



A Guide to Health Impact Assessments for Nonprofit Organizations

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Introduction to Health Impact Assessments

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a systematic process consisting of multiple steps conducted to understand the potential health impacts of a proposed project, policy, plan, procedure, or program (these terms are used interchangeably throughout this document). The goal of an HIA is to understand the potential health impacts of a project and provide recommendations for how to maximize positive health impacts and minimize negative ones. An HIA is a neutral process and therefore not a tool used to advocate for a predetermined outcome—it is simply a way to understand the possible implications of the project. HIAs also seek to understand how these health impacts differentially affect groups within the population.



SPOTLIGHT ON EQUITY

According to the Society of Practitioners of Health Impact Assessment (SOPHIA), an HIA “assesses the distribution of potential impacts from a proposal on the whole population, with particular attention to how the proposal will affect populations that face inequities and significant barriers to health and wellbeing (in terms of age, gender, ethnic background, socio-economic status, or other factors).”

An HIA is a tool that can be used to address equity and environmental justice concerns related to a decision that may cause health impacts. Equity is a guiding value of any HIA, and it should be considered throughout the entire HIA process rather than as an individual portion of, or separate process from, the HIA. HIAs should consider the distribution of the health impacts among different segments of the population and determine who would be disproportionately impacted.



Another way equity can be considered in HIAs is by considering the cumulative impacts or effects a given project would lead to. This means considering the decision within the current context of the community. For example, if a new facility that emits air pollutants is being considered, consideration must be given to whether there are already emitting facilities that impact

the same population and what the result of adding more pollution would be, rather than considering just the potential impacts of the new facility on its own.

Equity-specific resources:

- [How to Advance Equity through Health Impact Assessments](#) (SOPHIA) - Includes an equity planning tool and an equity evaluation tool
- [Communicating About Equity in Health Impact Assessments: A Guide for Practitioners](#) (SOPHIA)
- [Promoting Health Equity through the Practice of Health Impact Assessment](#)

WHY USE AN HIA?

An HIA may be used to:

- Identify prospective impacts before a decision is made
- Provide evidence-based strategies and recommendations
- Support transparency, inclusion, and democracy in the decision-making process
- Focus on quality of life (rather than economic) impacts
- Promote health, equity, and justice
- Inform a discussion on trade-offs

Some of the benefits of an HIA include that it brings together community members (community groups, business owners, policymakers), it considers many types of influences on health (social, economic, environmental), and it acknowledges trade-offs of choices while recommending ways to bring about the most benefit and the least harm.

WHEN SHOULD AN HIA BE DONE?

In a broad sense, it is appropriate to conduct an HIA for any potential change that could impact the health of a population or community. HIAs are used to understand the potential implications for the health of proposed policies, programs, and projects. These range widely in geographic scale (local, state, national, international) and sector (city planning, air quality, built environment, food accessibility, transportation, housing, and more). Although an HIA could be conducted on many policies, projects, plans, and programs, it is not possible or necessary to always do an HIA, and the screening phase of an HIA helps you determine whether to undertake an HIA for a specific decision. HIAs are conducted to understand the future implications of a policy decision and so cannot be used to analyze policy action taken in the past.

WHO CONDUCTS AN HIA?

Government agencies, academic institutions, and nonprofit organizations conduct most HIAs. Community organizations may also lead HIAs if they receive training or guidance from experienced HIA practitioners. It is common for multiple entities to partner in conducting an HIA and for that to include partners from different sectors, including government, nonprofits, and community organizations.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL OUTCOMES OF AN HIA?

There are a number of possible outcomes to conducting an HIA and developing a final HIA report. An HIA can:

- **Provide useful information** about potential health impacts and recommendations to maximize positive and minimize negative health impacts.
- **Impact decisions** (including changes to policy/project/program/plan), the impact of which could be very large (e.g., the project is stopped) or much smaller (e.g., tweaks to policy language or project plan).
- **Lead to changes to institutional decision-making practices**, especially when it comes to routinely considering health in these practices.
- **Establish or strengthen relationships** between stakeholders, including community members/groups, government agencies, and organizations.
- **Inform decision-makers and community members** about how health can be impacted by policies/projects/programs in non-health sectors.



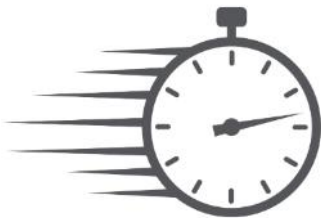
Scale of the HIA & Implications for Resources Needed

Not all HIAs are done on the same scale. Some situations allow for a more comprehensive approach while others do not. This decision will depend on a community's resources, time, or capacity. Below is a short description of each of the three scales of HIA typically conducted, from least to most comprehensive, including some guiding parameters (time to complete, number of health impacts included, types of activities/assessment, and extent of community participation).

Health impacts are defined as the effects that a proposed policy, program, project, or development may have on the health of individuals, communities, or populations. These impacts can be both positive and negative, direct or indirect, and can affect various aspects of health. A few of the most considered health impacts in HIAs include physical health, access to healthcare or health services, healthy behaviors, occupational health, community well-being, and environmental health. Health impacts and outcomes can be further specified under any of these categories, depending on what the HIA initially sets out to investigate.

The scales of HIA are:

RAPID



A rapid HIA is the shortest version of an HIA that meets the minimum elements outlined by SOPHIA. It takes approximately four to five weeks to complete and consists of a literature review, limited data collection, and community engagement, often in the form of small stakeholder interviews and meetings. This scale of an HIA can accommodate consideration of up to three health impacts.

Example: [Dover, Delaware, Rapid Health Impact Assessment](#)

INTERMEDIATE



An intermediate HIA takes approximately six months to complete and should consider between three and seven health impacts. This scale of HIA includes primary data collection and should incorporate both qualitative and quantitative data. At this scale, the formation of a community advisory board to guide the process as part of the stakeholder and community engagement strategy is also recommended.

Example: [Assessing Air Quality and Public Health Benefits of New York City's Climate Action Plans](#)

COMPREHENSIVE



A comprehensive HIA takes the longest time and allows for the most extensive community and stakeholder participation. This process can take approximately six months to one year or more and, because of this, it should only be considered when the decision-making timeline allows for this long period of study. When a comprehensive HIA can be done, it includes all the parameters outlined in an intermediate HIA, but it also allows for consideration of as many different health impacts as possible and for a deeper dive into the community's experience.

Example: [Kingsbury Bay-Grassy Point Habitat Restoration Project: A health impact assessment-presentation](#)

Note: Another type of HIA is referred to as a desk-based HIA, but this type of HIA is not recommended because it does not include a stakeholder engagement component and therefore does not meet SOPHIA's minimum elements and practice standards (MEPS).

The scale of an HIA also has significant implications for the cost and other resources necessary to complete the HIA. The resources needed will also depend on other factors, such as the location, methodology, data collection, and stakeholder engagement activities. If your budget is predetermined, you will have to design your HIA with this in mind, which could have a big impact on the scale of HIA you are able to conduct, the extent of stakeholder participation, the type of activities you can do to collect data, and other elements. For reference, SOPHIA reported in 2015 that "projects with restricted budgets or timelines" cost under \$75,000, while "projects with larger budgets or longer timelines" cost over \$75,000. It is also important to note that the costs required for stakeholder participation are often underestimated.

TABLE 2

The four levels and their resource and practice implications (adapted from¹¹):
Resources and practice guide to each level of depth in HIA

DESK BASED	RAPID	INTERMEDIATE	COMPREHENSIVE
2-6 weeks for one person full time ¹ .	6 to 12 weeks for one person full time.	12 weeks to 6 months for one person full time.	6 to 12 months for one person full time.
Provides a broad overview of potential health impacts.	Provides a more detailed overview of potential health impacts.	Provides a more thorough assessment of potential health impacts, and more detail on specific predicted impacts.	Provides a comprehensive assessment of potential health impacts.
Could be used where time and resources are limited.	Could be used where time and resources are limited.	Requires significant time and resources.	Requires significant time and resources.
Is an 'off the shelf' exercise based on collecting and analysing existing accessible data.	Involves collecting and analysing existing data with limited input from experts and key stakeholders	Involves collecting and analysing existing data as well as gathering new qualitative data from stakeholders and key informants.	Involves collecting and analysing data from multiple sources (qualitative and quantitative)
Activities include accessing off the shelf resources and synthesising and appraising information.	Activities include accessing resources, hosting and supporting meetings, and synthesising and appraising information. If capacity does not exist in-house, consideration should be given to commissioning external assessors.	Activities include accessing resources, hosting and supporting meetings, identifying stakeholders and key informants, gathering and analysing qualitative and quantitative data, and synthesising and appraising information. If capacity does not exist in-house, consideration should be given to commissioning external assessors.	Activities include accessing resources, hosting and supporting meetings, identifying stakeholders and key informants, gathering and analysing qualitative and quantitative data, and synthesising and appraising information. If capacity does not exist in-house, consideration should be given to commissioning external assessors.

LESS IMPACTS

MORE IMPACTS

*The time involved will vary depending on the number of people actively involved in undertaking HIA tasks. For example a comprehensive assessment may take a team of four people three months to complete.

TABLE 3

Level of HIA and number and depth of impacts to assess:

DESK BASED	RAPID	INTERMEDIATE	COMPREHENSIVE
No more than three impacts, assessed in less detail	No more than three impacts, assessed in more detail	Three to ten impacts, assessed in detail	All potential impacts, assessed in detail
Provides a broad overview of potential health impacts	Provides a more detailed overview of potential health impacts	Provides a more thorough assessment of potential health impacts, and more detail on specific predicted impacts	Provides a comprehensive assessment of potential health impacts

Source: University of New South Wales Research Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity: [Health Impact Assessment: A Practical Guide](#)

RESOURCES ON COSTS & FUNDING

- [Building Regional Capacity for Health Impact Assessment Mapping Regional Resources](#)
- [Stakeholder Engagement: Planning and Budget Resource](#)
 - Discussions for each of four types of stakeholder engagement (meetings, focus groups, interviews, and surveys), including why to use that engagement, questions and costs to consider, and cost-saving strategies as well as a budget worksheet.
- Potential Funding Sources

Data suggests that funding for not only HIAs, but public health initiatives as a whole, [has decreased substantially since 2010](#), and likely since well before then. As such, we recommend approaching funders and grantmaking organizations funding wide-ranging health initiatives that could include an HIA instead of looking for direct HIA funding. Some organizations to consider that have historically supported HIA and HIA-related work are:

- State, county, and city or municipal governments
- [CDC National Center for Environmental Health, Healthy Communities Design Initiative](#)
- Federal government agencies (via www.grants.gov; keyword search “health impact assessment” and filter by location)
- Local academic institutions, which at times fund community entities for health impact work
- [Association of State and Territorial Health Officials \(ASTHO\)](#)
- [National Association for County and City Health Officials \(NACHHO\)](#)
- [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#)
- [Health Impact Fund](#)
- [The Cigna Group](#)
- [The National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#)
- [National Network of Public Health Institutes \(NNPHI\)](#)
- [American Public Health Association \(APHA\) Public Health Funder Network](#)
- [Public Health Institute](#)
- [Pew Charitable Trusts](#)
- [W.K. Kellogg Foundation](#)
- [Kresge Foundation](#)[Kaiser Family Foundation](#)

Phases of HIAs

The HIA process involves multiple components, detailed below. In recent years, the language has shifted from “steps” to “phases” to emphasize that conducting an HIA is an iterative process and previous phases may be revisited as the process proceeds.

SCREENING



Purpose: Determine if the HIA should be conducted for the decision under consideration

Activities: Examine if the HIA is feasible (enough time, resources, and staff to complete it) and if it will add value (e.g., Is the decision likely to have an impact on health, are there stakeholder concerns, or will the HIA provide new information?)

Outcome: Decision on whether to proceed with the HIA

SCOPING



Purpose: Design the HIA

Activities: Determine goals, geographic range, timeframe (of HIA and decision), health impacts to consider, impacted populations, and any other relevant parameters. Based on all of this, what scale of HIA should be done?

Outcomes: Goals of HIA, description of impacted population and geography, research questions, list of participants and their roles/responsibilities, draft health impact pathways (logic model)

ASSESSMENT & RECOMMENDATIONS



Purpose: Assess and make a plan to address predicted health impacts

Activities: Use data to predict the health outcomes of the decision, which can include conducting a literature review, compiling and reviewing existing evidence, looking at similar projects, and engaging with community members and other stakeholders. Note: The exact methodology you use will depend on your question.

Outcome: Characterization of the health impacts (likelihood, direction, magnitude, severity, distribution) of the decision

REPORTING & DISSEMINATION



Purpose: Communicate results and recommendations to decision-makers and the community

Activities: Create a final report (see MEPS for what to include), disseminate the findings and recommendations of the HIA to the community and stakeholders

Outcome: Findings and recommendations of the HIA are available to the public/relevant stakeholders

MONITORING & EVALUATION



Purpose: Create sustainability and improvements beyond the initial HIA period

Activities: Process evaluation of the HIA (outcome and impact evaluations also, if possible); develop and implement a monitoring strategy for surveillance of outcomes, effectiveness of recommendations, and new recommendations

Outcome: Evaluation of the HIA process and improvements for the HIA team or process for use in the future; sustained relevance of the recommendations and relationships formed through the HIA process

Three Types of Evaluation

There are three different types of evaluation that can be conducted for any HIA: *process*, *outcome*, and *impact*. Each type of evaluation serves to answer different questions that will either help to improve future HIAs or help understand the influence and effect of the HIA being evaluated.

- **Process:** Did we accomplish our goals? Did we use our resources well? Were we inclusive
Example: [Atlanta \(Georgia\) Beltline Health Impact Assessment](#)
In the process evaluation of an HIA conducted for a proposed urban redevelopment project, the assessment team aimed to analyze whether they accomplished their goals efficiently and inclusively. They utilized surveys and stakeholder feedback sessions to assess the involvement of diverse community groups in the decision-making process. The evaluation team included efforts to stay in contact with decision makers for a 25-year implementation timeline after project completion, which is included as part of the ongoing evaluation efforts of the HIA.
- **Outcome:** What new partnerships were formed? Did predicted immediate health impacts occur? How well were community concerns incorporated into the decision? Is there any ongoing community involvement?
Example: [Safe Streets for Seniors \(New York City Department of Transportation\)](#)
In an outcome evaluation of an HIA focused on transportation infrastructure and pedestrian safety, the assessment aimed to measure the change in pedestrian injury and fatality. The assessment team tracked efforts such as high visibility crosswalks, curb repair, and considerations for elderly pedestrians as part of their evaluation efforts. The evaluation revealed that pedestrian injuries and fatalities decreased as much as 60% in some of the campaign areas.
- **Impact:** How many of the recommendations were adopted? How many community members can remain engaged? Did the process change because of the HIA? Were health considerations institutionalized in any process change?
Example: [East Bay Greenway Health Impact Assessment \(San Francisco\)](#)
An HIA was conducted to assess the potential health impacts of proposed transportation policies aiming to expand bike lanes and improve pedestrian infrastructure in the city center. The HIA focused on evaluating the impact of the HIA on the decision-making process and subsequent policy changes. The impact evaluation determined that 90% of policy recommendations were adopted and that city officials significantly adjusted their decision-making process throughout the project. HIAs also became mandatory for other city planning projects in the wake of this project.

SOPHIA HIA HOW-TO SERIES AND OTHER RELEVANT RECORDINGS

[Health Impact Assessment Overview webinar](#) (May 2023)

[HIA How To: Screening and Scoping](#) (June 2023)

[HIA How To: Designing the Assessment Phase](#) (July 2023)

[HIA How To: Recommendations and Reporting](#) (August 2023)

[Participation, Power, and Health Impact Assessment: Strategies for Health Equity](#) (June 2023)

[A Research Agenda for HIA](#) (December 2023)

[SOPHIA's HiAP Implementation Guide](#) (December 2023)

Community Participation & Stakeholder Engagement

Community participation and stakeholder engagement is typically one of the most challenging parts of conducting an HIA, and opinions have differed on its value and best practices. Ensuring that participation is meaningful and reflective of the entire affected population, especially those who are most disproportionately affected, is a challenging task and is often in tension with the timeline available to conduct an HIA. This topic requires special attention and consideration before embarking on an HIA.

COMMON STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

There are a number of activities stakeholders commonly engage in:

- Surveys
- Public meetings (one example is the three-meeting process, as outlined in [Health impact assessment and community involvement in land remediation decisions](#))
- Focus groups or small group interviews
- Community workshop(s)
- Advisory/steering committee leadership

These are some of the most common and general types of stakeholder engagement activities, but many more options are possible (see page 11 of [Guidance and Best Practices for Stakeholder Participation in HIA](#)).

STAKEHOLDERS DEFINED

The SOPHIA resource [Guidance and Best Practices for Stakeholder Participation in HIA](#) defines stakeholders as “individuals or organizations who stand to gain or lose from a decision or process,” including people who “are affected by the prospective change, have an interest in the health impacts of the policy or project under consideration because of their position, have an active or passive influence on the decision-making and implementation process of the project or policy under construction, or have an economic or business interest in the outcome of the decision.” This definition can be used to figure out who stakeholders are for your specific HIA context, but some examples of common stakeholder categories include community-based organizations, residents, service providers, elected officials, small businesses, industry, developers and big businesses, public agencies, advocacy organizations, academic, learning and research institutions, and HIA consultant organizations. It is important to have participation from a diverse set of stakeholders representing many different interests.

BENEFITS OF STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Communities stand to benefit from stakeholder participation in an HIA in various ways. Stakeholder engagement in HIAs can allow communities to:

- Acquire a better understanding of community concerns about health and the environment, currently and historically
- Identify equity issues
- Increase transparency
- Co-create recommendations
- Increase support and accountability for recommendations
- Increase community capacity to participate in a decision that impacts individuals
- Increase accuracy and value of the HIA
- Incorporate more forms of evidence in policymaking

BEST PRACTICES

The SOPHIA Guidance and Best Practices for Stakeholder Engagement in Health Impact Assessments is a great resource to learn more about stakeholder participation, including best practices. Table 3 (below) summarizes the essential and recommended practice standards for stakeholder engagement during each phase of the HIA process.

Table 3: North American HIA Practice Standards Relating to Stakeholder Participation by HIA Stage⁸

HIA Standards for Practitioners		Section
Process Oversight: <i>Intended to be used throughout all the stages of the HIA</i>		
Essential	▪ Accept and utilize diverse stakeholder input.	1.5
Recommended	▪ Have a specific engagement and participation approach that utilizes available participatory or <i>deliberative methods</i> suitable to the needs of stakeholders and context	1.6
Screening Stage: <i>Deciding whether an HIA is needed, feasible, and relevant</i>		
Essential	▪ Understand stakeholder concerns in order to determine potential health effects. ▪ Identify and notify stakeholders of decision to conduct a HIA.	2.2.3 2.3
Recommended	▪ Identify stakeholders to potentially partner with a HIA. ▪ Seek diverse stakeholder participation in screening the target policy or HIA plan.	
Scoping Stage: <i>Deciding which health impacts to evaluate and evaluation methodology</i>		
Essential	▪ Use input from multiple perspectives to inform <i>pathways</i> (between the policy, plan or project and key health outcomes). Use multiple avenues to solicit input (from stakeholders, affected communities, decision makers). ▪ Ensure a mechanism to incorporate new feedback from stakeholders on the scope of the HIA.	3.1 3.7
Recommended	▪ Work with diverse stakeholders to prioritize key elements of analysis. ▪ Seek feedback from stakeholders on HIA scope.	
Assessment Stage: <i>Using data, research, and analysis to determine the magnitude and direction of potential health impacts</i>		
Essential	▪ Use local knowledge as part of the evidence base.	4.2.1 4.2.4
Recommended	▪ Work to engage all stakeholders in data collection. ▪ Seek feedback from stakeholders on draft findings.	
Recommendations: <i>Providing recommendations to manage the identified health impacts and improve health conditions</i>		
Essential	▪ Use expert guidance to ensure recommendations reflect effective practices.	5.2
Recommended	▪ Work with community and other stakeholders to identify and prioritize recommendations. ▪ Seek input on recommendations.	
Reporting & Communication: <i>Sharing the results, recommendations</i>		
Essential	▪ Summarize primary findings and recommendations to allow for stakeholder understanding, evaluation, and response. ▪ Document stakeholder participation in the full report. ▪ Make an inclusive accounting of stakeholder values when determining recommendations. ▪ Allow for, and formally respond to, critical review from stakeholders, and make the report publicly accessible.	6.2 6.3 6.5 6.6-7
Recommended	▪ Seek diverse input on draft final report. ▪ Work with stakeholders to build their capacity to understand and articulate the findings of the HIA.	
Monitoring: <i>Tracking how the HIA affects the decision and its outcomes</i>		
Essential	▪ Plan should address reporting outcomes to decision makers. ▪ Monitoring methods and results should be made available to the public.	7.2 7.4
Recommended	▪ Involve interested stakeholders in monitoring outcomes.	

Best Practices for Stakeholder Participation in Health Impact Assessments – March 2012
Stakeholder Participation Working Group of the 2010 HIA in the Americas Workshop

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Source: [Guidance and Best Practices for Stakeholder Participation in Health Impact Assessments](#)

The document also includes a sample participation guide (Table 4) detailing the opportunities for stakeholder participation in each phase of the HIA process, including the tasks related to stakeholder participation, methods of ensuring participation, potential achievements, when it works best, and sample tools. This guide also includes information on various factors that influence stakeholder participation (e.g., time and resources constraints, equity, transparency, and responsiveness) and how they can impact your participation plan (Table 5), as well as pitfalls or mistakes that can happen during stakeholder engagement and possible solutions to avoid them (Table 6). The guide also includes four examples of successful stakeholder engagement in HIAs and a worksheet for stakeholder analysis (page 47).

RESOURCES ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- [Guidance and Best Practices for Stakeholder Participation in Health Impact Assessments](#)
- [Stakeholder Engagement: Planning and Budget Resource](#)
 - Discussions on each of the four types of stakeholder engagement (meetings, focus groups, interviews, and surveys), including why to use it, questions and costs to consider, cost-saving strategies, and a budget worksheet.
 - [Participation, Power, and HIA: Strategies for Health Equity webinar](#) (SOPHIA webinar, recorded June 2023)
 - [Stakeholder Engagement Video Series](#) (SOPHIA)
 - More resources about stakeholder engagement: <https://hiasociety.org/Stakeholder-Engagement-Tools-&-Materials>

Success Factors & Challenges

Some studies have shown that if certain factors are included in an HIA, there is an increased likelihood of the HIA being successful. Striving to include these factors in your HIA and dedicating enough time and resources to do them well could increase the chances of reaching the goals of your HIA. These studies also found some common challenges in conducting HIAs. Understanding these common challenges before beginning your HIA can help you plan your HIA in such a way as to avoid problematic issues to the extent possible, enabling you to be prepared to address challenges that do come up.



FACTORS THAT INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS

A number of factors increase the likelihood of HIA success:

- Conduct screening: Make sure an HIA is the right tool for the context; only choose targets for which an HIA makes sense.
- Ensure there is expertise in necessary areas on the HIA team (content, decision-making, project management, stakeholder engagement).
- Engage key stakeholders and decision-makers throughout the process.
- Make clear, actionable, and realistic recommendations.
- Emphasize communication tailored to each audience and delivered at the right time.
- Build credibility for the HIA with an evidence-based approach and stakeholder input.

COMMON CHALLENGES

Common challenges to successful HIAs include:

- Properly estimating the time, effort, and resources required
- Adequately engaging stakeholders and decision makers
- Understanding the timing and working at the speed of decision making; the HIA must be developed enough to assess health impacts but completed early enough to still influence decisions
- Finding continuity during political administration changes/turnover
- Access to quality data, relevant to the HIA; filling gaps in evidence
- Equity: consistent and meaningful participation of vulnerable populations
- Ensuring attention is given to recommendations, including follow-up and implementation
- Gauging adequate training for participants (public health professionals, community members, decision-makers)

RESOURCES ON SUCCESS FACTORS AND CHALLENGES

- [An evaluation of health impact assessments in the United States, 2011-2014 \(2015\)](#)
- [Growing the field of health impact assessment in the United States: an agenda for research and practice](#)

HIAs in the Oil & Gas Sector

EHP Information and Educational Resources

- [Health Risks from Shale Gas Waste](#)
- [Risks to Water from Shale Gas Development](#)
- [Episodic Air Pollution Exposures and Shale Gas Development](#)

Partner Organization Resources

- [Compendium of Scientific, Medical, and Media Findings Demonstrating Risks and Harms of Fracking and Associated Gas and Oil Infrastructure, Ninth Edition, October 19, 2023](#)
(Physicians for Social Responsibility)

Completed HIA Examples in the Oil & Gas Sector

- **Marcellus Shale:** [The Importance of Public Health Agency Independence: Marcellus Shale Gas Drilling in Pennsylvania](#)

This health impact assessment offers an overview of the potential health impacts of shale gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale. The findings of the impact assessment include an uncovered need for further policy action to actively protect resident health. The author also assessed a tight tie between government and oil and gas development companies, citing this partnership as a risk to public health.

- **Alberta:** [Oil Sands Development: A Health Risk Worth Taking?](#)

This health impact assessment provides an overview of the global impact of oil sands, including the release of greenhouse gases resulting from gas extraction. These outcomes are put into context of potential health exposures to nearby residents and the environment globally.

- **Colorado:** [The Health Impact Assessment for Battlement Mesa, Garfield County, Colorado](#)

This health impact assessment uses surveys and storytelling to understand the potential impacts of oil and gas development on a relatively smaller municipality. The assessment outlines in detail the process of building the HIA and is a good example of how to conduct such an assessment at a municipal-level scale.

- **General:** [The Use of Health Impact Assessment for a Community Undergoing Natural Gas Development](#)

Additional Resources

Guidelines

Many guidelines on HIA practice are available. While not an exhaustive list, the documents listed below are often referenced, and many were used in the making of this guide.

- [Health Impact Assessment: A Guide for Practice](#) (Health Impact Partners, 2011)
- [Minimum Elements and Practice Standards](#) (MEPS) (SOPHIA, updated in 2022)
- [The Merseyside Guidelines for HIA](#) (International Health IMPACT Assessment Consortium, 2001)
- [Equity-Focused HIA Framework](#) (Australian Collaboration for Health Equity Impact Assessment, 2004)
- [HIA: Concepts and Guidelines for the Americas](#) (WHO & PAHO, 2013)
- [HIA Summary Guide](#) (Human Impact Partners, 2014)
- [Rapid Health Impact Assessment Toolkit](#) (Design for Health – University of Minnesota, 2008)
- [SOPHIA Guide for Health in All Policies \(HiAP\) Implementation](#) (SOPHIA, 2023)

[SOPHIA \(Society of Practitioners of Health Impact Assessment\)](#)

SOPHIA is an international membership organization of HIA practitioners formed in 2011. Its mission is to provide leadership and promote excellence in the practice of health impact assessments and health in all policies. There are many resources free to anyone, as well as additional benefits available by becoming a member. See below for more information and check out their website for the most up-to-date information and many, many resources!

Free resources

- [Chronicles of Health Impact Assessment](#) (CHIA) – open access journal
- [List of HIA Publications](#)
- [Model HIA Reports](#)
- [Recorded Webinars & Previous Events](#)
 - How-to series (currently ongoing) that walks through how to conduct the various stages on an HIA
 - [HIA Practitioner Stories](#)

Membership

- Cost: See SOPHIA page on [membership pricing](#)
- Opportunity to join [working groups](#)
- Benefits
 - Quarterly newsletter
 - Mentorship opportunities
 - Member directory of HIA practitioners
 - Member-only events
 - Advertising opportunities

HIA DATABASES

Pew Database

- Includes HIAs and other resources like tools, datasets, guides, and more
- Can filter by resource type, sectors, topic areas, drivers of health, states and territories, geographic scope, decision-making levels, community types, organization types, affected populations, document languages, research methods, outcome statement, funding source, and status

PubMed

- A database that contains academic literature pertaining to health-related topics. It is important to note that most HIAs are not published as academic papers, but some have been, and there have been various academic studies of HIAs to try to understand what works well and what does not.
- HIA MeSH Term: MeSH terms are used in PubMed to index articles based on the topics they cover. To use a MeSH term when searching in PubMed, add [MeSH] after the term to have articles indexed with this word or phrase appear in the search. (Example: "Health Impact Assessment"[MeSH])

OTHER HELPFUL LINKS (MISCELLANEOUS)

- [The Health Impact Assessment \(HIA\) Resource and Tool Compilation: A Comprehensive Toolkit for New and Experienced HIA Practitioners in the U.S.](#) (EPA)
 - [Health Impact Assessment Resources](#) (CDC)
 - Compiled training resources: <https://bephec.org/academic-training-in-health-impact-assessment/>

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