HIA IN WALES: FROM VOLUNTARY TO STATUTORY

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Locating Wales
Devolved Government

- Emphasis on:
  - Health and wellbeing
  - Addressing inequalities within population
  - Sustainable Development
  - Citizen centred public services
  - Partnership working
  - Integrated agenda

- Devolved Powers include: health, planning, social services and social care
- Ability to legislate for these through Assembly Bills and Acts
IMPORTANCE OF CONSIDERING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Wales exhibits high levels of poor health
- Increasing rates of obesity and associated illness i.e. diabetes, heart disease and respiratory diseases
- Smoking, alcohol, mental health and well-being
- Inequalities in health - deprived communities exhibit higher levels of ill health and have shorter life expectancy than more affluent communities
- Not just physical health - wider determinants of health and mental wellbeing
**HIA and HIAP in Wales: Strategic Drivers**

- Importance of considering health and wellbeing and inequalities
- **Wellbeing of the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** - Sustainable Development focus
- **Consideration of Health in All Policies (HiAP)**
- ‘Prosperity for All’ (2018) - WG and Wales’ long term strategy
- **Public Health (Wales) Act 2017** - includes the requirement to make regulations about the use of HIA by public bodies.
Public Health (Wales) Act 2017

Regulations to specify:
- Circumstances when HIAs will be required by public bodies (PBs)
- How HIAs are to be carried out by public bodies
- Regulations to cover the role of PHW in providing assistance to public bodies
- Range of potential areas currently being explored
- Draft regulations expected to be consulted upon later this year
Many voluntary levers for HIA...

- Planning Act (2015) and Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 2018
- MTAN2: Coal (2009) - open cast mining. EIAs require a broad HIA to be undertaken
- NHS Infrastructure Investment Guidance (2016)
**Why now? Why successful?**

- Window of opportunity in Wales - political and social context
- Health and wellbeing status linked to economic development
- WFGA - Wellbeing Goals inc Health/Equality
- UN Sustainable Development Goals and SD agenda
- Success of HIA in practice at a national/local level and many benefits gained i.e. strengthened plans, community consultation/involvement; avoided unintended consequences
- Strategic advocates created i.e. BMA Cymru, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH), Public Health Wales (PHW)
ENABLERS

- WHIASU - Independent specialist unit for HIA/P
- Training/capacity building i.e. PBs/Local PHTeams
- Application of HIA/HiAP - strategic work with Welsh Government; ‘non health’ sectors - created ‘champions’ who have benefited
- Pragmatic approach taken i.e. Rapid participatory HIA is time and resource effective and efficient
- Creation of strong partnerships with organisations/individuals
- Case studies/presentations to highlight work - raise awareness of importance of health and wellbeing and HIAs role
WHIASU PREPARATION FOR THE PH ACT - HIA

- PHW internal Strategic Task and Finish Group - implications for a wide range of teams i.e. WHIASU, Environmental PH, Health Intelligence, Local Public Health Teams (LPHTs)
- PHW - lead by example and development of approach i.e. Brexit HIA
- WHIASU - advice and support to WG; preparation of resources i.e. Training Strategy with Skills and Knowledge Development Pathway and; Decision Criteria for requests for ‘assistance’
- Discussions with LPHTs and PBs incl Natural Resources Wales - 18 trained internally on Rapid HIA; wish to embed across the organisation
OPPORTUNITIES

- HUGE opportunity!
- Solidify Wales reputation as world leaders in HIA and HiAP
- Translation of policy into successful and meaningful practice
- Strengthen and improve plans and policies
- Avoid unintended consequences but also maximise positives and contribution to health and wellbeing and equalities
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in practice
CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Lack of capacity in WHIASU and public health system - new model of working for HIA?
- WG HIA Statutory Regulations - circumstances are as yet to be defined; no definition of assistance…
- Implications of the Act not understood widely - only a few PBs are prepared for the HIA duty
- A whole system approach is needed with joined up working and resources (mirrors the WFGA)
- To successfully translate policy into practice takes time and planning
- Austerity/Brexit
SUMMARY

- Need the right policy context BUT can still influence the successful use of HIA
- Exploit every lever possible to ‘sell’ HIA/HiAP
- Utilise a ‘Top Down’ approach at the same time as a ‘Bottom Up’ one
- Community involvement, avoiding unintended consequences - selling points
- Creation of strategic and local advocates - key
- Role of dedicated specialists to support and provide advice, guidance and resources
- Demonstrate ‘added value’ and evaluate any success
Diolch yn fawr iawn!
Thank you!