

Victorian Healthcare Association

Population Health Planning Framework

BUILDING CAPABILITY

Capacity building should be routinely incorporated as an important element of effective and sustainable population health planning practice.

“... capacity building increases the range of people, organisations, and communities who are able to address health problems and, in particular, problems that arise out of social inequity ...” (NSW Health 2001:1).

Capacity building is also a strategy for:

- increasing awareness of the need for a population health approach to planning
- engaging stakeholders and increasing community participation (see also ‘Working with community’ section)
- building leadership and champions of a social determinants approach, including beyond the health sector
- working more effectively by increasing integration and reducing duplication of effort
- enabling collaboration to address health issues and inequities

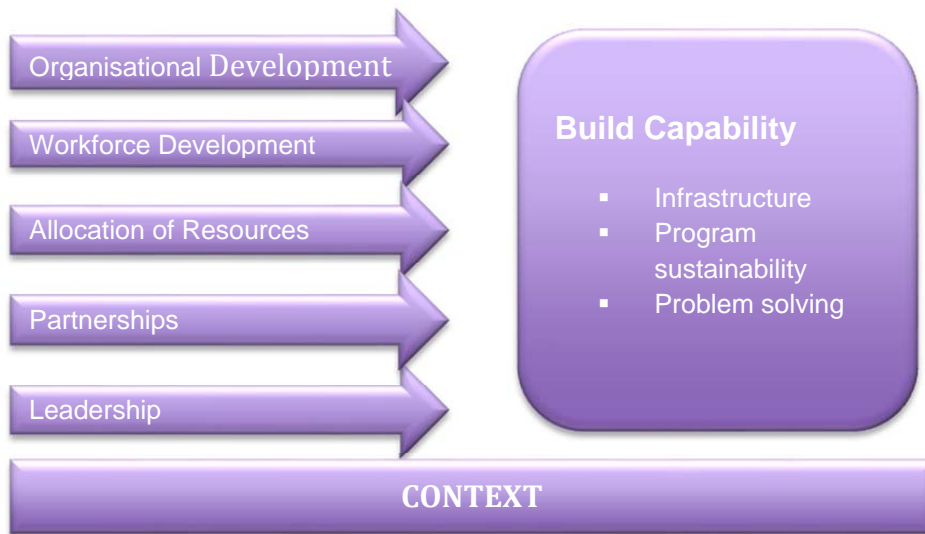
What is capacity building?

Capacity building is an approach to development that builds sustainability and independence (NSW Health 2001). While there are differing views on the purpose and processes of capacity building, it typically involves developing sustainable skills, organisational structures, resources, and commitment. (Hawe et al: 2000).

In a population health approach to planning context, capacity building activities can include canvassing the opportunities for a social determinants approach, advocacy, developing skills, supporting policy development, fostering senior management support, guiding the establishment of partnerships, or contributing to organizational planning. This means that capacity building activities may target individuals, groups, teams, organisations, interorganisational partnerships or communities (NSW Health 2001).

A capacity building framework

The NSW Health Department developed ‘A Framework for Building Capacity to Improve Health’ (see diagram below). This framework is commonly used in Victorian preventive and health promotion programs, and may also be applied for population health planning.



Capacity building goals

The NSW capacity building framework identifies three possible outcomes (or goals) of capacity building practice: building infrastructure, sustainability, and problem solving. All have relevance for population health planning.

Before identifying particular strategies, the leadership team needs to identify capacity building goals. These may include:

- developing an infrastructure to support population health planning and activity
- ensuring sustainability of the population health approach to planning in the area
- enhancing issue identification and problem-solving capacities

Clarifying the intent makes it more likely that leaders and planners will develop achievable capacity building goals, objectives, and relevant strategies (NSW Health, 2001).

Capacity building strategies

The NSW capacity building framework emphasises five key action areas:

- partnerships
- leadership
- organisational change
- workforce development
- resource allocation

Leadership and partnerships underpin the other three action areas, and have been discussed in detail as guiding principles within this toolbox.

The context in which population health planning occurs has implications for deciding on particular strategies for capacity building. (For further information on the planning context, refer to Step 2:

Analyse the planning context.)

Examples of capacity building activities for population health planning are given below. They are listed under the key action areas of organisational development, workforce development, and resource allocation. Examples of strategies for building leadership and partnerships are listed in the ‘Building leadership’ and ‘Working in partnership’ sections.

Capacity building strategies relevant for population health planning

Examples of organisational development strategies	
Policies and strategic plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and enhance opportunities to incorporate population health approaches to planning into the core business of an organisation Develop policies that ensure appropriate proportion of funds are allocated to support agreed area based population health actions
Organisational management structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish population health positions or responsibilities within management structures Incorporate population health planning and action into performance agreements, as key performance indicators, and in job descriptions at all levels of the organisation Monitor work practices to ensure appropriate time is allocated to population health planning activities
Management support and commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop systems to support organizational commitment to population health planning Develop mainstream line management positions and accountabilities for population health planning within the organisation Involve senior managers in steering committees for population health planning and projects
Recognition and reward systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge achievements, develop formal feedback and acknowledgement systems for those involved in population

	<p>health planning and action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate population health planning awards into mainstream award schemes across multiple sectors
Information systems- monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop systems that accurately identify the amount and type of population health planning and implementation activity undertaken by the organisation/staff Develop and utilise appropriate evaluation strategies Incorporate population health planning and action into staff appraisal processes
Quality improvement systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise best practice models, toolkits and guidelines for population health planning (eg, VHA Population Health Toolkit, Public Health Agency of Canada,2001)
Informal organizational culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to encourage attitudes that support a population health approach, including improving health for whole populations, and a social determinants and health equity approach

Adapted from “A Framework for Building Capacity to Improve Health” (NSW Health, 2001)

Examples of workplace development strategies	
Workplace learning including incidental and informal learning opportunities	<p>Provide opportunities for staff at all levels, organisations from multiple sectors, and the community, to learn about social determinants of health and population health planning. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population health planning committees Population health planning seeding grants Mentoring programs Secondments and job rotations Planning resources to support self-directed learning (eg, VHA Population Health Learning Module: Developing a Common Understanding; VHA Population Health Planning Framework and Toolkit) Information sharing initiatives Professional practice in planning and implementing population health projects
Course development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of population health short courses (eg, University of Melbourne)

	<p>Short Course)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop skills-based courses, (eg, data analysis) via workshops, seminars, conferences, in-service training Advocate for the incorporation of competency based standards into population health courses for professionals
Professional development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote formal education opportunities relevant to population health
Education – undergraduate and post graduate studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where appropriate, support incorporation of population health planning into graduate and post graduate studies
Professional support and supervision systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish formal supervision or support arrangements for population health work (1:1 or group, internal or external) Establish peer support systems or networks for people working on similar population health planning issues Provide access to specialist advice and support through networks and consultancies (eg, for data analysis, evaluation)
Performance management systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate population health planning work into performance appraisal systems Develop specific performance management guidelines for population health work that can be shared with organisations involved in population

Adapted from “A Framework for Building Capacity to Improve Health” (NSW Health, 2001)

Financial resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby for an appropriate proportion of an organisation’s budget to be allocated to population health planning and implementation activities Apply for short and long term funding opportunities for special projects Develop a seeding grant program Actively disseminate and promote information about funding opportunities to partners (and potential partners) relevant to population health
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advocate for funding models, cycles, and agreements that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ support pooling of resources around shared actions ○ have timeframes that support implementation of programs and evaluation of health outcomes over the longer term ○ include improved health outcomes and ○ reduction in health inequities, (as opposed solely to outputs)
Human resources development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment of 'core' population health planning responsibilities/positions to support planning and implementation ▪ Lobby for a fixed percentage of staff time to be devoted to population health planning and action ▪ Build a base of advocates/ champions for population health planning, particularly at senior management levels
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure availability and use of information to support population health action (eg, population health data,databases, literature reviews, information about best practice) ▪ Negotiate access to population health planning data to be shared with partners ▪ Advocate for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the collection of population health planning data ○ the collection of sub-LGA level data ○ disaggregated data for specific population groups ○ accessible data repositories that collate data from multiple sources and allow for increased overlay of data sets ○ increased collection, mapping and sharing of locally collected time-series data
Specialist advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure access to expertise when required (eg, data analysts, research and evaluation, planning,media and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> marketing, training) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide 'no cost' or 'low cost' access to population health planning skills development courses for potential partners, including from other/non-health sectors
Decision making tools and models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise best practice models, toolkits, and guidelines for population health planning (eg, VHA Population Health Toolkit, Public Health Agency of Canada, 2001)
Administrative and physical resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the availability of administrative support, equipment, meeting room hire etc

Adapted from "A Framework for Building Capacity to Improve Health" (NSW Health, 2001)

Resources

A Framework for Building Capacity to Improve Health (NSW Health, 2001)

Indicators to help with capacity building in health promotion (NSW Health, 2000)

Victorian Government Department of Health – Integrated Health Promotion Resource Kit

Hawe P, King L, Noort M, Jordens C, Lloyd B (2000) Indicators to Help with Capacity Building in Health Promotion, NSW Health Department, Sydney

Public Health Agency of Canada (2001) The population health template: Key elements and actions that define a population health approach. Available at <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/pdf/discussion-eng.pdf> [verified 18 May 2012]

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Further reading

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Health Promotion Strategies Unit (1999) A framework for building capacity to improve health, NSW Health, Sydney

National Public Health Partnership (2000) A Planning Framework for Public Health Practice, Melbourne, Australia. Available at <http://www.nphp.gov.au/publications/phpractice/planfrwk.pdf> [verified 18 May 2012]

NSW Health (1997) Capacity Building Framework, NSW Health Department, Sydney

Public Health Agency of Canada (2001) The population health template working tool. Available at http://www.phacaspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/pdf/template_tool-eng.pdf [verified 18 May 2012]



Public Health Agency of Canada (2012) What is a population health approach? Available at <http://www.phacaspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/approach-approche/index-eng.php> [verified 18 May 2012]

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Public Health Agency of Canada (2011) 'What makes Canadians healthy or unhealthy?' Available at www.phacaspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/determinants/determinants-eng.php#income [Verified 23 May 2012]

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Victorian Healthcare Association (2010) 'Population health approaches to planning.' (VHA and Monash University:Melbourne)