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population. **HIA provides recommendations on monitoring and managing those effects.**”

US National Academies Committee on HIA, 2011



## A Vision of HIA

- Land use and transportation planners and elected officials will request information on potential health consequences of projects and policies as part of their decision-making process
- Local health officials will have a tool to facilitate their involvement in land use and transportation planning decisions that impact health
- Public health will be at the table

Source: Andy Dannenberg Lecture 2012



## Rapid HIA

- Assessment based on what is already known
- Strengthened by 1-2 key informants
- Quick literature search and/or use of existing information

## Intermediate HIA

- Includes views of several key informants
- Assembly of routine statistics and perhaps some further analysis

## Comprehensive HIA

- Interviewing wide range of key informants
- Commission from relevant subject experts
- Possibly collection of new data
- Extensive literature search
- Broad public consultation/input

## *Defining SIA...*

It is a systematic and rigorous analysis of the likely social effects of a major development on people living and working in a community

Real SIA involves the detailed examination of the multi-faceted social equity dimensions of decisions, whether they be policies, programs, plans or projects. Assessing who wins and who loses is a core concern of SIA (Cox, 1996: 312)

# Relationship of HIA to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

HIA components can logically and legally fit within an EIA process

HIA incorporated into EIA is necessarily regulatory

Incorporating health issues into current EIA process has been successful in some settings

## Relationship of SIA to EIA

Both SIA and EIA are integral to the planning process

Physical (natural and built) environment – EIA

Human environment (social, economic and health) – SIA

Where does this leave HIA?

## Steps in Conducting an HIA/SIA

### Screening

- Determine if HIA/SIA is required

### Scoping

- Identify the issues and affected groups
- Establish focus and depth of HIA

### Profiling

- Collect data to establish conditions
- Undertake research – qualitative & quantitative

### Predicting

- Identify possible impacts of the proposal
- Address alternative development proposals
- Development may not proceed

## Steps in Conducting an HIA/SIA ctd

### **Assessing**

- Analyse impact
- Analyse relative importance of impacts

### **Evaluate social impacts**

- Determine appropriate measures for managing unacceptable negative impacts

### **Recommend**

- Use of IA to justify refusal / condition approval

### **Monitor implementation**

## Demographic issues to consider – winners and losers?

- Gender
- Different age groups
- Socio-economic position (employment, education)
- Place of residence
- Culture and ethnicity (for example minority groups)
- Aboriginality
- Current health and disability



## Demographic drilling down...

Needs of older people – access issues, availability of support services

Needs of people with a disability – access, availability of support services

Needs of younger people – child care services, children's needs generally, youth needs

And so on...

## Cultural issues

Needs of migrants (especially from NESBs)

Needs of indigenous people

Different religious needs

Other cultural issues such as food availability,  
access to specialist services and cultural  
practices

**NB. Need for culturally appropriate consultation to  
assess impacts**

## Neighbourhood and community issues

- Neighbourhood safety
- Neighbourhood identity
- Community severance (e.g. major freeway)
- Community cohesion

Where people live and work (does the place where people live place them at risk of losing compared to others?)

## Specific health impacts

Direct health impacts - air and water quality; toxic wastes and dangerous chemicals; open space provision

Current health and disability status (people who may have an existing health condition, or have a disability, that may result in them losing out compared to others)

**Economic issues** - local employment generation, unemployment, business development

**Cumulative impacts** - redundant facilities and possible reuse, effects of similar developments in the area

**Facility requirements** – will they increase or decrease? Need for community services, need for recreation facilities, government provided facilities (education, housing, health...)

## EXAMPLES OF HIAs

### Health Policies

Enhancements to Continuing Professional Development Delivery in Rural Practice – Equity focussed HIA

‘Good for Kids Good for Life’ Policy – Equity focussed HIA

### Built Environment Policies

Bungendore: A rapid HIA of two development scenarios

Coffs Harbour Our Living City Settlement Strategy

Greater Western Sydney Urban Development HIA

Health Impact Assessment of Lithgow City Council's Strategic Plan

## Proposals for Development

HIA of the Redevelopment of Liverpool Hospital

HIA of the Wollongong Foreshore Precinct Project

Oran Park and Turner Road HIA

<http://hiaconnect.edu.au/>



## Concluding thoughts

- Research is basis of assessments – quant and qual
- What sort of proposals require assessment of health?
- Mandated or discretionary process?
- Integrated assessment or stand-alone HIA process?
- Role of experts and the role of community?
- Use of findings – just assisting decision-making?  
Community action and advocacy

## Resources

HIA Connect:  
<http://www.hiaconnect.edu.au/>

Andy Dannenberg's Lecture  
on HIA in the US

*Public Health Bulletin* v18  
99-10), 2007

