

## Health Policy Content Analysis Method

Collins, T. (2005)

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National Collaborating Centre  
for Methods and Tools

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# REGISTRY OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION METHODS AND TOOLS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

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**RESOURCE:** Method  
**ACTIVITY:** Knowledge Application  
**STAGE:** Doing

## DESCRIPTION

This method for conducting and evaluating health policy content analysis was developed to address a lack of process for health-focused policy analysis. This method relies on the World Health Organization's definition of public health policy as the ability of a group to achieve agreement or consensus on priority health issues and goals to be addressed and the direction to be taken to meet these goals. Collins (2005) acknowledges that, although many factors are involved in generating and disseminating health policy, there is a need for a rational process for discussing and evaluating ways to meet a policy objective or goal. Further, health policy-makers need to make crucial decisions regarding population-based health care in a short period of time. This method involves eight steps from defining the context of the policy issue to evaluating the options to making the final decision. Information regarding the evaluation of this method is not available.

## RELEVANCE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Collins (2005) does not specify whether or not this policy content analysis method was developed

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exclusively for public health-related issues and goals. However, its process for analyzing a policy issue so that a decision can be made can easily be used for any public health policy issue. Examples are varied and include policy issues related to preventing health disparities, addressing determinants of health, and content-related areas such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic, childhood chronic disease due to obesity, aboriginal issues and organizational promotion of workplace health.

## **EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Evaluation**

Information not available

### **Validity**

Not applicable

### **Reliability**

Not applicable

### **Methodological Rating**

Not applicable

## **IMPLEMENTING THE TOOL**

### **Who is Involved?**

Policy-makers who need to evaluate health policy issues and establish consensus regarding the issue.

### **Time**

Information not available

### **Additional Skills Needed for Implementation**

Not specified

### **Steps for Using Tool**

The method proposed includes the following steps:

- 1) Define the context, including background of issue, contextual factors, situational factors, internal structure, other direct or indirect factors.
- 2) State the policy issue or problem, including potential adverse effects, any discrepancy between what

currently exists and what is needed, and any possible solutions.

3) Search for evidence, such as research and other forms of evidence that can identify significant features of the policy problem or directly relates to the policy problem being evaluated.

4) Consider different policy options that demonstrate the alternative courses of action, including potential interventions required.

5) Project the outcomes, such as potential conclusions or consequences of following a certain course of action outlined in the policy options.

6) Apply evaluative criteria, such as relevance of the intervention, progress of the proposed policy option, efficiency of the intervention especially in relation to cost and monetary output, effectiveness of the intervention in attaining proposed objectives, and the overall impact of the activity for population health.

7) Weigh the projected outcomes, NOT debating the merits of alternatives.

8) Decide, based on evaluation, which policy option to pursue.

## **Conditions for Use**

Not specified

## **TOOL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Developer(s)**

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### **Method of Development**

Information not available.

### **Release Date**

2005

## **CONTACT PERSON**

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## RESOURCES

<b>Title of Primary Resource</b>	Health policy analysis: A simple tool for policy makers.
<b>File Attachment</b>	None
<b>Web-link</b>	<a href="http://www.publichealthjrnl.com/article/S0033-3506(04)00099-X/abstract#">http://www.publichealthjrnl.com/article/S0033-3506(04)00099-X/abstract#</a>
<b>Reference</b>	Collins, T. (2005). Health policy analysis: A simple tool for policy makers. <i>Public Health</i> , 199, 192-196.
<b>Type of Material</b>	Journal article
<b>Format</b>	Periodical
<b>Cost to Access</b>	Cost for periodical.
<b>Language(s)</b>	English
<b>Conditions for Use</b>	

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