

Addressing health inequities and the social determinants of health in environmental health practice.

Findings of a pilot study

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NCCEH

Environmental health
practice, programs,
& policy in Canada

NCCDH

Social determinants of
health & health equity



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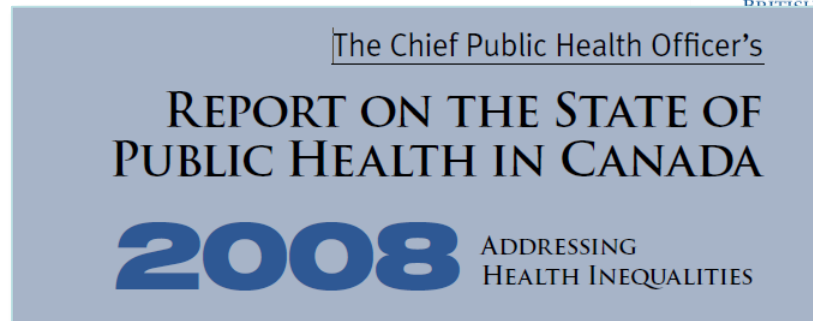
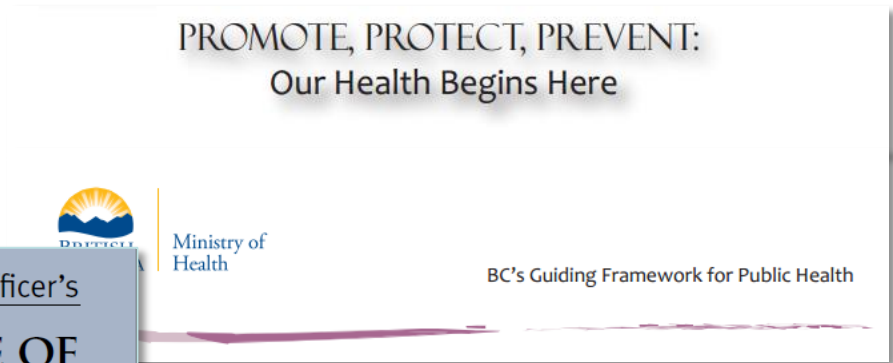


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EQUITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRACTICE: FINDINGS OF A PILOT STUDY

What do public health priorities of **health equity** and **SDH** mean for environmental health practitioners?



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EQUITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRACTICE: FINDINGS OF A PILOT STUDY

EH practice & inequities



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- Inequities create barriers to compliance
- May or may not be recognized by PHI
- PHI response may help **mitigate** inequities
- PHI response could **exacerbate** inequities



Insanitary
Conditions

By order of the
Public Health Inspector



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1. How do inequities and the SDH impact EH regulatory practice?
2. What needs and gaps affect PHIs' ability to promote health equity?
3. What are some promising practices being used by PHIs?



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- Focus groups with PHIs in BC and NS (n=11)
- Professional experiences & impact of SDH on health protection role
- Avoided “equity” terminology
- *QDA: a priori* & emerging themes



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Socioeconomic status

- Financial restrictions/cash flow
- Employee finances in job security

Cultural differences

- Expectations of PHIs/operator relationship
- Immigrants in new industry (food)

Language/Literacy

- Limited English language skills
- Low literacy/computer literacy

Stress

- Distraction
- Intensify other barriers

Geography

- Access to equipment, parts, expertise
- Food security in remote communities



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Social strategies

- Building trust and being upfront
- Risk communication

Support strategies

- Creative use of funding; Referrals
- Avoid overwhelming

Language strategies

- Informal translators & nonverbal communication
- Borrowing print resources

Discretion

- Progressive enforcement and prioritization
- Consider context and competing risks



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- Workload
- Staff turnover & lack of transition
- Prescriptive policies
- Lack of managerial support
- Silos: fragmentation & lack of collaboration
- Ambiguity about role & responsibility



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- Support EH workforce
 - Strategies to recognize & respond to barriers
 - Tools to mitigate barriers
 - Intersectoral collaboration
- Public health system support
 - Adaptive policies
 - Articulate role & responsibility
 - PHI training and competencies



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“It’s not an easy job. Some days you go home and you’re like, this job sucks. And then you have those small glittery moments where they get it, or you help someone, or someone calls you ... to say, thank you.... It makes you proud”



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NCCEH & NCCDH

- Follow-up with participants
- Consider exploring provincial/regional differences

BCCDC

- *Through an Equity Lens* project
- Focus groups in all health authorities (Summer 2015 report)



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Thank you!

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<http://www.ncceh.ca/documents/evidence-review/equity-environmental-health-practice-findings-pilot-study>

<http://nccdh.ca/resources/entry/equity-in-environmental-health-practice-findings-of-a-pilot-study>



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