Creating space:

Enabling organizational capacity for health equity in environmental public health

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Conflict of Interest Disclosure

No conflict of interests to declare.
National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health

Our audience
- Environmental health practitioners and policymakers

Our work
- Synthesize, translate, and facilitate exchange of knowledge
- Identify gaps in research and practice knowledge
- Build capacity through networks

Our focus
Environmental health practice, programs, & policy in Canada
National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health

Our focus: Social conditions that influence health & narrowing the gap between the least and most healthy

Our audience: Canadian public health organizations & practitioners.

Our work: Explain and share what’s known to help public health positively influence health for EVERYone through their work.
Agenda

• Intersection of EPH & health equity

• Key concepts
  • Structural & intermediary determinants
  • What do we mean by “environment”?
  • Charitable vs. critical approach

• Organizational capacity, barriers & facilitators to health equity work

• Practical implications of integrating health equity into EPH work

• Tools for EPH practitioners
Workshop objectives

1. Recognize facilitators and challenges related to integrating the social determinants of health and health equity into EPH practice, at the individual practitioner and organizational levels.

2. Identify and discuss how to apply tools that support the application of an equity lens in EPH practice.

3. Explore practical actions to incorporate a health equity lens within the operational realities of an organization.
Who is in the room?
“The window is determined by the frames we use to look through. We need a new frame.”

- Ryan Meili @ St FX - March 2, 2016

“Life changes the lens you look through.”

- Sean O’Toole, CIPHI - NS
Structural determinants of health

- Income
- Education
- Occupation
- Social class
- Gender
- Race/ethnicity

Intermediary determinants of health

- Material circumstances
  housing, neighborhood quality, consumption potential, physical work environment
- Psychosocial circumstances
  stressors, living circumstances and relationships, social support & coping styles
- Behavioural and/or biological factors
  nutrition, physical activity, tobacco & alcohol consumption, genetic factors

World Health Organization (WHO) conceptual framework.
Solar and Irwin, 2010.
Charitable mentality

– “Let’s lend a helping hand”
– “I encourage you”

A free pass to the rest of us?

– “You become like me”

“Deficit fix” intervention

– “Fixed” on “fixing” the poor/destitute/underprivileged

Credit: Jeff Masuda, Queen’s University, 2015
Theory: **Seek justice**

**Critical mentality**

– “Let’s realize we are all complicit in injustice”

**“Seeking justice” intervention**

– Where there is poverty there is privilege that needs unfixing

No one escapes scrutiny

– “We all need to change”

Credit: Jeff Masuda, Queen’s University, 2015
Environmental public health professionals

• Environmental health officers (EHOs) or public health inspectors (PHIs)

• Certified with Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI) (outside Quebec)

• Training: environmental health, hygiene, microbiology, food science, research methods

• Additional skills: epidemiology, toxicology, health promotion, healthy communities
Equity and EPH practice

- SES
  - Food premises
  - SDWS
  - Housing
  - Built environ.

- Culture & Language
  - Food premises
  - PSEs

- Literacy & Education
  - SDWS
  - Food premises
  - PSEs

- Psycho-social
  - Housing
  - Food premises

- Geography
  - SDWS
  - Food premises
  - Built environ.
Emerging practices

ONE-ON-ONE
Supportive relationships
Adaptive communication

RISK MANAGEMENT
Prioritize critical risks
Contextualize

COLLABORATION
Borrow tools and resources
Mutual Support
Networking and referral

DOCUMENTATION
Acknowledge and educate
Flag system gaps
# Moving toward equity-oriented EH practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice model</th>
<th>PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH TO EPH</th>
<th>SYSTEMS APPROACH TO EPH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Traditional</strong></td>
<td>Focus on regulation and health protection, using education as a tool.</td>
<td><strong>C. Emergent</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>B. Individual</strong></td>
<td>Respond to socioeconomic barriers when they arise. Incorporate equity into practice by providing tools for practitioners to help them work with individuals who face socioeconomic barriers.</td>
<td><strong>D. Population</strong></td>
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Capacity to advance health equity in EHP

**Individuals**
- Time
- Knowledge
- Skills
- Discretionary authority
- Tools
- Role clarity

**Organizations**
- Mandate
- Executive champions
- Manager buy-in
- Org. culture & strategic direction
- Intra/Inter agency collaboration & communication
- Reporting structure & job descriptions
- Appropriate legislation
Tools to advance health equity in EPH
10 considerations for action

- Enhancing knowledge
- Apply concepts to practice
- Reflective practice
- Identify internal and external collaborators
- Approaches at multiple organizational levels
3 main audiences:

1. Frontline PHI/EHO
2. Managers & directors
3. Educational & professional development organizations
Environmental public health & health equity

Scenarios & promising practices
World café instructions

• Discuss the question on your table
• Make notes & pictures on the table
• Think of ideas, be creative
• Be open to new possibilities – imagine there are no practical challenges
• Change tables at the bell – you will discuss 3 of 5 questions
Table hosts

• Record ideas throughout the conversation. Summarize in the plenary.

• Remind people to note or share key ideas, insights, connections, and new questions to contribute to the final report.

• At the beginning of each round of conversation, briefly share key ideas from the prior conversation so others can link and build using ideas from their previous conversations.
World Café principles

- **FOCUS** on what matters
- **CONTRIBUTE** your thinking
- **SPEAK** your mind
- **LISTEN** to understand
- **LINK AND CONNECT** ideas
- **LISTEN** for insights and patterns
- **PLAY, DOODLE, DRAW**
- **NO LIMITS!**
Factors in organizational capacity

Prioritization list – same one as in pre-session
Final thought……

Think “build-it-in”…. not “add-it-on”

Thank you!

And thank you for completing the evaluation survey 😊
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