



# **Identifying Community Assessment Practices for Public Health A Rapid Review**

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## Key Messages

1. Community assessment is a comprehensive process to identify the strengths, resources, assets and needs of a defined community that will lead to action to address an issue.
2. Community may be defined by geography, or by an attribute within a geographically defined community, such as faith, race/ethnicity, school, profession or culture. Community exists when a group of people is aware of its identity as a group.
3. A comprehensive community assessment has seven phases: 1) establish a community team, 2) determine the purpose, 3) plan the community assessment, 4) conduct the community assessment, 5) report results and recommendations, 6) evaluate the community assessment process, and 7) community action. The process is flexible to meet the needs of the community.
4. Community assessment requires community engagement and community member involvement in the decisions that affect them. A participatory approach is used to increase sustainability and ensure action.
5. Methods used to collect information about the community will depend on the needs of the community, the purpose and resources available. Data collection methods may include surveys, interviews, focus groups, community forums and observation.

# **Executive Summary**

## **Issue and Context**

End-to-End Public Health Practice (E2EPHP) is a strategic priority at Region of Peel-Public Health (ROP-PH) to ensure that public health decisions support population-level health outcomes. Community assessment is included in the E2EPHP model as one way to define a public health problem. Currently, ROP-PH lacks a consistent and rigorous approach to conduct community assessments. This review seeks to identify community assessment methods and tools to inform the development of tools or processes to be implemented within the organization.

## **Literature Review Question**

What processes, methods or tools are described in the literature for conducting community assessments?

## **Methods**

The literature search included unpublished literature, published literature and a textbook search. It included literature published in English from 2001 to the present. The search yielded seven relevant documents. After critical appraisal, all seven were included in this review.

## **Key Findings**

Community assessment is a comprehensive process to identify the strengths, resources, assets and needs of a defined community that will lead to action to address

an issue. A comprehensive community assessment has seven phases: 1) establish a community team, 2) determine the purpose, 3) plan the community assessment, 4) conduct the community assessment, 5) report results and recommendations, 6) evaluate the community assessment process, and 7) community action.

## **Recommendations**

1. Adopt a common definition of community assessment and define situations when a community assessment is appropriate within E2EPHP.
2. Based on the definitions above, create a process and develop the methods and tools to support a rigorous community assessment process for ROP-PH that fits with our resources and scope.
3. Develop an implementation plan to integrate community assessment into E2EPHP and ROP-PH. This will include a plan to develop the skills necessary to conduct a community assessment. Communicate the plan to leaders and staff at ROP-PH.

# 1 Issue

The End-to-End Public Health Practice (E2EPHP) model identifies community assessment as one way to define a public health problem. Community assessment is included in the E2EPHP model because it was part of situational assessment within the previous Program Planning and Evaluation process. In 2015, Region of Peel-Public Health (ROP-PH) developed a robust environmental scan process. It includes a guide for developing and documenting projects, and internal supports for teams. In 2017-2018, resources were dedicated to develop similar methods, tools and supports for community assessment.

In 2017, ROP-PH conducted an internal scan of community assessment related projects in the past five years. More than 30 projects were identified. These projects were diverse in terms of purpose, methods, scope and timeframe. Almost all required assistance from internal support teams (e.g., Population Health Assessment and Surveillance teams; Research, Policy and Planning teams). There was little consistency in reporting or applying the results. This internal scan highlights the need for a common approach to community assessment, as well as resources and capacity-building strategies to support teams in conducting such assessments.

# 2 Context

Evidence-informed decision making requires public health professionals to consider information from various sources:

- Community health issues and local context;
- Existing public health resources;

- Community and political preferences and actions; and
- Best available research findings. (1)

Community assessment is a way to gather information about community health issues, local context, and community preferences and actions.

Community assessment processes can incorporate methods that are similar to existing E2EPHP methods. For example, community assessments can include the use of health status data, primary data or published literature. The use of these types of data is already established in E2EPHP processes. ROP-PH needs to define situations when a community assessment is required within our E2EPHP approach.

ROP-PH supports the development of consistent, robust and well-documented methods for community assessment as one component of E2EPHP. The purpose of this review is to identify methods and tools to inform community assessment processes at ROP-PH.

### **3 Literature Review Question**

What processes, methods or tools for conducting community assessments are described in the literature?

### **4 Literature Search**

A search of unpublished literature was conducted in November 2016. The search was limited to English-language publications, from 2001 onward. It included:

- National Guideline Clearinghouse,
- World Health Organization (WHO),

- National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE),
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),
- National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (NCCMT),
- Turning Research into Practice (TRIP) database,
- Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC),
- Health Evidence, and
- Google.

A public health librarian conducted a search of published literature in July 2017. The search was limited to English-language publications from 2001 onward. It included Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, Global Health, Healthstar and Medline.

A textbook search was conducted in July 2017. It included a search in Google and WorldCat, review of the public health program websites of Brock University and University of Waterloo, and recommendations from experts from Toronto Public Health and the Dalla Lana School of Public Health. Details of the search strategies are outlined in Appendix A.

## **5 Relevance Assessment**

Relevance assessment was based on the following criteria:

- Inclusion: in-depth description of community assessment processes, methods or tools; health-related focus; adaptable to public health.
- Exclusion: data collection for a specific research project; focuses on populations in remote locations or developing countries.



Relevance assessment of full text literature was completed in August 2017 and revised in February 2018. Any discrepancies or uncertainties were discussed with two other reviewers and were resolved through discussion. Details of the relevance screening are in Appendix B.

## **6 Results of the Search**

The search yielded 563 results, including 254 duplicates. Based on initial relevance screening of the remaining 309 titles and abstracts, 266 were excluded and 43 were reviewed in full. Following full-text review, seven were relevant and were critically appraised: three textbooks and four guides. Details of the search results are in Appendix C.

## **7 Critical Appraisal**

Two reviewers independently appraised three textbooks and four guides. The textbooks were appraised using the Textbook Critical Appraisal Tool. All were rated strong. The guides were appraised using AACODS (Authority, Accuracy, Coverage, Objectivity, Date, Significance) Checklist for grey literature. All four were judged to be of sufficient quality (see Appendix D). All seven documents are included in this review.

## **8 Description of Included Studies**

The three textbooks and four guides summarized below describe key aspects of community assessments. They each describe processes, methods or tools to guide community assessment. For full data extraction, see Appendix D.

**Harris, MJ (2010): *Evaluating public and community health programs* (2)**

This textbook describes the approaches and methods for evaluating community health program and policy interventions. The intended audience is public health and community health students and practitioners. The author is an Assistant Professor at the University of Louisville School of Public Health and Evaluation. Dr. Harris has extensive evaluation experience and teaches participatory evaluation methods.

Chapter 2 describes community assessment as an input into program planning, implementation and evaluation within the Participatory Model of Evaluation. It outlines a step-by-step approach to conducting a community assessment. Supporting references are provided throughout the chapter. The textbook does not describe how the community assessment approach was developed, tested or evaluated.

Community assessment is defined by Harris as determining the extent of the problem and proposing the most feasible, viable and effective solutions to address the problem adequately and appropriately.

**Porche, DJ (2004): *Public & community health nursing practice* (3)**

The purpose of this textbook is to support public health nurses' ability to implement the core functions of public health practice. The author is the Dean of Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center School of Nursing. Dr. Porche has published extensively in the areas of men's health, nursing and the health system.

Chapter 8 proposes the integrated community assessment process based on the community assessment models, data sources, and data collection methods presented in the chapter. Supporting references are provided throughout the chapter. Additional

description on how the community assessment approach was developed, tested or evaluated is not provided.

Community assessment is defined by Porche as a comprehensive analysis of a specific community. It is the process of collecting data to identify community-level strengths and weaknesses. With this information, community-level interventions are planned and evaluated.

**Soriano, FI (2013): *Conducting needs assessments: A multidisciplinary approach* (4)**

This textbook provides an understanding of needs assessment methodologies. The intended audience is agencies, programs and researchers conducting needs assessments. The author is a Professor of Human Development at California State University-San Marcos. Dr. Soriano has published in the areas of violence, ethnicity and youth.

Chapter 4 describes the needs assessment process. It outlines steps to develop a plan and how to collect and analyze the data. Supporting references are provided for the chapter. The textbook does not describe how the needs assessment process was developed, tested or evaluated.

A definition of community assessment was not provided.

**City of Calgary (1997): *A handbook for conducting a community assessment* (5)**

This guide was developed by the City of Calgary Community and Social Development Department. The author of the guide is not identified. The intended audience is community workers and their communities.

The guide articulates the key elements and process for conducting a community assessment. Supporting references are provided for the guide. The guide states that the key elements were adapted from the work of Bill Lee's Pragmatics of Community Organization. It does not describe how the community assessment approach was tested or evaluated.

Community assessment is defined as a systematic way of identifying the needs and resources of a community. Statistical data, community member's perspectives and information about service providers and other community resources are collected.

**Carroll, AM (2004): *Performing a Community Assessment Curriculum* (6)**

This guide was developed at the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, Health DATA Program. The authors are Amy M. Carroll, Mercedes Perez and Peggy Toy. Dr. Carroll's research focuses on the application of community-based research methods. The guide is a curriculum to train participants to plan and conduct a community assessment.

This guide provides information to plan and conduct a public health assessment in the community. Six steps to a community assessment plan are presented. The guide does

not describe how the community assessment approach was developed, tested or evaluated.

Community assessment is defined as collecting, analyzing and reporting on the needs in a community as well as its strengths and assets. Community assessment is a process driven by the community.

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2010): *Community Health Assessment and Group Evaluation (CHANGE) Action Guide* (7)**

The Division of Adult and Community Health at the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion of the CDC developed the CHANGE tool. The authors are Shannon Griffin-Blake, Andrae Ivy, Stella Cory, Ann Ussery-Hall, Hema Desai and Keisha Edwards. The CDC is a recognized expert in public health practice and data collection methodology.

The CHANGE tool assesses and identifies community strengths and areas for improvement related to the social and built environments to address chronic disease. The Action Guide outlines the steps to complete the CHANGE tool. Supporting references are provided for the guide. The guide does not describe how the CHANGE process was developed, tested or evaluated.

Community assessment is defined as gathering and organizing data on community assets to define and prioritize improvement areas. The community creates a Community Action Plan to address priorities.

**Center for Community Health and Development (2017): *Chapter 3. Assessing Community Needs and Resources* (8)**

The Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas and partners developed and manage the Community Tool Box. They are considered an authority in community development.

The Community Tool Box provides practical, step-by-step guidance and toolkits to support practitioners working in community development. It is a free, online resource that has been under continuous development since 1994. Chapter 3 teaches how to identify and assess community concerns, needs and assets. Guidelines for how to develop a plan for community assessment are presented. Supporting references are provided for the guide. The guide does not describe how the community assessment guidelines were developed, tested or evaluated.

Community assessment is explained as identifying local needs and resources to understand the environment, to understand public opinion, and to make decisions about priorities.

## **9 Synthesis of Findings**

The included literature provides guidance on the community assessment process and step-by-step guides for conducting a community assessment.

### **What is community assessment?**

Community assessment is a systematic and comprehensive process of collecting, analyzing and reporting information on a defined community. (3,5) Community

assessments identify the strengths, resources and assets, not just the needs of a community. (2,3,6,8) Assets may be human, material or economic strengths of the community such as strong community coalition, existing health services infrastructure or high employment rates (2). Community assessments are action-oriented; they lead to practical action to address an issue. (2,3,5) A participatory approach increases sustainability and ensures action. (2,8)

Community assessment has value as both a product and a process. (5) The product is the information collected and documented about the community. (5) The process is the work done with, or driven by, the community, where team members learn about their community and become invested in working for change. (5,6)

The scope of community assessment varies from broad to narrow. Community profiling is the broadest type of community assessment. (3) A needs assessment is more focused and only seeks to understand needs specific to one issue. (3,4)

### **Why conduct a community assessment?**

Reasons to conduct a community assessment include:

- providing a comprehensive picture of the community;
- identifying new, or understanding known, community public health issues;
- identifying factors associated with a particular issue;
- developing an understanding of particular groups in the community;
- assessing the community's readiness to proceed with action;
- understanding available resources within the community;
- establishing community priorities and developing action plans; and

- gathering data to develop an intervention, including baseline data. (2,5,6)

### **How can models be used in community assessment?**

One or more theories or models can be selected to guide the community assessment and outline underlying assumptions. (2) Models are useful to focus the purpose, to aid in interpreting the findings or to develop programs/initiatives based on the findings. (2-4)

No single model for community assessment emerged. The model should be selected based on the fit to the community, the types of data needed and how the data will be used for planning. (3) The community may already be using a model for community development that can be applied to the community assessment. (5)

Community assessment looks at more than the individual factors that influence health. (2,7) The selected model should provide a framework to assess interpersonal, organizational, community and public policy factors that play a role in health. (2,7)

### **What is the community assessment process?**

A comprehensive community assessment process has seven phases: 1) establish a community team, 2) determine the purpose, 3) plan the community assessment, 4) conduct the community assessment, 5) report results and recommendations, 6) evaluate the community assessment process, and 7) community action. Community assessment is a dynamic, iterative process. (2,6) The process adapts to meet the needs, ideas and timelines available.





**Figure 1. Community Assessment Process**

Establish a community team

Community assessment is conducted through partnership. These partnerships are built thoughtfully to achieve the established purpose. The aim of this phase is to develop community partnerships and establish a team. (2,5-8) Community assessment requires community engagement and community member involvement in the decisions that affect them. Before starting a community assessment, an understanding of the people, structures and dynamics of the community is required. (5) Identifying and engaging stakeholders and community members early on in the process builds relationships and establishes trust. (2,5-8) In some cases, relationships and a community group will already exist.

To conduct a community assessment, the community of interest needs to be identified and defined. Community can be defined as any group sharing something in common. (8) A community may be defined by geography, or by an attribute within a geographically defined community, such as faith, race/ethnicity, school, profession or culture. (2,5,8) Community exists when a group of people is aware of its identity as a group. (8) Participation by members in the community is necessary for a community assessment.

The team should represent all stakeholders, have a mix of skills and mirror diversity of the community. (8) The historic context and underlying assumptions or perspectives of partners must be understood. (6) Stakeholders are groups or individuals who can affect or are affected by the issue and those with a vested interest in the actions that will result. (6) The team should include a mix of professionals, community members, community leaders and key decision makers. (5,6,8) To identify stakeholders, consider who are the organizations, leaders, community-influencers and who will use the results (6). Team members need to define and understand their roles and responsibilities. (5,6,8)

A sensitive, open and inclusive process encourages community participation. (5) Some community members may be less willing to engage if they have had negative experiences in the past. (8) Genuine intentions to actively include, listen, and respond to the results of the community assessment increases participation. (8) The team must demonstrate to community members the value of participating in the process. (8)

Determine the purpose

The community team collaboratively determines the focus and purpose for the community assessment. This builds buy-in for the assessment and the subsequent action. (6,8)

The purpose must be clear and agreed upon by the community team. The purpose should include a focus on the assets and strengths of the community. (3,4) The purpose determines the methods and approach. The available resources influence the size and scope of the assessment. (6,8)

### Plan the community assessment

The community assessment plan outlines the model/theory underlying the community assessment, the partners involved, and how the team plans to collect the data, analyze the data, document and communicate the results, and evaluate the process. (2,5-8)

The data collection portion of the plan outlines:

- available data;
- data to be collected;
- data collection methods;
- tools to use or that need to be created
- sources of information;
- who will collect and analyze the data; and
- training needed for team members. (2,5,6,8)

The data analysis portion of the plan outlines how information from multiple sources will be triangulated to develop recommendations. (6,8) A SWOT (strength, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis is one useful assessment technique. (8)

The evaluation portion of the plan outlines how the community assessment process will be evaluated. The evaluation should examine what happened, what went well, what did not go well, what has been learned and what should happen next. (3,5)

#### Conduct the community assessment

In this phase, the team implements the community assessment plan as outlined. (2,3,5,7) The team will need to communicate often during implementation to monitor progress.

#### Report results and recommendations/priorities

The result of the community assessment will depend on the purpose. For example, a community diagnosis that identifies assets and needs of the community may be created. (3) The community team may prioritize any identified issues. (5,6) Information may have been collected to identify interventions or create a community action plan. (2,3,5,7) The community team develops recommendations or next steps through a transparent process.

At a minimum, the community assessment produces a final report that details the process and results. (6) Additional communication products are created based on the needs of the audiences. (6) The team can identify other ways to share results with the community. (5,6,8)

#### Evaluate the community assessment process

In this phase, the team implements the evaluation plan as outlined. (3,5)

#### Community action

The community assessment informs action. The community team and/or the community itself determine next steps. (5)

Community action may lead to further community assessment on a new issue that has arisen or to assess a different aspect of the community. (2)

### **What methods are used for community assessment?**

The methods used in community assessment depend on the purpose of the assessment, the resources available, the skills of those involved and the timeline. (6)

The team determines if the skills required to collect data exist within the team, if team members can be trained, or if external resources will be needed. (8) Community assessment may include primary or secondary data analysis. Qualitative and quantitative data collection methods can be used in community assessments. Community assessments often use two or more data collection methods. (7) Table 1 outlines data collection methods that may be used in community assessment.

**Table 1. Data Collection Methods**

| <b>Data Collection Method</b>       | <b>Description</b>  |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Surveys                             | Collecting information through a standard questionnaire of open and/or closed-ended questions – by mail, phone, face to face, or online (3)   |
| Key-informant interviews            | One-to-one interviews to gather information from individuals with unique insights regarding the community (those who are affected by the problem or can provide independent perspective) (2,3)    |
| Focus groups                        | A series of small group discussions focused on a specific topic and conducted by a trained facilitator (3,6)  |
| Community forums                    | Public meetings focused on a defined topic led by a moderator. Community members discuss issues, identify problems and engage in problem-solving discussions (3,6)                                |
| Observation - direct or participant | Direct observation is an assessment by an outsider looking into the community. Participant observation is done by the community members or by someone engaging in the life of the community (3,8) |
| Windshield or walking surveys       | Driving or walking through a community to observe and assess certain aspects about the community (3,8)  |
| Asset mapping                       | Collecting an inventory of assets or strengths in the community and plotting the assets on a geographic map or other visualization (6)  |
| Photovoice                          | Qualitative data collection process where people use photo or video to share information about their community or point of view (7,8)   |

## **10 Applicability and Transferability**

A facilitated discussion with Managers, Supervisors, Specialists and Public Health Nurses from across ROP-PH was held May 1, 2018 (Appendix E).

### Political acceptability

Participants saw the community assessment process as politically acceptable. It is aligned with the Region of Peel's corporate strategic plan and its mission of "Working With You". Increasing capacity to conduct community assessment supports ROP-PH's E2EPHP strategic priority. Community assessment supports compliance with the Ontario Public Health Standards. Community assessment would increase transparency and accountability of ROP-PH.

### Social acceptability

Clear communication is required to set the context for staff and clarify the definition of community assessment within the E2EPHP model. An example project or pilot could build staff understanding and acceptance.

Participants noted that there has been a shift in the organization's focus on community engagement and assessment. Previous Medical Officers of Health held different perspectives on the value of community engagement within ROP-PH. This shift needs to be acknowledged to build staff acceptance.

Open, sensitive and inclusive participation in the process will increase community acceptability. Communities will appreciate the strengths-based and participatory approaches to the community assessment process. ROP-PH should reduce barriers to participate and mitigate the power imbalance created when a large organization works with community members.

#### Available resources, organizational expertise and capacity

Public Health Nurses and Community Development Workers at ROP-PH are well positioned to work on community assessment. They have education, skills and experience in working with communities. Health Promoters and Public Health Inspectors may also have experience working with communities. Specialists have the technical knowledge in research and data methods.

The participatory nature of community assessment requires skills in engagement and partnership. Organizational capacity and staff training will be required related to community engagement, facilitation and cultural humility.

It takes time to understand a community and build trust before an assessment can be completed. Leadership needs to allow for the time necessary to conduct this foundational work.

The primary cost to implement will be staff time. These costs were seen as worthwhile given the benefits of community assessment. There could be unintended costs associated with implementation of inappropriate interventions if ROP-PH doesn't move forward with community assessment.

The community assessment process lends itself to cross-division/department collaboration. A potential organizational barrier is communication and knowledge transfer across divisions and departments on their work with local communities.

### Transferability

The community assessment process is transferable to a variety of populations. The process needs to be flexible so it can be tailored for each community. It has the potential to reach and engage priority populations in Peel.

## **11 Recommendations**

Recommendations should be completed in order:

1. Adopt a common definition of community assessment and define situations when a community assessment is appropriate within E2EPHP.
2. Based on the definitions above, create a process and develop the methods and tools to support a rigorous community assessment process for ROP-PH that fits with our resources and scope.
3. Develop an implementation plan to integrate community assessment into E2EPHP and ROP-PH. This will include a plan to develop the skills necessary to conduct a community assessment. Communicate the plan to leaders and staff at ROP-PH.



## References

1. National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools. A Model for Evidence-Informed Decision-Making in Public Health [Internet]. Public Health Agency of Canada. [cited 2018Feb27]. Available from <http://www.nccmt.ca/uploads/media/media/0001/01/4504c27e14836059b8fd3ce3b3eaac2ed2ce6ed6.pdf>
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3. Porche DJ. Public & Community Health Nursing Practice: A population-based approach. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.; 2004. p.108-128.
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6. Carroll AM, Perez M, Toy P. Performing a Community Assessment Curriculum. Los Angeles: Center for Health Policy Research, Health DATA Program Train-the-Trainer Project; 2004. Available from [http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/programs/health-data/trainings/Documents/tw\\_cba4.pdf](http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/programs/health-data/trainings/Documents/tw_cba4.pdf)
7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Community Health Assessment and Group Evaluation (CHANGE) Action Guide: Building a Foundation of Knowledge to

Prioritize Community Needs. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2010. Available from <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/healthycommunitiesprogram/tools/change/pdf/changeactionguide.pdf>

8. Center for Community Health and Development. Chapter 3: Assessing Community Needs and Resources [Internet]. Total Chapters: 24, Kansas, MO: University of Kansas; 2017 [cited 2018Jan31]. Available from: <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources>

## **Appendices**

**Appendix A: Search Strategy**

**Appendix B: Relevance Screening Table**

**Appendix C: Literature Search Flowchart**

**Appendix D: Data Extraction Tables**

**Appendix E: Applicability & Transferability Worksheet**

## Appendix A: Search Strategy

Database: EBM Reviews - Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews <2005 to July 19, 2017>, Global Health <1973 to 2017 Week 28>, Ovid Healthstar <1966 to June 2017>, Ovid MEDLINE(R) <1946 to July Week 2 2017>, Ovid MEDLINE(R) In-Process & Other Non-Indexed Citations <July 21, 2017>

Search Strategy:

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- 1 exp Public Health/ (12469044)
- 2 exp Community Health Planning/ (9890)
- 3 exp Needs Assessment/ (54626)
- 4 ("community assess\*" or "situational assess\*").ti. (334)
- 5 exp Community Networks/ (12771)
- 6 ("tool\*" or "theor\*" or "framework\*" or "model\*" or "procedure\*" or "protocol\*" or "method\*" or "process\*").ti. (2146525)
- 7 1 or 2 (12472993)
- 8 3 or 4 (54902)
- 9 ("local population\*" or "communit\*").ti,ab. (916574)
- 10 5 or 9 (922902)
- 11 6 and 7 and 8 and 10 (575)
- 12 limit 11 to (English language and yr="2001 -Current") [Limit not valid in CDSR; records were retained] (497)
- 13 remove duplicates from 12 (243)

## Grey Literature Search Strategy

Date: November 2016

| Database   | Search Terms   | Relevant Results |
|--|--|------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Google</li> <li>• TRIP Database</li> <li>• CDC – The community Guide<br/><a href="http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html">http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html</a></li> <li>• NCCMT (National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools) Public Health portal<br/><a href="http://www.nccmt.ca/public_health_plus/all/1/list-eng.html">http://www.nccmt.ca/public_health_plus/all/1/list-eng.html</a></li> </ul> | 1) ("community assess*" or "situational assess*" or needs assess*)<br>3) English language<br>4) from: 2001 to: 2017<br>AND ("step*" OR "method*" OR "tool*" OR "process*") | 13               |

## Textbook Search Strategy

Date: July 2017

| Database   | Search Terms   | Relevant Results |
|--|--|------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of public health course websites for Brock University and University of Waterloo</li> <li>• Experts from Toronto Public Health and the Dalla Lana School of Public Health</li> <li>• Google</li> <li>• WorldCat</li> </ul> | 1) ("community assess*" or "situational assess*" or needs assess*)<br>3) English language<br>4) from: 2001 to: 2017<br>AND ("step*" OR "method*" OR "tool*" OR "process*") | 53               |

## Appendix B: Relevance Screening Table

| Literature (Author, date, title)  | Initial relevance screening   | In-depth review for relevance   | Critical appraisal | Include |
|---|---|---|--------------------|---------|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes community assessment process/model/tool</li> <li>Health-related focus</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broad and adaptable to public health</li> <li>In-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool</li> <li>Exclusion criteria: Too specific in regards to research method or population/community</li> </ul> |                    |         |
| <b>Harris, M.J. (2010). Evaluating Public and Community Health Programs</b> [textbook]  | ☑   | ☑   | Strong             | ☑       |
| <b>Porche, D.J. (2004). Public &amp; Community Health Nursing Practice</b> [textbook]   | ☑   | ☑   | Strong             | ☑       |
| <b>City of Calgary (1997). A Handbook for Conducting a Community Assessment</b> [handbook]  | ☑   | ☑   | Sufficient quality | ☑       |
| <b>Soriano, F.I. (2013). Conducting Needs Assessments: A Multidisciplinary Approach</b> [textbook]  | ☑   | ☑   | Strong             | ☑       |
| <b>Carroll, A.M., Perez, M., Toy, P. (2004)</b> Performing a Community Assessment Curriculum  | ☑   | ☑   | Sufficient quality | ☑       |
| <b>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2010).</b> Community Health Assessment and Group Evaluation (CHANGE) Action Guide: Building a Foundation of Knowledge to Prioritize Community Needs  | ☑   | ☑   | Sufficient quality | ☑       |
| <b>Community Tool Box;</b> Work Group for Community Health and Development; University of Kansas Created – 1994; Reviewed – 2016  | ☑   | ☑   | Sufficient quality | ☑       |
| <b>Racher, F.E. &amp; Annis, R.C. (2008).</b> Community health action model: Health promotion by the community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural Community Health and Well-Being: A Guide to Action (adjunct material)</li> </ul> | ☑   | ☒<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool<br>*specific to rural community  |                    |         |
| <b>Holakouie Naieni, K., Ahmadvanc, A., Ahmadnezhad, E. &amp; Alami, A. (2014).</b> A community assessment model appropriate for the Iranian community.   | ☑   | ☒<br>*Too specific to Iranian community   |                    |         |
| <b>Sharma, R.K. (2003).</b> Putting the community back in community health assessment: A process and outcome approach with a review of some major issues for public health professionals.   | ☑   | ☒<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool  |                    |         |

| Literature (Author, date, title)   | Initial relevance screening | In-depth review for relevance  | Critical appraisal | Include |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--------------------|---------|
| <b>McDonald, E.L., Bailie, R. &amp; Michel, T. (2013).</b> Development and trialling of a tool to support a systems approach to improve social determinants of health in rural and remote Australian communities: The healthy community assessment tool. | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Too specific to remote, indigeneous community in Australia         |                    |         |
| <b>Kiefer, C.W. (2007). Doing Health Anthropology: Research Methods for Community Assessment and Change</b> [textbook]   | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not relevant to community assessment                               |                    |         |
| <b>Ndirangu, M. et al. (2007).</b> Conducting needs assessment using the comprehensive participatory planning and evaluation (CPPE) model to develop nutrition and physical activity interventions in a rural community in the Mississippi Delta.        | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Describes how a model was used, but not the model itself           |                    |         |
| <b>Horne, L., Miller, K., Silva, S &amp; Anderson, L. (2013).</b> Implementing the ACHIEVE model to prevent and reduce chronic disease in rural Klickitat County, Washington.  | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Describes how a model was used, but not the model itself           |                    |         |
| <b>Zoellner, J., Motley, M., Wilkinson, M.E., Jackman, B., Barlow, M.L. &amp; Hill, J.L. (2012).</b> Engaging the Dan River Region to Reduce Obesity.  | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Describes how a model was used, but not the model itself           |                    |         |
| <b>Li, Y., Cao, J., Lin, H., Li, D., Wang, Y &amp; He, J. (2009).</b> Community health needs assessment precede-proceed model: A mixed methods study.  | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Describes how a model was used, but not the model itself           |                    |         |
| <b>Macaulay, A.C. &amp; Ryan, J.G. (2003).</b> Community needs assessment and development using the participatory research model.  | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Describes how a model was used, but not the model itself           |                    |         |
| <b>Karan, O.V., DonAroma, P., Bruder, M.B. &amp; Roberts, L.A. (2010).</b> Transitional assessment model for students with severe and/or multiple disabilities: Competency-based community assessment.   | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health                            |                    |         |
| <b>Running, A., Martin, K. &amp; Tolle, L.W. (2007).</b> An innovative model for conducting a participatory community health assessment.   | ☑                           | ☒<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Nyaku, M.K. et al. (2014).</b> Assessing radiation emergency preparedness planning by using community assessment for public health emergency response   | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health                            |                    |         |

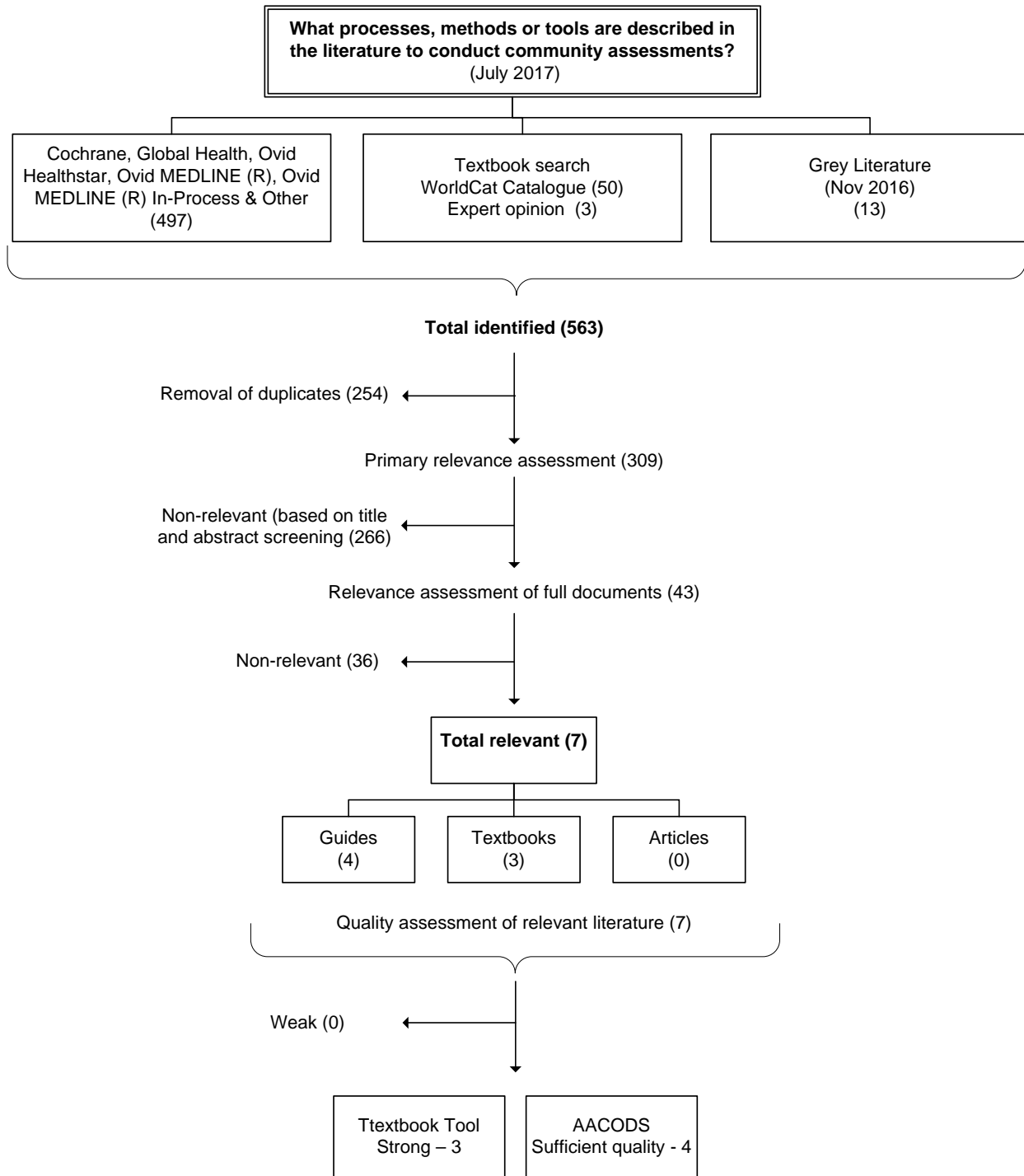
| Literature (Author, date, title)   | Initial relevance screening | In-depth review for relevance  | Critical appraisal | Include |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--------------------|---------|
| (CASPER) methodology.  |                             | *No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool  |                    |         |
| <b>York, N.L. &amp; Hahn, E.J. (2007).</b> The community readiness model: Evaluating local smoke-free policy development.                                      | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health  |                    |         |
| <b>Stafford-Alewine, S. &amp; Land, G.H. (2002).</b> The Missouri experience in providing tools and resources to promote community assessment.                 | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Newman, D.M.L. (2005).</b> A community nursing center for the health promotion of senior citizens: Based on the Neuman systems model.                       | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Kazda, M.J. et al. (2009).</b> Methodological complexities and the use of GIS in conducting a community needs assessment of a large U.S. municipality.      | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Beene-Harris, R. &amp; Bach, J.V. (2009).</b> Michigan genetics plan: A report on the needs assessment process.   | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Ariza, L. et al. (2010).</b> A simple method for rapid community assessment of tungiasis.   | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Hendricks, A., Conradi, L. &amp; Wilson, C. (2011).</b> Creating trauma-informed child welfare systems using a community assessment process.                | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Ceci, C., Purkis, M.E. &amp; Bjornsdottir, K. (2012).</b> Theorizing accommodation in supportive home care for older people.                                | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Stoto, M.A, Straus, S.G., Bohn, C. &amp; Irani, P. (2009).</b> A web-based tool for assessing and improving the usefulness of community health assessments. | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health  |                    |         |



| Literature (Author, date, title)  | Initial relevance screening | In-depth review for relevance  | Critical appraisal | Include |
|---|-----------------------------|--|--------------------|---------|
|   |                             | *No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool  |                    |         |
| <b>Kuehnert, P., Graber, J. &amp; Stone, D. (2014).</b> Using a web-based tool to evaluate a collaborative community health needs assessment.   | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Semple, M.G. et al. (2013).</b> An evaluation of community assessment tools (CATs) in predicting use of clinical interventions and sever outcomes during the A(H1N1)pdm09 pandemic.                                    | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Christeson, E.P. (2003).</b> The health of school nurse community: A framework.  | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Goldman, K.D. &amp; Schmalz, K.J. (2005).</b> "Accentuate the positive!": Using an asset-mapping tool as part of a community-health needs assessment.  | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Graham, S.R., Carlton, C., Gaede, D. &amp; Jamison, B. (2011).</b> The benefits of using geographic information systems as a community assessment tool.  | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Lascher, S. et al. (2013).</b> Government public housing health needs assessment: Focus on race, ethnicity, and the older adult: Background, methods, and demographics.  | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Lyon, A.R., Maras, M.A., Pate, C.M., Igusa, T. &amp; Vander Stoep, A. (2016).</b> Modeling the impact of school-based universal depression screening on additional service capacity needs: A system dynamics approach. | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Kurkjian, K.M. et al. (2017).</b> Assessing emergency preparedness and response capacity using community assessment for public health emergency response methodology: Portsmouth, Virginia, 2013.                      | ☑                           | ☒<br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health<br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |

| Literature (Author, date, title)  | Initial relevance screening         | In-depth review for relevance  | Critical appraisal | Include |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------|---------|
| <b>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.cdc.gov/stltpublichealth/cha/assessme nt.html">https://www.cdc.gov/stltpublichealth/cha/assessme nt.html</a></li> <li>Community Needs Assessment Participants Workbook; 2013</li> </ul> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br>*Adjunct to CHANGE Action Guide included in relevance screening     |                    |         |
| <b>Assessing Community Needs and Resources;</b> Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA); 2011   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Community Health Assessment Toolkit;</b> Association for Community Health Improvement – American Hospital Association (AMA); 2017  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br>*Not broad or adaptable to public health                            |                    |         |
| <b>10 Steps in Community Health Assessment Development Process;</b> New York State Department of Health; 2010   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |
| <b>Online Health Program Planner;</b> Public Health Ontario/ National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools; 2017  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br>*No in-depth description of community assessment process/model/tool |                    |         |

# Appendix C: Literature Search Flowchart



## Appendix D: Data Extraction Tables

| Criteria                        | Evaluating Public and Community Health Programs (textbook)   |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Author(s), Date                 | Harris, M.J., 2010   |
| Relevant Section(s)/ Chapter(s) | Chapter 2 – The Community Assessment: An Overview (p. 19-40)   |
| Intended Audience/ Target Group | Public health and community health students and practitioners  |
| Quality Rating (Tool)           | Strong (Textbook tool)   |
| Chapter Objective               | Describes the relationship of community assessment to the implementation of public and community health programs and to program evaluation; identifies and describes approaches to conduct community assessments; and describes the importance of a literature review as a component of community assessment.  |
| Relevance Factors Included      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Model <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tool   |
| Factors/Topics Not Covered      | Does not discuss a tool to apply a model or process for conducting community assessment.   |
| Results                         | <p>A community assessment determines the extent of the problem and proposes the most feasible, viable, and effective solution or combination of solutions to address the problem adequately and appropriately. A community assessment depicts the perceived and actual needs of a given population and their assets and resources for the development of a public health initiative.</p> <p>The community may be a geographical, faith, racial/ethnic, school, professional, or cultural community etc.</p> <p>The community assessment is part of a cyclical and iterative process and precedes the selection, development, and implementation of the initiative. A community assessment may also be required following an evaluation to identify additional community needs, assets, and priorities and to determine next steps for program development. The assessment may also indicate the need for refinement of the initiative or the start of new one.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Assessment Theoretical Considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It is useful to conduct the community assessment using a theoretical framework because public health programs and policy initiatives are best developed using a strong theory.</li> <li>○ Community assessments may be based on one or a combination of individual, interpersonal, or communal theoretical models of health-behaviour change.</li> <li>○ When a theory or theoretical framework is used for the community assessment, the same theory may be used in the development of the program—it increases the likelihood of incorporating factors that are known to result in the change that the initiative is addressing.</li> <li>○ Individual behavioural theories don't recognize the interpersonal, organizational, community, policy and</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

SDOH factors that influence health. Using the ecological model as the guiding framework allows these concepts to be included in a community assessment of factors that influence health

- The ecological model dictates that it is not sufficient to look at individual factors in community assessment because organizational and community factors may play a role

#### **Community Assessment Processes**

- Data for a community assessment are collected from the population of interest. Data collection should include incidence and prevalence rates of disease, risk and protective factors, community assets (human, material and economic). Includes demographic, social, economic, cultural structural and systems factors that affect the community. Contains information about the state of the community, access to and delivery of services, cultural and social norms and practices and the economic situation.
- The community assessment is conducted using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The assessment requires a process that involves multiple stakeholders and uses multiple data-collection sources and methods.
- Steps in conducting a community assessment include:
  - **1. Establish a Team** – Consists of people who live within the community or who have an interest in the assessment being conducted. Members should include those who are familiar with the problem, research methods, data collection approaches and data analysis. Conducting a community assessment based on participatory model requires equitable involvement by the community
  - **2. Determine the Availability of Data** – Determine what information already exists (regularly collected data) and what still needs to be collected.
  - **3. Determine which Data are Missing and Need to be Collected** – Collect only the information that is needed and that answers the overarching research question.
  - **4. Decide on the Data Collection Approach** – Depends on the size and scope of the project, the study subject(s), the kind of information required (knowledge, attitude, behaviour), and the resources available.
  - **5. Develop and/or Secure Data Collection Instruments** – Data obtained from multiple sources and collected using reliable tools increase the validity and credibility of the research. Some tools include: focus group discussions, key-informant interviews, photovoice, digital storytelling, and asset maps.
  - **6. Develop the Data Collection Plan** – Includes the following components: data to be collected, methods for collecting the data, source of the data, and persons responsible.
  - **7. Secure Resources for the Data Collection Plan** – These can include: personnel for conducting the study, salaries and stipends, transportation, data collection instruments, interview space, equipment, supplies, and materials.
  - **8. Implement the Data Collection Plan** – All resources are available, materials have been developed, study participants have been notified or recruited and the instruments are available and ready to use.
  - **9. Analyze and Interpret the Data** – Determined based on the type of data collected and the sample size. Interpretation is based on the information that is to be collected and the likely use of the data.
  - **10. Use the Information to Frame the Intervention** – Use information obtained to frame the new initiative.

#### **Data Sources**

- May include collecting primary data and using previously collected secondary data

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Commonly used model for conducting a comprehensive community assessment by local public health agencies and was developed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cyclical MAPP process is organized in six phases and contains four major components of the health assessment: 1) Community themes and strengths; 2) local public health system assessment; 3) Community health status assessment; and 4) Forces of change assessment. In addition, a community assessment should incorporate an extensive search of the scientific literature to identify known behavioural, epidemiological, social, cultural, and environmental conditions associated with the public health problem at the local, state and national levels.</li> <li>• The community assessment report is a summary of the results of the assessment and the review of scientific literature and discussion of priorities for addressing the public health problem</li> <li>• Identifying and engaging stakeholders should occur in the first step to ensure stakeholder groups are involved in the process from the start</li> </ul> |
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| <b>Criteria</b>                        | <b>Public &amp; Community Health Nursing Practice (textbook)</b>   |
| <b>Author(s), Date</b>                 | Porche, D. J., 2004  |
| <b>Relevant Section(s)/ Chapter(s)</b> | Part II: Public Health-Community Health Assessment Framework; Chapter 8 (p. 108-128)   |
| <b>Intended Audience/ Target Group</b> | Professional/Academic  |
| <b>Quality Rating (Tool)</b>           | Strong (Textbook tool)   |
| <b>Chapter Objective</b>               | Focus on the community assessment process by defining community assessment; proposing community assessment models; identifying data collection sources and methods; and proposing various community assessment processes.  |
| <b>Relevance Factors Included</b>      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Model <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tool   |
| <b>Factors/Topics Not Covered</b>      | None   |
| <b>Results</b>                         | <p>Community assessment is defined as a comprehensive analysis of the community, with behavioural, public health agency, and environmental health assessment data incorporated into the analysis (p108). It is the process of collecting data on a defined community to be used as the foundation for identifying community-level strengths and weaknesses and planning and evaluating community-level interventions and programs.</p> <p>A model should be selected based on the definition of the community, types of data needed, and the potential use of the data for program planning (not one-size-fits-all).</p> |

### **Community Assessment Models**

- **Community-as-Partner**
  - A community assessment using this model focuses on assessing the core community, the eight subsystems (physical environment, education, safety and transportation, politics and government, health and social services, communication, economics, and recreation), and the normal lines of defense, flexible lines of defense, and lines of resistance.
- **Community Health Assessment Tool (CHAT)**
  - Based on 11 functional health patterns: a) community health and safety efforts; b) adequacy of community's nutritional efforts; c) waste management in the community; d) community transportation and recreation systems; e) community cycles and rhythms; f) community decision-making processes; g) community self-perception and opinion; h) informal and formal roles defined by the community; i) community reproductive functions, resources, and family structure; j) community support services; and k) cultural, ethical, and spiritual community needs.
- **Epidemiological Model**
  - The model components are agent, host, and environment and they provided the components from which data are collected in a community assessment.
  - Data are collected about each component and the relationships that exist between each component provide the summative analysis of the community assessment process.
- **General Ethnographic and Nursing Evaluation Studies in the State (GENESIS)**
  - Epidemiological and ethnographic data are integrated into a comprehensive community analysis to identify community residents' perceptions of their health needs and to describe health problems and related factors that influence health status.
- **Community Identification Process**
  - Involves collecting information on how community members view themselves and their world, as a means to best affect beliefs and behaviours.
  - Rapid assessment; focuses on: a) defining the population; b) creating taxonomies and acquiring materials; c) surveying internal knowledge; d) summarizing internal knowledge; e) developing an external knowledge base; f) integrating information and refining segments; g) interviewing key gatekeepers and opinion makers and observing the community; h) interviewing participants; and i) analyzing and interpreting data).
- **Helvie's energy Theory for Community Assessment**
  - System theory that focuses on energy as the capacity to do work.
  - Community assessment process consists of a comparison of past and present energy balances with other energy system states at other levels, such as comparing the community energy system to state or national energy systems.

- Assets Mapping Approach
  - Data collected are used to construct a map of assets and capacities.
  - Community assets are mapped according to building blocks—primary, secondary, and potential.
  - The assets mapping approach builds a community’s capacity to meet its identified needs. It identifies community strengths that can be used to develop or build more community capacity to create a competent community.
  
- Community assessment involves systematic acquisition of data from multiple data sources in the community – including both primary data collection and secondary data extraction from published
- Information on data collection methods are provided including: archival data extraction, windshield and walking surveys, participant observation, interviews, focus groups, surveys, Delphi technique, community forums, and geographic information system mapping
  
- Community profiling is a term to describe the broadest type of community assessment. Community profiling is a comprehensive description of the needs of a population that is defined as a community, and the resources that existed within that community, carried out with active involvement of the community itself, for the purpose of developing an action plan or other means of improving the quality of life in the community
  
- **Community Assessment Processes**
- Integrated Community Assessment Process – proposed by Porche, D. J.
  - Consists of the systematic collection of population-based data in a defined community using primary and secondary data collection methods to identify community assets and deficits.
  - The culmination of the integrated community assessment process is a community diagnosis, the planning of community interventions, and evaluation of these interventions.
  - Consists of six phases:
    - 1) Community Assessment Data Collection – Three parts to data collection: narrative description of the community, a windshield or walking survey, and archival community data collection;
    - 2) Community Assessment Data Analysis – Comprehensive review, critique and analysis of all data using classification, summation, interpretation and validation to develop list of assets, deficits and needs;
    - 3) Writing a Community Diagnosis – List community asset and diagnosis statements that provide direction for developing community interventions and evaluating such interventions;
    - 4) Proposed Multilevel Intervention – For each community diagnosis statement, corresponding objectives, interventions, timelines and evaluation methods are presented;
    - 5) Report Writing – Comprehensive summary of the community assessment data;
    - 6) Evaluation – evaluation of the community assessment process: what worked, what did not work, what other data sources should be included in the future, and what other methods should be used.
  
- Needs Assessment Approach



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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Considered a specialized and focused assessment of a particular need.</li> <li>○ A need is considered to exist if there is a discrepancy between “what is” and “what should be”.</li> <li>○ Reasons to conduct a needs assessment are to: a) provide supporting data to justify a new or improved program or service; b) provide data to justify discontinuation of a program or service; c) recommend organizational change in purpose, direction, management, operations or personnel; d) determine solutions or actions to rectify a problem; e) periodically reappraise services and activities within a program; f) validate the current target populations.</li> <li>○ Three levels of need exist within a community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Primary - needs of the service receivers (students, clients, information users, commuters, potential customers) among whom the need exists;</li> <li>▪ Secondary - needs of service providers and policy makers (teachers, parents, social workers, healthcare professionals, administrators);</li> <li>▪ Tertiary - consists of resources or solutions (buildings, facilities, equipment, technology, transportation, salaries and benefits, program delivery systems) to the need.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Needs assessment process can be divided into three phases: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Preassessment – Develop a management plan, define purpose, define boundaries, identify major areas or issues, identify existing data sources, and determine data to collect, data sources, data collection methods, and potential uses of data;</li> <li>2) Assessment – Collect data, establish preliminary priorities of needs from levels 1, 2, and 3, compile all data and begin analyzing and synthesizing data;</li> <li>3) Postassessment – Complete data analysis and synthesis to bridge gap between what is known and what is needed, set priorities for needs, identify potential solutions, develop an action plan to implement interventions, evaluate the process, and disseminate results.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p><b>Community Assessment Tool</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated Community Assessment Tool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Includes instructions for conducting all phases of the “Integrated Community Assessment”.</li> <li>○ Includes templates for data collection (windshield survey), data analysis, and proposed interventions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
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| <b>Criteria</b>                        | <b>Conducting Needs Assessments: A Multidisciplinary Approach (textbook)</b>   |
| <b>Author(s), Date</b>                 | Soriano, FI, 2013  |
| <b>Relevant Section(s)/ Chapter(s)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 4: Planning Your Needs Assessment</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Intended Audience/ Target Group</b> | Professional/Academic  |
| <b>Quality Rating (Tool)</b>           | Strong (Textbook tool)   |
| <b>Chapter Objective</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 4: Outlines how to plan for a needs assessment and the appropriate steps to the process.</li> </ul> |

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Relevance Factors Included</b> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Model <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tool  |
| <b>Factors/Topics Not Covered</b> | Limited to needs assessments, doesn't cover more broad community assessment process   |
| <b>Results</b>                    | <p><b>Guiding Theory for a Needs Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a needs assessment, theory is used to guide inquiry, explain observations or findings, or to justify services.</li> <li>• Theories are used with needs assessments at three main points: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) When planning and determining the focus and scope of a needs assessment.</li> <li>2) When interpreting findings from a needs assessment.</li> <li>3) When planning to use the findings to suggest a need for services or programs.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Ideological Theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Conceptual explanations for assumed links between community problems and service or program needs.</li> <li>○ Uses educated guessing or personal observations to justify assumptions or to interpret findings from a needs assessment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Scientific Theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Based on empirical research or studies.</li> <li>○ Uses past research or empirical findings to justify assumptions or to interpret findings from a needs assessment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Needs Assessment Model</b></p> <p>A decision model is outlined, to describe the steps in determining the type of assessment to conduct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration of key stakeholders (e.g., program and service funders, consumers of services, community leaders, and the community itself)</li> <li>• Determine expectations, requirements and wishes regarding the information to be gathered</li> <li>• Determine appropriate data collection method (quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods)</li> <li>• Assess level of commitment to the chosen method (from stakeholders who may prefer one method over another)</li> <li>• Assess appropriateness of chosen method through question development, needs and cost analysis</li> </ul> <p><b>Needs Assessment Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to conduct a needs assessment that is focused, realistic, doable and impactful. In order to accomplish this, the process is defined by the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Step 1 – Identify Key Stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Who is requesting the needs assessment? Could a needs assessment identify a community's unique programming and service needs? Are there multiple stakeholders involved? What are the expectations? Consult with stakeholders before planning and undertaking a needs assessment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Step 2 – Determine the Purpose of the Needs Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Write out the purpose in the form of goals and objectives or purpose and key questions. The purpose/objectives should outline the population/community of focus</li> <li>▪ Purpose should not just focus on concerns and problems, but also assets and strengths.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

- Step 3 – Identify Underlying Theories and Assumptions
    - Determine the underlying conceptual and theoretical paradigms. These paradigms are determined by the assumptions about the best way to address the problem/issue.
    - Theoretical assumptions will be used to suggest service and program needs and to analyze data, since assumptions will suggest which findings are important to point out.
  - Step 4 – Assess Available Resources
    - This includes expertise, manpower, and funding.
  - Step 5 – Know the Community
    - Understand social and political realities and contexts, as well as community sensitivities regarding particular issues and populations.
    - This will help predict the type of data and style of presentation that will elicit interest and support.
    - Know the population’s characteristics because it is essential for developing a sociocultural and demographic profile of the geographic area of interest.
  - Step 6 – Choose the Type of Assessment
    - Decide between quantitative or qualitative methodology.
    - Qualitative methods – Include key informant interviews, community interviews or case studies, focus groups and semi- and unstructured interviews. These are appropriate for generating personal, poignant, and descriptive information.
    - Quantitative methods – Include secondary data analysis, structured interviews, and surveys. These generate information that is more generalizable and has the potential of being more objective.
    - A mixed-method needs assessment can also be conducted, if qualitative and quantitative data is needed.
  - Consider language proficiencies and literacy levels of likely respondents
- Needs Assessment Tool**
- Needs Assessment Guide (Appendix A)
    - The guide is designed to help consider the information needed to conduct a needs assessment. The guide has questions, checklists, tables and worksheets to help develop the needs assessment process. It is divided into the following eight sections:
      - Purpose and Objectives
      - Roles and Responsibilities
      - Target Population and Subgroups
      - Stakeholder
      - Resource Availability
      - Use of the Information
      - Decision-Making Guide
      - General Checklist

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| <b>Criteria</b>                        | <b>A Handbook for Conducting a Community Assessment</b>   |
| <b>Author(s), Date</b>                 | City of Calgary, 1997   |
| <b>Relevant Section(s)/Chapter(s)</b>  | Entire handbook   |
| <b>Intended Audience /Target Group</b> | Professional/Academic<br>Community workers  |
| <b>Quality Rating (Tool)</b>           | Sufficient quality<br>AACODS rating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• partial rating for authority, accuracy (no methods stated) and significance (impact of paper is unknown)</li> <li>• No score for coverage (limitations not stated)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Handbook Objective</b>              | To articulate the key elements and process for conducting a community assessment. It is intended to provide a framework and tools for actively learning about a community's needs and strengths and then setting priorities. The handbook describes a community assessment process from beginning to end and serves as a guide rather than a definitive model.  |
| <b>Relevance Factors Included</b>      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Model <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tool  |
| <b>Factors/Topics Not Covered</b>      | None  |
| <b>Results</b>                         | <p>A community assessment is a systematic way of identifying the needs and resources of a community by gathering statistical data, soliciting perspectives of community members and collecting information about service providers and other community resources. The literature suggests that a community assessment is both a product and a process</p> <p>The purpose and outcomes of a community assessment depends on the model(s) of community practice being used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Assessment: A Key Component of Community Work (Lee, 1992) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This model identifies where a community assessment fits within the community work process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pre-assessment Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand your organization's expectations, the socio-political context within which you work, the relationships within your organization, and your organization's relationships with the community.</li> <li>• Establish contact with the community, begin to identify community leaders and understand the community's people, structures and dynamics.</li> <li>• Begin to build relationships and establish trust and clarify community expectations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Community Assessment Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather information, develop leadership, and broaden participation and support.</li> <li>• Develop a community image and coherence and identify strengths and needs and set priorities for future actions through collaboration and consensus.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Organization/Development Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an organization and plan for action and change based on identified priorities.</li> <li>• Further develop relationships/partnerships and build support.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

- Action Phase
  - Maintain and strengthen the organization.
  - Implement the plan to make the changes, review progress, share the accomplishments and look to the future.
- Evaluation Phase
  - Examine what happened, what went well; what did not go well, what has been learned and what is next.
- Continuation/Termination Phase
  - Decide to continue in some capacity or bring the relationship to a conclusion.

**Community Assessment Processes**

- Core Elements for Developing a Community Assessment Plan
  - The decision to undertake a community assessment will evolve out of the pre-assessment phase, as you learn about the community and establish a network of contacts who see the benefits of participating in this kind of community information gathering process.
  - Clarify issues regarding the scope, timelines and purpose of the community assessment.
  - Consider key factors that will influence a community assessment process.
  - Core elements when developing a plan:
    - **Establish a Representative Planning Group**
      - Community assessment should be done by the community, rather than to it.
      - Planning and guidance throughout the process should be provided by a group that is broadly representative of the community (community members, service providers, consumers, indigenous leaders and decision makers).
    - **Define the Community**
      - May be defined on the basis of geography, attribute, function, interest or a combination of these.
      - Geographic community – People living in the same physical area, such as a neighbourhood.
      - Community of attribute/function – People who share or possess a common characteristic, such as gender, ethnicity, religion or socioeconomic status.
      - Community of interest – When a group of people is drawn together as a result of a strong common interest, such as a fight to stop youth violence or homelessness.
    - **Information Collection and Analysis**
      - Identify information to be collected.
      - Should examine needs, issues, resources and strengths.
      - Should incorporate statistical information and the perspectives of community members.
      - Use the best available analytical techniques to interpret the data.
    - **Consider the Community's Unique Characteristics**
      - Tailor assessment strategies to the community and its the characteristics, strengths and limitations
    - **Sensitivity, Openness and Inclusiveness**
      - Assessment should be planned and undertaken with a high level of sensitivity, openness and

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|  | <p>inclusiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly outline the benefits to the community</li> <li>• Consider who will receive the assessment results and how they will be used (convey this info from the outset).</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Timing and Sequencing of Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a realistic time frame and sequence of activities before proceeding with data collection.</li> <li>• A pre-established time frame may dictate what information can realistically be gathered.</li> <li>• Gather particular information needed to answer critical questions for early implementation activities and delay other assessment activities until later.</li> <li>• Assessment process should not be so time consuming and labour intensive that once completed no one will want to participate in the organization/development and action phases.</li> <li>• Note – A community assessment can take four months to a year to complete, depending on the community and the level of detail and activity decided upon for the initiative.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Availability of Financial and Human Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the financial and human resources available to undertake the community assessment process.</li> <li>• Establish plan on the basis of what is realistic, given the available resources.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Anticipate the Challenges</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anticipate challenges that may arise during the assessment process and consider how they might be handled.</li> <li>• helps to prevent unnecessary work, delays, complications</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature suggests that 3 kinds of data should be collected for community assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Statistical data (typically secondary data)</li> <li>○ Perspectives of community members - residents, consumers and other community stakeholders (may be collected via surveys, key informant interviews, focus groups, community forums/organized public meetings, nominal group processes, Delphi technique)</li> <li>○ Community resources and assets, both informal and formal</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Community Assessment Tool</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “A Handbook for Conducting a Community Assessment” includes Worksheets for the pre-assessment phase, developing a community assessment plan, information collection and analysis, establishing community priorities and reporting the findings.</li> </ul> |
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| <b>Criteria</b>             | <b>Performing a Community Assessment Curriculum</b>                     |
| <b>Author(s), Date</b>      | Carroll AM, Perez M, Toy P. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research 2004 |
| <b>Relevant Section(s)/</b> | Entire guide (curriculum)   |

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| <b>Chapter(s)</b>                          |   |
| <b>Intended Audience/<br/>Target Group</b> | Professional/academic   |
| <b>Quality Rating (Tool)</b>               | Sufficient quality<br>AACODS rating:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• partial rating for authority, accuracy (no methods stated) and significance (impact of paper is unknown)</li> <li>• No score for coverage (limitations not stated)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Guide Objective</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The curriculum provides the information needed to plan and conduct a public health assessment in your community. A Community Assessment Plan of six steps and a worksheet for each step are included</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Relevance Factors<br/>Included</b>      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Model <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tool  |
| <b>Factors/Topics Not<br/>Covered</b>      | N/A   |
| <b>Results</b>                             | <p>Community assessment is a process of collecting, analyzing and reporting information about the needs in a community as well as its strengths and assets. A community assessment should be driven by community leaders and organizations, and actively involve community residents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build partnerships that share common interests; contribute or share the resources necessary to conduct a community assessment</li> <li>• Community assessment is a dynamic process – the steps should be completed in the order that makes sense for your group and steps may need to be revisited</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a community partnership <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Identify stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a core group of individuals and organizations with a vested interest in the assessment and what will be done with the results</li> <li>• Consider what defines your community, who are the social institutions, organizations, clubs, community leaders, community-influencers, who has community assessment expertise, who will use the results</li> </ul> </li> <li>1.2 Form a community partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community partnership = a collaboration that represents the most intense way for individuals to work together, while still retaining the separate identity of the participating entities</li> <li>• Partners may offer/agree to different levels of collaboration e.g., just updates on progress, occasional consultation and feedback, or included in all aspects of project</li> </ul> </li> <li>1.3 Assess the individual and organizational capacity of the partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of resources, time and capacity of each member/organization will determine the magnitude and scope of the community assessment</li> </ul> </li> <li>1.4 Identify benefits and risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss early on so that the group can air concerns, try to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks</li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> </ol> |

2. Determine your focus
  - 2.1 Identify and prioritize community public health issues
    - Discussion to select the health issue that will be the focus of the community assessment
  - 2.2 Define the problem
    - Frame the selected health issue in terms of unmet needs, gaps in health care services, lack of community-wide resources, or funding
  - 2.3 Create realistic and achievable goals and objectives for the community assessment
3. Determine the information (data) you need
  - 3.1 Articulate the primary questions to be answered
    - 3-6 questions you wish to answer with the information you collect through the community assessment
  - 3.2 identify what type of data is needed
    - Types of data could include demographic characteristics, community utilization of services, levels of knowledge, opinions, behaviours, assets, needs
  - 3.3 Identify data sources
    - Identify existing secondary data that can be used that can be used to answer the question before moving onto primary data collection
4. Determine how to get the information (collect data)
  - 4.1 Identify what new data needs to be collected (information that can't be accessed from secondary data)
  - 4.2 Select the appropriate data collection method(s) (given time, staffing, resources and skills)
    - Methods could include asset mapping, focus groups, key informant interviews, surveys, community forums and/or rapid appraisal techniques
    - Create a data collection plan for each method that outlines the type of data (qualitative or quantitative), target respondents, assessment questions the method will answer, activities to complete data collection, who will do the work, timeline
  - 4.3 Revisit steps 1-3 to ensure you're on track
5. Determine how to understand the information (analyze data)
  - 5.1 Check the data
    - Ensure you have complete and quality data
  - 5.2 Go back to the primary assessment questions
    - Ensure that you only analyze data that helps you answer your primary assessment questions
  - 5.3 Reduce the Amount of data
    - E.g., coding data into database, creating qualitative summary document
  - 5.4 Analyze the data
  - 5.5 Verify findings
  - 5.6 Interpret findings and draw conclusions
    - With community partners, discuss interpretations that can be drawn, draw conclusions
6. Determine how to use and communicate the results
  - 6.1 Identify assessment products



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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop products that effectively communicate findings. A written report usually provides the foundation for other assessment communication products</li> </ul> <p>6.2 Identify target audiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal and external stakeholders with whom the team wants to share their findings</li> </ul> <p>6.3 Present your findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make the case for the findings</li> </ul> <p>6.4 Determine next steps for the partnership</p> <p>6.5 Celebrate and acknowledge your work</p> |
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| <b>Criteria</b>                        | <b>Community Health Assessment and Group Evaluation (CHANGE) Action Guide: Building a Foundation of Knowledge to Prioritize Community Needs</b>  |
| <b>Author(s), Date</b>                 | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010   |
| <b>Relevant Section(s)/ Chapter(s)</b> | Entire Action Guide  |
| <b>Intended Audience/ Target Group</b> | Professional<br>Community teams and local stakeholders   |
| <b>Quality Rating (Tool)</b>           | Sufficient quality<br>AACODS rating:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>partial rating for accuracy (full methods not stated)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Guide Objective</b>                 | <p>Community Health Assessment and Group Evaluation (CHANGE) was developed to assess the risk factors that contribute to chronic diseases in five community settings, such as health care, schools and worksites, and create an action plan</p> <p>CHANGE tool objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify community strengths and areas for improvement</li> <li>Identify and understand the status of community health needs</li> <li>Define improvement areas to guide the community towards implementing and sustaining policy, systems, and environmental changes around healthy living strategies</li> <li>Assist with prioritizing community needs and consider appropriate allocation of available resources</li> </ul> <p>To support and promote the use of the CHANGE tool, CDC produced the step-by-step Action Guide to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide clear action steps to complete the CHANGE tool</li> <li>Provide examples of resources that users can leverage for their own communities</li> <li>Support the consistent implementation of the CHANGE tool across communities</li> </ul> |
| <b>Relevance Factors Included</b>      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Model <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tool   |

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| <b>Factors/Topics Not Covered</b> | Topics outside of chronic disease<br>CHANGE measures population-based strategies, not individual-level strategies  |
| <b>Results</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHANGE is a data-collection tool and planning resource for community members who want to gather and organize data of community assets and potential areas for improvement prior to deciding on the critical issues to be addressed in a Community Action Plan. It is meant to be an annual process</li> <li>• CHANGE tools is a set of Excel spreadsheets</li> <li>• The Socio-Ecological Model provides a useful framework for showing the multiple influences on community health and barriers to health improvement. Understanding these factors aids in developing strong, actionable strategies for your community. Model includes individual, interpersonal, organizational, community and public policy domains of behaviour influence</li> <li>• Community Change Process has 5 phases (CHANGE tool focuses on the first 3): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Commitment – assembling a team to address issues</li> <li>○ Assessment – gathering data and input on community needs; giving the community’s voice a chance to be heard</li> <li>○ Planning – developing the Community Action Plan for change</li> <li>○ Implementation – executing the plan in collaboration with the community team</li> <li>○ Evaluation – woven throughout the community change process to answer key questions</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Actions steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assemble the Community Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much of your effort should be focused initially on establishing a strong community team</li> <li>• Seek representation from diverse sectors</li> <li>• Recommend 10-12 individuals maximum</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Develop Team Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide whether to complete CHANGE as a whole team or divide into subgroups (minimum 2 people collecting and analyzing data and reporting back to the team to gain consensus). Establish group standard operation procedures and decision-making process</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Review all 5 CHANGE Sectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review all 5 sectors prior to completing them so the community team understands the total picture of what is being assessed. The 5 sectors are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ community-at-large – community wide efforts that impact social and built environments</li> <li>○ community institution/organizations sector – those that provide human services and access to facilities</li> <li>○ health care sector – includes places where people for to receive preventive care or treatment</li> <li>○ School sector – includes all learning institutions</li> <li>○ work site sector – places of employment</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Within each sector are modules that contain specific questions to be asked for each sector. Included modules are: leadership, chronic disease management, demographics, physical activity, tobacco and nutrition (and after school and district for the school sector)</li> </ul> </li> </ol> |

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|                    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Gather data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorm sites for each sector (suggest a minimum of 13) and people (key informants)</li> <li>• Use multiple methods to gather data from each site</li> <li>• Using existing data sources to capture community information where possible</li> <li>• Possible data collection methods include: observation, Photovoice, walkability audit, focus groups, surveys,</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. Review data gathered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the CHANGE tool rating scale to rate the progress of each sector on their policy and environment change</li> <li>• Brainstorm, debate and dialogue with the team to gain consensus on what these data mean in terms of parameters of the CHAGNE tool. Data should be rated based on a comprehensive review of all sources and agreement of everyone involved</li> </ul> </li> <li>6. Enter data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data is entered into the CHANGE Sector Excel File. The tool will provide a summary of all scores</li> </ul> </li> <li>7. Review Consolidated Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the CHANGE summary worksheets and templates to determine areas of improvement to develop a Community Action Plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>8. Build the Community Action Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes project period objectives, annual objectives and activities to achieve the objectives</li> </ul> </li> </ol> |
| <b>Limitations</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus is on chronic disease – modules are limited in their scope of questions</li> <li>• Focus on community defined as a set geographic area (could be city, town, county, neighbourhood, school district) but would be challenging to apply to a community defined in another way</li> <li>• This program is no longer funded by CDC, but Excel files and worksheets can be accessed online <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/healthycommunitiesprogram/tools/change/downloads.htm">https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/healthycommunitiesprogram/tools/change/downloads.htm</a></li> </ul>  |

| <b>Criteria</b>                        | <b>Community Tool Box</b>  |
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| <b>Author(s), Date</b>                 | Kansas University Center for Community Health and Development  |
| <b>Relevant Section(s)/ Chapter(s)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 3. Assessing Community Needs and Resources</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Intended Audience/ Target Group</b> | Professional/academic<br>Community stakeholders  |
| <b>Quality Rating (Tool)</b>           | Sufficient quality (AACODS – no quality rating)<br>AACODS rating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• partial rating for authority, accuracy (no methods stated) and significance (impact of paper is unknown)</li> <li>• No score for coverage (limitations not stated)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Guide Objective</b>                 | To provide practical, step-by-step guidance in community-building skills and tools to support most steps   |
| <b>Relevance Factors</b>               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Model <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tool   |

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| <b>Included</b>                   |   |
| <b>Factors/Topics Not Covered</b> |   |
| <b>Results</b>                    | <p>Section 1. Developing a plan for assessing local needs and resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why identify local needs and resources – to understand the environment, to understand public opinion, to make decisions about priorities</li> <li>• May be important to address the community’s priorities first to build relationships even if those priorities aren’t the most important issues</li> <li>• Community assessment process benefits from full participation from community stakeholders. Consider involving the following people: those experiencing needs that should be addressed, health and human services providers, government officials, influential people, people whose jobs or lives could be affected by the results of the assessment, community activists, businesses.</li> <li>• Identifying needs and assets can be helpful at almost any point in your initiative (when planning, when implementing, when efforts are being reviewed)</li> <li>• Guidelines to develop a plan for assessing local needs and resources (these steps may take place in a different order or at the same time): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recruit a planning group that represents all stakeholders and mirrors diversity in the community (determine if this planning group will be the group that actually conducts the assessment; consider training needs at this point)</li> <li>○ Design an evaluation process for the assessment</li> <li>○ Decide why you want to conduct the assessment (this will affect from whom and how you gather information, what is assessed, and what you do with the information you get)</li> <li>○ Determine what data is already available</li> <li>○ Determine what other information you need</li> <li>○ Decide what methods you’ll use for gathering information. Options include using existing data, listening sessions and public forums, interviews and focus groups, direct/participant observation, surveys, asset mapping</li> <li>○ Decide whom you’ll gather information from</li> <li>○ Decide who will collect data</li> <li>○ Decide how you’ll reach your informants (e.g., posting requests on local websites or social media, choosing people at random, mailing or emailing surveys, intercept surveys, posters and flyers in public places, using the media, direct appeal to local community group, or having the planning group personally recruit friends/colleagues/neighbours)</li> <li>○ Decide who will analyze the data and how they’ll do it</li> <li>○ Plan any training needed for the planning group (e.g., on data collection methods, how to conduct interviews)</li> <li>○ Decide how you’ll record the results of the assessment and present them to the community</li> <li>○ Decide who will perform what assessment tasks</li> <li>○ Create a timeline</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

- Present the plan, get feedback, and make adjustments
- Celebrate the completion of the plan

#### Section 2. Understanding and Describing the Community

Community = any group sharing something in common – this may be a given geographic location, or other communities within a larger geographically-defined community (often defined by race or ethnicity, professional or academic ties, religion, culture, or shared background or interest)

- Take time to understand your community by creating a community description (of the community now, in the past and what it could be in the future). A community description could include physical aspects, history, community leaders, community culture, existing groups and institutions, economics, government/politics, social structure, attitudes and values
- Anything we do in a community requires us to be familiar with its people, its issues, and its history. Working in a community is more likely to be successful if everyone is informed by the culture of the community and understands relationships within the community

#### Section 4. Collecting Information about the Problem

- Collecting quantitative information provides a concrete tool to compare community problems and can build awareness and gather support for community issues
- Data can come from existing sources or may need to be collected
- Surveys are one of the best ways to find quantitative information. Focus groups and public forums can also be used to collect information – more often qualitative
- Know the limitations of the data

#### Section 5. Analyzing Community Problems

- The goal is to understand the problem better and to deal with it more effectively.
- Steps to determine the causes of a problem include:
  - Justify the choice of the problem. Consider the criteria of frequency, duration, scope, severity, equity and perception
  - Frame the problem – state the problem without implying a solution or blaming anyone
  - Identify whose behaviour and/or what and how environmental factors need to change for the problem to begin to be solved
  - Analyze the root causes of the problem – using techniques such as critical thinking or “but why?”
  - Identify the restraining and driving forces that affect the problem (force field analysis)
  - Find any relationships that exist among the problem you’re concerned with and other problems in the community
  - Identify personal factors that may contribute to the problem
  - Identify environmental factors that may contribute to the problem
  - Identify targets and agents of change for addressing the problem
- Real community problems are likely to be complex. They will have more than one underlying cause/reason and

may require multi-pronged solutions

Chapter 3 includes sections that outline how to conduct a number of information collection and organizing strategies for community assessments, including: public forums and listening sessions, focus groups, needs assessment surveys, concern surveys, interviews, surveys, developing baseline measures, determining service utilization, SWOT analysis, qualitative methods, geographic information systems for mapping, using public records and archival data, photovoice, windshield and walking surveys and small area analysis.

Section 23. Developing and Using Criteria and Processes to set Priorities

- A community assessment will likely identify multiple issues to be addressed so criteria and decision-making processes will need to be selected to deciding which issues are most important and what strategies or approaches could be used to address the issues
- The ideal process is participatory and inclusive, involving stakeholders
- Creating a process to develop criteria for prioritizing issues will ideally happen early in the decision to conduct a community assessment.
- Steps:
  - Assemble a participatory group representative of all stakeholders
  - Identify the interests of various stakeholder groups in relation to the process of setting priorities
  - Establish clear criteria for setting priorities for community issues to be addressed (e.g., seriousness, frequency, cost, feasibility of affecting the issue, resources needed, readiness etc.)
  - Establish a process for engaging stakeholders and the broader community in using the criteria to set priorities on the issue(s) to address
  - Establish criteria for selecting an approach to address each of your priority issues
  - Establish a process for selecting approaches using the established criteria
  - Finalize your choices (but be prepared to monitor your effort and change priorities as conditions change)

## Appendix E: Applicability and Transferability Worksheet

Summary of discussion notes from May 1, 2018 A&T meeting

| Factors                             | Questions  | Notes  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Applicability (feasibility)</b>  |  |  |
| Political acceptability or leverage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the process be allowed or supported in current political climate?</li> <li>• What will the public relations impact be for local government?</li> <li>• Will this process enhance the stature of the organization?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>E.g., are there reasons to do the process that relate to increasing the profile and/or creating a positive image of public health?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Will the public and target groups accept and support the process in its current format?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lines up well with new “Working With You” mission, the refreshed corporate values (e.g., we find and implement solutions together), and ROP Corporate Strategic Plan (current strategic plan built using community engagement process)</li> <li>• Aligns with OPHS (including new foundational health equity standard and focus on priority populations)</li> <li>• There has been support and buy-in from Regional Council in the past for processes like this when they are done right</li> <li>• Reinforces E2EPHP and how organization makes decisions</li> <li>• Potential link to ROP-PH’s Equity Steering Committee</li> <li>• Process seems consistent with current knowledge and processes</li> <li>• Other departments (e.g., Human Services) would be interested if Public Health were to do this type of work</li> <li>• Opportunity to have influence on positive image and profile of organization – demonstrates leadership re. strengths-based participatory approach</li> <li>• Beneficial to clearly define community assessment and when and how it should be used</li> <li>• Would be seen to increase transparency and accountability of organization</li> </ul> |
| Social acceptability                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the target population find the process socially acceptable? Is it ethical?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Consider how the process would be perceived by the population.</i></li> <li>○ <i>Consider the language and tone of the key messages.</i></li> <li>○ <i>Consider any assumptions you might have made about the population. Are they supported by the literature?</i></li> <li>○ <i>Consider the impact of your</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | <p>Staff perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to set the context and have clear communication to staff to build acceptance and understanding</li> <li>• Need to clarify definitions for common and similar terms that are used related to community assessment. Definitions need to fit in E2EPHP and ROP-PH context</li> <li>• Disseminate via knowledge transfer strategy and training</li> <li>• Need to be aware of changing organization culture regarding community development. Based on MOH guidance, ROP-PH previously focused more heavily on community work including assessment and then we moved away from this work. This may influence the way some staff think about this “new” process. Need to acknowledge “swinging of pendulum” back towards</li> </ul>  |

| Factors                              | Questions   | Notes   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
|                                      | <p><i>process and key messages on non-target groups.</i></p>  | <p>this type of work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is demand and interest from staff for process and guidance to support this type of work</li> <li>• An example project or pilot would be helpful for staff to understand scope of community assessment and where it might be useful</li> <li>• The process to conduct a community assessment seems quite large and time consuming – could ROP-PH's role be better clarified?</li> <li>• Staff are often keen to implement new processes – this desire would need to be balanced with true need for this type of information</li> </ul> <p>Community perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider – is there communication that would need to happen with external partners about the process ROP-PH will follow once created?</li> <li>• May need further investigation into barriers to participation which may require accommodation. Consider how to balance power and create level decision-making between paid professional's and volunteer community members</li> <li>• Need to plan for changes that may occur in ROP-PH staff who are working with the community group (succession planning) - build trust with community/organizations</li> <li>• May need to provide financial or other incentives to community members to show value for their time and involvement in projects (e.g., aware of a health unit that provided paid roles to community members to support their involvement)</li> <li>• Communities will likely appreciate strengths-based approach and participatory approach. Could increase acceptability of programs if they are based on community assessment work</li> <li>• Open, sensitive and inclusive participation increases acceptability</li> <li>• Evaluation of the community assessment process may help with acceptability</li> <li>• Be aware that some people/groups may not see themselves as members of a community that we are interested in working with (e.g., do sex workers or intra-venous drug users see themselves as a community?)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No ethical concerns identified</li> </ul> |
| <p>Available essential resources</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who/what is available/essential for the local implementation?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will require centralized support from OMOH, Education &amp; Research team to develop tools and support process on on-going basis</li> <li>• Tool/guide created would be general for the 7 phase process; would not be</li> </ul>   |



| Factors                   | Questions  | Notes   |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| (personnel and financial) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are they adequately trained? If not, is training available and affordable?</li> <li>• What is needed to tailor the process locally?</li> <li>• What are the full costs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consider: <i>in-kind staffing, supplies, systems, space requirements for staff, training, and technology/administrative supports.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Are the incremental benefits worth the</li> </ul> | <p>realistic to create a tool for each phase – tool will need to be flexible to allow adjustment for differing communities and the issues that need to be considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some existing tools/supports related to E2EPHP already exist that may be able to support community assessment process</li> <li>• Community Development Workers (CDWs) have skills in community engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Oral health CDWs are currently doing something similar in an informal way</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Public Health Nurses are well positioned to work in community assessment process based on their nursing education and experience working with clients and engaging with people</li> <li>• Public Health Inspectors and Health Promoters are also connected to communities and may have necessary skills and capacity</li> <li>• An internal team of staff that would be involved in a community assessment would benefit from including staff with frontline experience working with community and technical research methods/data skills (e.g., Analysts). Also need people with the right authority around the table to set agendas and negotiate</li> <li>• Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Skills required – strong facilitation skills, community engagement, ability to understand a community, identifying and engaging stakeholders, cultural humility, active listening, negotiation skills (to be able to meet community needs but still move ROP-PH's needs forward)</li> <li>○ There may be some expertise or capacity in these areas already, but also a need for staff skilled in engagement</li> <li>○ May be able to leverage training from ROP Corporate Services on culture and diversity when/if this is developed in the future</li> <li>○ Training could come from community members to help understand the community</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Management needs to understand and allow for time necessary for initial work of identifying the community, building trust and confidence</li> <li>• The process is general enough that it could be applied locally with different types of communities. Each situation working with a community would be different and would require tailoring to that community</li> <li>• Costs and benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Costs to implement (develop process/tools) are primarily staff time</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

| Factors   | Questions  | Notes  |
|---|--|--|
|   | costs of the process?<br>○ <i>Consider the cost of the process relative to the number of people that benefit from the process.</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Benefits – successful community assessment projects could build a positive reputation, successful programs, can influence programs/interventions, could identify and help address inequities, could build capacity and knowledge in the community</li> <li>○ Also need to consider the cost of not moving forward with this process (e.g., financial impact of implementing/running an ineffective or unacceptable program)</li> <li>○ Technology won't be a cost driver – should consider how social media could be useful for some populations</li> </ul>   |
| Organizational expertise and capacity           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the process in line with ROP-PH's 10-Year Strategic Plan (i.e., 2009-2019, 'Staying Ahead of the Curve')?</li> <li>• Does the process conform to existing legislation or regulations (either local or provincial)?</li> <li>• Does the process overlap with existing processes/programs or is it symbiotic (both internally and externally)?</li> <li>• Does the process lend itself to cross-departmental/divisional collaboration?</li> <li>• Any organizational barriers/structural issues or approval processes to be addressed?</li> <li>• Is the organization motivated (learning organization)?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Consider organizational capacity/readiness and internal supports for staff learning.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process fits with E2EPHP which is a strategic priority in ROP-PH's current strategic plan</li> <li>• Within E2EPHP, need to clarify difference between data, research, other E2EPHP pieces and community assessment</li> <li>• Opportunity for cross-divisional and cross-departmental collaboration and learning from other departments (e.g., Human Services)</li> <li>• ROP-PH is organized by health topic areas, not by population groups so we would need cross-divisional communication to have a sense of who has engaged communities in the past</li> <li>• Corporately, may need to consider strategy to communicate and coordinate when we are working with a community so ROP isn't placing too much burden on a community or overwhelming with multiple requests</li> <li>• ROP-PH is a learning organization and could be motivated to learn about community assessment</li> <li>• Could be an opportunity to collaborate with academic institutions</li> </ul> |
| <b>Transferability (generalizability)</b>       |  |  |
| Magnitude of the "reach" and cost effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the process appropriately reach the priority population(s)?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What will be the coverage of the priority population(s)?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process will reach staff via knowledge transfer/communication strategy – need to have clear messages and ensure properly timed communication</li> <li>• Process can be applicable to any population defined</li> <li>• Where ROP-PH doesn't have experience reaching a priority population, may be able to learn from other organizations, stakeholders that have experience</li> <li>• Community assessment will reach priority populations with greater understanding and input from team</li> </ul>  |

| Factors   | Questions  | Notes   |
|---|--|---|
|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider effective strategies to reach “vulnerable populations”</li> <li>• Consider how efforts can be coordinated across the department when reaching priority populations</li> <li>• Reach may depend on ROP-PH’s willingness to build relationships with priority populations/communities through engagement work</li> </ul>  |
| Target population characteristics   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the local population comparable to populations in the literature?</li> <li>• Will any difference in characteristics (e.g., ethnicity, socio-demographic variables) impact the process effectiveness locally? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Consider if there are any important differences between the studies and the population in Peel (i.e., consider demographic, behavioural and other contextual factors).</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature was broad and didn’t discuss specific populations when describing community assessment process – should be adaptable to Peel Region and communities with whom we may work</li> <li>• Tool should be applicable in a variety of populations regardless of characteristics</li> <li>• Peel context is unique; process seems to be broad enough to apply in Peel. Specific communities may need additional considerations</li> <li>• Consideration will need to be given to adapting the process for each community we engage</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Proposed Direction (after considering the above factors):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education &amp; Research should proceed with development of community assessment guide</li> <li>• Need to develop clear definition of community assessment and suggestion of when and why you would use community assessment</li> <li>• Plan a pilot project with team and community using this process of community assessment. Revise the process as needed based on local context and needs. Or consider and exemplar project to illustrate how and what a community assessment would look like.</li> </ul> |  |   |