



# Using health impact assessment within the university context

Alex Scott-Samuel

**IMPACT**

International Health Impact  
Assessment Consortium,  
University of Liverpool

[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)





## What is HIA?

A combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, programme or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population

Source: WHO Gothenburg consensus paper, 1999

[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)



# Important characteristics of HIA

- Prospective
- Decision support tool, not evaluation method
- Trade-off between brevity and rigour



# Uses of HIA

- **creation of healthy public policies / projects**
- **social and economic development**
- health advocacy
- advocacy for disadvantaged groups
- personal development
- partnership building



[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)



# Policy context

- EIA / HPP
- 1980s - 'LDCs'
- 1993 - Manchester 2<sup>nd</sup> runway
- 1993 - British Columbia
- Mid-90s - Australasia and Europe
- Liverpool Public Health Observatory
- Late 90s - WHO / European Union
- IMPACT
- USA - early 21c – CA, MN

[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)

# Closing the gap in a generation

Health equity through action on the social determinants of health





## ***Closing the Gap in a Generation –*** **HIA recommendations**

- competent, regular health equity impact assessment of *all policy-making and market regulation* should be institutionalized nationally and internationally
- Institutionalize and strengthen technical capacities in health equity impact assessment of *all international and national economic agreements*
- National and local governments should build capacity to use health equity impact assessment as *a standard protocol in all major policy-making*



[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)



---

# Fair Society, Healthy Lives

---

## The Marmot Review Executive Summary



Strategic Review of Health Inequalities  
in England post-2010





# Marmot Review

All national and local policies and strategies should be routinely scrutinised through a health equity impact assessment

*Fair Society, Healthy Lives. The Marmot Review.* London, 2010: 152



[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)



# Some IMPACT HIA projects

- Foresight Vehicle Initiative
- Castlefields regeneration
- Policy HIA for the EU – European Employment Strategy
- Capacity building in Liverpool
- Antisocial behaviour - Citysafe
- Community HIA
- ‘Making it Better’
- Birmingham International Airport



[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)



European Policy  
Health Impact Assessment



**METHODOLOGY**





**Mental Well-being Impact Assessment: A Toolkit**  
**'A Living and Working Document'**



**Liverpool 08 European Capital of Culture:  
Mental Well-being Impact Assessment**



# Two perspectives of HIA

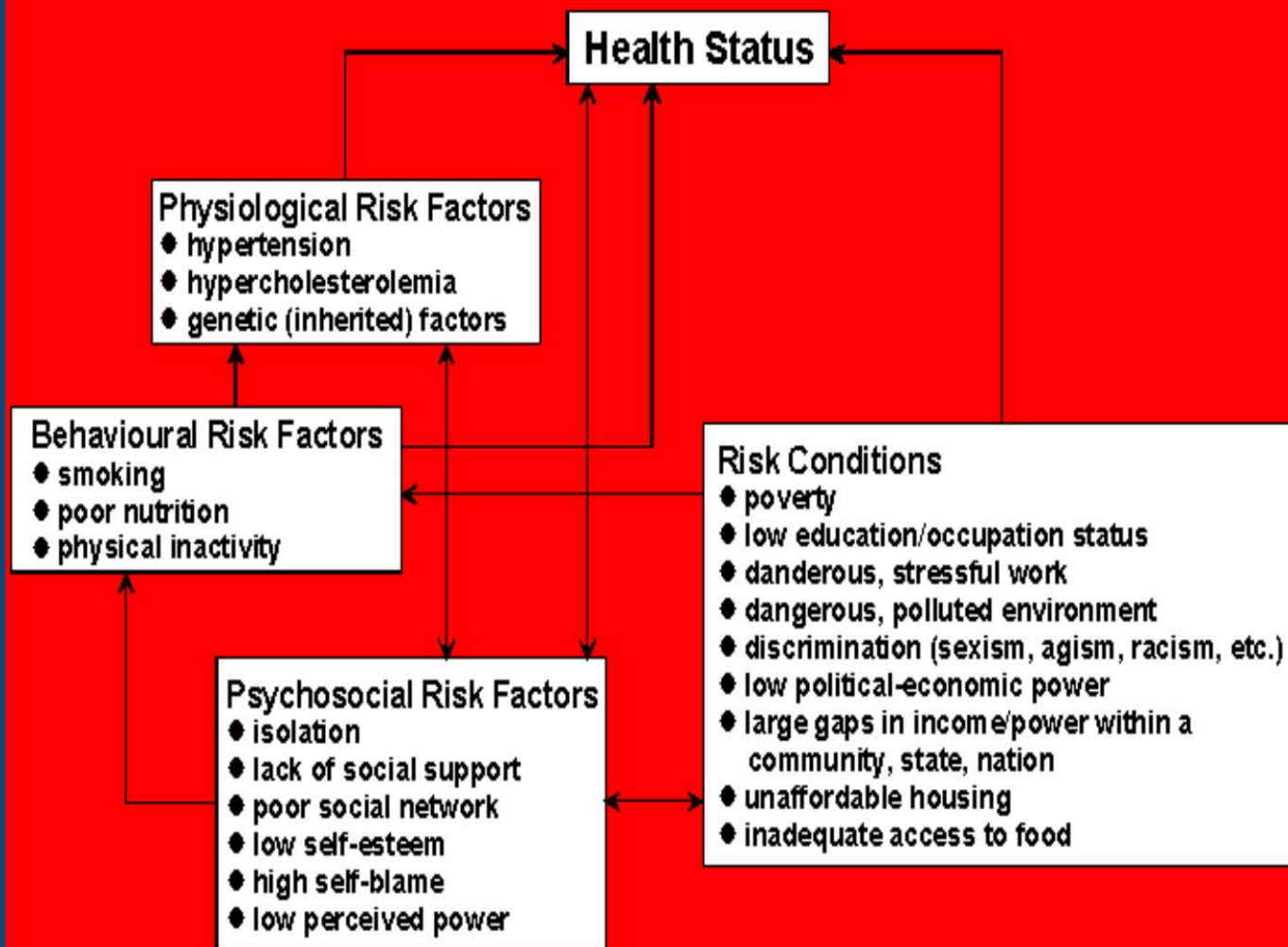
	<b>Broad perspective</b>	<b>Tight perspective</b>
<b>View of health</b>	Holistic	Definition and observation
<b>Disciplinary roots</b>	Sociology, epidemiology	Epidemiology, toxicology
<b>Ethos</b>	Democratic	Technocratic
<b>Quantification</b>	In general terms	Towards exact measurement
<b>Types of evidence</b>	Key informant data	Measurements
<b>Precision</b>	Low	High

Source: National Assembly for Wales (1999) Developing health impact assessment in Wales.

[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)



## The Socioenvironmental Approach to Health



Ron Labonte. Inequalities in Health in the City of Toronto. 1991



# 3 levels of HIA

- Desktop – usually <1 week
- Rapid – usually 1 week - 2 months
- Comprehensive – 2-6 months+

Main differences – depth of evidence review; type(s) of fieldwork and of quantitative methods





# The Merseyside approach to HIA - 1

- Screening
- Scoping: steering group; terms of reference; select assessor
- Policy analysis
- Profiling of communities
- Collect data from stakeholders and key informants
- Identify health determinants affected

[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)



# The Merseyside approach to HIA - 2

- Assess new and published evidence
- Establish priority impacts
- Recommend and justify options for action
- Appraise assessment
- Negotiate favoured options
- Implement and monitor
- Evaluate and document

[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)



## Data collection from stakeholders and key informants

### RAPID

- Stakeholder workshops

### COMPREHENSIVE

- Stakeholder workshops
- Interviews / focus groups
- Delphi exercises
- Scenarios
- Mathematical / economic modelling

[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)



## Health inequality in HIA

- inequality a **screening** (selection) criterion
- vulnerable groups identified in **profiling** and **policy analysis**
- **distributional impacts** (as well as population impacts) identified
- **recommendations** take account of impact inequalities
- **monitoring** and **evaluation** based on inequality indicators and outcomes



## Equity in HIA

- choice of paradigm (expertist vs participatory)
- public involvement in HIA steering groups
- ‘lay’ people as stakeholders and key informants
- **equitable valuation of lay evidence and of evidence on lay priorities**
- ‘bias to the poor’ in recommendations





# The impact of HIA

- input
- process
- impact
- outcome



## Birmingham International Airport runway extension

- establish a health forum to guide health conscious decision making within the airport company
- within 12 months...prepare a health management plan...to progress the recommendations set out in the HIA
- investigate cause and extent of transport barriers which may hinder employment opportunities
- encourage non car means of transport including public transport and cycling
- investigate feasibility of modifying sound insulation scheme in terms of sleep disturbance at night and report to council
- develop a Site Employment and Training strategy

[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)



# Methodological controversies

- science and politics
- value-free and value-laden
- holism and reductionism
- qualitative and quantitative
- expertism and participation
- duration and depth
- equity and inequality



[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)





## Gaps in current practice

- limited application - especially re public policy
- *macroeconomic policy*
- *human rights*
- *foreign policy*
- *Trade policy*
- *social and gender policy*



## Gaps in current theory

- distributional effects poorly operationalised
- political determinants of health insufficiently acknowledged, *eg power, ideology, class, interest groups, institutions*
- participatory research
- feminist research, *eg intersectionality*



# Capacity building

- a limiting factor
- training
- advocacy
- policy development
- organisation development





**impact@liverpool.ac.uk**

**(+44) 151 794 5004**

[www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk](http://www.healthimpactassessment.co.uk)

