

Screening in HIA

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Screening: What is it?



A systematic way of assessing which proposals will undergo HIA

Screening: Why do it?

Objective: to select proposals suitable for investigation by HIA, for one or more reasons:

- **importance to the municipality**
- **importance to the community**
- **their potential impacts on health**

Screening: When is it done?

Classic or traditional HIA process

- **As the first step at the beginning of the HIA process**

HIA approach

- **At any time during the design or development of a proposal**

Screening: Who does it?

When introducing HIA

- **Officers in the organisation**

As you gain experience in HIA and/or work in partnership

- **Officers from other organisations may also be involved**

Screening: who does it?

Possible

- It can be done by one person, BUT it is advisable for this person to know about the proposal AND be aware of relevant information about the community and potential health impacts

Advisable

- It is best if 2 or more people – up to 4 or 5 – undertake screening because you benefit from the knowledge and experience of more than one person

Screening: How is it done?

When introducing HIA:

- people usually do not formalise the screening step
- a decision is made according to what is practicable in the context of the municipality at the time

Screening: How is it done?

As you gain experience in HIA:

- A set of criteria is developed against which the decision to do HIA on a particular proposal is assessed
- These criteria can be developed as a checklist or as a screening tool

Screening: How is it done?

Key issues to explore during screening

- The strategic importance of the proposal
- People affected by the proposal
- Potential impacts on the health and well-being of the community

Screening: How is it done?

Strategic importance of the proposal

Criteria used for this could include:

- Political priority of the proposal
- Amount of money to be invested in the proposal
- Involvement of other organisations to design or implement the proposal
- Level of community interest or concern

Screening: How is it done?

People affected by the proposal

Criteria used for this could include:

- People in a particular geographical area
- People belonging to a particular group, e.g. users of a service, employees, passengers
- Vulnerable people, e.g. children, older people, people on a low income

Screening: How is it done?

Potential impacts on health and well-being

Criteria used for this could include:

- Potential impacts through the determinants of health, e.g. environmental factors, social factors, economic factors
- Nature of the potential impacts on health, e.g. number of people affected, severity of impact, duration of impact

Advantages of screening

- **Resources used for HIA are targeted on proposals that are important to the municipality**
- **Reassurance for politicians and other decision-makers that HIA is being applied systematically in accordance with municipality priorities**