

HOW TO: HEALTHY PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES PROCESS

PURPOSE:

To support amplified Population & Public Health influence on healthy public policy action through;

- improved communication between service areas, strategic approaches and community areas,
- policy referrals for consultation, triage and recommended next steps.

DOCUMENTS:

Map of Population & Public Health groups: This depicts the community areas, centralized service areas, leadership groups, practice councils and working groups.

Population & Public Health Group Functions: Describes the functions and purpose of the leadership groups, practice councils and working groups.

Healthy Public Policy Issues Form: Communication tool.

This tool for communication can be used to:

- guide discussion with a team or working group,
- raise a public policy issue, and
- propose actions.

PROCESS:

THINGS TO CONSIDER

What are the timelines?

- a. Immediate – less than a week
- b. Near future – within 3 months
- c. No specific timeline – more than 3 months

If there is a window of opportunity that requires immediate action, expedite the process and contact Healthy Public Policy – [Sarah Prowse](#)

If this relates to an existing area of centralized public health work, talk to the relevant content lead or team to see if it is an issue they are aware of and working on.

Healthy Built Environment – [Lisa Richards](#) (medical officer of health lead)

Healthy Sexuality & Harm Reduction – [Kim Bailey](#) (team manager)

Injury Prevention – [Cynthia Menzies](#)

Nutrition Promotion – [Lydia Lee](#)

Physical Activity Promotion – [Kristine Hayward](#)

Tobacco Reduction/Substance Use – [Elizabeth Hydesmith](#)

INITIATE

You or your colleagues have identified a public health issue in your practice that may require a healthy public policy approach.

- Use the Healthy Public Policy Issues form to guide you through gathering the information needed to explore the issue.
- Add this to a team agenda. Have others identified a similar issue? Can this be actioned within the team?
- Use the Map of PPH Groups and Group Functions documents to discuss who could **lead** work in this area, who could **support**, and who should **know** about this.
- Complete **Part 1** of the Healthy Public Policy Issues form.

TRIAGE THE COMPLETED FORM

- Use existing communication mechanisms and processes (practice councils, PPH Operations Team and Strategic Directions) to triage the form.
 - Is this a community area local issue? Discuss with your team and team manager.
 - Is this a broader community/PPH issue? Consider having your team manager bring this to PPH Operations Team or Strategic Directions.
 - Related to a practice issue? Consider the practice councils.

COLLABORATE

These communication mechanisms can triage policy issues and help determine who could **lead** work in this area, who could **support**, and who should **know** about this. Some potential approaches:

1. A local community issue related to public policy is identified. The community area public health team manager feels that the issue can be addressed at the local level, and asks for consultation from the Healthy Public Policy specialist and/or other program specialists. The community area leads the work with support from centralized.
2. An issue that is relevant more broadly and requires a coordinated approach is identified and discussed at Operations Team/Strategic Directions. The policy approach to address the issue may involve different parts of the public health program, and as such, is referred from PPHOT or Strategic Directions to the Healthy Public Policy Collaboration Group. Based on criteria, the issue is prioritized.

If immediate action is to be taken, a task team with appropriate members is struck. If there is centralized content leadership, they may lead with healthy public policy and community area support. If there is no centralized content leadership, healthy public policy may lead with centralized and community area support. The task teams can be made up of people broader than the HPP Collaboration Group. If a task group is formed, updates will be provided to PPHOT/Strategic Directions. If no immediate action, the HPP group will inform PPHOT/Strategic Directions with an explanation.

3. A practice issue is brought to the relevant practice council. Discussion at this table identifies a public policy implication of the practice issue. The practice council brings the issue to the HPP Collaboration Group for prioritization, consultation and to identify who may lead this work. If appropriate, a similar task team approach described above will occur.

*Please note: All usual and required decision-making processes are followed in all of these approaches.

The lead program or team will then fill in the **Part 2** of the Healthy Public Policy Issues Form and send to [Sarah Prowse](#), Healthy Public Policy Specialist.

COMMUNICATE

The lead program or team will send Issues Form to the group/person that initiated the form. As work progresses, the final section, Action Taken, will be completed and the form will be updated and shared as appropriate. Ongoing communications will occur throughout the process including regular updates from the HPP program specialist on public policy work and priorities.