

Report from the

2019 HIA PRACTITIONER WORKSHOP

April 1st & 2nd
St Paul, Minnesota
at Minnesota Department of Health



Society of Practitioners of Health Impact Assessment

2019 HIA PRACTITIONER WORKSHOP

Minnesota Department of Health, Freeman Building

625 Robert Street North

St Paul, Minnesota

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Thank you to the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials and the National Association of County and City Health Officials for providing support through scholarships.

And a special thanks to our host,



Summary Report

The HIA Practitioner Workshop presents a unique opportunity for current practitioners of Health Impact Assessment to come together and participate in strategic field building. Over fifty practitioners joined us in St. Paul over the two-day workshop. The theme of this year's Workshop was "making the most of HIA." To address this, we hosted strategic plenary discussions that highlighted how HIA practitioners were able to leverage their HIA work into broader field-building activities, such as strategic partnerships and HIA mandates. We also invited our participants to propose presentations in various formats which highlight their work and expand on this year's theme.

We heard from a diverse and fascinating group of practitioners. We were fortunate to host former Minnesota Health Commissioner Dr. Edward Ehlinger for the opening address, in which he helped to anchor the Workshop through a presentation on health equity and upstream approaches to health. The lightning talks returned once again, along with a rendition of SOPHIA Hollywood Squares. We also trialed a new tool—an 'offers and needs market'— which aimed to connect participants across a range of topics of their choice. It was an energizing and informative two days.

Thank you to everyone who made this event possible. The Workshop could not have been held without the very generous support of our sponsors, the Practitioner Workshop Committee, and our amazing hosts, the Minnesota Department of Health. We also want to thank all participants of the Workshop for their enthusiastic engagement and generous sharing of ideas.

Each session is summarized below along with associated resources. The complete agenda can be [downloaded here](#). Attendees will also receive additional information on how to engage with SOPHIA and with other practitioners through follow up on the offers and needs market and sign-ups to new working groups.

If you were not able to attend the workshop but are interested in participating in working groups or SOPHIA committees, please contact sophie@hiasociety.org. If you are interested in becoming an HIA mentor through SOPHIA or a partner in the Practitioner Exchange Program, please [complete this form](#).

Day 1 – April 1, 2019

Opening Address: Health Impact Assessments: A Tool for Advancing Health Equity and Creating Healthy Communities

Speaker: Edward P. Ehlinger, Former Minnesota Health Commissioner

Dr. Ehlinger provided a framework of health and health equity to set the tone for the workshop. He invited practitioners to think about what it means to approach our work through a 'radical upstream approach.' He discussed the importance of having a public agency explicitly address structural racism as the basis for public policies and health inequalities. On HIA in particular, he shared why he values it as a tool for health equity: HIA has the ability to help expand the understanding of what creates health and helps us as practitioners to change the narrative of what shapes health. He drew upon an example of an HIA that was conducted on the light rail that stops in front of the Minnesota Department of Health offices (where the workshop was held). It was because of this HIA that three additional stops were added in communities between St Paul and Minneapolis, increasing access for communities that otherwise would not have benefited from the large infrastructure project.

[Presentation Slides](#)

[Twin Cities Light Rail Project HIA](#)

Plenary Panel: Making the Most of your HIA Work

Speakers:

Nerys Edmonds, Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit

Jimmy Dills, Georgia Health Policy Center

Carissa Slotterback, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota

Kristin Raab, Minnesota Department of Health

The three presentations shared by the four panellists focused on how HIA has been leveraged as a tool to move towards more comprehensive inclusion of health in decision making processes. [Jimmy Dills shared](#) his story of how one HIA on affordable housing led to a Healthy Housing Initiative Score Card and facilitated the incorporation of health into building plans. [Nerys Edmonds discussed](#) the journey of HIA becoming statutory in Wales –from conducting HIAs on various policies and projects to eventually passing the 2017 Public Health Wales Act which requires HIA. [Dr Carissa Slotterback and Kristin Raab discussed](#) the evolution of the Design for Health program funded first in 2010, how the coalition worked to support community-based HIAs, and how in partnership with the University of Minnesota, this translated into providing best practices and evidence to communities and practitioners.

In the discussion with the audience, the panel discussed a number of key elements for success:

- Importance of independent parties advocating for HIA and institutionalization
- Create sustainable partnerships early and work hard to maintain them
- Align different funding sources

- Train others in HIA to create advocates and build multi-disciplinary teams; and make sure trainings are inclusive of different sectors
- Partner with community-based organizations with existing and deep community connections.

[GHPC Affordable Housing Case Study](#)
[Public Health Wales Bill, Statutory Requirement for HIA](#)
[Quality Assurance Review Framework for HIA](#)
[Design for Health](#)

Lightning Talks

Moderated by Emily Laflamme, Chicago Department of Health

Lightning talks are fast-paced, 5-minute presentations that are meant to be fun and informative. Since the 2016 Practitioner Workshop the lightning talk session has provided a dynamic platform to highlight innovative HIA work and resources. This year, we asked participants to share how they have made the most out of their HIA practice.

A Toolkit to Promote Healthier Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration

Dasha Dokshina & Bethany Rogerson, Health Impact Project

Dasha and Bethany shared about the next stage of the HIA Map created by the Health Impact Project. This will be an interactive toolkit created to facilitate cross-sector collaborations to improve public health. Read [more about the toolkit here](#) and consider submitting to their [call for resources](#). [Download the presentation](#)

Use of HIA in Specific Sectors: Reaching Out to New Partners

Andy Dannenberg, University of Washington School of Public Health and College of Built Environments

Andy highlighted the findings from a number of publications he and colleagues have published on how HIA has been used in ten major sectors. See links to major references below.

- [Urban Planning](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Energy/Natural Resources](#)
- [Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Criminal Justice](#)

(Climate Change, Housing, and Substance Abuse are forthcoming).

[Download the presentation](#)

A Health Impact Assessment of the Adams County Civil Rights Project

Madeline England, Mississippi State Department of Health

This community-led HIA aimed to represent the lived experiences of the civil rights movement through nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Madeline shared the importance of local civil rights education and how it is intrinsically connected to health and equity.

[Download the presentation](#)

Story Maps: Harnessing the Power of Maps and Storytelling to Communicate Your HIA

Samantha Shattuck, Pegasus Technical Services c/o U.S. EPA

Sam highlighted Story Maps as a narrative-driven and interactive tool that can be used for unique HIA reporting. See how it has been [used in EIA here](#).

[Download the presentation](#)

Fracking, Data and Democracy

Beth Weinberger, Environmental Health Project

Beth shared her work on delivering data resources to local community groups to better engage around decisions related to fracking in Southwestern Pennsylvania. See more on [Environmental Health Projects website](#).

[Download the presentation](#)

Engaging California's Working Family Caregivers for an Assessment of California Paid Family Leave

Sukhdip Purewal Boparai, Human Impact Partners

Suk shared the extensive stakeholder engagement that Human Impact Partners undertook to better understand how the California Paid Family Leave (PFL) program impacted caregivers. This was done through focus groups, interviews, and a state-wide survey. This led to a better understanding of how different and often vulnerable groups lacked the support and information to access PFL and gave a more realistic and inclusive picture of what caregiving looks like in families.

[Download the presentation](#)

Extending the Impact of an HIA – A Medical Marijuana HIA Update

Carlie Houchen, Kansas Health Institute

Carlie shared an update from the 2015 Medical Marijuana HIA conducted by Kansas Health Institute. With additional research and resources available since the completion of the first HIA, stakeholders reengaged during the recent legislative session to better understand how new evidence related to the opioid epidemic might impact original findings.

[Download the presentation](#)

Breakout Session 1

Session 1.1, Integrating Ecosystem Services, Health, and Human Well-being into Decision-making

Presenters:

Justicia Rhodus, HIA Support Lead, Pegasus Technical Services, Inc. c/o U.S. EPA

Joel Hoffman, Supervisory Research Biologist, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Kathleen Williams, Postdoc Geographer, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Samantha Shattuck, Public Health Specialist, Pegasus Technical Services, Inc. c/o U.S. EPA

In a four-part panel, EPA scientists and contractors presented on a unique opportunity for the systems-based approach of Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to be used to work across sectors and science-policy divides to integrate ecosystem services and health into decision-making. Ecosystem services are the biophysical components or outputs of ecosystems that are directly enjoyed, consumed, or used to benefit human health and well-being. Decisions may directly alter ecosystem services and lead to potential health impacts, while in other cases, ecosystem services may be a mitigating factor influencing the impact of a decision on human health. Considering ecosystem services in decision-making has public health, environmental, economic, and social benefits. Some strategies and tools for considering ecosystem services include mapping of ecosystem services, the Eco-Health Relationship Browser, EnviroAtlas, the Human Well-being Index, the EcoService Models Library, and the Neighborhood Model, which uses a Distinctions-Systems-Relationships-Perspectives (DSRP) framework to unpack and understand community values and social determinants of health. Two EPA-led HIAs that integrated ecosystem services were presented, along with a research project that is currently underway to mine HIAs conducted in the U.S. to better understand the ecosystem services-human health linkages that have been considered and the strength of evidence that exists for those relationships.

[EnviroAtlas](#)

[Eco Service Models Library](#)

Session 1.2, Is anyone better off? Applying Results-Based Accountability (RBA) to Evaluate HIA Performance and Outcomes

Presenter: Amber Lenhart, Research Scientist, Data Center

This breakout session provided specific tools for the HIA practitioner to use when working on the 6th step of an HIA: Evaluate. Tips and tools designed to help practitioners with the design of their evaluations were demonstrated, including finding common language, using 'Turn the Curve' to help create an action plan, and how to determine Effect Measure. Attendees were able to group up and test how they would apply RBA to an HIA project that they had completed or were working on.

Session 1.3, Health in All Policies Working Group

Facilitator: Sandra Whitehead, Director of Programs and Partnership Development, NEHA

The HiAP working group discussion focused primarily on resources that the group could work to develop, and an assessment of what resources don't exist that should. The group determined that creating a repository of case studies and success stories that show the impact and outcomes of HiAP would be beneficial as a communication tool for elected officials or policy makers. Funding options were also discussed. Discussion surrounding skills, tools and competencies needed to work in HiAP focused on the need for a list of "soft skills" and tools; the HiAP readiness model was highlighted during this discussion. Please contact Sandra Whitehead (SWhitehead@neha.org) if you are interested in engaging with the HiAP Working Group but were not present during the Workshop. Take a look one output from past HiAP groups, the [Health in All Policy Approaches Guide](#).

Day 2 – April 2, 2019

New Practitioner Breakfast

Facilitators: Bethany Rogerson & Ruth Lindberg, Health Impact Project

This session provided an opportunity for newer HIA practitioners to connect with one another and learn about resources available through SOPHIA and its partners. Approximately 20 people attended the breakfast. Below are links to several of the resources discussed during the conversation.

- HIA/HIAP courses
 - [MIT Open Courseware](#) HIA class
 - SOPHIA is hosting a [1-day HIA Training](#) on July 31 in Barcelona, Spain
 - UCLA offers a list of [HIA training resources](#), and CDC has an [HIA Education](#) section with contacts for HIA course professors
 - The Canadian National Collaborating Centre for Public Policy runs a [free online HIA Course](#)
- HIA evaluations
 - Issue brief: [Do Health Impact Assessments Promote Healthier Decision-Making?](#)
 - Report: [Community Participation in HIAs: A National Evaluation](#)
 - Article: [An Evaluation of HIAs in the U.S., 2011-2014](#)
 - Article: [Avenues of Influence: The Relationship Between Health Impact Assessment and Determinants of Health and Health Equity](#)
 - Article: [Effectiveness of Health Impact Assessments: A Synthesis of Data From Five Impact Evaluation Reports](#)
- SOPHIA member directory
 - All SOPHIA members have access to an online member directory. To access the directory, login using your email and the password you created when you became a member. At the top of the website, select “Member restricted resources” from the “Membership” drop-down option. The SOPHIA Member Directory is the third option in the drop-down list under the member restricted resources.
- Legislative analysis models
 - The Health Impact Project is piloting [health notes](#) to help lawmakers learn the potential health implications of proposed legislation and policies. The notes are brief, nonpartisan summaries that draw from the best available peer-reviewed research, scientific data, and public health expertise.
 - The Washington State Board of Health uses [health impact reviews](#), an objective, evidence-based tool available to the Governor and state legislators. Health impact

reviews analyze how a proposed legislative or budgetary change will likely impact health and health disparities in Washington.

- Equity case studies
 - SOPHIA's equity working group evaluated three HIA case studies using the [Equity Metrics for HIA Practice](#), and produced briefs on each case study:
 - Case Study 1: [Health and Equity Impacts of a Local Transport Facility](#)
 - Case Study 2: [Integrating Health and Equity into a Regional Housing Plan](#)
 - Case Study 3: [Rehabilitating Corrections in California](#)
- Peer exchange and mentoring
 - SOPHIA offers several ways for its members to connect and learn from one another through its [peer exchange](#) and [mentoring services](#).
- Other resources
 - SOPHIA maintains [a list](#) of its own resources and publications as well as select materials from partners
 - Human Impact Partner offers an [HIA Fact Sheet and video](#) that provides a quick summary of HIA

Making the Most of SOPHIA

Speakers:

Emily Bever, Health Impact Project

Jimmy Dills, Georgia Health Policy Center

Through a game of SOPHIA Hollywood Squares, our gameshow hosts guided us through a series of questions related to SOPHIA's Strategic Plan with an opportunity for participants to share ideas and input on what opportunities they see for strategic field building, and how SOPHIA and the broader network of practitioners we represent can work together. Take a look at the most recent update of the [Strategic Plan](#).

Breakout Session 2

Session 2.1, Centering Racial Justice in Research Practices

Presenters:

Martha Ockenfels-Martinez, Research Associate, Human Impact Partners

Lisa Skjefte, Native American Indian Community Liaison, Children's Hospital Minnesota

This session focused on practical approaches for bringing a racial justice lens to research practices, including HIA. This approach focuses on racism as a fundamental determinant of health and asks researchers to be more explicit about their own positions, roles, and places of power and to make their inherent biases more explicit in research practices. The presenters offered five key ways to produce research using a racial justice lens:

1. Acknowledge mistrust
2. Build with community partners; recognize the knowledge of communities
3. Understand the role of racism and how it shows up (implicit bias, structural racism, research practices); think about how Whiteness or your dominant lens affects your work
4. Understand power (privileges and strengths)
5. Change the narrative, change the practice; and power as an ability to inform the narrative.

To learn more about applying a racial justice lens to research, consider using a racial equity assessment tool, such as the [Racial Equity Impact Assessment Toolkit](#).

Session 2.2, Big HIA: Large-scale projects and policies

Presenters:

Nerys Edmonds, Senior Public Health Practitioner (Policy and Impact), Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit, Public Health Wales NHS Trust

Joan Vanhala, Hennepin County Community Works Community Engagement Coordinator

Denise Butler, African Career & Education Resources Program Manager

This session focused on two examples of complex, large-scale HIAs: one on the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union (commonly referred to as "Brexit"), and one on the Bottineau Transitway in Hennepin County, Minnesota. The presenters described how HIA can be used effectively to inform complex policy and infrastructure decisions that will be implemented over many years. Presenters from both HIAs described how the assessments paved the way for ongoing efforts to incorporate health and equity into decision-making. For example, the Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit was asked to do a follow up HIA once the terms of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union are set. In Hennepin County, presenters described how the HIA built the capacity of local community organizations to interface with government entities and shaped the way Hennepin County Community Works funds and engages with community groups.

[Health Impact Assessment on Brexit](#)
[Hennepin Bottineau HIA](#)

Session 2.3, Methods or Tools for HIA Practice

Presenters:

Sukhdip Purewal Boparai, Senior Research Associate, Human Impact Partners
Sandra Whitehead, Director of Programs and Partnership Development, NEHA
Bridget Kerner, Senior Program Analyst, NACCHO

This session aimed to elevate novel tools for HIA and HiAP. [Suk shared two approaches](#): an equity analysis tool and the consensus conference approach. Both of these could be used within the framework of HIA. Sandra and Bridget engaged participants in a discussion of how to effectively evaluate HiAP. The group shared a number of examples such as measuring engagement, sharing testimonials, and network analysis alongside using resources such as [SOPHIA's Health Equity Metrics](#). NEHA and NACCHO will be releasing a new toolkit which SOPHIA will share with its members.

Breakout Session 3

Session 3.1, Advancing the Practice of HIA at the State, Regional and Federal Level: HIA as a Translational Research Tool

Presenters:

Justicia Rhodus, HIA Support Lead, Pegasus Technical Services, Inc. c/o U.S. EPA
Joel Hoffman, Supervisory Research Biologist, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Kathleen Williams, Postdoc Geographer, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Advancing HIA session began with a review of the working group's past efforts and a discussion of what remains to be done to complete the initial product of the working group – a guide for advancing HIA in federal environmental impact statements. The session then transitioned to a facilitated discussion aimed at identifying opportunities for the systems -based approach of HIA to inform decisions at the state, regional and national levels. The session participants:

- Discussed HIA as a translational research tool (i.e., “research conducted in collaboration with stakeholders that produces research knowledge that is disseminated and put it into action to address an environmental or public health need”)
- Identified initiatives and opportunities at state, regional, and federal levels where HIA could play a role
- Created a vision for the future state of HIA practice at these higher decision-making levels that includes Health in All Policies (HiAP) and HIA as a tool for accomplishing the integration of health into decision-making
- Identified critical factors for achieving the vision of HiAP at state, regional, and federal levels

- Opportunities for HIA at higher decision-making levels and the critical factors for achieving HiAP.

Next Steps

As a working group, we encourage HIA practitioners to pursue the critical factors identified for achieving HiAP at state, regional, and federal levels and to capitalize on the many opportunities that exist for advancing HIA at these higher decision-making levels. The next step for the working group is to complete the HIA Practitioner's Guide for Incorporating HIA into Federal Environmental Impact Statements. If you are interested in joining this working group, please contact Justicia Rhodus (rhodus.justicia@epa.gov).

Session 3.2, Evaluating HIAs: Our Common Challenges and How We Can Address Them

Presenters:

Darío Maciel, Harder+Company Community Research

Ruth Lindberg, Manager, Health Impact Project

Will Nicholas, Center for Health Impact Evaluation, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Andy Dannenberg, University of Washington School of Public Health and College of Built Environments

This session provided an overview of the current state of evaluation in HIA, findings from several evaluations across the globe, and exploration of common challenges. Through a facilitated activity, participants brainstormed solutions to these challenges, and identified ways that SOPHIA can support implementing these solutions.

Common challenges included:

1. Attributing changes to the HIA. As a field, we are good at collecting stories about HIA recommendations being included in final decisions, but we don't necessarily know attribution without an in-depth interview with decision-makers or other monitoring efforts. It is difficult to measure changes and the HIA's contribution to change in complex policy environments.
2. HIA is an evaluative tool and it can be tricky to evaluate an evaluative tool (versus evaluating a program or policy change).
3. Community surveys are burdensome and must be paired with direct community benefits.
4. Practitioners commonly encounter time, capacity, or resource constraints that can hinder evaluation efforts.

Potential solutions generated by the group included:

1. Updating the Minimum Elements and Practice Standards for HIA to encourage practitioners to meet core evaluation standards and ensure dissemination of evaluation findings.
2. Creating a new SOPHIA resource: Results-Based Accountability for HIA.

3. Leveraging the SOPHIA mentoring program to provide evaluation support for organizations that may have limited capacity to evaluate their HIAs.
4. Ensuring HIA funders emphasize evaluation as a grant deliverable but allow flexibility in evaluation approach.
5. Aligning the goals of the evaluation with the goals of the HIA (e.g., if the primary goal of the HIA is to enhance community engagement, then the evaluation approach and research questions should reflect that goal).
6. Creating a new SOPHIA resource to support planning and budgeting for HIA evaluation.

If you would be interested in generating any new SOPHIA resources related to HIA evaluation, please contact Ruth Lindberg at rlindberg@pewtrusts.org.

Session 3.3, Communities Leading HIAs: Challenges and Successes

Panel presentation followed by discussion with:

Martha Ockenfels-Martinez, Human Impact Partners, Research Associate

Beth Weinberger, Research Consultant, SWPA Environmental Health Project

Jill Kriesky, Associate Director, SWPA Environmental Health Project

Kristin Raab, Minnesota Department of Health

This session shared three different stories of recent HIAs that engaged with communities in unique ways, namely, how communities can be the driver for HIAs. Kristin Raab discussed an HIA led by a tribal nation on manoomin (wild rice). Martha Ockenfels-Martinez discussed the community organizing work of Human Impact Partners with La Union del Pueblo Entero that resulted in a rapid HIA on Local Law Enforcement Practices in a border community in the Rio Grande Valley. Jill Kriesky and Beth Weinberger discussed their efforts to work alongside communities that are experiencing fracking through providing research and data.

The panel discussed a number of common themes:

- The importance of recognizing the place of privilege that often the practitioner brings (“Who am I in relationship to the people I’m working with”)
- Being aware of the language that is used by practitioners that might not have the same meanings for communities
- HIA in the hands of a community can be used as an organizing tool; consider what that means for the limitations of a given organization or practitioner in the role of advocacy
- It is really important to manage expectations of the community throughout the process and especially at the beginning

Making the Most of our Future Practice

Facilitators:

Emily Bever, Health Impact Project

Jimmy Dills, Georgia Health Policy Center

In this session, we asked, “Where do you see HIA in five years?” The facilitators engaged participants in a discussion of how we will achieve this vision through re-energizing our SOPHIA Working Groups. Several ideas for new and reformed groups were shared during this session and participants had the opportunity to register their interest. Those who signed up should receive an email connecting them with other interested participants.

For more information about the groups and ideas generated during the workshop, please contact Emily Bever: ebever@pewtrusts.org.



Word cloud generated from the ideas shared in the final session.