

Evaluating HIA in the Hawke's Bay: lessons from the field

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Paper aims:

1. Describe HIAs & evaluations
2. Reflect on HIA & evaluation



Broader Context

Parameters	Inputs	Process	Proximal Impacts	Distal Impacts
Decision-making processes	Proposal	Procedural fidelity	Informing decisions	Understanding
Decision-makers	Capacity and experience	Involvement of decision-makers and stakeholders	Changing decisions and implementation	Participatory learning
Type of HIA	Resources	Transparency	Changes in health determinants	Influencing other activities
	Time	Trade-offs	Predictive efficacy	Engagement
	Organisational arrangements	Review	Achieving goals	Perception of HIA

Values, Purpose and Goals

Harris-Roxas B. Conceptual Framework for Evaluating the Impact and Effectiveness of Health Impact Assessment, Centre for Health Equity Training, Research and Evaluation (CHETRE), 2008.
http://www.hiaconnect.edu.au/evaluating_hia.htm

Broader context

- NZ HIA Guides
- Growing support/practice of HIA in NZ
- HIA Support Unit in Ministry of Health
- Funding available for “Learning by Doing”
- Training available – Rob, Louise etc
- Ana and Maree met on training and became colleagues at Hawke’s Bay District Health Board (DHB)
- Maree/Ana applied for funding with Rob as mentor and me as evaluator

Parameters

Five HIAs evaluation

- For 3 councils, 1 for DHB
- Topics – Flaxmere Urban Design, graffiti vandalism, oral health, waste management, air quality
- Plans, strategies, framework
- Process & impact evaluation (except air change which only impact)
- Timeframe – over two years

Methodology



Evaluation Objectives

Process objectives

- What process was undertaken?
- The strengths of, constraints on, improvements to, the HIA process?
- The resources used?

Impact objectives

- Were the objectives of the HIA met?
- Impact on the Strategy/Framework/Plan?
- If HIA added value to the planning process. How?

Overall Evaluation Objectives

- Key factors that achieved buy-in to the HIA process and outcomes, esp. at senior management & political level?
- What resources could be developed for use in future HIAs & evaluations?
- The key lessons from HIAs



Theoretical underpinnings

1. Evaluation frameworks from NZ HIA Guides
2. Health Promotion Programme Evaluation
 - Hawe, P., Degeling, D. & Hall, J. (1990).
Evaluating Health Promotion: A health workers guide. Sydney: MacLennan & Petty.
 - Waa A., Holibar, F and Spinola, C. (1998).
Programme Evaluation: An Introductory Guide for Health Promotion. Auckland: Alcohol and Public Health Research Unit.
3. Action research

Methods

1. Participant observation – attended scoping/appraisal workshops, team meetings sometimes by phone, debriefs
 - Pros – established relationships with team/ key stakeholders, acted as critical friend asking reflective questions at team meetings, demonstrated how to undertake an evaluation (learning by doing), assist with clarifying work at each stage i.e. HIA objectives
 - Cons – possibly too close & biased but two of us, took time but hugely valuable

Methods

2. Documentary analysis – minutes meetings, workshop reports, evaluations of workshops, data used, literature review analysed, HIA report reviewed, Council/DHB decisions
 - Pros – can provide good/tangible data, can be readily available
 - Cons – important that it is gathered, not full story

Methods

3. Key informant interviews – range of perspectives: HIA team, key stakeholders, insiders and outsiders, - used versions of interview schedule
 - Pros – range reduces bias, by phone
 - Cons – time, money so had to be very selective



Results of evaluations - process

- Good process that improved as HIAs progressed
“seamless”
- It may not be your timetable *“the first was last”*
- Needed to be savvy to get good participation
“warm contacts”
- Struggled to keep track of time it took
- Relations strengthened between partners & made future HIAs even easier

Process “opened each other’s eyes as to how each of us works, & how we go about our decision-making”

Results of evaluations - impacts

- HIA objectives meet
- Positive impact on plans - all but two recommendations were accepted
- Added value to planning process –strong evidence base, likely stronger policy for health wellbeing & equity, stronger community support
- Strengthened democracy (waste management)
- Buy-in from key stakeholders for HIA

Lessons about HIA

- Importance of legislative requirement (wellbeings in Local Govt. Act)
- Chose winners to start
- Importance of working with partner agency and establishing relations e.g. report peer reviewed for:
accuracy,
appropriate language,
that recommendations
that are fit for purpose



Lessons about evaluation

- Need to be flexible – not your timeframes
- Improve process as it progresses
- Interrogate the entire process
- Action research approach enables input along way
- Easy to evaluate best practice – values
- Easy to evaluate a team that wants to be evaluated – integral part of the process
- Evaluate – even on a shoestring

Further work

- Outcome evaluations of HIAs
- Review of all NZ evaluations
- Better methods for tracking time
- Focus on unintended impacts
- Stronger focus on HIA values -
equity, honouring Treaty of Waitangi

