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Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit (WHIASU)

Spring 2018 Newsletter

Welcome

Welcome to the spring 2018 edition of the Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit (WHIASU) newsletter. Since the last newsletter was published in the Autumn of 2017, the Unit has been exceptionally busy preparing for the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017, and in particular the regulations which will make Health Impact Assessment (HIA) statutory for Public Bodies under certain conditions. In preparation for the Act, the Unit's new Training Strategy is progressing well in response to the feedback from two recent engagement sessions. We hope to publish the Training Strategy on our website in the coming months. Looking ahead, we will be re-developing our HIA guide over the next year and we would welcome any suggestions or feedback you may have.



We hope you enjoy reading our articles and if you have any questions or queries please contact us on the contact details provided at the end of the newsletter.

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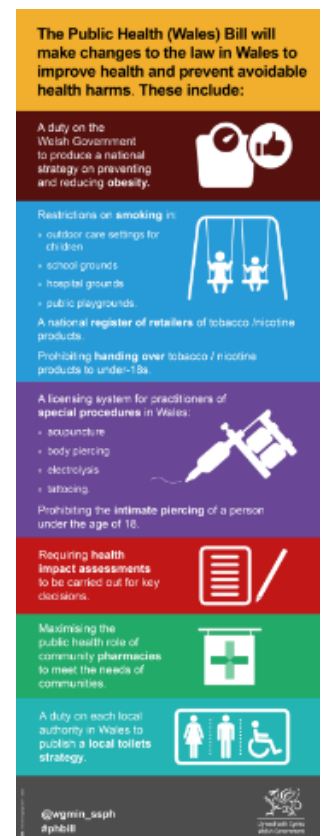
Update on the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017

In July 2017, the Public Health (Wales) Act was passed into statute. The Act contains the requirement for public bodies to carry out Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) in specific circumstances. Wales is the only nation in the world who has this requirement where the focus is on the consideration of broad health and wellbeing and inequalities. The Act states that:

‘the regulations may require the Public Health Wales National Health Service Trust to give assistance to another public body carrying out a health impact assessment’ and ‘the regulations may make provision about how the assistance is to be given, including (among other things) about when it is to be given’.

Currently Welsh Government is compiling the statutory regulations for HIA, the specific circumstances and the definition of assistance. Draft Regulations will be out for consultation in late 2018 with the final regulations published and implementation of them in 2019.

This is a unique opportunity to build on WHIASU’s work to train and capacity build in HIA and Health in All Policies, and strengthen and maximise plans, projects and proposals in their consideration of health, wellbeing and inequalities. Strengthening the use of HIA will also support the implementation of other key Welsh legislation such as the Well-being of the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Planning (Wales) Act 2015.



Wales – World Leading on Investment for Health and Well-being

The World Health Organization (WHO) has designated Public Health Wales' Policy, Research and International Development Directorate as a WHO Collaborating Centre on 'Investment for Health and Well-being'.

The designation recognises Public Health Wales as a world leading authority on supporting investment in people's health and well-being, driving sustainable development and promoting prosperity for all.

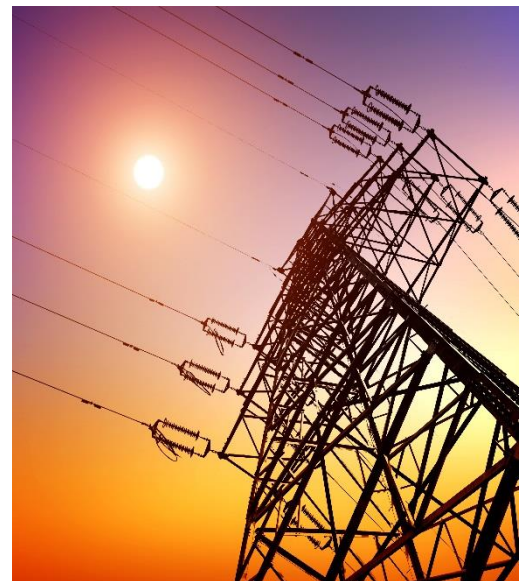
This is the first WHO Collaborating Centre in this area of expertise in the world.



Read the full article on Public Health Wales' [website](#) or on the WHO [website](#).

Update on the Proposed Wylfa Newydd Nuclear Power Station Development HIA

The last Steering Group meeting for the HIA of the Wylfa Newydd Nuclear Power Station development was held at the end of January 2018. The process started in 2012 and has involved a number of stakeholders and a wide-ranging consultation with the communities of Anglesey. The final HIA report will be published later in 2018 by Horizon Nuclear Power (the developer) when it is submitted as part of the supporting evidence for the Development Consent Order and Planning applications. The HIA whilst a standalone report, will have a Non Technical Summary (NTS) and is submitted alongside the Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment documents.



There will now be an ongoing Health and Wellbeing Monitoring Group which will ensure that the health and wellbeing of the population is not impacted detrimentally as the construction begins.

Town and Country Planning Association – Reuniting Health with Planning: 5 years

on

WHIASU and Public Health Wales have recently been invited to join the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) on an exciting new project – *Reuniting Health with Planning: 5 years on*.

This project will examine the challenges experienced by local authority Planning Departments and Public Health and Health Care organisations in integrating health and wellbeing, both formally and informally, into the planning process at a municipal and national level. It will scope existing examples of good practice in England and Wales and will also look to highlight future opportunities which stakeholders can utilise.

The project will highlight national priorities such as obesity, poor air quality and the ageing population, and how this can be addressed through the planning systems in England and Wales - taking account of local policy initiatives and legislation to put health and wellbeing at the heart of planning i.e. the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act in Wales.

As part of the project, WHIASU and Public Health Wales will be co-hosting a half-day workshop in Cardiff with the TCPA to bring together representatives from the planning and health sectors to link research and evidence to practice on the ground.

Following the collation of good practice case studies and the interactive workshop, the TCPA will publish a revised handbook which will be available electronically on the WHIASU website.

International Association of Impact Assessment Webinar

On February 15th 2018 Liz Green from WHIASU delivered an international webinar for the International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA) entitled: *'Health, wellbeing and gender impact: HIA of a Night Time Economy'*.

The presentation focused on how HIA added value to the night time economy (NTE) in Wales and what are the health impacts of the NTE, and what groups are affected. Many of these impacts are sex/gender-related and are surprising in several respects. The webinar used a case study from the Welsh Government to discuss stakeholder perspectives and recommendations; how the safeguarding of NTE participants has been enhanced; and how the HIA has provided insight to the Welsh Government to revise the NTE and clearly articulate the key groups who would be affected and the potential consequences for them. The HIA was carried out by WG with support from WHIASU but also Janine Roderick and Kath Ashton from PRID.

A range of practitioners attended the webinar from across the world – these included environmental health practitioners, those involved within criminal justice, public safety, public health arenas and economic development and land use planning development.

The link to the 45 minute webinar recording is: <http://www.iaia.org/webinars.php>. Links to the HIA report and journal paper are referenced on the WHIASU [website](#).

European Public Health Association Conference, November 2017

Liz Green was invited to deliver two presentations at the European Public Health Association (EUPHA) Conference in November 2017 in Stockholm. The first was entitled '*Health Impact Assessment (HIA) in Wales: From voluntary to statutory*' and was in a session entitled '*Mapping legal requirements for HIA institutionalisation across Europe*'. This generated a lot of discussion amongst the audience about how Wales is now in the successful position it is in respect of Health in All Policies/Health Impact Assessment and the Public Health (Wales) Act statutory requirement for HIA, compared to other European states.

Liz also delivered a presentation in the session '*Integration of health appraisal within urban planning and environmental impact assessments*' and this was entitled '*Integrating health in planning sectors in Wales: Developing a resource for practitioners*'. This focussed on the Unit's HiAP work and outlined the rationale and development of the '[Planning for Better Health and Wellbeing](#)' resource for public health and planning officers in Wales.

Since returning from the conference Liz has received many emails and requests to discuss this document and work further, and sent links to colleagues across Europe.

HIA Training and Learning Transfer

Training

WHIASU is currently re-developing their Training Strategy and further details will be published shortly. This is in response to the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 and the continued growth in the practice of HIA in Wales and the need to build additional capacity.

Meanwhile, the Unit continues to deliver a range of training including the free to access [e learning](#) package which offers a basic introduction. There are more in depth options including Rapid or Comprehensive HIA competency courses delivered in partnership with the Chartered



Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH). In addition, the Unit can design training to meet specific needs of teams.

The next Rapid competency course will be delivered in Conwy, North Wales starting on September 18th. Content and booking details can be found [here](#).

As part of the training strategy development, WHIASU has identified a number of roles associated with applying HIA methodology. We believe these roles will help individuals and teams focus on their specific training needs whilst also providing focus for tailored content of our courses. Delivery of training is only successful if the learning is transferred into practise and the Unit is always reflecting on how we can support this transfer of knowledge into practise.

Learning transfer

Which comes first - attending HIA training or involvement in applying HIA methodology and a desire to build additional skills and knowledge? Whichever route brings you to HIA training is not the important factor. The important thing is you have a desire to know more about HIA or you wish to demonstrate to others that you have confidence in applying the methodology because HIA can contribute to the delivery of key outcomes for your area of work.

Below are two case studies that will help to illustrate the learning transfer and the outcomes that can be achieved.

Comprehensive HIA Course - To access this course you need to have undertaken the Rapid HIA training. Candidates will have been involved in applying their learning and now wish to demonstrate a 'step up'. Candidates will be awarded a certificate of competency following the successful completion of a Comprehensive HIA and final report.

An Environmental Health Officer working in Anglesey has been an advocate for HIA for many years and has gained experience through 'learning by doing'. Huw wished to formalise that learning and demonstrate his competency by undertaking the comprehensive HIA course. Huw chose an assignment topic that would not only fulfil the needs of the course but would also inform a piece of work that Anglesey County Council would need to undertake. This has resulted in a clear demonstration of learning transfer. The full report can be accessed from WHIASU's [website](#).

Below Huw has outlined his HIA;

"In response to Welsh Government's proposals that Local Authorities should prepare local toilet strategies, I undertook a prospective Comprehensive Health Impact Assessment (HIA).

The intention was to trial this by examining the specific circumstances found on Anglesey using the WHIASU Practical Guide (2012) (www.whiasu.wales.nhs.uk).

The HIA considered the views of various Public Health experts and stakeholders through both direct communication and a half-day rapid HIA participatory workshop (which engaged older people, parents with young children, tourists, the provider service and community representatives). This resulted in a number of negative and positive health effects being identified and various issues scoped-in for further assessment, including:-

- Vulnerable Groups such as older people, individuals on low incomes, homeless, people with certain medical conditions and tourists.*
- Lifestyles impacts such as dehydration in individuals, (particularly amongst older people and drivers) who reduce fluid intake in order to avoid toilet stops*
- Social and community issues such as isolation and loneliness amongst older people including those who are disabled, who are reluctant to go out because of a lack of public toilets to meet their needs.*
- Environmental issues such as street fouling, particularly along A55(T).*
- Economic issues such as impacts on tourists and peripatetic workers.*
- Impacts on services such as reduction in amenities, alternative provision by private businesses and use of IT.*

These issues were refined by further discussions with three separate focus groups: postal workers, haulage and a coach/bus company (all of which employed a peripatetic workforce), as well as telephone interviews with organisations responsible for maintaining the A55(T) and another that works on behalf of homeless people. The outcome of these assessments, when considered in terms of the community profile and literary evidence, resulted in a number of recommendations.

The HIA identified that there may be unintended consequences when a local authority closes public toilets. These can range from impacts on the tourism economy (e.g. Retaining Seaside Awards) to the provision of services for the homeless. HIA enables a local authority to ensure that decisions on public toilet closures are not taken in isolation and when closures are approved, suggests methods of mitigating or even negating the impacts.”

Local Public Health team

Craig Jones from the Hywel Dda Public Health Team outlines below his experiences in relation to HIA.

"What has Health Impact Assessment ever done for us?"

No, it's not the start of a Monty Python sketch but a serious consideration for local Public Health teams as HIAs are set to become a mandatory product for any major projects.

If nothing else, the implementation of a HIA forces us to ask key questions. Is what we are about to do actually going to make any difference to the health of the population? And if so, how?

It's a pretty obvious question to ask, isn't it? Maybe to those of us working in Public Health, yes. But is it always a key consideration amongst our partners? Honestly? Possibly not.

But that's about to change and I can speak from experience that our ability to deliver on the HIA process is certainly one of our very unique public health contributions to partnership working.

The Hywel Dda team were asked to lead on the HIA process for The Wellness Village in Llanelli (a multi-million pound ARCH project). A daunting task, no doubt about that. However, as the work has progressed, we have been able to use the HIA skills and processes to influence not only the programme that will be delivered onsite but the development of the site itself. It has been a truly rewarding process for all involved and most importantly it has seen our influence rise with a massive number of local and national partners. They've recognised our 'unique' role in the process and have listened to our voice. The only downside is that they now know who to come to for their next big project, and that's not a bad thing at all!

Involvement in the Wellness Village HIA has also stimulated a greater awareness across the local team here. As part of our team's consideration of our role in respect of the introduction of statutory HIA within the PH Act we've had the WHIASU trainers down to deliver a session. HIA is now seen as a key consideration for future work planning by all members of the team. The process has not just been recognised as a good 'in' with partners but also a key factor in establishing the meaningful components of monitoring and evaluation protocols.

So what has Health Impact Assessment ever done for us?

Plenty.

It's allowed us to contribute in a meaningful way to a massive local project and allowed us to influence positive changes for the good of our populations' health.

It's actively transformed our thinking around how we approach new and innovative projects and partnerships.

And it's allowed us to show our very unique public health contribution to the work of our partners.

Not bad. Not bad at all."

Useful Resources

As part of the Unit's role to support the effective use of HIA in Wales, we continue to develop a range of resources such as tools and case studies. These are intended to provide practical support for HIA practice along with insight into the context of applying HIA methodology to aid decision making and understanding of HIA. In many cases we collaborate with others to produce these resources when a gap or specific need has been identified. The Unit welcomes any opportunity to discuss ideas for the development of resources which will support and further the understanding and practice of HIA.

Below are some examples of items produced over the last 12 months and there are more available on our website. Others are currently in development including the updating of the WHIASU Practical Guide for HIA and a Skills and Knowledge Framework for HIA. Both are illustrations of the Unit's response to the passing of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017. If you spot a gap or have a specific need we are always happy to discuss further.

- [Case study for Night Time Economy Framework](#)
- [Briefing: Housing and Health: Health Impact Assessment](#)
- [The Quality Assurance Framework Tool for Health Impact Assessment](#)
- [The Quality Assurance Framework Guidance](#)
- [Planning for Better Health and Wellbeing in Wales Resources](#)

Useful Links

A 'Health in All Policies' approach requires a broad understanding across a range of sectors and settings, therefore having a good range of topical information sources really helps. Listed below are some information sources you may already be familiar with and others that you may like to investigate.

- [WHIASU website](#)
- Public Health Network Cymru [website](#) and [bulletins](#)
- [PHW Observatory](#)



- [IN BRIEF](#)
 - This website is produced by Senedd Research, National Assembly for Wales. It provides impartial, authoritative information on the latest topics under consideration at the National Assembly for Wales. [Subscriptions](#) available for weekly or monthly email alerts.
- Healthy People Healthy Places Current Awareness Update
 - This is produced by Public Health England Knowledge & Library Services. The purpose of this update is to provide you with an overview of the latest news, policies, evidence and resources relevant to the health and place agenda. PHE Knowledge & Library Services can be contacted at libraries@phe.gov.uk.
- West Midlands Healthy Urban Development Group
 - A very useful resource which provides weekly updates on a range reports, research and news. Topic areas cover: Sustainable Development Goals, Healthy planning & environment, Housing, Climate change and sustainability, Active travel & transport, Air Quality & pollution, and Food & food security. To receive the update contact paul.southon@outlook.com

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For more information and guidance on HIA, please visit our [website](#).