

Nova Scotia Public Health

Policy Protocol ¹¹



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ACCESS ASSOCIATED PROTOCOL EXPECTATIONS BY SELECTING THE PROTOCOL NAME BELOW.

PROTOCOL EXPECTATIONS:

Understanding

Priority Setting & Planning

Partnership

Policy

Health Equity

Communicable Disease Prevention, Management, & Response

Publicly Funded Immunization

Environmental Health

Healthy Communities

Healthy Development



Expectations

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Public health will

- conduct the analysis and influence the development, implementation, evaluation and/or modification of policies to promote and protect the health of the population, including
 - describing/understanding the problem
 - analyzing the social and political context
 - influencing the policy

This should be done while recognizing that these components are interdependent.

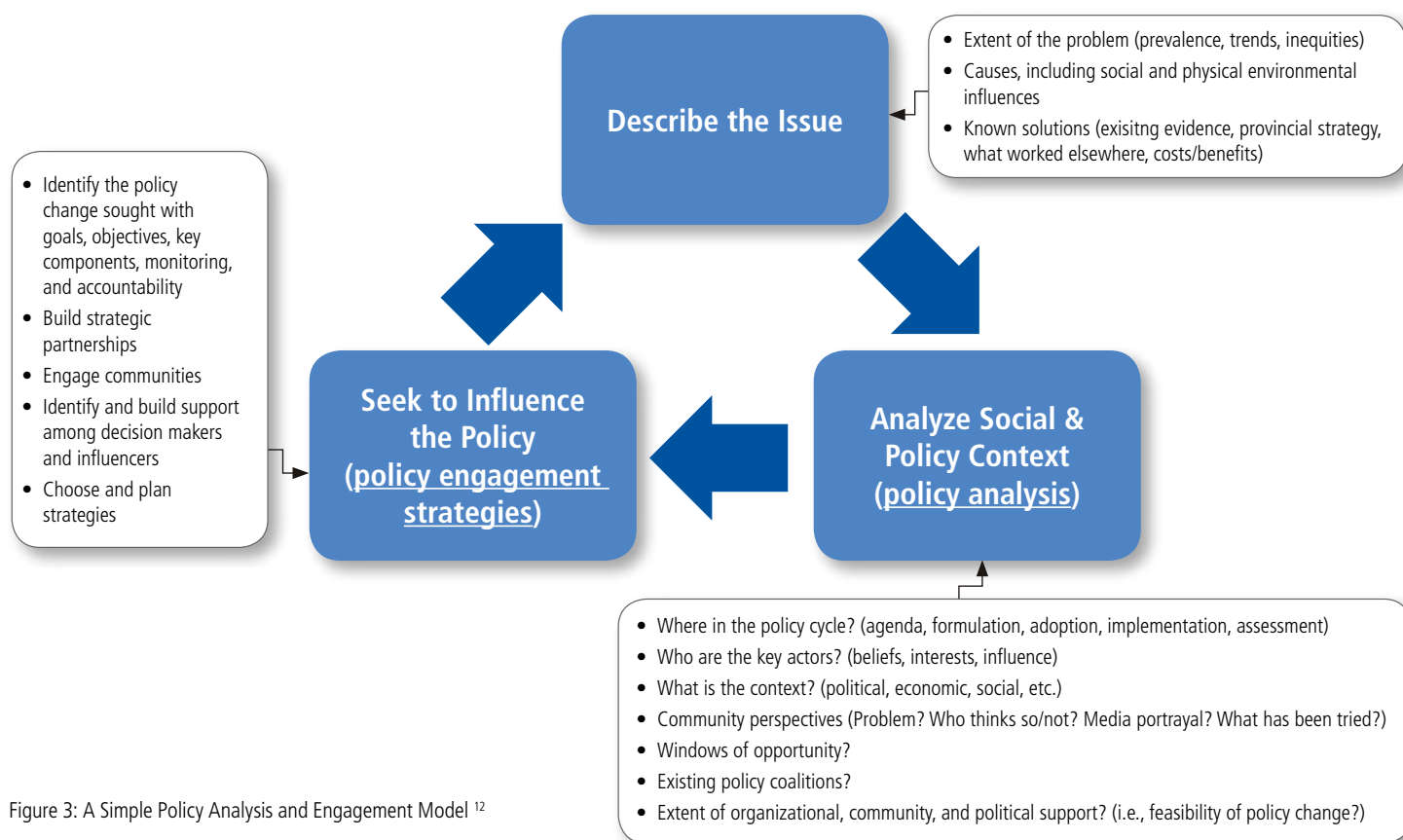


Figure 3: A Simple Policy Analysis and Engagement Model ¹²

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Describe the Issue

Public health will

- describe the issue, using multiple sources of information, with consideration given to the following:
 - extent of the issue (e.g., prevalence, trends, inequalities, inequities)
 - understanding of causes, including social, economic, and physical or environmental influences
 - impact of the issue (e.g., social and economic implications if nothing is done)
 - known alternatives, based on
 - best available evidence (e.g., academic literature, lived experience)
 - linkage to existing provincial strategy
 - success in other jurisdictions
 - costs and benefits of various solutions

Analyze the Social & Policy Context

Public health will

- consider the following elements related to the issue:
 - policy cycle—e.g., where the issue is currently situated (i.e., agenda setting, policy formulation, decision making, policy implementation, policy assessment)
 - policy actors or contributors (e.g., those most affected—individuals, groups, or organizations and their known beliefs, interests, and influence)
 - context (e.g., systematic factors—political, economic, social, or other—that have affected or may affect the policy, as well as external events that may influence the policy context)
 - community, organizational, and political support and readiness (e.g., how the community views the issue, media portrayal of the issue, the extent of support, readiness to embrace policy as a solution to identified issue, etc.)
 - opportunities (e.g., analysis of whether there are windows of opportunity)¹³
 - existing policy coalitions¹⁴

- support (e.g., the extent of organizational, community, and political support for change)
- forces for and against the proposed change¹⁵

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Seek to Influence Policy (Policy Engagement)

Public health will

- determine the profile level of efforts, including
 - low: quiet negotiation; meeting decision makers/persons of influence; shareing information; non-public briefs
 - medium: continued negotiation; meeting decision makers/persons of influence; public briefs; committee meetings; alliances with others; letters to newspapers
 - high: social media; public criticism; ad campaigns; public release information; letter writing; demonstrations
- identify the policy change by
 - establishing evaluation criteria to compare, measure, and select among alternatives
 - choosing an option after considering existing evidence, the extent of support, and opportunities that exist for change
 - identifying the goals, objectives, and key components of the policy change,
 - ensuring implementation is practical, affordable, sustainable, can demonstrate progress towards goal, and will address risks and barriers
 - determining how the policy, once implemented, will be monitored and enforced
- build strategic partnerships and engage the community
- identify and build support among decision makers and their influencers
- provide evidence regarding the magnitude of problems, causes, and what is known about the effectiveness of solutions
- inform and speak for the health of the public
- consider a range of factors, including but not limited to
 - availability of assets and resources
 - consideration of potential allies and opponents regarding this issue, and of how they may support or oppose, and how they might optimize and counter, opposition

- identification of advocacy strategies and development of an action plan
- identification of key messages, framing, and communication channels, including
 - linking how the policy addresses the compelling issue
 - providing simple descriptions of solutions
 - identifying signs in the community that change is warranted and desired
- timing, including responsiveness to opportunities

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¹¹ This cross-cutting protocol is focused around policy analysis and engagement and is referred to as “Policy Protocol” for simplicity sake. The implementation part of it happens at the content-specific level.

¹² Adapted from the model developed for the Region of Peel Public Health in *The Use of Policy Frameworks to Understand Public Health-Related Public Policy Processes: A Literature Review* (Prepared for Region of Peel Public Health by Brent Moloughney, October 2012).

¹³ Using a “Multiple Streams Framework,” see *The Use of Policy Frameworks to Understand Public Health-Related Public Policy Processes: A Literature Review* (prepared for Region of Peel Public Health by Brent Moloughney, October 2012).

¹⁴ Using the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF), a formal analysis that looks at the strengths of coalitions. Public policies can be understood as the effect of power relations between coalitions of actors. See National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy.

¹⁵ Using “Force Field Analysis,” a method for evaluating the various forces for and against a proposed change. See *The Use of Policy Frameworks to Understand Public Health-Related Public Policy Processes: A Literature Review* (Prepared for Region of Peel Public Health by Brent Moloughney, October 2012).