

Health Impact Note Appendix

What is a health impact note?

Health notes are brief impartial documents that provide context relating to the health and wellness impacts of legislation (Enlund, 2022). They can be utilized to support community focused policy and provide insight for decision-making practices around the conditions that impact wellness.

Why is the consideration of health and wellness important during the policy making/evaluation process?

Policy determines resources which influence or directly impact a community's wellness. Identifying potential health and wellness risks early in the policy development process can provide an opportunity for lawmakers, government agencies, community organizations, and individuals to promote positive health outcomes and mitigate negative consequences (National Research Council (US) Committee on Health Impact Assessment, 1970).

How can I use this template to benefit me?

This template was created to serve as a guide for reviewing and identifying potential health and wellness impacts within legislative policy. Section one of the template focuses on identification and breakdown of the policy. This can aid in fostering an understanding of its intent, as well as identifying potential leverage points for health considerations. Section two of the template focuses on the identification of wellness impacts of the policy. Within those leverage points, a system-thinking approach can be implemented to analyze how a given policy/program may impact the conditions in which people live, work, age, play, and worship (WHO). Section three of the template provides a space to identify positions that support or oppose the policy. By considering these factors, as well as the following questions throughout this guide, one should be able to:

- a) identify key components of a bill/program in question,
- b) identify the health impacts of said legislative policy,
- c) observe the arguments for and against, and
- d) highlight ways to improve the legislative policy to be more well-oriented, if necessary

An Appendix was created as a compliment to this health impact note template. That Appendix can be found on the NOMHE webpage or at the end of the extended version of the Health Impact Note Template.

Appendix:

A: Helpful Definitions:

- **Community-based participatory research (CBPR):** a collaborative research method that involves community members, researchers, and organizations, in order to improve health and well-being within a given community (Collins, et al., 2018).
- **Health:** a complete state of physical, mental, and social well-being, and not just the absence of disease (WHO).
- **Health-span:** the amount of time a person is healthy, free from serious disease, and disability (*Health Span Definition*).
- **Health in All Policies (HiAP):** a framework for policy making that aims to improve health outcomes by integrating health considerations into policy decisions (*American Public Health Association*).
 - It is both a practical and collaborative approach that help governments make decisions to improve quality of life for all people. It recognizes that decisions about housing, transportation, education, land use and other complex topics have a determining effect on wellness.
- **Lifespan:** the total number of years that a person/organism lives (*Life span Definition*)
- **Political Determinants of Health (PDoH):** examines how political systems, policies, power structures (e.g. laws, resource allocation, social norms) shape health outcomes (2023).
- **Quality of life:** a person's perception of their life in the context of their culture, values, and goals (Teoli, 2023).
- **Social Determinants of Health (SDoH):** the non-medical factors that affect health outcomes, well-being, and quality of life, and can include, economic stability, education access and quality, healthcare access and quality, neighborhood and built environment, and social and community context (WHO).

Examples provided below:

-Economic stability: the state of one's income, employment status, and access to affordable housing.

-Education access and quality: being able to obtain education (high-school diploma and higher), and to have that education be of high quality.

-Healthcare access and quality: having health insurance coverage that is affordable, having access to healthcare services (i.e. primary and specialty care), and receiving quality care.

-Neighborhood and built environment: living in a place that is clean, safe with low crime rates, having access to parks and outdoor recreation areas, availability of health stores, and having access to quality transportation (i.e. public transit, biking or walking trails, safe roads and sidewalks).

-Social and community context: having social support networks, feeling connected to your community, a lack of discrimination and prejudice, and access to cultural and recreational activities.

- **Systems thinking**: a holistic approach to understanding and addressing health issues by considering the complex interactions between social, environmental, and behavioral elements, rather than just focusing on individual behaviors/disease (Thelen et al., 2023).
- **Well-being**: a positive state encompassing a person's physical, mental, emotional, and social health (WHO).

B: Guiding Questions to understand potential impacts relating to the Social Determinants of Health (SDoH):

Healthcare Access and Quality

Will their access to health care, or the quality of their health care be impacted?

Will more providers be made available?

Will the work of healthcare providers change in some way?

Is the cost of health care changing?

Is health insurance coverage going to change?

Education Access and Quality

Will their access to education, or the quality of their education be impacted?

Will more educators be made available?

Will educators start getting paid more, or paid less?

Is the curriculum changing in some way?

Is the legislative policy related to primary education (K-12th grade) or secondary education (college/university)?

Is the cost of education changing in some way?

Neighborhood and Built Environment

Is the neighborhood or built environment for a community going to be changed?

Are things being added or taken away from the community?

Social and Community Context

Will the social networks/community for that individual be impacted in some way?

Economic Stability

Will people lose their jobs?

Will more jobs be created?

Will people be paid more or less?

Will taxes be increased/decreased?

C: Additional Resources:

- Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity Website
 - <https://www.dhs.nv.gov/Programs/omhe/>
- Health Notes for Policy Makers Training by the UNR Larson Institute
 - <https://learn.makinghealthhappen.org/#/online-courses/f7b3b00b-1c68-4b2d-bdab-91d91f8aa53d>
- The PEW charitable trust produced a health note for Colorado Senate Bill 20-014, which addressed excused absences in public schools for behavioral health reasons. The example is linked below:
 - https://www.pew.org/-/media/assets/2020/02/co-sb20-014-health-note_final.pdf
- The PEW charitable trust produced a health note for Metro D.C. Amendment Act of 2021 Bill 24-0429
 - [Microsoft Word - Health Note DC B24-0429 Metro for DC Amendment Act of 2021](#)
- Policy Matters Ohio, a nonprofit think tank, developed a health note in 2020 for that state's HB 1 and SB 3, both of which addressed drug sentencing reform. The example is linked below:
 - <https://policymattersohio.org/research/health-note-drug-sentencing-reform/>
- The North Carolina Budget and Tax Center produced a health note in 2019 for HB 692 to examine the health effects on older adults of proposed changes to their homestead property tax liability. The example is linked below:
 - https://www.ncjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Health_note_school_construction_2020.pdf

- The Health Impact Project formed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in collaboration with The PEW charitable trust created a user guide to legislative health notes. The guide is linked below:
 - <https://www.pew.org/-/media/assets/2021/04/apractitionersguidereportfinal.pdf>

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