Health Impact Assessment:
A Practical Framework for Identifying Environmental Human Health Effects & Relevant Policy Solutions
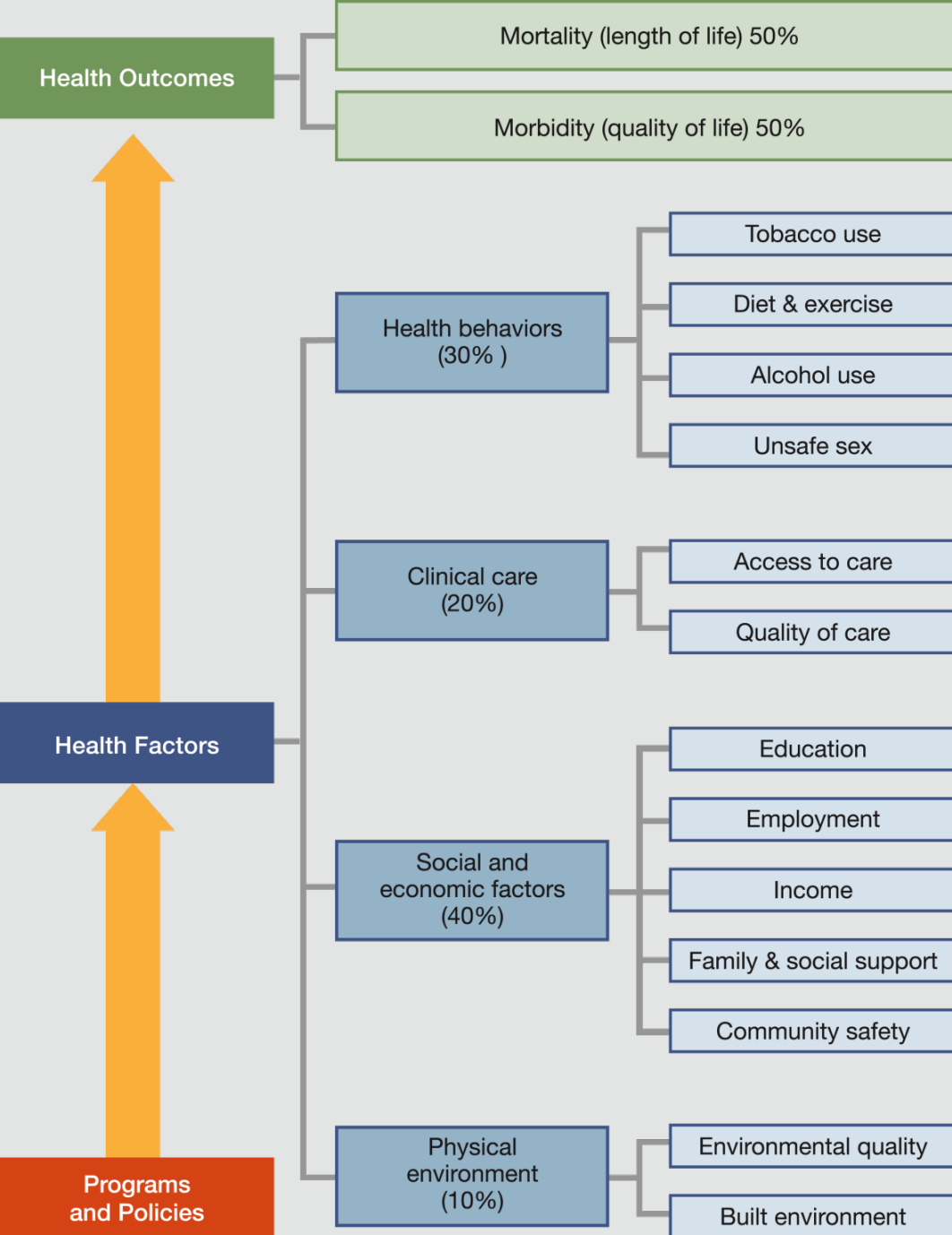
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A collaboration between Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts.

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Outline

- Context for HIA

- What is HIA?

- Steps of HIA

- Examples of HIA

- Integrating HIA into EIA
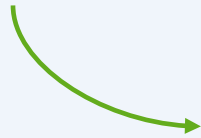
- Key Points about HIA

County Health Rankings model ©2010 UWPHI

HIA Addresses Determinants of Health

How does the proposed project, plan, policy

affect

Housing
Air quality
Noise
Safety
Social networks
Nutrition
Parks and natural space
Private goods and services
Public services
Transportation
Livelihood
Water quality
Education
Inequities

and lead to health outcomes

Slide courtesy of Human Impact Partners

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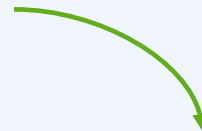
Definition of HIA

HIA is a systematic process that uses an array of data sources and analytic methods and considers input from stakeholders to determine the potential effects of a proposed policy, plan, program, or project on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population. HIA provides recommendations on monitoring and managing those effects.

[National Academies: Committee on Health Impact Assessment]

The HIA Process

- **Screening:** *establishes the need for and value of conducting an HIA*

- **Scoping:** *identifies the populations that might be affected, determines which health effects will be evaluated in the HIA*

- **Assessment:** *describes baseline health conditions of affected populations; characterizes expected health effects of the proposal relative to the baseline*

- **Recommendations:** *identifies alternatives to the proposal or specific actions that could be taken to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects AND maximize health benefits of a proposal*

- **Reporting:** *communicates findings and recommendations to decision-makers, the public, and other stakeholders*

- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** *monitors results of HIA, monitors health outcomes; evaluates the HIA process*

HIA Ex: Jack London Gateway Development

Authors: Human Impact Partners & SFDPH

Decision: Plan for 61 new senior housing units close to 2 freeways & Port of Oakland

Impacts: Air quality; noise; safety; retail access

Recommendations: Noise-insulating windows; pedestrian protection medians; traffic calming measures; air quality monitoring; installation of ventilation systems; and many others

Outcomes:
- Many recommendations adopted
- Additional HIA projects were funded
- Healthy Development Checklist adopted by the development committee

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Integrating HIA into EIA

National Academies – National Research Council Committee on HIA Report Findings:

- The U.S. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and some related state laws explicitly require the identification and analysis of health effects when environmental impact assessment (EIA) is conducted.

- Improving the integration of health into EIA practice under NEPA and related state laws is needed and would advance the goal of improving public health.

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Case Study: Integrating HIA into EIA

Decision: BLM proposed expanded oil leasing in Alaska's North Slope, triggering an EIS

Impact: contamination of local food sources, dietary changes, social ills, air pollution, increased tax revenue

Outcomes:
- Tribal gov't became a "cooperating agency" allows formal role in EIS

- Compromise leasing plan reached

- The lead federal agency incorporated the HIA into the EIS

- New requirements for monitoring AQ & oil contaminants in subsistence foods, worker ed. prog.

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Key Points About HIA

1. HIA can be successfully applied to a wide array of topics
   - It's not just about land use and transportation projects

2. It's not for EVERY decision

3. HIA works in the setting of real time planning and decision-making.
   - Flexible (scope can be scaled to fit available time and resources)
   - Solutions-oriented and realistic (can actually speed approval of a project/decision)

4. It's an effective tool for lasting cross-sector collaboration

5. It helps ensure the correct type of data is collected to facilitate better management of health effects

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Discussion?

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