

Health Equity Impact Assessment

Getting Started with HEIA

What is Health Equity?

Some people are healthier than others. When differences in health are because of reasons that are systemic, patterned, unfair, unjust and actionable, those differences are called health inequities¹. Equity involves trying to understand what populations and communities need to enjoy full, healthy lives. In contrast, equality aims to ensure that everyone gets the same things. In other words, programs and services based on the concept of equality assume that everyone has the same health status and needs, while equity focused initiatives take into consideration that certain groups face greater social, economic and environmental barriers that result in poor health.

What is Health Equity Impact Assessment?

HEIA seeks to identify and remove those barriers. It is an easy-to-use-tool developed by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care as a way for organizations to address health inequities by considering the needs of specific populations. Conducting an HEIA on a program, policy, service or initiative can help organizations identify potential unintended impacts and identify strategies to maximize the positive and minimize the negative impacts².

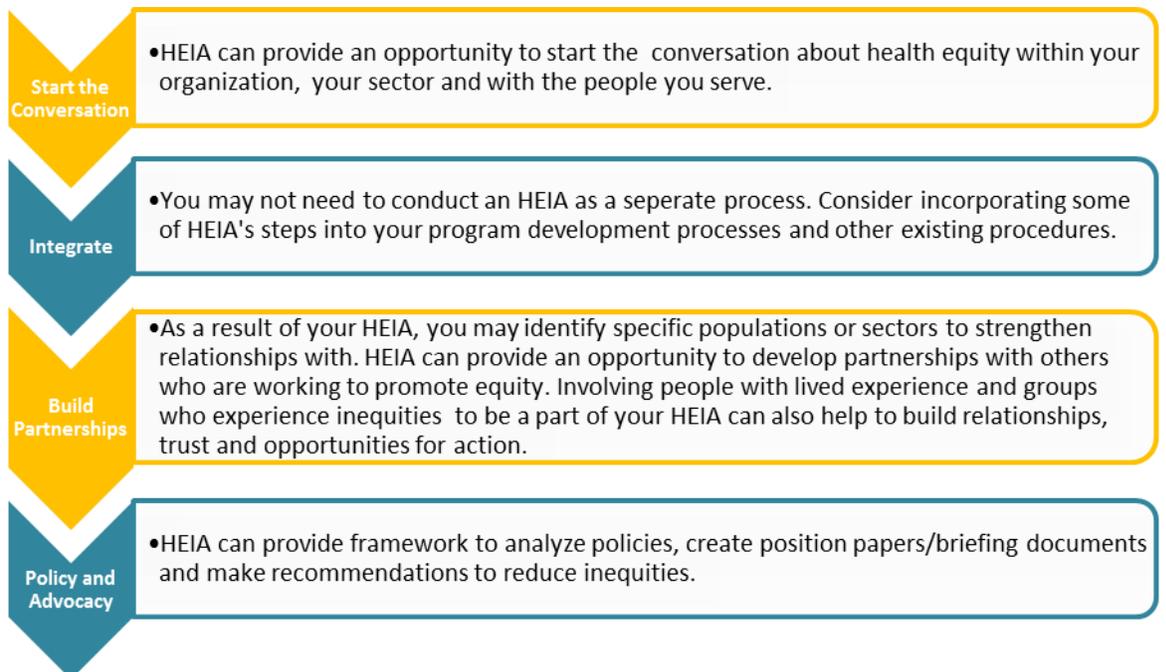
Should I conduct an HEIA?

If your program, policy, initiative or service could have unintended impacts on certain populations or communities, or could affect some populations more than others, you should conduct an HEIA. Put simply, conducting an HEIA will help you to identify if there are populations whose needs are not being met by your program, why that is, and what you can do about it.

How can I use HEIA?

HEIA is a simple and flexible process that can easily be adapted, modified, or incorporated into your existing processes.

There are many different methods you can use to conduct an HEIA, and many different ways to use the process/results:



For more information about HEIA contact us at 1-800-397-9567 or visit our website: www.healthnexus.ca

References

¹ Margaret Whitehead and Goran Dahlgren. Concepts and principles for tackling social inequities in health: Levelling up Part 1. WHO Collaborating Centre for Policy Research on Social Determinants of Health, 2006.

²Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Health Equity Impact Assessment Workbook, 2012