



What is a Health Impact Assessment (HIA)?

An Introduction and Overview

Chicago Department of Public Health

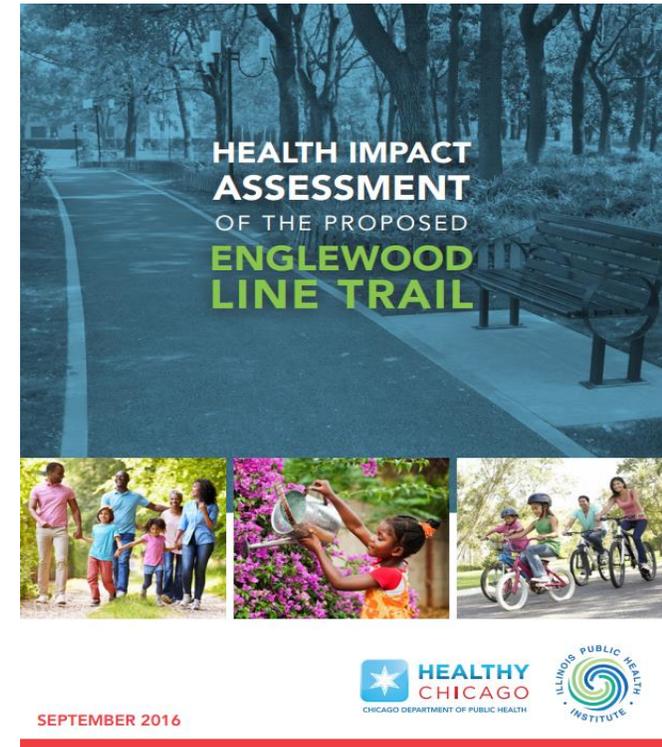
★ Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

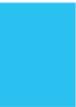
A health impact assessment is a process that:

- Determines the potential effects of a proposed policy, plan, or project on the health of a population
- Considers the distribution of those effects within the population (who will be burdened and who will benefit)
- Provides recommendations on monitoring and managing those effects

The assessment is done by:

- Reviewing and analyzing data
- Considering input from community members and stakeholders





Guiding Principles for Practice

Health Impact assessment aims to advance:

- **Democracy** by involving and engaging the public, and informing and influencing key decision makers.
- **Equity** by considering who will benefit and who will be burdened by a proposal.
- **Sustainability** by assessing the short- and long-term impacts of a policy, plan, or project within a time frame to inform decision makers.
- **Ethical use of evidence** by assessing impacts and informing recommendations in a rigorous and transparent way.
- **A comprehensive approach to health** by considering the many factors that influence how long and how well we live.





What a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Is and What it Is Not

- It is **proactive and forward looking**. It is meant to inform a proposed policy, program or project currently under consideration.
- It is a framework to translate data (numbers and narratives) into well-informed policy, plans, or projects.
- It is not used to make the case for why a policy, plan, or project should be proposed.
- It is not an evaluation to understand the impacts of a program or policy once it has been implemented.



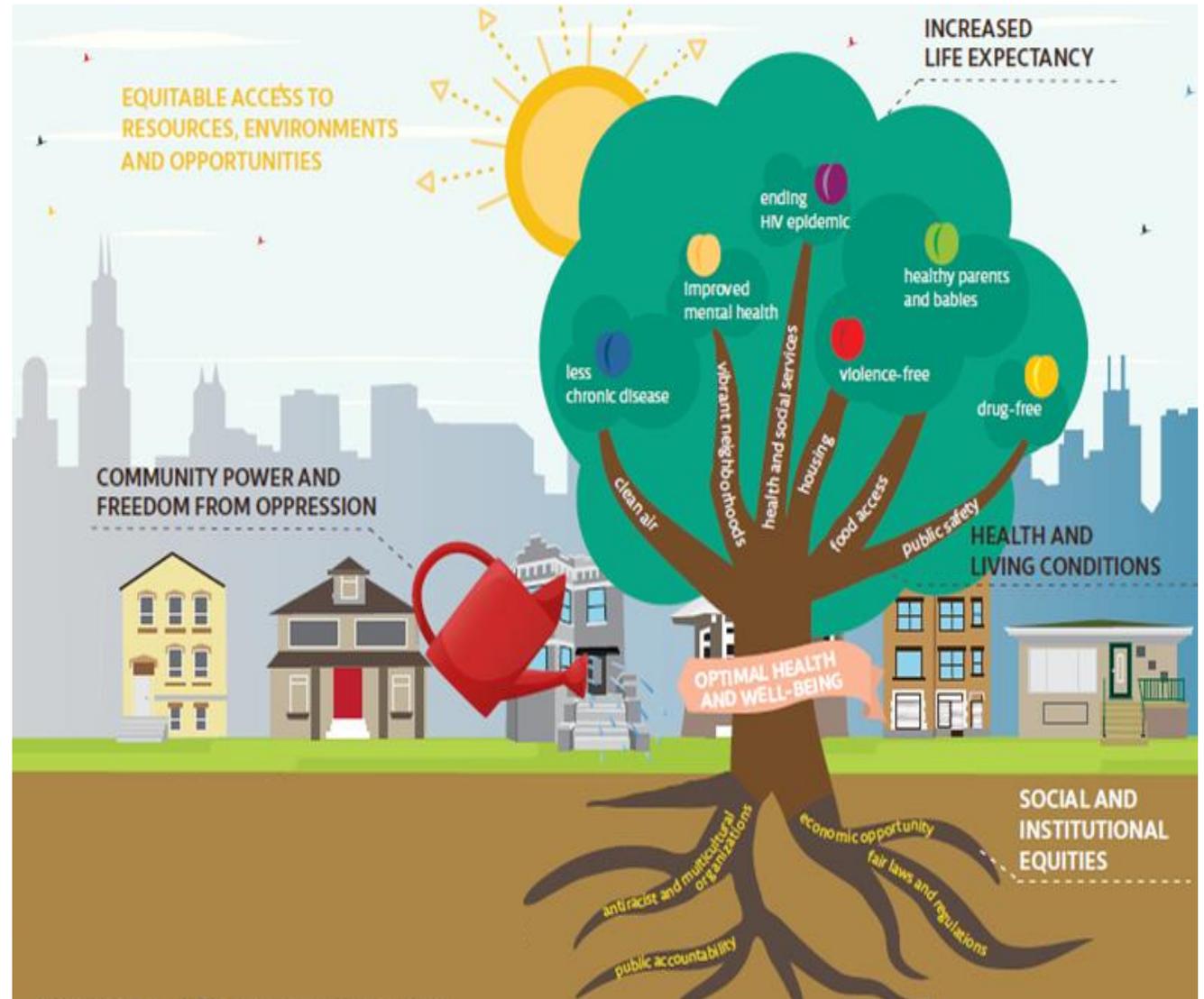


Why do we do Health Impact Assessments (HIA)?



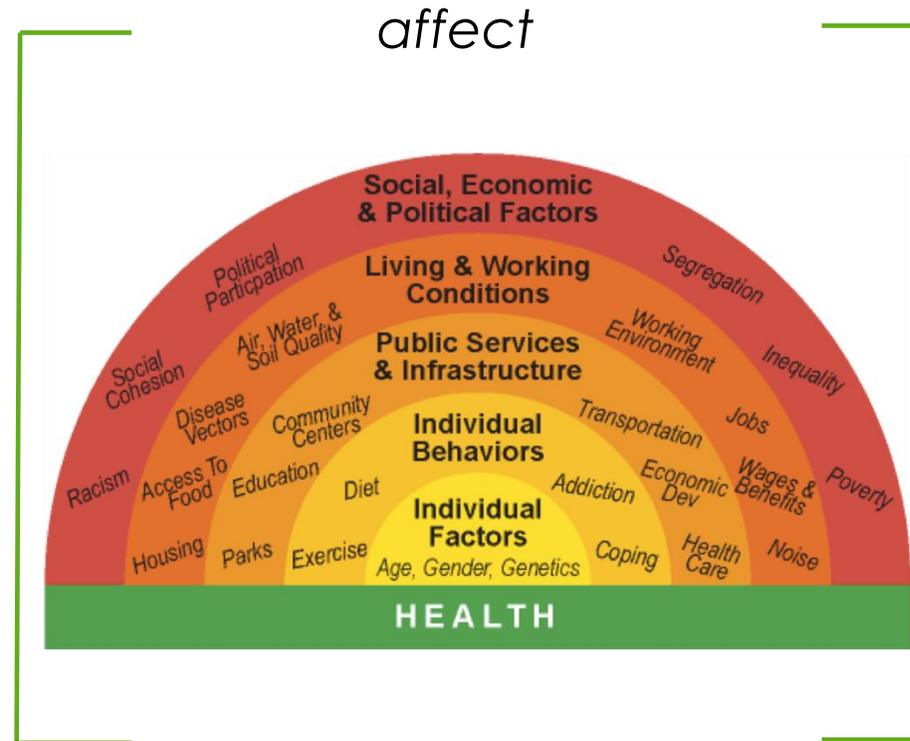
What Impacts Health?

- Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being; not just the absence of disease.
- Many factors – such as social and economic conditions, physical environments, and health behaviors – influence how long and how well we live.
- These factors known to directly or indirectly impact health are called determinants of health.



Health Impact Assessments (HIA) Ask...

How does a proposed policy, plan, project...



...and who is impacted?

Provides recommendations to promote health equity



Health Impact Assessments (HIA) Use

- Identify benefits and burdens before decisions are made
- Identify strategies and recommendations to promote health equity
- Increase transparency in the policy decision-making process
- Support inclusive and democratic decision-making
- Support community engagement in the decision-making process
- Shift decision-making from an economic to a quality of life framework
- Inform a discussion of trade-offs involved with a policy, plan, or project
- Facilitate decisions and their implementation
- Advance health and racial equity





How do you do a Health Impact Assessment (HIA)?

★ Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Steps

Health impact assessments are usually carried out using the six following steps:

1. Screening
2. Scoping
3. Assessment
4. Recommendations
5. Reporting
6. Monitoring and Evaluation





Community and Stakeholder Engagement

- Stakeholders are individuals or organizations who may gain or lose from a decision or process and can be people who:
 - are affected by the prospective change
 - have an interest in the health impacts of the proposal under consideration
 - have influence on the decision-making and implementation process of the proposal
 - have an economic or business interest in the outcome of the decision
- Community members are an important stakeholder in the health impact assessment process. They can:
 - Provide local knowledge of health and existing conditions
 - Identify areas of concern and issues of interest
 - Offer contextual and cultural experiences
- Engagement of community members, especially from disinvested communities, is important in ensuring that equity is promoted.





Promoting Equity in Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

Equity is both an **outcome** and a **process** that results in fair and just access to opportunity and resources that provide everyone the ability to thrive.

There are many ways to incorporate equity during the health impact assessment process, including:

- Ensuring community leadership, oversight, and participation early and throughout the process.
- Supporting authentic participation in decision-making process.
- Focusing health impact assessments on proposals identified by disinvested communities who have been historically and intentionally excluded.
- Identifying recommendations that yield an equitable distribution of health benefits.
- Communicating findings and recommendations in accessible and actionable ways and ensuring the impacts of decisions are monitored.





What are the potential outcomes of a Health Impact Assessment (HIA)?



Potential Outcomes from Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

- Health impact assessments can:
 - Promote a greater understanding of health and the health impacts of decisions
 - Increase community engagement and participation in decision-making
 - Improve the evidence on which decisions are made
 - Make recommendations for changes to the design, adoption, or implementation of proposals to incorporate health
 - Influence decision-making by including health-promoting changes
- Health impact assessments may:
 - Promote system changes that could advance health equity





HIA Summary

- A health impact assessment is a process to determine the potential health effects of a proposal, including who benefits or is burdened, and make recommendations to maximize health and minimize harm.
- It is forward looking and meant to inform decision making for a proposal currently under consideration.
- Health impact assessments take a comprehensive approach to the many factors that influence health.
- Health impact assessments are usually done by following six steps: screening, scoping, assessment, recommendations, reporting, and monitoring and evaluation.
- Health impact assessments include many stakeholders and engaging community members, especially from disinvested communities, is important in ensuring that equity is promoted.
- Potential outcomes from health impact assessment include: a greater understanding of health and the health impacts of decisions; increased community engagement and participation in decision-making; and changes to the design, adoption, or implementation of proposals.



Thank You!



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