Putting “the public” back into public health policy-making

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with the collaboration of
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Overarching objectives

1. Examine the spectrum of potential ways that the public could inform public health policy making

2. Explore the use of citizens’ panels for public health practitioners in Ontario
Proposed agenda

1. Public health policy making and the imperative to involve [10 min.]

2. Defining “public involvement” [20 min.]

3. The citizens’ panel model [10 min.]

Part 1.
The imperative to involve
The imperative to involve rests on: [McDougall, 2011]

- **Normative** arguments
- **Legal** arguments
- **Professional** arguments
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

“Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.”

(Article 21)
Declaration of Alma-Ata (1978)

“The people have the right and duty to participate individually and collectively in the planning and implementation of their health care.”
Ottawa Charter (1986)

“Health promotion works through concrete and effective community action in setting priorities, making decisions, planning strategies and implementing them to achieve better health. At the heart of this process is the empowerment of communities - their ownership and control of their own endeavours and destinies.”
Bangkok Charter (2005)

“This requires actions to promote dialogue and cooperation among nation states, civil society, and the private sector.”
Adelaide Statement on HiAP (2010)

“Health in All Policies works best when [...] accountability, transparency and participatory processes are present [e.g.: community consultations and citizens juries].”
Partnerships, collaboration and advocacy

A public health practitioner is able to...

“4.1 Identify and collaborate with partners in addressing public health issues.

4.2 Use skills such as team building, negotiation, conflict management and group facilitation to build partnerships.

4.3 Mediate between differing interests in the pursuit of health and well-being, and facilitate the allocation of resources.”
“Boards of health shall foster the creation of a supportive environment for health through community and citizen engagement in the assessment, planning, delivery, management, and evaluation of programs and services. This will support improved local capacity to meet the public health needs of the community.”
Part 2.
Defining “public involvement”
La confusion des langues
Gustave Doré (1865)
Three dimensions of public involvement

Dimension 1
Domains of involvement

The public can be involved in four domains

1. Decisions regarding **policies**
2. Decisions regarding **programs and services**
3. Decisions regarding **individual treatment/care**
4. Decisions regarding **research**
Dimension 2
The levels of involvement
Arnstein’s ladder (1969)

IAP2’s spectrum (2007)

Health Canada’s continuum (2000)

Our framework (in progress)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Direction of communication</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inform the public</td>
<td>One-way (e.g. brochures, fact sheets, websites)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consult with the public</td>
<td>One-way (e.g. surveys) or two-way (e.g. town hall meetings, focus groups, deliberative dialogues)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborate with the public</td>
<td>Two-way (e.g. consensus-building exercises)</td>
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<td>Empower the public</td>
<td>Two-way (e.g. citizens’ jury)</td>
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Dimension 3
The public’s perspective
“The public” can have at least two perspectives

1. **Societal perspective**
2. **Beneficiaries of public health services**
Where’s “the public”?
Three strategies to select participants

1. Open to all
2. Purposeful selection (e.g. call for nominations)
3. Random selection (e.g. civic lottery)
Part 3.
The citizens’ panel model
The deliberative turn
- Improve the accountability and legitimacy of political systems
- Increase public understanding of policy issues, citizens’ competency and capacity
- Improve the quality of policy-making by tapping into the public’s knowledge
Deliberation

1. thoughtful, careful, or lengthy consideration
2. formal discussion and debate, as of a committee, jury, etc
3. care, thoughtfulness, or absence of hurry, esp. in movement or speech
Abelson (2010) on ‘deliberative processes’

“Individuals with different backgrounds, interests, and values listen, learn, and potentially persuade and ultimately come to more reasoned, informed, and public spirited judgments”

A citizens panel

1. A group of 15-30 citizens (or patients and service users) are selected (e.g. call for nomination or civic lottery)
2. The panel meets routinely face-to-face and/or virtually
3. The panel receives and exchanges information about an issue
4. The panel critically examine the issue, and
5. There is an explicit process for collecting individual and collective input.
Potential benefits of citizens panels

• Panel can act as “sounding boards” or “value consultants” for public health authority (e.g. explore social and ethical dilemmas, set priorities, allocate resources, formulate value statements and recommendations)

• Attitudes, values and preferences of the panel can be measured on a regular basis

• Proportion of panel members can be replaced at each meeting to increase the overall number of participants

• Multiple panels can be held and run to increase participant numbers
Two recent examples

1. Citizens Reference Panel on Health Technologies [Dr. Julia Abelson, McMaster University]

2. Citizens Reference Panel on Health Services (MASS LBP & PWC)
April 29, 2011

**The new citizens' panels: a powerful antidote to cynicism**

By MICHAEL POSNER

From Saturday's Globe and Mail

*A new breed of opinion-gathering is giving people a voice while helping shape public policy*
Part 4.

Could citizens’ panels contribute to public health policy making in Ontario?
Our group is interested in exploring how citizens’ panels could inform and improve public health policy-making at the local, regional, and perhaps even provincial levels.
Exploring Public Engagement Models for Public Health Policy-Making in Ontario

Tuesday, April 3rd, 2012
from 10:30am to noon
What do you think?
Could citizens’ panels contribute to public health policy making in Ontario?
What do you think?
If so, for want kind of issues.
What do you think?
Are there any important considerations to keep in mind?
What do you think?
Do you want to join us in a pilot project?
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