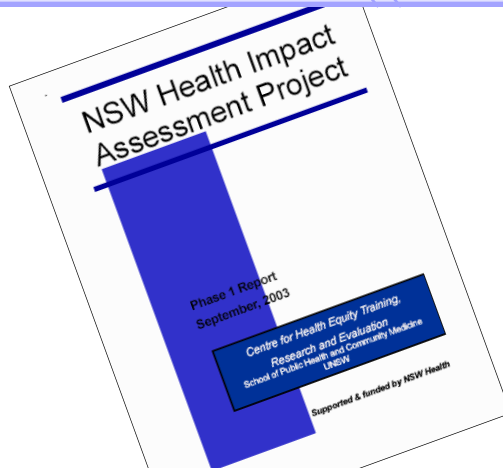


NSW HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROJECT

E-News



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october
2003**

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print**

NSW HIA Project Phase One Ends: What Next?

The development of processes for undertaking rapid health impact appraisals and comprehensive health impact assessment have been identified through CHETRE's recent work as key areas for development. It is envisaged that these processes will form part of a set of strategies to ensure that proposed government policies, programs and projects improve health and address health inequalities.

In order to ensure that NSW Health had the capacity to undertake HIA, CHETRE was contracted by the NSW Centre for Health Promotion to:

- Explore the feasibility and mechanisms for the development of HIA processes in NSW
- Increase awareness in the NSW health system on the purpose and scope of HIA processes
- Identify key areas where capacity needed to be developed

This was part of the project, known as Phase 1, which ended on 30 June 2003.

A report on the outcomes of Phase 1, developed in consultation with key

stakeholders in NSW Health, has now been submitted to the Department. The focus of the consultations was on the reviewing Phase 1 and the developing an approach for the next step, Phase 2. The next edition of the HIA E-news will provide an overview of the main findings from Phase 1 along with what's proposed as part of Phase 2 of the NSW HIA Project. The HIA Project team will also be presenting the outcomes of Phase 1 to different areas within the Department (e.g. Environmental Health Branch colloquia) and to a range of NSW Health forums (e.g. Directors of Public Health) over the coming months to raise awareness of the project and to seek input to Phase 2.

The project team found that the introduction of HIA in NSW requires a structured approach, beginning with an exploration of the feasibility of introducing HIA (Phase 1). This would then be followed by the implementation of HIA within NSW Health through "learning by doing" (Phase 2). Further information on this and the developmental HIA sites will be available in future issues.

by sarah simpson

**project manager
CHETRE**

**Phase 2 will focus
on "learning by
doing"**

inside

**NSW Health
Aboriginal Health
Impact Statement**

**Coming Soon:
Developmental
HIA Sites**

**Screening: The
First Step in a
Health Impact
Assessment**

New Resources

The HIA Project E-News will be bigger and less frequent

Please fill out the reader survey attached

Contact us:

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Past editions of the NSW HIA Project E-News can be obtained by emailing the project team

Some Changes to the HIA E-News

Welcome to the new-look fifth edition of the Health Impact Assessment Project E-News. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep you informed about the NSW Health HIA Project, HIA resources and websites and new developments in the field. Based on feedback from readers we've modified the look to enhance readability. Please let us know what you think by taking the time fill out our survey.

As part of Phase 2 of the NSW HIA Project, the NSW HIA Project E-News will be issued every two months and usually contain more articles. If you have any ideas about issues that you would like to see covered in future editions please e-mail your ideas to **Ben Harris-Roxas**.

In our next issue we'll be reporting on the outcomes of the inequity profiles workshop held earlier this year.

NSW HIA Project E-News

editorial panel
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disclaimer
CHETRE is supported in this project by NSW Health. Views expressed here are not necessarily the views of NSW Health.

This newsletter is brought to you by the HIA Project Team at the Centre for Health Equity Training Research and Evaluation (CHETRE).



In 2000 there were 2,122 births to Aboriginal women in NSW (2.4% of all births) and 38 perinatal deaths, giving an Aboriginal perinatal mortality rate of 17.9 per 1,000. This was almost twice the NSW non-Aboriginal rate of 9.7.

**NSW Health 2003:16
Accessible via the
intranet and internet.**



NSW Health Aboriginal Health Impact Statement

background

Today, health outcomes for Aboriginal people remain significantly lower than those for the general population. For example, Aboriginal men can expect to live 56 years, and Aboriginal women can expect to live 64 years. This is about 20 years less than the life expectancy for the general population (ABS, 2001).

Despite relatively poor health, Aboriginal people access mainstream health services at a significantly lower rate than the general population. This is partly due to the fact that mainstream services are not always culturally appropriate and therefore not easily accessible to Aboriginal people. A major step towards improving the accessibility of mainstream services to Aboriginal people will be the integration of Aboriginal health needs and interests into all services delivered by NSW Health.

purpose

The purpose of the NSW Health Aboriginal Health Impact Statement (the Statement) is to ensure that the health needs and interests of Aboriginal people in NSW are integrated into the development, implementation and evaluation of all health policies, programs and strategies. The Statement is a declaration that appropriate Aboriginal consultation and

negotiation processes have taken place during the development of applicable policies, strategies and programs, and that the health needs of Aboriginal people have been properly considered in the proposed policy, strategy or program.

The Statement, an Australian first, was developed by the Aboriginal Health Branch in partnership with the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW, the peak body representing the Aboriginal community controlled sector in NSW. Area Managers of Aboriginal Health in NSW Health, and other stakeholders, were also involved in the Statement's development.

key principles

The Statement is based on the core Aboriginal health principles, which are designed to guide all relevant health policy initiatives:

a whole-of-life view of health

Aboriginal people have a holistic and social view of health encompassing the physical, emotional, cultural, and spiritual well-being of individuals and communities. A holistic approach to the delivery of services is essential to the improvement of Aboriginal health.

self-determination

The practical exercise of self-determination is central to Aboriginal health. It underpins cultural,

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Aboriginal Health
Impact Statement
Flyer

by liz wheeler,
corinne fagueret
& lisa mackey

aboriginal health
branch
NSW Health

Including core
Aboriginal health
principles in
health policy
initiatives means
incorporating a
whole-of-life view
of health, self-
determination,
partnership,
community
understanding
and a recognition
of trauma and
loss

“The Statement is to ensure that the health needs and interests of Aboriginal people in NSW are integrated into the development, implementation and evaluation of all health policies, programs and strategies.”

page 3

The statement includes practical information on consulting and negotiating with Aboriginal communities

“Working partnerships are essential to providing Aboriginal people with equitable access to culturally sensitive health services and to address the issues underlying the disadvantage of Aboriginal people and communities.”

NSW Health Aboriginal Health Impact Statement cont.

community and individual well-being. Aboriginal self-determination lies at the heart of Aboriginal community control, ensuring that Aboriginal people have a leadership role in determining strategies for Aboriginal health.

partnership

Partnership with the Aboriginal Community Controlled sector is a major platform of the NSW Government's policy commitments to the Aboriginal people of NSW. Working partnerships are essential to providing Aboriginal people with equitable access to culturally sensitive health services and to address the issues underlying the disadvantage of Aboriginal people and communities. Partnerships also ensure that the health expertise of Aboriginal communities and community controlled representative bodies is brought to bear upon health policy.

cultural understanding

Cultural understandings shape the provision of health services, and understandings of Aboriginal culture need to be applied in mainstream health services in order to improve Aboriginal health.

recognition of trauma and loss

Disruption to cultural and overall well-being and the resulting loss and trauma significantly contributes to ill-health in Aboriginal communities. Recognising and addressing the issues of loss and trauma resulting from the history of Aboriginal people since European colonisation is critical to the success of services and programs in preventing Aboriginal ill-health.

how the statement works

As well as comprising a formal declaration that Aboriginal health needs have been taken into account,

the Statement also contains important information and references about Aboriginal health and how to involve Aboriginal stakeholders in the policy development, implementation and evaluation process.

The Statement also contains a useful “how to” guide for consultation and negotiation with Aboriginal communities. Another document, *Communicating Positively – A Guide to Appropriate Aboriginal Terminology for NSW Health*, has been developed as a companion document for the Statement.

All NSW Health staff (and their consultants) who develop, implement or evaluate applicable health policies, programs or strategies need to make sure that they are aware of and implement the Statement appropriately. In particular, Aboriginal stakeholders are to be involved at the earliest stages of development of policies, strategies or programs with a significant Aboriginal health impact.

A Statement should then be completed and accompany any new health policy, program or strategy proposals, as well as new health policy implementation or evaluation plans.

At the state level, new policies submitted to the NSW Department of Health's Policy Development Committee require a Statement to be approved. Similarly, at an Area level, relevant policies, programs or strategies submitted for local approval will require a Statement.

trial implementation

The Statement is currently being implemented across all Divisions of the NSW Department of Health, as well as in nine volunteer Health Services: Central Coast, Corrections

NSW Health Aboriginal Health Impact Statement cont.

Health, Hunter, Macquarie, Mid North Coast, New England, Southern, South Eastern and Wentworth.

Following completion of the trial, feedback on the performance of the Statement will be collected and used to adjust the Statement where necessary, before its generalised implementation across NSW Health.

where to access documents

Copies of the NSW Health Aboriginal Health Impact Statement and its accompanying Survival Guide are

available from the Better Health Centre Publications Warehouse, Locked Mail Bag 5003, Gladesville NSW 2111, Phone (02) 9816 0452, Fax (02) 9816 0492; or the NSW Health website, through both the **internet** and **intranet**.

Copies of the terminology guide will shortly be available from the same sources.

To find out more about the development of the Statement email **Liz Wheeler** or **Corinne Fagueret**.

Coming Soon: NSW Developmental HIA Sites

NSW Health will soon be inviting all Area Health Services and areas within the Department to apply to become an endorsed developmental health impact assessment site.

A key recommendation from Phase 1 of the NSW HIA Project was the need to establish 4-5 developmental HIA sites, so that we can "learn by doing". Ideally the endorsed developmental HIA sites will include:

- a mix of HIA types – both desk based audits and health impact statements
- health impact assessment of different types of proposals – a policy, program, project and/or plan/strategy
- involve a range of sectors within health – clinical/acute, public health, primary health, statewide planning etc
- a willingness to learn by doing and to collaborate with others involved in undertaking HIAs

The HIA project team at CHETRE will provide training, support, technical advice and assistance to endorsed developmental sites in undertaking the HIA.

If you are currently involved in developing a policy, plan, program or project and you think it will be developed enough by early 2004 to assess using HIA, we recommend that you consider applying to become a developmental HIA site. Given the timeframe for submissions is likely to be fairly tight – probably the end of November 2003 – it's worth beginning to think about a submission now. As a way of beginning it's probably worthwhile to visit the HIA gateway site to review some HIA manuals with a particular focus on the screening and scoping stages of HIA. If you have any questions about this initiative please contact Sarah Simpson or Ben Harris-Roxas at CHETRE on 9828 2230 to discuss.

Invitations to apply to be a NSW developmental HIA site will be sent out in the coming months

New Resources

websites

UK HIA Gateway
<http://www.hiagateway.org.uk>

WHO Health Impact Assessment Website
<http://www.who.int/hia/en/>

journal articles

Sim F & Mackie P (2003)
Health Impact Assessment: a science and art for public health, Public Health, 117(5):293-294, Sept.
Accessible via CIAP.

Milner S, Bailey C & Deans J (2003)
'Fit for Purpose' Health Impact Assessment: a realistic way forward, Public Health, 117(5):295-300, Sept.
Accessible via CIAP.

Joffe M (2003)
How Do We Make Health Impact Assessment Fit for Purpose?, Public Health, 117(5):301-304, Sept.
Accessible via CIAP.

Mindell J, Ison E & Joffe M (2003)
A Glossary for Health Impact Assessment, J Epidemiol Commun H, 57(9):647-651, Sept.

Krieger N et al (2003)
Assessing Health Impact Assessment: multidisciplinary and international perspectives, J Epidemiol Commun H, 57(9):659-662, Sept.

reports

Welsh Assembly Government (2003)
Health Impact Assessment and Government Policymaking in European Countries: a position report, Office of the Chief Medical Officer: Cardiff.
<http://www.hpw.wales.gov.uk/English/national/resourcehia.htm>

conferences

International Association for Impact Assessment Conference 2004
<http://www.iaia.org>



Milner, Bailey C & Deans 'Fit for Purpose' Health Impact Assessment article in the September issue of Public Health