# Health Impact Checklist

**Document purpose**

This document is intended to be used to support the identification of impacts during a stakeholder workshop (step 3 of the HIA process). It can also be used as part of the screening step to consider whether to undertake a HIA.

**Key notes**

The term ‘health’ is used throughout as umbrella term for physical and mental health. It is recognised that most factors which impact on physical health, may also impact on mental health.

**Introduction**

Use the questions and table below to guide a conversation with stakeholders to identify potential impacts. Note that the list is not exhaustive and other relevant information, groups and determinants can be added and discussed.

Before working through this checklist, it can be helpful to have an opening discussion about ‘what will change’ as a result of the proposal.

Then using the checklist, discuss how the groups and health determinants will be differentially affected by the proposal and consider any potential positive, negative and uncertain impacts. There is no need to record something for every prompt if there is no impact.

Use the supplementary guidance at the end of the document to see how a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) can support meeting the requirements of mandatory duties and impact assessments for example the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty.

**Population Groups**

Q1. Who might be affected by the proposal?

*Think about the roles that people may have that are relevant to the proposal.*

*For example:*

* *A healthcare proposal may affect patients, staff, visitors*
* *A housing development may affect people who move into new housing, people already living nearby, workers employed on the site and others*
* *A transport proposal may affect people using different transport modes.*

Q2. How might people in the population groups below, be affected by the proposal? Will these impacts be positive, negative or uncertain?

*Work through the prompts and discuss each of the populations listed. People in each group could be in several of the roles discussed in Q1 above. Remember many people are in several of the groups listed below, which may add to their vulnerability.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Population Groups** | How could these groups be affected by the proposal? Consider potential positive, negative and uncertain impacts. |
| **Populations with protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010**[[1]](#endnote-2)   * Age: older people, children and young people[[2]](#endnote-3), adults of working age * Sex: women and men * Pregnancy and maternity: pregnancy, the period after birth and breastfeeding * Disability: includes physical, learning disability, neurodiversity, sensory impairment, long term medical conditions, people experiencing poor mental health including suicidal behaviour and self-harm * Sexual orientation: LGBTQI+ populations * Gender reassignment: trans man, trans women, people undergoing or planning to undergo gender reassignment (including wider consideration of gender identity e.g. non-binary) * Marriage and civil partnership: people who are married and in civil partnerships (including wider consideration of unmarried, separated/divorced, widowed and single people) * Race: people from minority ethnic backgrounds, including Gypsy/Travellers and non-English speakers * Religion or belief: people who have different religions or beliefs |  |
| People living in poverty caused by socio-economic disadvantage as outlined in the Fairer Scotland Duty:[[3]](#endnote-4)   * Low/no wealth * Low income * Area deprivation * Socio-economic background * Material deprivation   Consider the priority family types[[4]](#endnote-5):   * Larger families (3+ children), family with child under 1 year old, single parents, young mums (25 or under), families with a disability, BME families |  |
| Other population groups   * Refugees, asylum seekers and people who are displaced * People experiencing homelessness * People experiencing social isolation and loneliness * Veterans * People involved in the criminal justice system and their families * People who have been the victims of crime * People who have experienced trauma, including adverse childhood experiences * Care experienced children and adults * Carers, including lone parents, young carers and elderly carers * Students * People with low literacy/numeracy, lower attainment * Workers * Staff (who will implement the policy or plan) * People in remote, rural and/or island locations[[5]](#endnote-6) * People living in urban areas * Others – please add |  |

**Health Determinants**

Q3. What positive, negative or uncertain impacts do you think there may be on the following health determinants? Which population groups will be affected by these impacts?

Discuss the determinants section by section.

*These are prompts for discussion – they will not all be relevant for every proposal.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Health determinants** | How could these health determinants be affected by the proposal? Consider potential positive, negative and uncertain impacts. |
| **Economic environment**   * Access to/levels of employment (paid or unpaid), unemployment and economic inactivity * Quality of employment and working conditions – including health and safety, job control, job strain, employee voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect * Income and wealth inequality * Wealth circulation and community benefits * Income security and debt * Cost of living * Ownership of assets * Commercial practices |  |
| **Social environment**[[6]](#endnote-7)   * Social status * Stigma * Culture, community connectedness and cohesion * Stress, uncertainty, resilience and community assets * Family and social relationships support * Participation and social interaction * Influence and sense of control * Inclusion, identity and belonging * Sense of purpose * Public safety, crime and fear of crime |  |
| **The Public Sector Equality Duty**[[7]](#endnote-8)   * Discrimination, harassment and victimisation * Advancing equality of opportunity between groups * Promoting good relations between different groups |  |
| **Place and the physical environment**   * Housing provision, mix, living conditions, security of tenure * Local amenities – retail, community venues * Public spaces quality and maintenance – litter, fly tipping, dog fouling * Natural space and biodiversity * Environmental pollution – quality of air, water, soil, light, noise and odours * Energy, resource use and waste * Greenhouse gas emissions * Climate resilience and adaptation – flood protection, coastal erosion, extreme weather * Unintentional injuries * Transmission of infectious diseases |  |
| **Access to and quality of services**   * Health and social care services * Housing and homelessness services * Transport – available, reliable, affordable, accessible, safe active and public transport * Education provision – learning, training, skills development, digital literacy * Community venues, culture, leisure and play provision * Digital connectivity – access to IT, internet and digital services * Environmental and regulatory standards and services * Other service provision – eg legal, refuse |  |
| **Commercial and environmental influences on health**   * Food and nutrition * Exercise and physical activity * Substance use – tobacco (smoking/vaping), alcohol, drugs * Gambling * Sexual health * Social media use * Sleep |  |

**Supplementary guidance**

The HIA process can be used to support meeting of other statutory duties. Using the health impact checklist allows for consideration of population groups with protected characteristics and the other requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. It also considers people living in poverty or experiencing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage as outlined in the Fairer Scotland Duty. Consideration of health impacts children and young people may be able to support a Children’s Rights & Wellbeing Impact Assessment. Please note that the relevant guidance for other impact assessments should always be referred to, references are provided below.

*Reference endnotes here*

1. The Public Sector Equality Duty is a duty on public authorities to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act also states there must be due regard or consideration of the need to:

   * eliminate unlawful discrimination
   * advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don’t
   * foster or encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don’t

   For further information on the Equality Act, protected characteristics and discrimination see the Equality and Human Rights Commission [Protected characteristics | EHRC (equalityhumanrights.com).](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/protected-characteristics)

   There is also a Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty in Scotland available at [guidance-essential-guide-public-sector-equality-duty-scotland.pdf (equalityhumanrights.com)](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/2022/guidance-essential-guide-public-sector-equality-duty-scotland.pdf) [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
2. Children’s Rights & Wellbeing Impact Assessments provide a mechanism to ensure compliance with United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child (UNCRC) requirements. For more information and guidance on CRWIA in Scotland see [Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment guidance - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/childrens-rights-wellbeing-impact-assessment-guidance/) [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
3. The Fairer Scotland Duty places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies in Scotland to pay due regard how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions.

   Socio-economic disadvantage can be described as below as is referenced in the checklist:

   * Low/no wealth
   * Low income
   * Area deprivation
   * Socio-economic background
   * Material deprivation

   The inequalities of outcome that people can face as a result of socio-economic disadvantage can include, but are not limited to:

   * Low/no wealth
   * Poorer skills and attainment
   * Lower healthy life expectancy
   * Lower quality, less secure and lower paid work
   * Greater chance of being a victim of crime
   * Less chance of being treated with dignity and respect

   These are not referenced in this section of the checklist but discussions on other population groups and health determinants may be used to inform consideration of this aspect of the Duty.

   For more information on the Fairer Scotland Duty see <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-duty-guidance-public-bodies> [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
4. The six priority family types are identified as being at highest risk of child poverty. It is useful to be aware that families often belong to more than one priority group. For more information see <https://www.gov.scot/publications/tackling-child-poverty-priority-families-overview/> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
5. Relevant authorities as identified in the Islands (Scotland) Act are required to carry out an Island Communities Impact Assessment when preparing policies, strategies and services. For more information see <https://www.gov.scot/publications/island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-toolkit-2/> [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
6. The social environment section includes protective and risk factors for mental health and wellbeing. You can also consider this more in-depth using the Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment Toolkit. More information is available at <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/whiasu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2021/05/Mental_Wellbeing_Impact_Assessment_Toolkit_-_full_version.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
7. See footnote (i). [↑](#endnote-ref-8)