



Commissioning a HIA and appointing a HIA specialist or consultant

Things to consider:

Tender

Why are you commissioning a HIA and what do you need from it? What are your prospective outcomes?

What finances and resources do you have available?

What are your timeframes and any key deadlines? (Using the Scoping Checklist within the guide will help you formalise and shape these questions)

What requirements (legal or otherwise), if any, does your organisation have to include within any HIA or need to fulfil?

Experience

What previous experience does the consultant or the consultancy have in HIA?

Have they actually conducted one and are able to produce a report of the work? Or is the knowledge purely theoretical? Will the work be outsourced to a third party?

Can the Consultant explain how the outputs and findings had any influence on the decision makers?

Does the Consultant have the key skills to engage with the key stakeholders and community contributors?

What kind of experience do you require? A wide ranging knowledge to complete a comprehensive HIA or is a limited working knowledge sufficient?

Approach to health and wellbeing

Which approach to HIA does the consultant have? A narrow, environmental/technically focussed one based more on statistics and baseline data or a holistic sociological one that encompasses the World Health Organisation's definition of health and wellbeing?

Approach to evidence and participation

What kinds of evidence do you expect the HIA Consultant to gather? Can the consultant provide information that they have the ability to obtain, examine and successfully achieve this?

What requirements (legal or otherwise), if any, does your organisation have to consult with the community or has promised to fulfil?

How does the consultant view consultation - and does this include active citizen and community participation?

Outcomes

What does the HIA aim to achieve? What will the outcomes be?

What will be the measures of success? Both the Commissioner and the Consultant need to be aware of these from the start and the Consultant must be able to explain the process and how these outcomes can be achieved.

Other issues to consider

Does the Consultant have knowledge of the local area? Will they be able to contact the local people and organisations needed to contribute to and provide support and evidence for the HIA?

What is included in the price - will anything be extra. Does the HIA work cover all your needs? What will be provided within it? Does it include potential dissemination? Agree the parameters at the outset - timeframes, breakdowns and non-negotiables. You may want to consider asking for a Terms of Reference or Scoping paper to be drawn up.

Who will retain overall responsibility for the HIA? Who is responsible for conflict resolution within Steering Group or the HIA? Again, this needs to be agreed.

Do you have the knowledge or have someone experienced enough to be able to recognise a good quality finished HIA and report and challenge the Consultants if need be.

Liz Green. Principal HIA Development Officer

Public Health Wales/Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit