

CASE STUDY

Development of a Population Health Policy Framework for Primary Care Networks in Alberta

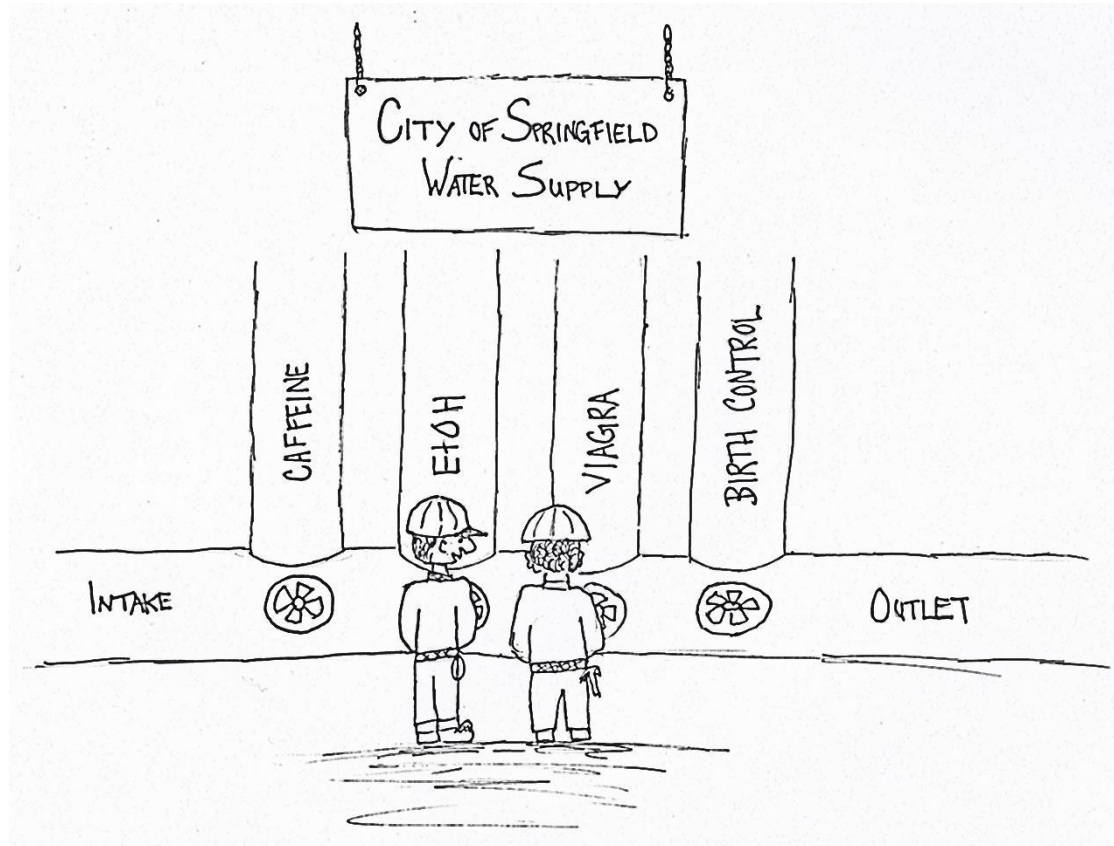


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CAHSPR Concurrent Session – Stream F
Continuity and Equity in Primary Care



Policy at Work



"I'm SURE glad they voted out that Fluoride Policy and let the people start making their own choices!"

Alberta's Primary Care Networks



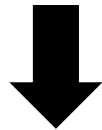
- ▶ PCNs as organizational and geographic structures
 - ▶ 2003 trilateral agreement
 - ▶ Each with own Board, budget and patient population

- ▶ Purpose
 - ▶ Patients → Increase access
 - ▶ Providers → Improve coordination; local programs/services
 - ▶ System → Health promotion, disease and injury prevention

Alberta's Primary Care Networks



- ▶ 40 PCNs, urban & rural
- ▶ 2500 family physicians (80% of eligible)
- ▶ Discrete patient populations



**Unique Mandate:
"Address Population Health"**



PCN's Population Health Burden



- ▶ Each PCN patient population has unique health burden
 - ▶ Type and volume of service delivery
 - ▶ Morbidity/mortality

- ▶ Recurring issues for front-line and Board
 - ▶ Obesity, physical inactivity
 - ▶ Tobacco, alcohol and drug use
 - ▶ Chronic disease management
 - ▶ Injury prevention
 - ▶ Disease screening
 - ▶ Maternal and child health

PCN's Dilemma



- ▶ Attempts at a systematic response
 - ▶ Each PCN Board making 'decisions', forming 'positions'
 - ▶ Pan-PCN Population Health Committee formed
- ▶ Need for uniform, evidence-informed population health policy; but limited resources to achieve

Health Policy Research Request



- ▶ In 2011, seven PCNs request academic consultation
- ▶ Clarify request: Policy formulation or Policy how-to
- ▶ First step: Build a Population Health Policy Framework
 - ▶ 8 week timeline
 - ▶ Pan-PCN working group formed
 - ▶ Applied 'research' tailored to Pan-PCN needs
 - ▶ Not for publication but...

Population Health Policy Framework



- ▶ **Purpose:** Guide the development, implementation and evaluation of population health policies within and across PCNs
- ▶ **Four components**
 - ▶ Policy categories
 - ▶ Evidence-based policy cycle
 - ▶ Resourcing: Leadership, HR and infrastructure
 - ▶ Templates, resources, glossary



Population Health Policy Framework

A Guide for PCN Policy Development and Implementation

October 2011

Step 1: Knowledge Review and Stakeholder Engagement



- ▶ Literature review of policy development frameworks
- ▶ Stakeholder consultation
 - ▶ PCN Boards
 - ▶ Pan-PCN Operations Committee → Pan-PCN working group
 - ▶ Pan-PCN Population Health Committee
 - ▶ Public Health and Preventive Medicine

Step 2: Common Terminology



| Term | Operational Definition |
|--------------------------|--|
| Population | “...PCN patient populations” |
| Population health | “...seeks to improve the health of a PCN population by influencing a broad array of health determinants” |
| Policy | “...definite course of action selected from among alternatives to guide present and future decisions” |
| Population health policy | “...health policy impacting PCN patient populations” |

Step 3: Policy Categories

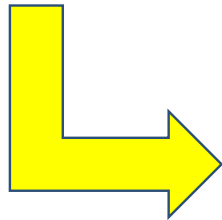


| | PCN | Pan-PCN |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Internal Policies | PCN developed Limited involvement of population health policy stakeholders | Pan-PCN developed Limited involvement of population health policy stakeholders |
| External Policies | PCN developed Engagement of population health policy stakeholders | Pan-PCN developed Engagement of population health policy stakeholders |

Policy Category Examples

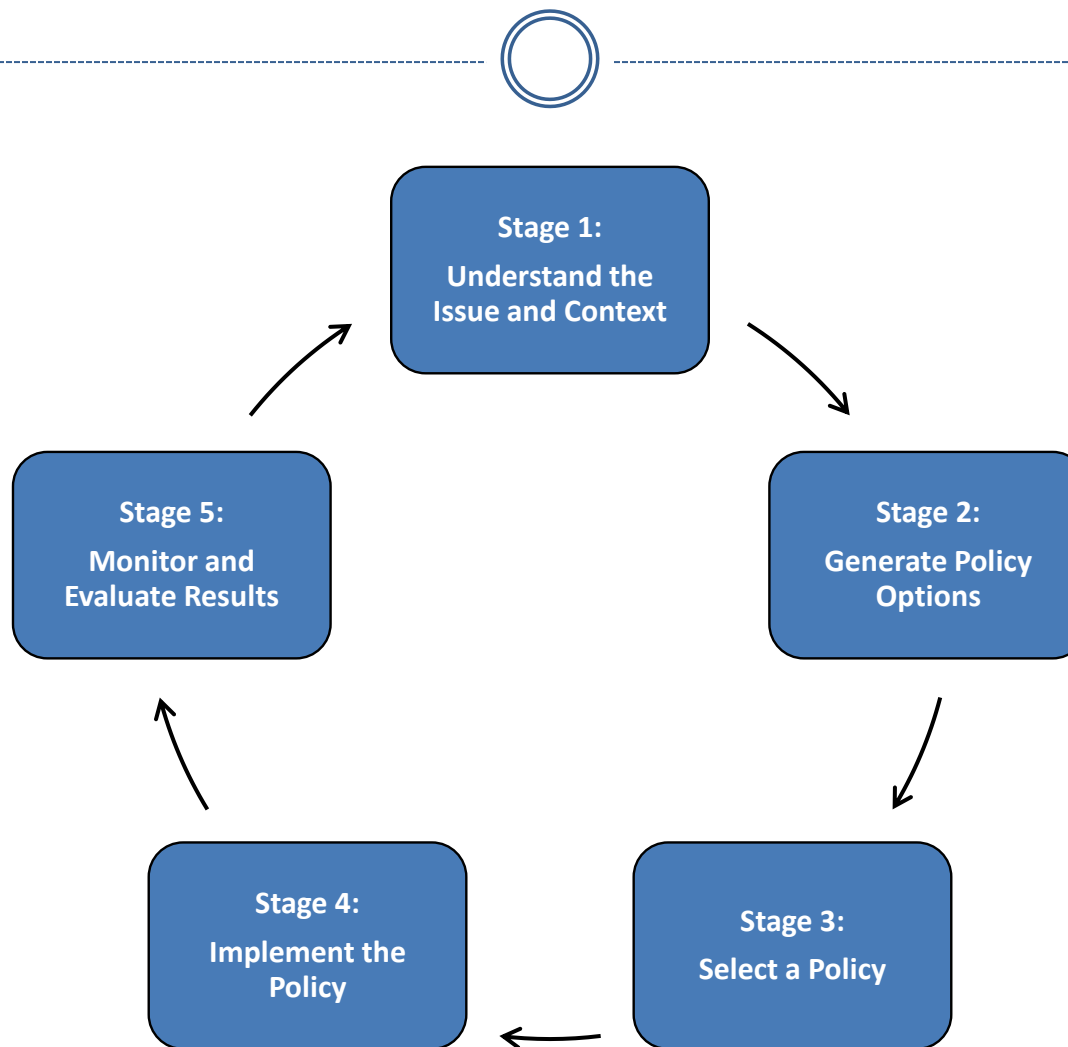


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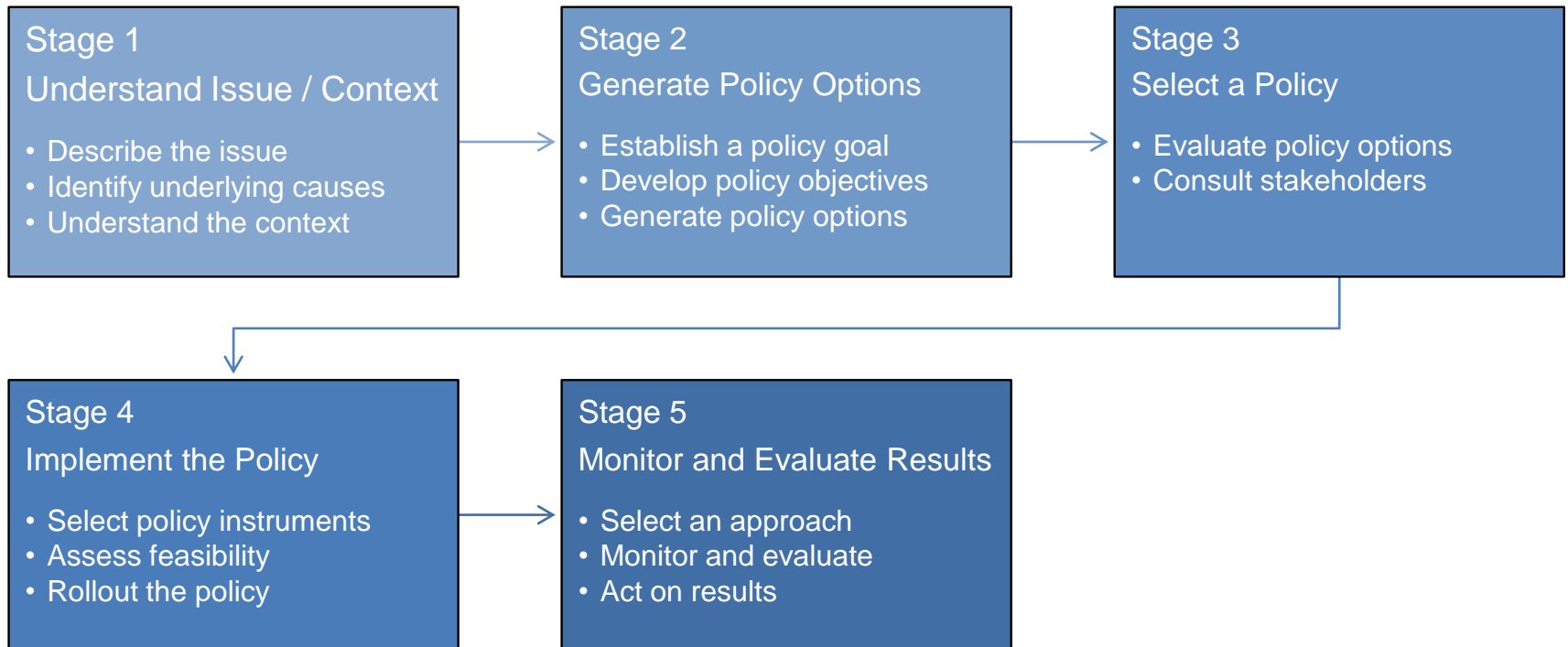


| Policy Type | Example |
|------------------|---|
| PCN Internal | A policy to initiate clinical surveillance of adult obesity rates in a PCN patient population to guide future population health initiatives |
| PCN External | A policy to increase physical activity of school-aged children in a PCN's patient population by partnering with after-school programs such as the Boys and Girls Club |
| Pan-PCN Internal | A policy to address the gap in well child screening for ages 18 months to 5 years among all PCNs |
| Pan-PCN External | A policy to increase cervical cancer screening among low-uptake population groups developed in collaboration with the Alberta Cervical Cancer Screening Program |

Step 4: Policy Cycle



Policy Cycle Outline



Step 5: Resourcing



- ▶ Recommendations re: 3 organizational attributes required for population health policy development
 - ▶ Leadership
 - ▶ Human Resources
 - ▶ Infrastructure

Step 6: Templates, Resources, Glossary



- ▶ Policy Briefing Note
- ▶ Policy Statement
- ▶ Roles and Responsibilities Matrix

POLICY BRIEFING NOTE

| POPULATION HEALTH ISSUE | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Issue | Click here to enter the population health policy Issue |
| Background | Click here to enter the population health policy Background |
| Current Situation | Click here to enter the population health issue's Current Situation |
| POLICY SELECTION | |
| Policy Analysis | Click here to enter the Policy Analysis including key considerations |
| Policy Options | Click here to enter the Policy Options |
| Recommendation | Click here to enter the policy Recommendation |
| ACTION PLAN | |
| Risk Mitigation | Click here to enter Risk Mitigation plans for the proposed policy |
| Next Steps | Click here to enter Next Steps required to further the proposed policy |
| References | Click here to enter relevant References for the policy |

Challenges



- ▶ **Competing interests**
 - ▶ Population health policy mandated but is it a priority?
- ▶ **Governance structures**
 - ▶ PCN vs. Pan-PCN accountabilities

Conclusions and Next Steps



- ▶ Operational framework in place
- ▶ Investment in relationship between primary care operations and health policy research
- ▶ In discussion with PCNs re: policy research projects

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