



National Collaborating Centre
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale
en santé environnementale



National Collaborating Centre
for Determinants of health

Centre de collaboration nationale
des déterminants de la santé

Public Health Inspectors Taking Action on Health Equity and the Social Determinants of Health

CIPHI National
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National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health



National Collaborating Centres for Public Health



Centres de collaboration nationale en santé publique





National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health

Our focus

Environmental health
practice, programs,
& policy in Canada

Our audience

- Environmental health practitioners and policymakers

Our work

- Synthesize, translate, and facilitate exchange of knowledge
- Identify gaps in research and practice knowledge
- Build capacity through networks



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National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health

Our focus

Social determinants of health & health equity

Our audience

- Practitioners, decision makers, & researchers working in public health
- Organizations in Canada's public health sector

Our work

- Translate & share evidence to influence work on the social determinants & health equity



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Today we will explore ...

How social determinants of health (SDH) and health equity impact environmental health practice

The role of environmental health practitioners in dealing with SDH and health inequities

Barriers and facilitators for Public Health Inspectors (PHIs) to addressing SDH and health equity



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Key terms

Glossary of Essential Health Equity Terms

<http://nccdh.ca/resources/glossary/>

- SDH (social determinants of health)
- Health equity
- Health inequities
- Inequalities/Disparities



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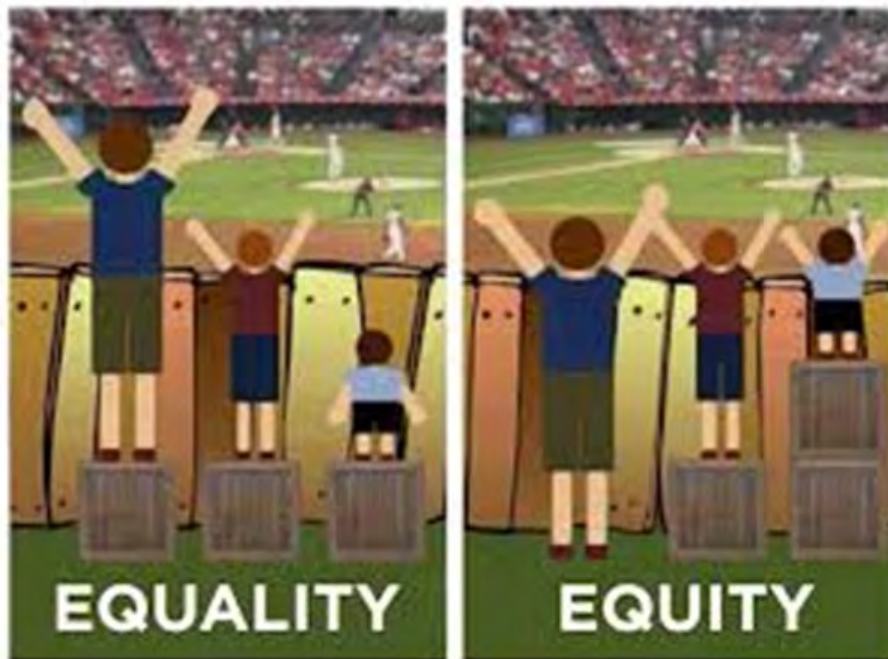
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Equality vs. Equity



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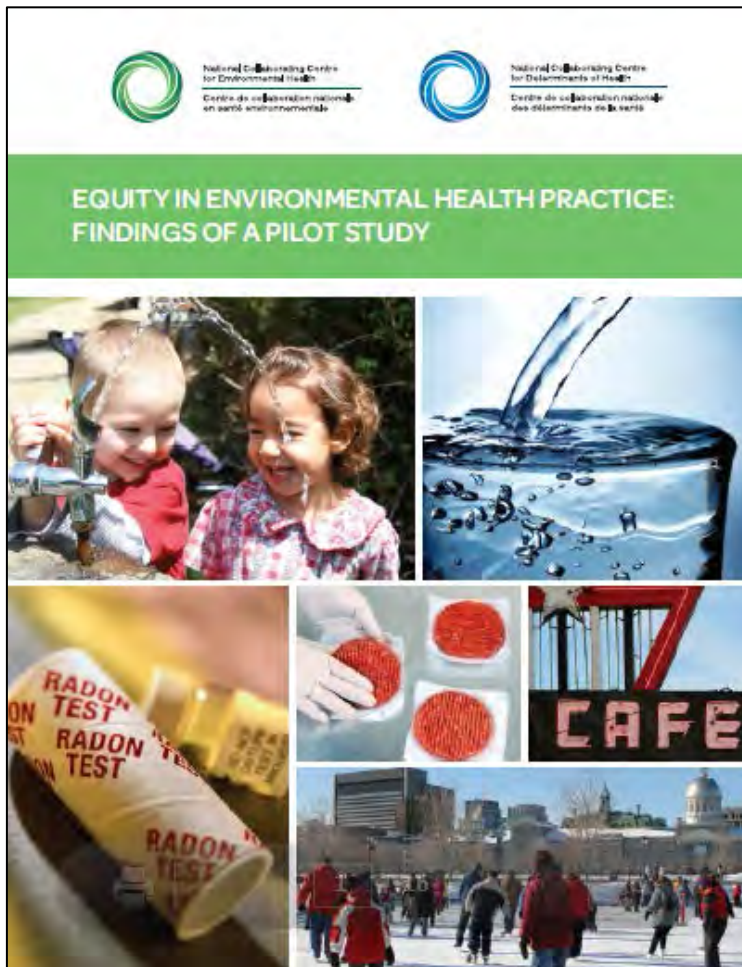
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EQUITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRACTICE: FINDINGS OF A PILOT STUDY



NCCEH

<http://www.ncceh.ca/documents/evidence-review/equity-environmental-health-practice-findings-pilot-study>

NCCDH

<http://nccdh.ca/resources/entry/equity-in-environmental-health-practice-findings-of-a-pilot-study>



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What do public health priorities of health equity and SDH mean for environmental health practitioners?



PROMOTE, PROTECT, PREVENT:
Our Health Begins Here



BC's Guiding Framework for Public Health



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EQUITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRACTICE: FINDINGS OF A PILOT STUDY

- Inequities create barriers to compliance
- May or may not be recognized by PHI
- PHI response may help **mitigate** inequities
- PHI response could **exacerbate** inequities



Closed
due to
Insanitary
Conditions
By order of the
Public Health Inspector



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1. How do inequities and the SDH impact EH regulatory practice?
2. What needs and gaps affect PHIs' ability to promote health equity?
3. What are some promising practices being used by PHIs?



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- Focus groups with PHIs in BC and NS (n=11)
- Professional experiences as PHIs, impact of SDH on health protection role
- Avoided “equity” terminology in focus groups
- QDA: *a priori* codes + emerging themes



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Socioeconomic status

- Financial restrictions/cash flow
- Employee finances in job security

Cultural differences

- Expectations of PHIs/operator relationship
- Immigrants in new industry (food)

Language/Literacy

- Limited English language skills
- Low literacy/computer literacy

Stress

- Distraction
- Intensify other barriers

Geography

- Access to equipment, parts, expertise
- Food security in remote communities



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Social strategies

- Building trust and being upfront
- Risk communication

Support strategies

- Creative use of funding; Referrals
- Avoid overwhelming

Language strategies

- Informal translators and nonverbal communication
- Borrowing print resources

Discretion

- Progressive enforcement and prioritization
- Consider context and competing risks



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- Workload
- Staff turnover/transition
- Prescriptive policies & lack of managerial support
- Fragmentation and lack of collaboration
- Ambiguity about role & responsibility



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- Implement *ad hoc* strategies consistently
- Oral translation services, multilingual print resources
- Formal structures for collaboration, mutual support, and debriefing
- Guidance on use of discretion
- Training and education:
 - SDH and health equity
 - risk-based inspection
 - risk communication
 - context-specific responses



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- Time constraints
- Jurisdictional grey-zone
- Lack of management support or backup
- Being the “enforcer” with no option other than tickets
- Frustration with operators intentionally trying to get out of compliance
- Passionate about health protection but not feeling recognized or valued



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“It’s not an easy job. Some days you go home and you’re like, this job sucks. And then you have those small glittery moments where they get it, or you help someone, or someone calls you ... to say, thank you.... It makes you proud”



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- Supportive strategies to help operators achieve compliance
- Tools to mitigate barriers
- Referral to services – Collaboration

- Adaptive organizational policies
- Clearly articulate role and responsibility
- Integrate SDH and health equity into PHI training and competencies



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Introducing.....

Vittoria Vecchiarelli

Senior PHI, Regional Municipality of York



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Final thoughts ...

Thank you!

And thank you for completing the evaluation survey 😊



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