The Role of the Health System in Reducing Health Inequity

Wednesday 29 June

Equity focused health impact assessment
Dr Ben Harris-Roxas, Deputy Director
Purpose of this session

- Overview of equity focused health impact assessment (EFHIA)
- Examples of EFHIAs
- Effectiveness of EFHIAs – what works
- Opportunities, barriers and considerations within health systems
Equity Focused Health Impact Assessment

ACHEIA

Equity-Focused Health Impact Assessment Framework

Mary Mahoney
Sarah Simpson
Elizabeth Harris
Rosemary Aldrich
Jenny Stewart Williams
Considering equity: Differential impacts
Considering equity: **Determinants of health inequity**

Example: VicHealth EFHIA of the Walk to School Program 2016
Example: EFHIA of the Aboriginal Good for Kids, Good for Life Program Activities
**Example: NSW Australian Better Health Initiative Implementation Plan EFHIA**

A rapid equity focused health impact assessment of a policy implementation plan: An Australian case study and impact evaluation

**Effectiveness: What works an what doesn’t**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What works</th>
<th>What doesn’t</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Structured process</td>
<td>• Equity adds an additional layer of conceptual complexity*</td>
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<td>• EFHIA as a process for learning</td>
<td>• Lack of a shared understanding about the goals of the EFHIA</td>
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<td>– Technical</td>
<td>• Lack of organisational commitment</td>
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<td>– Conceptual</td>
<td>• Challenging values and differential impacts*</td>
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<td>– Social</td>
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<td>• Timeliness</td>
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<td>• Identifying assumptions*</td>
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<td>• Equity has cross-sectoral relevance*</td>
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*Both enablers and barriers depending on context*
The overarching challenge
Discussion

• Your experience and insights

• What are the opportunities for EFHIA’s use?

• What are the challenges?

• Are there related approaches we should be considering?

• Is there a role of EFHIA in the health system?
Strategies/actions/ideas from the workshop

- It is possible to incorporate EFHI into planning at LHD/state level but
  - needs champions
  - needs to be regarded as core business.
- Transparency/trade-offs within EFHIAs aren’t straightforward
  - often take the form of short term pain for long term gain.
- An activity that would advance EFHIA/health equity more generally
  - identify the prevention activities where equity gains can be made or where there are gaps
  - don’t focus solely on intractable issues or solely on greatest need, think about where change can occur as well.
- EFHIA should be considered a tool for “bringing together narratives and numbers”
  - demonstrating need/relevance at a practical/local/implementation/narrative level and aligning with population/macro,numbers level.
- Is there a role for Equity Focused Health System Impact Assessment?
  - this would also be about recognising where we can make gains.