

PARTICIPANT GUIDE



Prioritizing Public Health Problems

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Prioritizing Public Health Problems

INTRODUCTION

Prioritizing public health problems can be an important aspect of your job responsibilities when you have competing priorities. In this lesson, you will learn some methods for making those prioritizations easier.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify the key stakeholders and partners with whom to prioritize public health problems
- Identify the criteria for prioritizing public health problems
- Reach consensus on the two highest priority NCDs on which to focus prevention and control efforts

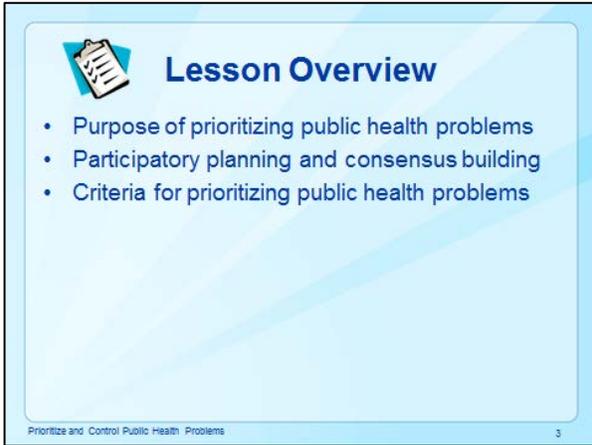
ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME

- 2 hours

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- CDC, Sustainable Management Development Program (SMDP). Healthy Plan-*it*[™].
- CDC, Epidemiology Program Office. Translating Science into Practice: North Dakota Cancer Case Study. 1998.
- D Vilnius and S Dandoy. A Priority Rating System for Public Health Programs. *Public Health Rep*, Sep-Oct 1990;105(5):463–470.

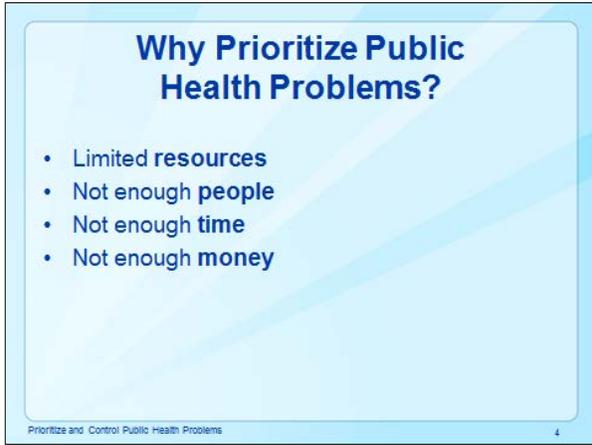
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 **Lesson Overview**

- Purpose of prioritizing public health problems
- Participatory planning and consensus building
- Criteria for prioritizing public health problems

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Why Prioritize Public Health Problems?

- Limited **resources**
- Not enough **people**
- Not enough **time**
- Not enough **money**

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PARTICIPATORY PLANNING AND CONSENSUS BUILDING

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Participatory Planning

- We each have different experiences and perspectives.
- Decisions need to involve all concerned and affected parties.
 - **Stakeholder:** a person or organization that has an interest, share, or investment in what you are doing.
 - **Partner:** a person or organization that is supportive of what you are doing. (Sub-set of stakeholders)

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Consensus Building



A collaborative decision-making process that focuses on partnership, participation, involvement of appropriate leadership, and builds a foundation of trust within an atmosphere of flexibility.

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Criteria for Reaching Consensus

1. Everyone concerned or affected participates in discussions
2. No one is forced to agree to an idea or the final decision
3. Final decision must be one that everyone can accept, even if some support it more or less than others

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Activity: Consensus Building

1. Divide into small groups.
2. Rank items according to their importance to your survival.
3. Select a spokesperson who will report on the decisions of the group.

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Scenario



- Plane crash
- Pilot didn't survive
- Somewhere in the desert, several kilometers off course
- Hot and sunny
- Flat, with little vegetation
- You took 5 items off the plane:
 - One parachute (red and white)
 - One flashlight with batteries
 - Water (one quart per person)
 - Top coat (one per person)
 - Small mirror

"Well, back to the old 'survival' game!"

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Consensus Building: Recap

1. Reaching consensus can be difficult
2. Reaching consensus can be important for "survival"
3. Understanding why and how people's opinions differ on major issues will help you reach consensus on smaller issues
4. To help reach consensus, you need to identify criteria

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CRITERIA FOR PRIORITIZING HEALTH PROBLEMS

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Common Criteria

- Size of problem
- Seriousness of problem
- Availability of current interventions
- Economic or social impact
- Public health concern
- Political will to address issue
- Availability of resources
- Disease of international interest
- Equity



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Size of Problem

Definition:

- Number or percentage of people affected by a health condition in a particular area
- Source to learn number affected: prevalence data



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Rating for Size of Problem

- 1 = Relatively few people affected
- 2 = Moderate number affected in particular subgroups
- 3 = Moderate number affected across the entire population
- 4 = Large number affected in particular subgroups
- 5 = Large number affected across entire population

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Prioritizing Problems Example- Size

Health Problem	Size	Seriousness	Interventions	Impact	Resulting Rating
Diabetes	5				
Hypertension	4				
Breast Cancer	4				
Obesity	4				
Alcohol Use	5				

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Seriousness of Problem

Definition:

- Potential of a health problem to result in severe disability or death

Source of information on seriousness:

- Cause-specific mortality tables
- DALYs (disability-adjusted life years)



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Slide **Notes**

Rating for Seriousness of Problem

- 1 = Not life threatening or disabling
- 2 = Not life threatening but sometimes disabling
- 3 = Moderately life threatening or disabling
- 4 = Moderately life threatening, with a strong likelihood of disability
- 5 = High likelihood of death or disability

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Prioritizing Problems Example- Seriousness

Health Problem	Size	Seriousness	Interventions	Impact	Resulting Rating
Diabetes	5	4			
Hypertension	4	4			
Breast Cancer	4	5			
Obesity	4	3			
Alcohol Use	5	2			

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Availability of Current Interventions

- Are there evidence-based interventions or promising practices to prevent or control this health problem?
- Can these interventions or practices be implemented easily?

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Rating for Availability of Current Interventions

1 = No evidence-based interventions or promising practices available

2 = No evidence-based interventions available, but promising practices are available

3 = Evidence-based interventions available but difficult to implement

4 = Evidence-based interventions available and can be implemented with moderate effort

5 = Evidence-based interventions available and can be implemented easily

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Prioritizing Problems Example- Interventions

Health Problem	Size	Seriousness	Interventions	Impact	Resulting Rating
Diabetes	5	4	4		
Hypertension	4	4	3		
Breast Cancer	4	5	4		
Obesity	4	3	5		
Alcohol Use	5	2	3		

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Economic and Social Impact

- Monetary costs
- Societal costs



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Rating for Economic and Social Impact

- 1 = Economic or societal costs are minimal
- 2 = There is some potential increased costs
- 3 = There is likely to be moderate costs
- 4 = There is likely to be substantial costs
- 5 = There are great economic and societal costs

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Prioritizing Problems Example- Impact

Health Problem	Size	Seriousness	Interventions	Impact	Resulting Rating
Diabetes	5	4	4	4	
Hypertension	4	4	3	4	
Breast Cancer	4	5	4	5	
Obesity	4	3	5	3	
Alcohol Use	5	2	3	4	

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Prioritizing Problems Example- Result

Health Problem	Size	Seriousness	Interventions	Impact	Resulting Rating
Diabetes	5	4	4	4	320
Hypertension	4	4	3	4	240
Breast Cancer	4	5	4	5	400
Obesity	4	3	5	3	180
Alcohol Use	5	2	3	4	120

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REVIEW

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Review: Questions 1-2

1. What five words do we use to describe consensus building?
2. What is the difference between a stakeholder and a partner?

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Review: Questions 3-4

3. What are five examples of criteria you can use to prioritize health problems?
4. What kind of data would you use to determine the size of a health problem?

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Review: Questions 5-7

- 5. What kind of data would you use to determine seriousness of a health problem?
- 6. If a problem has a high likelihood of causing death or disability, would you rate the problem a 1 or a 5?
- 7. If evidence-based interventions are available to prevent or control a health issue, but they are difficult to implement, would you rate that criterion a 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5?

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Review: Questions 8-9

- 8. What societal costs can be associated with a health issue?
- 9. How would you collect information about the economic and social impact of a health problem?

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Half-Truths and Misunderstandings

MISUNDERSTANDING LOW AND MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRIES SHOULD CONTROL INFECTIOUS DISEASES BEFORE CHRONIC DISEASES

- Reality: double burden = double response

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Slide**Notes**

Skill Assessment

1. You will be provided with information about non-communicable diseases and risk factors of importance in your country.
2. Determine which key stakeholders and partners to involve in prioritizing those health problems.
3. As a group, determine three criteria to use for prioritizing.
4. Prioritize the health problems, and reach consensus on the two highest priority problems. Those are the two problems on which to focus prevention and control efforts.

SKILL ASSESSMENT

**Activity****Instructions:**

1. Work with your facilitator to identify four NCDs and risk factors of importance in your country and record on the worksheet on the following Slide.
2. Use the space below to record the key stakeholders and partners to involve in prioritizing those health problems.

3. As a group, determine three criteria to use for prioritizing and record on the worksheet on the following Slide.
4. Prioritize the problems and reach consensus on the two highest priority health problems to focus prevention and control efforts. (Use the worksheet on the next Slide to rank and prioritize each health problem.)

Prioritizing Health Problems Worksheet

Determine criteria for each health problem.

Health Problem	Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Resulting Rating

Slide**Notes**

Skill Assessment Debrief

1. Who were the stakeholders and partners you identified?
2. What criteria did you use for prioritizing?
3. What challenges, if any, did you face when trying to reach consensus?
4. What were the two highest priority health problems?

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