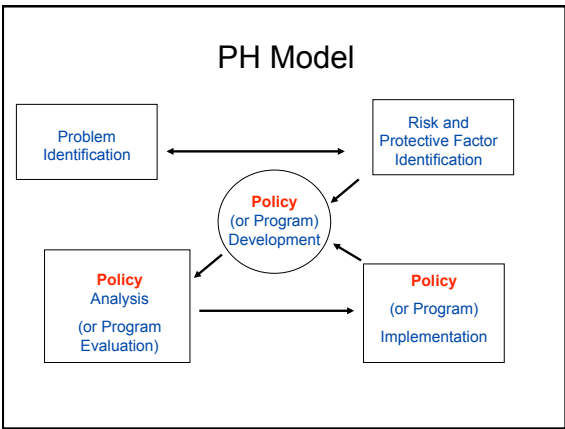


The Role of Policy Analysis in the Public Health Model



- What is a policy?
- Who makes policy?
- Why are policies made?
- What are important health policies of interest to you? to the state? to the nation? to the World?

Policy Analysis...

...is **client-oriented** advice relevant to public decisions and informed by social values.

- Typically, policy analysis relates to *public* decisions
 - From traditional schools of public policy
 - Can include analyses done by private sector that are impacted by public decisions
- But, in health, policy analysis extends beyond just public decisions
 - Examples?

...Involves (Political) Systems Analysis

- Assesses the interaction of all different parts of the **political** system that affects health policy
- The political system provides the framework for people's participation in the policy making process
 - By encouraging or discouraging participation

Defining the Political System

- Government (the State)
- Political Parties
- Private Sector (industry/business)
- Individual Voters
- Interest groups

Key Health Policy Actors

- Health care purchasers
- Health care providers
- Third-party payors
- Consumers
- Interest groups
- Other groups

How do they impact the health policy process?

Exogenous Factors that Affect Health Policy

- Situational factors
 - current events
 - major political/world changes
- Structural factors
 - Type of political regime, constitution
 - Separation of checks and balances in the federal system
 - Economic structure/base

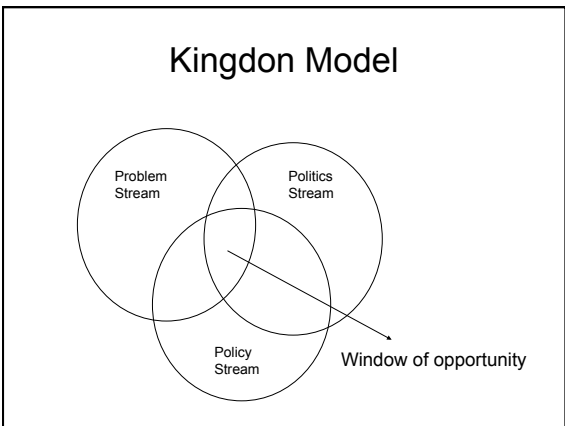
Exogenous Factors that Affect Health Policy

- Cultural factors
 - Political Environment
 - Consensus building
 - Incrementalism
 - Political feasibility
 - Public philosophy and political ideology
 - Public trust in government
 - Religious factors
- Environmental factors
 - External, international situations of relevance
 - Economic feasibility, scarcity of resources
- Technological environment

3 things required for policy making to occur in a political system:

- Problem Stream: why do some problems come to the fore? Because of how policymakers learn about conditions
 - Indicators – health status data
 - Focusing events – crises
 - Feedback – from programs already in place

- Politics stream: visible and hidden participants in the political process
 - Organized interest groups, advocates
 - Politicians
 - Academics, researchers
- Policy stream: selecting from proposals that will become policy
 - Technical feasibility
 - Congruence with existing values
 - Anticipation of future constraints (including economic)
 - Public acceptability
 - Political receptivity



What are types of government policy actions?

- Health regulation
- Provision of healthcare
- Provision of health insurance
- Health promotion
- Funding of research and ethical implications
- Training of healthcare workers

Another Framework for Policy Actions

- A comparison of monetary versus non-monetary actions
- A comparison of direct versus indirect actions
 - Monetary/direct: provide, purchase
 - Monetary/indirect: tax, subsidize
 - Non-monetary/direct: require, prohibit
 - Non-monetary/indirect: inform, implore/cajole

9 Steps in Conducting a Policy Analysis

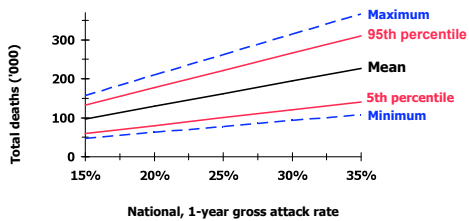
1. Define the Problem
2. Assemble Some Evidence
3. Construct the Alternatives
4. Select the Criteria
5. Project the Outcomes
6. Confront the Trade-Offs
7. Decide
8. Tell Your Story
9. Implement and Monitor

Key criteria in Evaluating Policies

- Efficiency – a comparison of outcomes to costs
- Political Feasibility
- Ethical Concerns
- Distributional/Equity Concerns

Example: What Should the US Immunization Policy Be When (not if) a Flu Pandemic Occurs?

Estimated US Deaths Due to Flu Pandemic



- Immunization policy if objective is to maximize benefits/outcomes (i.e., minimize morbidity and mortality)?

- Immunization policy if objective is to minimize total costs?
 - Total Costs = Costs to Immunize - Cost of Illness averted
 - Costs of Illness = medical costs of flu and losses in productivity

- Groups to Consider for Immunization**
- 65+, high-risk
 - 65+, low risk
 - 20-64, high risk
 - 20-64, low risk
 - 0-19, high risk
 - 0-19, low risk

Example: Policy Implications - Who to Vaccinate First?

Groups Under Consideration: 65+, high risk; 65+, low risk; 20-64, high risk; 20-64 low risk; 0-19, high risk; 0-19, low risk

Priority	Criteria for Prioritization	
	Risk of Death	\$ to vaccinate
1(top)		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Example: Policy Implications - Who to Vaccinate First?

Priority	Criteria for Prioritization	
	Risk of Death	\$ to vaccinate
1(top)	HR 65+ yrs	
2	LR 65+ yrs	
3	HR 0-19 yrs	
4	HR 20-64 yrs	
5	LR 20-64 yrs	
6	LR 0-19 yrs	

Example: Policy Implications - Who to Vaccinate First?

Priority	Criteria for Prioritization	
	Risk of Death	\$ to vaccinate
1(top)	HR 65+ yrs	HR 20-64 yrs
2	LR 65+ yrs	HR 0-19 yrs
3	HR 0-19 yrs	LR 20-64 yrs
4	HR 20-64 yrs	LR 0-19 yrs
5	LR 20-64 yrs	HR 65+ yrs
6	LR 0-19 yrs	LR 65+ yrs

Political Feasibility

- Who are the key stakeholders?
 - Who will support the policy and how can their support be garnered?
 - Who will oppose the policy and how can their objections be countered or how can they be compensated?
- Does a window of opportunity exist?
 - Example: Obama healthcare reform

Ethical Concerns

- Does the policy “do no harm”?
 - Example: folic acid fortification to bread
- Is the policy in line with the morals of society?
 - Example: Stem cell research

Distributional Concerns

- Does the policy eliminate health disparities?
 - School lunch programs
- Does the policy impact hard to reach, underserved populations?
 - Health savings accounts

Other Domains

- Access to care
- Utilization of services
- Quality of care
- Awareness/satisfaction with care

GA Health Policy Issues?

- Mandatory HPV vaccine for girls entering 6th grade
- Mandatory BMI screening
- Increased requirements for citizenship documentation for PeachCare
- Seatbelts for pick-up trucks
- Tax for hospital to cover cost of increasing Medicaid costs

Policy Evaluation – Post-Implementation

- Have outcomes improved?
- Have costs been reduced?
- Do benefits outweigh costs?
- **Compliance with the policy**
 - Example: age 21 set as drinking age
- **Enforcement of the policy**
 - Example: state-wide smoking ordinance

Want More?

- HPAM 8400: Policy and Economic Analysis in PH (Spring)

- HPAM 8850: Cost-effectiveness Analysis (Fall)
