



Society of Practitioners of Health Impact Assessment

HIA Minimum Elements &  
Practice Standards Webinar  
March 22, 2021

A webinar to raise awareness of and solicit feedback on the ongoing update to the HIA Minimum Elements & Practice Standards (MEPS).

# MEPS Working Group

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# Society of Practitioners of HIA

The Society of Practitioners of Health Impact Assessment (SOPHIA) is an international association of individuals and organizations that provides leadership and promotes excellence in the field of health impact assessment (HIA)

SOPHIA develops high-quality resources to help HIA practitioners build capacity, supports member networking and peer mentoring opportunities, and communicates timely information on resources, training, and technical assistance opportunities

SOPHIA transforms HIA practice through the activities of its member led working groups

# What is the MEPS?

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The MEPS outlines the minimum criteria that an HIA should address, as well as best practices for conducting an HIA



The MEPS is not an instruction manual, but a set of standards that defines the minimum to be included for work to be considered an HIA



It is used by practitioners as guidance and as a tool to assess HIA work

# Why update the MEPS?

Decreased funding for HIAs since 2014

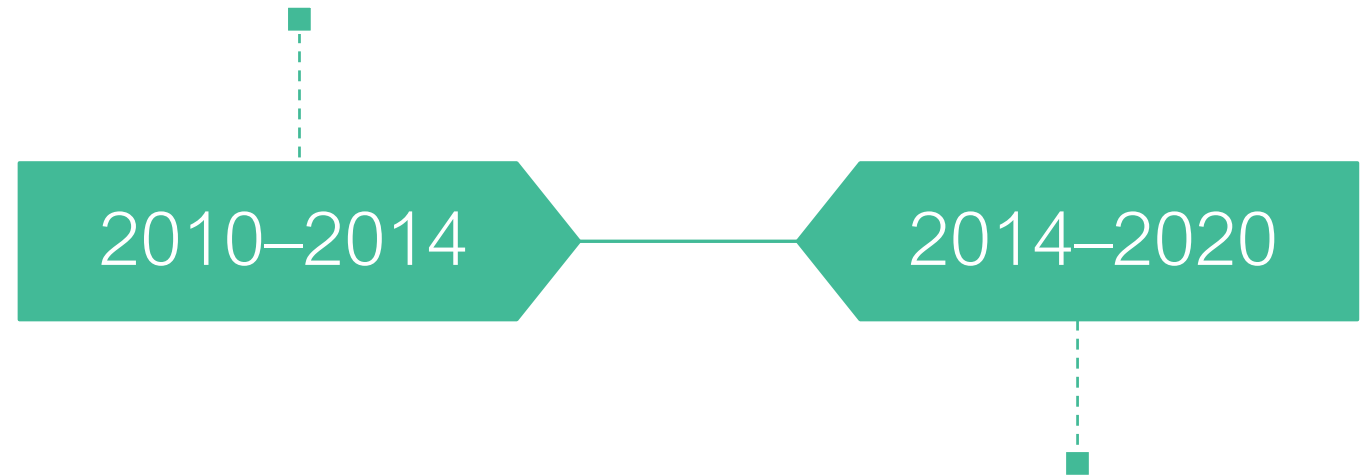
Shifting practice toward rapid HIAs, health impact reviews, and health notes

Changing nature of who performs HIAs

Larger role of health equity, HiAP

# Decreased Funding for HIAs

Between 2010-2014, an average of almost 48 HIAs were conducted each year in the U.S



Since 2014, overall HIA grant funding has decreased, along with the number of HIAs conducted yearly

# More Rapid Methods

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Need for easily digestible outputs for decision makers

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Lack of resources to complete comprehensive or even intermediate HIAs

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Tools such as health impact review, health notes and health lens analysis are quicker but use the methodology and principles of HIA

# Who Conducts HIAs

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Before 2014 almost 40% of HIAs conducted were led by state or local health departments

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Since 2014, about 35% of lead HIA organizations have been nonprofits, compared to about 30% state or local health departments

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More community groups are conducting HIAs and using findings to advocate for policy changes that advance health and equity



# Larger Role of Equity & HiAP

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Equity has always been a core HIA value

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SOPHIA Equity Metrics for HIA Practice  
developed since last MEPS update

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HIA commonly used in the context of  
Health in All Policies (HiAP) as an  
approach to ensure consideration of  
health and equity in non-health issues

**What has  
been  
updated?**

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Iterative Nature of HIA Practice

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Equity & Stakeholder Engagement

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Specifying Key Outputs by Phase

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Making Monitoring More Feasible

# Iterative Nature of HIA Practice

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Shift from 'Steps' to 'Phases'

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Added language to scoping standards encouraging practitioners to revisit and revise their workplan throughout the process:

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*“The HIA team should revisit the work plan with stakeholders and revise as necessary at each phase of the HIA process. This helps ensure responsiveness to the iterative nature of HIA.”*

# Equity & Stakeholder Engagement

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Revised minimum element to focus on engaging stakeholders facing health inequities:

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*“HIA involves and engages stakeholders affected by the proposal, particularly populations that face significant barriers to health and wellbeing who may be disproportionately affected by the proposal.”*

# Specifying Key Outputs by Phase

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Scoping example:

*“The scoping output is a work plan for conducting the HIA. These work plans may vary based on the HIA scale.”*

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Reporting & Dissemination example:

*“The HIA team should document at a minimum, the HIA’s purpose, findings, and recommendations and share these publicly.”*

# Making Monitoring More Feasible

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Recognizes resources limitations and establishes core monitoring activities:

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*“While many monitoring activities will not occur during an initial HIA project period, all HIAs should include some level of retrospective reflection on the process and consider how longer-term impacts and outcomes monitoring could occur when and if resources become available.”*

# Next Steps

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- What are we going to do with your input?
- Draft update coming to SOPHIA website, with open comments spring/summer of 2021
- Contact Sandra if you would like to be a ‘practitioner reviewer’
- Forthcoming CHIA article & May 2021 IAIA presentation
- Suggestions can be submitted to Sandra: [Swhitehead@GWU.edu](mailto:Swhitehead@GWU.edu)



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visiting our website: [www.hiasociety.org](http://www.hiasociety.org)**