

# Policy readiness tool: Assessing a municipality's readiness for policy change

## A summary of

Nykiforuk, C.I.J., Atkey, K.M., Nieuwendyk, L.M., Raine, K.D., Reed, S. & Kyle, K. (2015). Policy Readiness Tool: Understanding a Municipality's Readiness for Policy Change and Strategies for Taking Action. Edmonton, AB: School of Public Health, University of Alberta.



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## Categories:

Tool, Synthesize, Implement, Communication, Economic evaluation, Organizational change, Partnership development and maintenance, Policy development, Situational assessment, Stakeholder analysis and engagement

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September 5, 2012

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## Tool

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## Relevance For Public Health

The Policy Readiness Tool supports policy change with communities and organizations. It can be used with other kinds of governing bodies, such as school boards.

## Description

The [Policy Readiness Tool: Understanding a Municipality's Readiness for Policy Change and Strategies for Taking Action](#) supports policy change at the municipal level. It was developed by Dr. Candace Nykiforuk and the Policy, Location and Access in Community Environments (PLACE) team in the School of Public Health, University of Alberta. The Policy Readiness Tool assesses a municipality's or organization's level of readiness for policy change, it also identifies strategies to support municipalities and organizations in policy initiatives specific to their level of readiness.

The Policy Readiness Tool was developed using Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory. The toolkit includes resources to help with the policy change process, including:

- Questionnaire for Assessing Policy Readiness
- Key Strategies to Gain Support for Healthy Public Policy (targeted to level of readiness)

The [toolkit](#) is available online (<http://policyreadinesstool.com/>). The website features other resources and includes:

- [General Strategies for Encouraging Policy Change](#) (at any level of policy readiness)

## Implementing the Tool

### Who is Involved?

Anyone interested in healthy public policy development could use this tool, including policy developers, advocates, community organizations, non-profit organizations, government, community members and researchers.

### Steps for Using Tool

The Policy Readiness Tool is a questionnaire that assesses municipalities and organizations with respect to their level of readiness to engage in policy change. Municipalities and organizations are classified as one of the following in terms of readiness for policy change:

- innovator

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These summaries are written by the NCCMT to condense and to provide an overview of the resources listed in the [Registry of Methods and Tools](#) and to give suggestions for their use in a public health context. For more information on individual methods and tools included in the review, please consult the authors/developers of the original resources.

- majority
- late adopter

For each level of readiness, key strategies and resources are identified to support policy change.

#### 1. Innovator municipalities and organizations:

- provide supportive evidence
- frame the issue to appeal to the municipality or organization
- build relationships with champions from the municipality or organization
- generate decision-maker support
- raise public awareness about the issue

#### 2. Majority municipalities or organizations:

- provide evidence and outline public opinion
- frame the issue from the majority perspective
- engage and mobilize the community to take action on the issue
- build relationships and maintain momentum
- provide tools and incentives for policy adoption

#### 3. Late adopter municipalities or organizations:

- educate decision-makers about the issue
- provide evidence to illustrate benefits of policy change relative to costs
- build strategic relationships with key community members
- understand and address unique barriers of the municipality or organization

## Evaluation and Measurement Characteristics

### Evaluation

Information not available

### Validity

Not applicable

### Reliability

Not applicable

### Methodological Rating



Not applicable

## Tool Development

### Developers

C.I.J. Nykiforuk  
K.M. Atkey  
L.M. Nieuwendyk  
K.D. Raine  
S. Reed  
K. Kyle

### Method of Development

The Policy Readiness Tool was developed with support from the Alberta Policy Coalition for Chronic Disease Prevention (APCCP). The Tool was developed by: performing a literature review collecting and coding health-related municipal bylaws to validate constructs to assess a municipality's readiness for policy change pilot testing the tool through structured interviews with municipal representatives determining readiness-specific strategies for influencing policy change through semi-structured interviews with policy developers and advocates

### Release Date

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## Contact Person

Candace Nykiforuk  
 School of Public Health, University of Alberta  
 Alberta Policy Coalition for Chronic Disease Prevention  
 Phone: (780) 492-4109  
 Fax: (780) 492-9579  
 Email: candace.nykiforuk@ualberta.ca

## Resources

<b>Title of Primary Resource</b>	Policy Readiness Tool: Understanding a Municipality's Readiness for Policy Change and Strategies for Taking Action
<b>File Attachment</b>	None
<b>Web-link</b>	<a href="http://policyreadinesstool.com/">http://policyreadinesstool.com/</a>
<b>Reference</b>	Nykiforuk, C.I.J., Atkey, K.M., Nieuwendyk, L.M., Raine, K.D., Reed, S. & Kyle, K. (2015). Policy Readiness Tool: Understanding a Municipality's Readiness for Policy Change and Strategies for Taking Action. Edmonton, AB: School of Public Health, University of Alberta.
<b>Type of Material</b>	Toolkit
<b>Format</b>	On-line Access
<b>Cost to Access</b>	None.
<b>Language</b>	English, French
<b>Conditions for Use</b>	Copyright © 2015 Policy Readiness Tool

<b>Title of Supplementary Resource</b>	General Strategies for Encouraging Policy Change
<b>File Attachment</b>	None
<b>Web-link</b>	<a href="http://policyreadinesstool.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/General-strategies-guide-updated.pdf">http://policyreadinesstool.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/General-strategies-guide-updated.pdf</a>
<b>Reference</b>	Nykiforuk, C.I.J., Atkey, K.M., Nieuwendyk, L.M., Raine, K.D., Reed, S., & Kyle, K. (2011). General Strategies for Encouraging Policy Change. Edmonton, AB: School of Public Health, University of Alberta.
<b>Type of Material</b>	Factsheet
<b>Format</b>	On-line Access
<b>Cost to Access</b>	None.
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