

Using Science to Inform Policy. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2013.

Field Guidelines for Using Science to Inform Policy

The use of science to inform policy allows for systematic and scientific decision making. Policies that are based on data, principles, interventions and findings that are supported by scientific methods can engender more support and have a greater impact on health. These field guidelines are based on the *Using Science to Inform Policy* module, and are intended to assist you with organizing your approach to getting involved in policy development.

This document includes the following sections:

[STEPS FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST](#)

You will use the checklist when you are helping to develop policy. The checklist includes the steps you will take when developing health policy and presenting the evidence.

[DEVELOPING HEALTH POLICY AND PRESENTING EVIDENCE WORKSHEETS](#)

This section provides you with a tool to assist you when you are gathering scientific evidence to inform policy formulation and planning to present evidence.

[HOW YOUR MENTOR WILL ASSESS YOUR WORK](#)

This section provides you with the criteria your mentor can use to evaluate your work in gathering scientific evidence to inform policy formulation.

Steps for Policy Development Checklist

<input type="checkbox"/> Step 1: Set the agenda <i>Influenced by epidemiologic, social, political, and economic factors</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Step 2: Define the health issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Summarize what is known <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Determine the nature of the problem <input type="checkbox"/> Determine the known or suspected cause(s) of the problem <input type="checkbox"/> Determine who is affected by the problem <input type="checkbox"/> Determine what is known about the history of the problem <input type="checkbox"/> Identify what effective interventions have been used to address the problem <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Quantify the health issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Identify the burden of the problem (morbidity and mortality rates) from published data <input type="checkbox"/> Identify whether existing data can be analyzed to assess the data <input type="checkbox"/> Determine what is known about burden in sub-populations of interest
<input type="checkbox"/> Step 3: Develop policy options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Engage appropriate stakeholders <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct policy analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Identify best practices and research interventions that have a beneficial impact on the problem <input type="checkbox"/> Determine whether alternative solutions exist <input type="checkbox"/> Assess the impact each policy intervention option would have <input type="checkbox"/> Assess cost of proposed policy intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Identify if interventions could benefit from policy change or new policy implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Identify potential barriers to implementing the policy
<input type="checkbox"/> Step 4: Make recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Describe the scientific rationale for each policy option <input type="checkbox"/> Consider relevant economic factors <input type="checkbox"/> Assess whether the severity of the problem warrants the policy <input type="checkbox"/> Determine whether the policy addresses key factors that will influence the health problem <input type="checkbox"/> Identify measurable actions that can be derived from the policy <input type="checkbox"/> Consider whether the policy is targeted toward the right arena (local, organizational, governmental) <input type="checkbox"/> Consider if the policy is feasible and practical to implement <input type="checkbox"/> Assess whether there is partner support for the policy

Steps for Policy Development Checklist

- Step 5: Present the evidence
 - Define the audience for your recommendations, what the audience member(s) care about, and how they participate in the policy process
 - Categorize information to present in terms of scope of the problem, costs of the problem, and possible solutions to the problem

Developing Health Policy Worksheet

Step 1: Setting the Agenda (note current events and factors that made the issue rise to public importance)

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Step 2: Define the Health Issue

Determine What is Known (include the what, who, where, when and natural history)

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Quantify Issue (include morbidity and mortality rates in the population and sub-populations)

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Developing Health Policy Worksheet

Step 3: Develop Policy Options
Engage Stakeholders (note names, titles, affiliations)
Conduct Policy Analysis (identify best practices and alternative solutions)
Assess cost and impact of policy intervention options
Assess whether policy change or implementation is needed and identify potential barriers to policy implementation

Developing Health Policy Worksheet

Step 4: Make Recommendations for a Policy Decision
Describe rationale and economics of policy options
Assess severity of the health problem and whether the policy option(s) will influence the health problem
Identify measurable actions from the policy, whether it is logistically feasible to implement and whether there is partner support for the policy

Presenting Evidence Worksheet

Audience (include audience's background, interest in the issue and capabilities to do something about this issue)

One-Pager Outline (include scope/impact of the problem of the problem, economic impact (costs) of the problem, policy options as possible solutions to the problem)

How Your Facilitator/Mentor Will Assess Your Work

You will provide your mentor with a 1-page fact sheet and then present the evidence to him or her as though he or she is a decision-maker. Your mentor will assess how well you **present the evidence** by using the criteria listed below. He or she will use the following point system for the evaluation:

Points	Description
5 = excellent	The element is present, consistent with the standard described in the instructions and provided in the classroom, and is of a remarkable/outstanding quality.
4 = good	The element is present and consistent with the standard described in the instructions and provided in the classroom.
3 = satisfactory	The element is present and may be used even though it may not completely follow the standard described in the instructions and provided in the classroom.
2 = poor	The element is present but flawed or of poor quality.
1 = absent	The element is absent.
NA = not applicable	The element is not relevant.

Category	Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Tailor the Message	Know the audience ¹ .						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address what the decision-maker cares most about and what is within their power to accomplish. 						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the decision-makers' professional and technical background. 						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the most appropriate way to present the information to the decision-maker. 						

¹ Provide your mentor a brief description of the audience so that he or she can assess how well you have tailored the message.

Category	Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Develop a One-Pager	Summarize the scope and impact of health issue.						
	Summarize the cost of health issue (economic and morbidity/mortality).						
	Discuss possible solutions to the problem, including a proposed policy.						
	Summarize the evidence making a strong case for the policy you are proposing.						
	Include potential barriers to implementation.						
Present Evidence	Respect the amount of time allowed to present.						
	Be clear and concise.						
	Present the most important information first and auxiliary or supporting information second.						
	Allow enough time for questions and discussion.						
	Describe the problem (scope and importance of health issue).						
	Give the policy option(s) to address the problem, including recent and concise evidence.						
	Describe how options can be implemented, including what barriers to implementation may be encountered and the impact of implementing the policy.						
	Discuss recommended option or next course of action or ask decision-maker about the most important needs and what he or she can do to help.						