

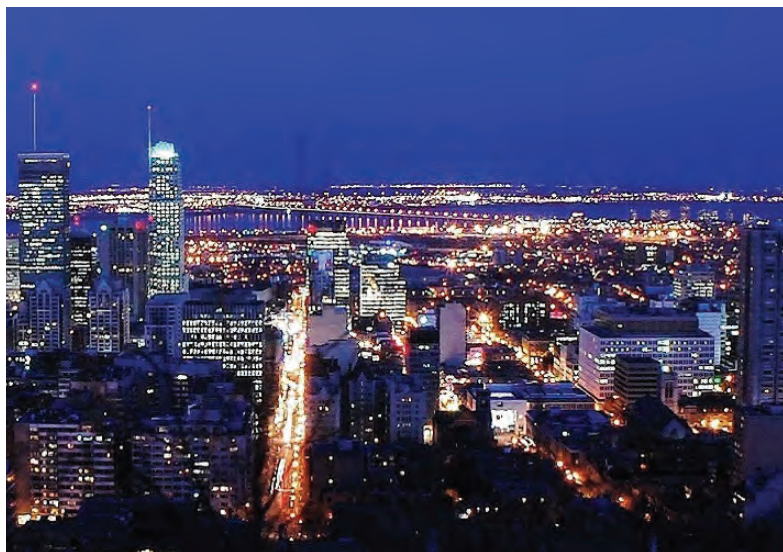



National Collaborating Centre
for Environmental Health
Centre de collaboration nationale
en santé environnementale



National Collaborating Centre
for Determinants of Health
Centre de collaboration nationale
des déterminants de la santé

KEY RESOURCES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTITIONERS TO ADDRESS HEALTH EQUITY: *A CURATED LIST*





Public health is built on the principles of social justice and equity. Given that public health inspectors (PHIs) – also known as environmental health officers or EHOs – are the only professional discipline with a training based in public health explicitly, it is essential that they are empowered to work towards these principles.

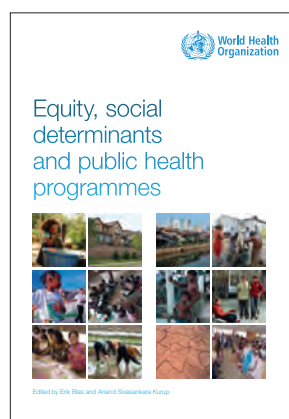
We've selected resources for environmental public health practitioners to use in addressing the social determinants of health (SDH) and health equity as part of their consultation, enforcement, and educational roles. This curated list points to key resources that are targeted at environmental public health practitioners specifically, to help them see their role in integrating a health equity lens into their regulatory mandate.

A broad scan of resources was conducted through electronic search means as well as connections with practitioners and organizations across Canada. Most of the resources found and listed here relate to the work of the National Collaborating Centres for Determinants of Health and Environmental Health (NCCDH and NCCEH) and the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC). The scarcity of other resources is a reflection of being in the early stages of integrating these concepts into environmental public health practice.

This list does not include resources on integrating SDH into public health practice more broadly across disciplines. It also does not include peer-reviewed scientific literature relating these concepts. The focus of creating this curated list was on finding grey literature sources and practice-based tools and information. Further resources to support the understanding of the broader concepts and the implementation of practices to advance health equity (such as intersectoral collaboration, policy development, practice assessment, leadership, discipline competencies, monitoring, and advocacy) can be found by visiting www.nccdh.ca.

THE INTERSECTION OF THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH AND HEALTH EQUITY WITH ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE

Understanding how SDH and health equity intersect with the work PHIs do helps distinguish practitioners' role in addressing these issues.



[Equity, social determinants and public health programmes.](#)

World Health Organization. [2010].

This book includes chapters on the intersection of health equity and 12 major public health issues. Chapter 6, "Food safety: Equity and social determinants," explores

social determinants at a structural level (ethnicity, gender, education, migration, trade, urbanization, demographic factors and poverty) that imply inequity in relation to food safety. As well, the socioeconomic consequences of foodborne illness related to inequities are discussed along with an analysis of factors leading to differential exposure, the causes of increased vulnerability, and differences in socioeconomic context and position. A conceptual framework of the social determinants of food safety is offered, along with recommendations for public health interventions including strengthening food safety systems, addressing the conditions leading to increased vulnerability, and addressing the root causes of inequity in food safety.

NCCDH has prepared "[Pathways to health equity and differential outcomes: A summary of the WHO document *Equity, social determinants and public health programmes*](#)" to highlight the priority public health conditions analytical framework outlined in this book. The framework looks at how exposure to risk conditions leads to differences in exposure to risk conditions, which in turn leads to differences in vulnerability to risks, variable health outcomes, and differential quality of life impacts (consequences).



[Public health, environmental and social determinants of health.](#)

World Health Organization. [n/d].

This section of the World Health Organization (WHO) website profiles the organization's Department of Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinants of Health (PHE), the goal of which is to "promote a healthier environment, intensify primary prevention and influence public policies in all sectors so as to address the root causes of environmental and social threats to health." News and events related to global issues of environmental health and health equity are shared, as well as links to the work of the WHO addressing the social determinants of health with an environmental and public health focus. The work of the PHE is to develop resources that facilitate policies and interventions focused on reducing environmental and social risk factors to health.



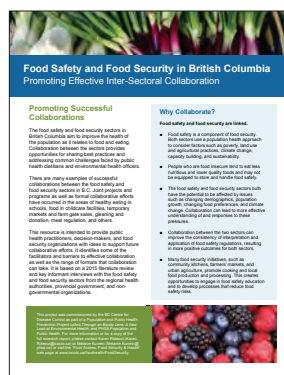
Environmental scan of policy levers for equity-integrated environmental health practice in BC.

BC Centre for Disease Control. [2016].

This report aims to clarify a mandate for equity-integrated environmental public health

practice within British Columbia. Based on an environmental scan of legislation and policy instruments from across Canada, the report summarizes how two types of policy levers relate to health equity and environmental public health: governing instruments are enforceable legislation and regulations; policy drivers are frameworks, strategic plans, and other action-oriented tools that guide the operationalizing of concepts such as equity. Through an analysis of these policy levers, the report explores legislative and organizational factors that impact the integration of equity into environmental health practice. A companion document called "[Taking action on health equity: Policy levers in environmental health practice](#)" highlights how two types of policy levers (governing instruments and policy drivers) affect the implementation of an equity lens, and highlights five key ways that policy can support leaders and decision makers to take further action.

This document is part of [Through an Equity Lens](#), an online series of resources about health equity and the social determinants of health created specifically for environmental public health practitioners and policymakers.



Food safety and food security in British Columbia: Promoting effective intersectoral collaboration.

BC Centre for Disease Control and Provincial Health Services Authority. [2015].

This summary report is intended to provide public health practitioners, decision-

makers, and food security organizations with ideas to support collaborative efforts between the food safety and food security/healthy eating sectors. It is based on a research report from a qualitative study of environmental health officers, policymakers, public health dietitians, and representatives of food organizations in British Columbia. The report summarizes some of the facilitators and barriers to effective collaboration as well as the range of formats that collaboration can take. It highlights the importance of articulating shared goals and visions, open communication, collaborative processes, and creativity, and provides examples to illustrate these approaches in practice.

FACILITATORS & BARRIERS TO INTEGRATING SDH AND HEALTH EQUITY INTO INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES

Identifying barriers and facilitators to addressing SDH and health equity supports a shift in practice focus for individual PHIs and organizations.

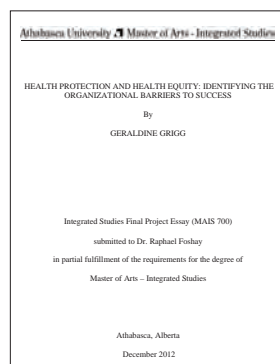


[Equity in environmental health practice: Findings of a pilot study.](#)

National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health, National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health. [2015].

This report presents the findings of a qualitative study

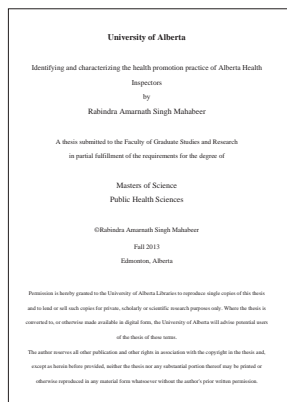
that explored the role of public health inspectors (PHIs) in addressing the social determinants of health and health equity. Although addressing these issues has been identified as a priority area for all public health professionals, PHIs have often not been included in discussions about how public health can do this work. Results of the study explore the equity-related issues experienced by operators that may present as barriers to compliance with public health protection regulations, organizational factors that affect a PHI's ability to take action, and strategies that are employed to address such circumstances. Recommendations to support PHIs in taking action to address SDH and health equity are offered for consideration at the individual and organizational levels.



[Health protection and health equity: Identifying the organizational barriers to success.](#)

Geraldine Grigg. [2012].

This case study considers the ability of health protection regulatory programs to address health equity within current Public Health organizational capacity. The literature review portion of this paper explores staff capacity, organizational structure, and organizational capacity related to addressing health equity through regulatory public health programming. The case study was an examination of documents and information sources from a specific health protection program including the annual report, job descriptions, and continuing competencies of public health inspectors (PHIs). Results highlighted barriers and facilitators related to organizational structure, programming, staffing positions, and competencies. Organizational development and staff education are recommended.

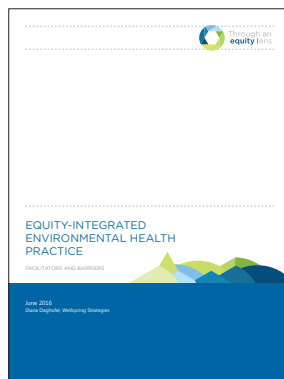


Identifying and characterizing the health promotion practice of Alberta Health Inspectors.

Rabindra Mahabeer. [2013].

This graduate thesis presents a qualitative study of how public health inspectors (PHIs) practice health promotion and address the social determinants of health (SDH) in regulatory health

protection work. An extensive literature review describes public health policy regulation, and the relationship between environmental public health practice and SDH. Findings report on facilitators and barriers that affect capacity, policy, and the ability of PHIs to practice health promotion, as well as how PHIs can affect policy implementation. As practicing health promotion and addressing SDH is often at the discretion of the individual practitioner, a gap is identified between the existence of public health policy and “the social reality of implementation” (e.g., the need to tailor interventions to individual client needs while staying within boundaries of organizational policy), calling for the implementation of a comprehensive health promotion strategy to ensure the SDH are addressed.



Equity-integrated environmental public health practice: Facilitators and barriers.

BC Centre for Disease Control. [2016].

This report highlights ways that equity is integrated into environmental public health practice within BC and across

Canada. The document includes a series of vignettes that illustrate different ways to integrate health equity into environmental health practice. It also provides an overview of individual characteristics and organizational factors that can facilitate, or create barriers to, integrating an equity lens to environmental public health practice.

Two companion documents offer action-oriented strategies to integrate equity into practice. “Taking action on health equity in environmental public health: Five strategies for organizational change” outlines five ways to begin integrating an equity lens into environmental health practice. “Success factors for equity-integrated environmental health practice: A discussion guide” summarizes the key facilitators to integrating an equity lens and uses three case studies to illustrate different ways these facilitators have been implemented. Each case study is followed by an identification of critical success factors and a series of discussion questions to guide thinking toward the context of one’s own agency or department.

This report is part of Through an Equity Lens, an online series of resources about health equity and the social determinants of health created specifically for environmental public health practitioners and policymakers.

TAKING ACTION ON SDH AND HEALTH EQUITY

Stories from the field and tools to identify actions provide practical considerations for how PHIs can address SDH and health equity in their mandated regulatory practice.



[Health equity and environmental public health practice: Stories from public health inspectors.](#)

National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health. [2016].

This series of blogs highlights various ways that public health

inspectors (PHIs) can address the social determinants of health (SDH) and health equity within their mandated public health roles. Three scenarios are highlighted to represent different types of action that can be taken at different levels of public health practice. Stories include: how the actions of one PHI can evolve into an intersectoral collaborative approach; integrating SDH into community engagement campaigns and organizational practice; and PHIs as part of a cross-disciplinary approach to food systems. These blogs help address the request from practitioners for practical ideas of actions that can be taken within their daily practice and the scope of their current mandated roles.



[Primer on equity and environmental public health \(EPH\) practice.](#)

BC Centre for Disease Control. [2016].

This three-part primer was written to introduce

environmental public health practitioners, managers, and program directors to the concept of health equity as it relates specifically to their area of practice. The first part, "Five things to know about equity in EPH," highlights the ways that equity intersects with practice. The second, "Areas of EPH practice impacted by the social determinants of health," shows how equity issues can arise across different areas of environmental health practice. The third and final part, "Equity in EPH practice," highlights some emerging and promising practices for integrating an equity lens within environmental public health.

This primer is part of [Through an Equity Lens](#), an online series of resources about health equity and the social determinants of health created specifically for environmental public health practitioners and policymakers.



Toward health equity: Practical actions for public health inspectors.

*National Collaborating Centre
for Environmental Health,
National Collaborating
Centre for Determinants
of Health, BC Centre for
Disease Control. [2016].*

This framework and user guide are designed to help individuals and organizations get started applying an equity lens within environmental public health practice. These resources are intended to stimulate thinking about how health equity and the social determinants of health relate to an individual's or an organization's role. Through a series of questions, the framework guides the user through a process, from learning about the basic concepts to relating them to practice and stimulating ideas for how to move closer to an equity-integrated practices. The user guide provides ideas for how individual frontline practitioners, managers, and professional educators can use the framework in a variety of settings to meet their equity goals.



Determinants of health and environmental health practice: Opportunities for action.

*National Collaborating Centre
for Environmental Health
and National Collaborating
Centre for Determinants
of Health. [2015].*

The National Collaborating Centres for Environmental Health and Determinants of Health (NCCEH and NCCDH) co-hosted a workshop about health equity at the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI) Manitoba Branch Continuing Professional Competencies (CPC) Fall 2015 Workshop in Winnipeg, MB. The session provided an overview of how health equity and the social determinants of health impact environmental public health practice and explored ways practitioners can respond. The slide deck includes two presentations: (1) "Overview of a pilot study on equity in environmental health practice" by Dianne Oickle, NCCEH and (2) "Areas of environmental public health practice affected by the social determinants of health" by Karen Rideout, BCCDC/NCCEH. This session also included a panel discussion with representatives from the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch of Health Canada, and Manitoba Health, which has been summarized in an article titled "[Opportunities for environmental public health action on the social determinants of health and health inequity](#)" in the December 2015 issue of *Environmental Health Review*.

This curated reading list was prepared by Dianne Oickle (NCCDH) & Karen Rideout (NCCEH, BCCDC).

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La version française est également disponible aux adresses www.ccnds.ca et www.ccnse.ca sous le titre *Ressources clés pour aider les spécialistes en santé environnementale à agir pour l'équité en santé : liste de lectures essentielles*.