



National Collaborating Centres
for Public Health
Centres de collaboration nationale
en santé publique

Influence-in-action: National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy

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Healthy public policies can play a key role in improving population health and reducing health inequalities by acting on the social, economic, and environmental determinants of health, such as education, social support, income, and the built environment. Healthy public policy is foundational to Canada's renewed public health system, as identified in the *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion*.

The National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy (NCCHPP) supports Canada's public health actors to participate in shaping policies to advance population health and reduce inequalities through a wide range of tools, resources and activities such as literature reviews, online courses, briefing notes, inventories of key resources, workshops, webinars, and more. These resources and activities belong to one of two broad areas: thematic knowledge syntheses, and methods and approaches for developing healthy public policies.

Current focus areas and projects

- Analyzing public policies
- Policy processes
- Knowledge sharing
- Health impact assessment
- Integrated governance
- Ethics
- Population mental health
- Built environment
- Health inequalities
- Deliberative processes

KEY STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES

1. Thematic knowledge syntheses

The NCCHPP develops and shares knowledge syntheses to inform policy options where gaps are identified. Some of the topics that have been covered include:

- population mental health promotion;
- traffic-calming approaches and interventions;
- policy approaches to reducing health inequalities; and
- knowledge sharing in a decision-making context.

2. Methods and approaches for developing healthy public policies

The NCCHPP introduces public health actors to methods and approaches that can help them to participate in healthy public policy development:

- An internationally-recognized method for analyzing public policies that facilitates the integration of evidence about effects and equity with implementation issues (cost, feasibility, and acceptability).

- Learning tools on collaborative models such as integrated governance, whole-of-government approaches and health in all policies.
- Health impact assessment (HIA) resources such as an online course, tools, and resource inventories, all of which support integrating a health perspective into policy making.
- Various public health ethics resources including adapted summaries of ethics frameworks and short case studies to allow reflection on values and principles that underpin policy decisions.
- Resources to map policy landscapes, coalitions and stakeholders, identify strategic opportunities, and communicate effectively across sectors.





CASE STORY

Demystifying policy analysis for better public health interventions

The NCCHPP has developed an integrated series of evidence-informed tools in French and English to help public health professionals analyze policy options, including:

- the *Method for synthesizing knowledge about public policies*;
- a practical *guide for applying an analytical framework to public policies*;
- a practical *guide for constructing a logic model to reflect on a policy's effectiveness*; and
- an *online training course on a framework for analyzing public policies*.

Supporting public health to inform public policy development

- Informing public policy development is recognized as a key strategy of population health promotion. Since 2010, the [method for synthesizing knowledge](#) has been supporting public health practitioners in their efforts to consider research-based evidence, stakeholders' perspectives on policy effects and equity, as well as implementation issues (cost, feasibility and acceptability). Practitioners can easily apply this policy analysis method to:
 - » consider the relevance of a particular policy; or
 - » plan a knowledge-sharing strategy that considers what is important to policy makers.

Capacity development for a renewed public health workforce

- High demand for this method inspired the NCCHPP to develop [an online training course](#). This course has been completed by hundreds of people from across Canada and abroad, including public health actors at the local, regional, provincial, and federal levels, by students and by staff from non-governmental organizations.

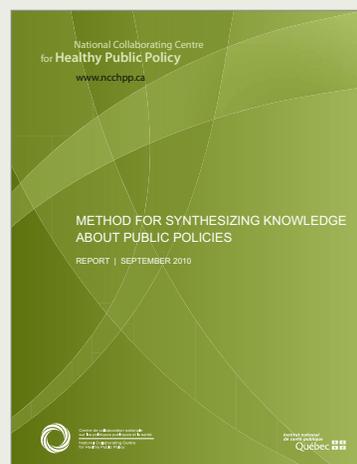
Undergraduate and graduate curriculum

- This online course is being used in various public health programs in universities across the country. Course material has informed and structured classroom discussions, has been assigned as mandatory reading, and has been integrated into end-of-session assignments.

The method for policy analysis in action

This method has informed analyses on a wide-range of policies.

- Regional ragweed pollen control policy (this led to the development of a provincial policy framework with significant funding under the Climate Change Adaptation Plan)
- Federal regulatory options for e-cigarettes
- Age-friendly municipal strategy
- Food safety intervention and evaluation
- Impact of subsidized school meal policies on children’s diet and body weight
- “Health in All Policies” initiatives



Staff development

- Some teams in public health authorities have taken the online course in groups and then discussed the implications for their work. One health authority decided to make the online course a mandatory continuing education activity for some of its professionals and physicians. They developed a ninety-minute condensed version of the course that is now being offered to all of its health professionals. The course material was also used to make a short presentation to the health authority’s board of directors.

“The content presented will support me in conducting a well-planned and well-rounded policy analysis without being overwhelmed by the process”

“I now have a structured approach to policy analysis.”

COURSE PARTICIPANTS

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La version française est également disponible au www.ccnsp.ca sous le titre *Appuyer la santé publique partout au Canada – l’influence des Centres de collaboration nationale en santé publique*.

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