North Metropolitan Health Service Public Health Planning: Development Guide

A guide outlining the support North Metropolitan Health Service can provide north metropolitan local governments in public health planning.

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nmhs.health.wa.gov.au

One team, **many** dreams.

Care / Respect / Innovation / Teamwork / Integrity

Acknowledgement of Country and People

North Metropolitan Health Service respectfully acknowledges the Noongar people as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land on which we work and pay respect to their Elders both past, present and emerging. North Metropolitan Health Service recognises, respects and values Aboriginal culture as we walk a new path together.

Thank you

Contents

List of Abbreviations

NMHS   North Metropolitan Health Service

LGA   Local Government Authority

PHP   Public Health Plan

Image Description: City of Wanneroo walking group

North Metropolitan Health Service Public Health Planning: Development Guide

On 4 June 2024, Stage 5A of the WA Public Health Act 2016 commenced. This requires all Local Government Authorities (LGA) to publish a public health plan (PHP) that applies to its local district and is consistent with the State Public Health plan* by **4 June 2026**. A LGA PHP fits within the LGA integrated planning and reporting framework and can be a stand-alone informing strategy or integrated into existing plans (eg: Strategic Community Plan). Most LGAs prepare a stand-alone plan as their first PHP.

As per the WA Public Health Act 2016 Section 45, a local public health plan must:
- (a) identify the public health needs of the local government district
- (b) include an examination of data relating to health status and health determinants in the local government district
- (c) establish objectives and policy priorities for:
  - (i) the promotion, improvement and protection of public health in the local government district
  - (ii) the development and delivery of public health services in the local government district
- (d) identify how, based on available evidence, the objectives and policy priorities referred to in paragraph (c) are proposed to be achieved
- (e) describe how the local government proposes to work with the Chief Health Officer and other bodies undertaking public health initiatives, projects and programmes to achieve the objectives and policy priorities referred to in paragraph (c)
- (f) include a strategic framework for the identification, evaluation and management of public health risks in the local government district and any other matters relating to public health risks in the local government district
  - (i) that the local government considers appropriate to include in the plan, or
  - (ii) that are required to be included in the plan by the Chief Health Officer or the regulations
- (g) include a report, in accordance with the regulations, on the performance by the local government of its functions under the Act.

North Metropolitan Health Service (NMHS) has committed to providing north metropolitan LGAs with public health planning support and guidance – as per the Roles and Responsibilities Agreement. This work is led by the Health Promotion Service, Public Health Service who aim to keep the population healthy by preventing chronic disease (eg: cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes) and injury. The *North Metropolitan Health Service Public Health Planning: Development Guide* (Guide) is a concise and practical document developed to assist Health Promotion staff and LGAs. More detailed guidance on public health planning can be found in the Department of Health's Public Health Planning Guide for Local Government.

Specifically, the Guide is intended to outline the:

- key stages in developing a PHP
- expertise and technical support NMHS can provide free-of-charge, within our scope of capacity and expertise** to LGAs at each stage
- resources and editable templates LGAs can use/adapt.

This Guide does not address PHP implementation, but NMHS can provide support during implementation as requested.

* To assist local governments with developing their local PHPs, the Chief Health Officer has released the draft objectives and priorities for the revised State Public Health Plan. These serve as a strategic framework and PHPs should be tailored to reflect the public health needs of your area and the community you serve. The revised State Public Health Plan is due for release in late 2024/early 2025.

** Our expertise is in working collaboratively to address the risk factors causing the greatest burden of disease in the population: smoking, poor diet, harmful alcohol use, overweight and obesity and physical inactivity. NMHS can connect LGAs to the relevant Department of Health directorates for support and guidance on areas outside our scope of expertise.

Image description: Families at Jo Wheatley All Abilities Play Space, Dalkeith

The stages – planning and development

There is no 'one size fits all' approach to public health planning. Each LGA is different with varying resources and capacity – the stages outlined can be tailored to meet the needs of each LGA. Furthermore, while the stages are depicted in a cycle, some stages may occur at the same time, or be re-visited throughout the planning process.

An important step before the planning begins is to conduct a review of existing LGA plans and strategies and recent community consultations – and cast a preventative health lens over these. This helps identify work the LGA is already doing to support public health and wellbeing. While each LGA is expected to have their own PHP, LGAs may wish to plan and develop their PHP together, especially neighbouring and/or smaller LGAs.

Each stage of the planning process (see below) is outlined in the following pages, including the support NMHS can offer LGAs.

Stage 1
Pre-planning – setting the foundations

Stage 2
Develop a project plan

Stage 3
Identify your community's health and wellbeing priorities

Stage 4
Develop your public health plan

Stage 5
Finalise the public health plan and communicate the results
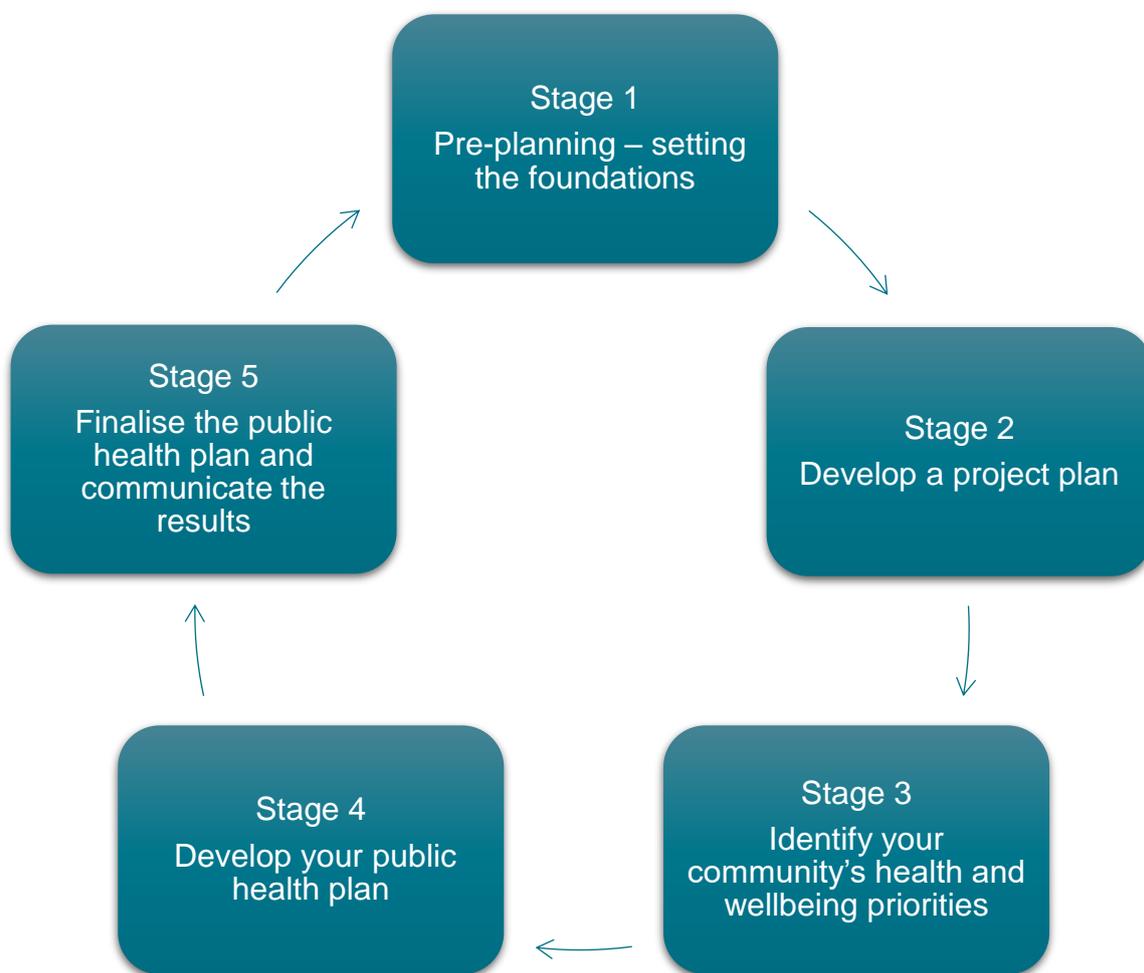
Stage 1. Pre-planning – setting the foundations

1.1. Establish the governance mechanisms

Key personnel	Resourcing	How we can support you
☐ Appoint a senior manager and/or executive leader to drive the development of the PHP and gain support from your chief executive officer. ☐ Appoint a project coordinator to develop the PHP and to manage the community engagement and communication activities. ☐ Establish an advisory group with broad business unit representation to ensure whole of LGA support and engagement throughout development of the PHP.	Identify what human and financial resources are available and/or needed. For example: ☐ What budget has been or needs to be allocated? ☐ Will your LGA utilise an existing staff member, create and fill a new position or hire a consultant? ☐ How will a project coordinator be appointed? ☐ What is the timeframe for commencement and completion? ☐ What events and communication channels are available for community engagement? ☐ What community groups and stakeholder organisations need to be involved and/or can assist with community engagement?	Work with you to develop a briefing note encouraging executive approval and support of the public health process. Present the public health planning process and requirements, as outlined in the Public Health Act 2016, to your executive. Provide public health planning support and advice, formalised through a Letter of Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding*. Provide guidance to develop a consultancy brief. Provide an editable position description form template to ensure suitability and experience for public health planning and project management. Provide an editable terms of reference template for the advisory group. Participate on the advisory group.

*A formal agreement between the LGA and NMHS with clearly identified roles and responsibilities to support the development of a local PHP.

Stage 2. Develop a project plan

2.1. Engage key personnel to define the stages, scope and deliverables for developing your Public Health Plan

Develop a project plan to guide the development of your public health plan.

Considerations:

☐ Outline the expected tasks, responsible person(s) and expected timeframes.

☐ Liaise with your internal community engagement team to determine your engagement approach with key stakeholders, elected members and the community, utilising the IAP2 Engagement Level Matrix (or equivalent framework).

☐ Potential risks and mitigation strategies (eg: how will your LGA manage human and financial resources, source credible information and meet timeframes).

How we can support you

Work with you to identify the project scope and deliverables.

Give input into other relevant project documents, such as a community engagement plan, to meaningfully engage community and other stakeholders.

Provide you with editable templates, including project logic model, implementation plan and community engagement plan.

Image description: Youth development at Point Resolution Childcare Centre, Dalkeith.

Stage 3. Identify your community's health and wellbeing priorities

3.1. Review your key strategic plans, community engagement reports and other relevant local reports

Strategic alignment

Review your strategic plans to determine the health and wellbeing priorities for your LGA with a health lens, noting PHP health priorities need to be consistent with the [WA State Public Health Plan.](#)

Example strategic documents

- Strategic Community Plan
- Sustainability Strategy
- Corporate Business Plan
- Community Development Plan
- Active Transport Plan
- Planning Strategy
- Sport and Recreation Plan
- Community Safety Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Access and Inclusion Plan
- Local laws and policies

Internal and external stakeholder engagement

☐ Review internal regulatory responsibilities to include within the PHP (eg: actions conducted by the environmental health officers).

☐ Review community engagement reports or market research to identify any pre-determined health and wellbeing priorities already put forward by community.

☐ Liaise with key internal business units and external stakeholders (eg: NMHS, Cancer Council WA, Injury Matters) to identify priorities for the PHP.

☐ Summarise the key priorities from this review and incorporate into the community engagement process and key communication activities (See 3.3).

How we can support you

Present the health promotion objectives of the State Public Health Plan.

Provide a preventative health lens on your LGAs strategic documents and community engagement reports to identify the key public health priorities.

3.2. Review your demographic and health and wellbeing related data

Obtain credible sources of data and reports to inform the health and wellbeing priorities.

For example:

☐ The Local Government Community Health and Wellbeing Profile reports prepared by the Department of Health (see *Requesting health data* tab). These reports include data on nutrition, physical activity, overweight and obesity, tobacco smoking, alcohol, illicit drugs, mental health, injury and notifiable infectious diseases. Given the rigor of these reports, LGAs are not required to gather additional data on these risk factors.

☐ Demographic data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). The ABS contains population data on age groups, gender, employment, education, income, housing and socioeconomic status.

☐ National and state strategic plans outlining health and wellbeing priorities. These documents are particularly important when local data is not available for the whole community and/or priority populations at greater risk of poor health outcomes (eg: WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015 - 2030, WA Health Promotion Strategic Framework 2022 - 2026). Priority populations include Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, older adults and people living in low socioeconomic circumstances, people living with a disability, culturally and linguistically diverse people and LGBTQIA+ people.

Summarise the key health related issues and risk factors from the data into a brief report and incorporate into the community engagement process and key communication activities (See 3.3 below).

How we can support you

Provide you with a Department of Health Community Health and Wellbeing Profile report for your LGA.

Help source other credible health and wellbeing data, where available.

Assist in the interpretation of health data and key risk factors affecting your community.

Support engagement with relevant stakeholders to obtain social, demographic and health data for priority populations.

Support you to identify and summarise the key health priorities based on your Community Health and Wellbeing Profile.

3.3. Develop your Community Engagement Plan

Develop a Community Engagement Plan for your LGA.

Considerations:

- ☐ Background information and key messages you want to communicate to your community about the PHP.

- ☐ Incorporate the priorities identified from Stages 3.1 and 3.2 into your community engagement process and key communication activities to further refine these priority areas and inform strategies.

- ☐ Identify key engagement tools and methods and develop an action plan as part of the Community Engagement Plan.

- ☐ Supporting communication documents (eg: Question and Answer information sheet and brochures) to use during the community engagement process.

- ☐ The engagement level (under the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation or equivalent framework) and group stakeholders into different priorities and individual engagement levels (eg: inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower).

- ☐ Your resources and budget.

- ☐ How to evaluate the community engagement process.

How we can support you

Offer advice and support on methods to engage with community.

Provide you with an editable community engagement plan template.

Image description: Community members at Nedlands Foreshore.

3.4. Implement your Community Engagement Plan

Raise your community's awareness

Begin promoting your upcoming community engagement, including:

☐ What a PHP is, its objectives and desired outcomes.

☐ The process, including the duration and engagement tools.

☐ How the community and key stakeholders can get involved.

☐ Benefits of a PHP for the community.

Utilise positively framed health messages in your engagement communications that will resonate with your community.

How we can support you

Liaise with your communications department to ensure information and images presented to community about the PHP is positively framed in line with values-based messaging.

Engage and involve the community

Engage the community to share information and capture priorities and feedback. This involves:

☐ Monitoring community participation and evaluating feedback, adjusting the Community Engagement Plan if you need to make any improvements.

☐ Reporting on the key findings and outcomes of the community engagement and feeding relevant information into your PHP.
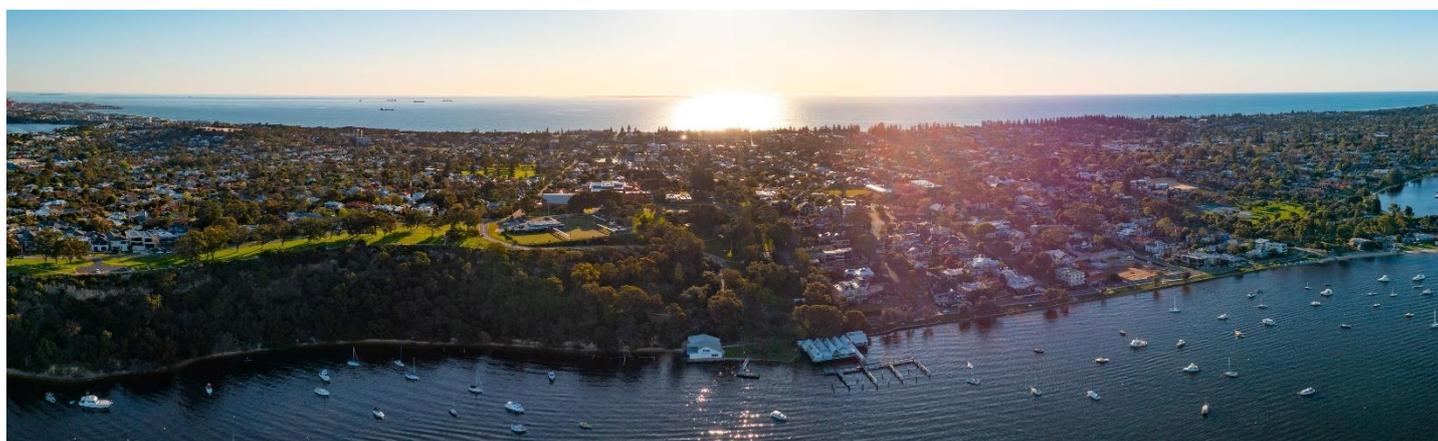
Image description: City of Mosman Park

Stage 4. Developing your Public Health Plan

4.1. Set achievable goals, objectives, actions and review measures for each priority

Action planning

Liaise with your advisory group to review the information gathered from Stage 3. Determine the health and well-being priorities that will be addressed in your PHP and develop an action plan.

Considerations:

☐ Use the SMART technique to develop goals and objectives

☐ Outline what your LGA will do and by when, ensuring actions are based on credible sources of information.

☐ Include the health and wellbeing related work each business unit within your LGA is already doing and/or has planned to do.

☐ Your resources. For example, rather than including an unrealistic number of initiatives (actions), focus on one (or two) new projects your LGA can feasibly implement and/or consider what external funding opportunities there are to support implementation.

☐ Interdepartmental collaborative opportunities to implement new initiatives to address identified priorities.

Ensure the action plan is approved by each business unit and your executive leadership team.

How we can support you

Offer input and guidance into determining your health and wellbeing priorities.

Provide guidance and feedback, ensuring consistency with the State Public Health Plan for Western Australia and priorities are achievable and measurable for your LGA.

Offer credible sources of information to create your action plan.

Increase your awareness of evidence-based health and wellbeing initiatives (actions) and ways to 'value add' to your work currently in place.

Supply an action plan template that can be tailored to your LGAs needs.

Image Description: City of Wanneroo community activities board at Clarkson library

Cont. 4.1. Set achievable goals, objectives, actions and review measures for each priority

Review

All local governments are required to conduct annual reviews of their PHP to monitor and ensure actions are being implemented as intended.

Considerations:

☐ Develop an annual review plan to determine what you will measure, what information needs to be collected, by whom and when to determine whether your PHP actions have achieved its aims and objectives.

☐ Your resources – what type of review and evaluation is realistic and feasible?

☐ Identify what actions are working well and what amendments or changes to the PHP are required. For example, are additional resources required for some actions or do some actions need to be reconsidered in response to emerging new priorities?

☐ How you will record and disseminate your results to stakeholders, including elected members and community, to demonstrate accountability?

How we can support you

Provide advice on developing an annual review plan.

Provide evaluation advice to measure selected activities.

Connect you to additional resources, eg: new partnerships and grant programs to achieve your identified PHP objectives.


Image description: Community event, Sunset Eats, Mosman Park

4.2. Liaise with your Communications Department on the style and format of your Public Health Plan

Public health plan format

Your PHP should be easy to read and include a mix of relevant photos and pictures which proudly display local events and amenities.

Considerations:

☐ Acknowledgement of Country.

☐ Message from your Mayor or Shire President highlighting the benefits of a PHP for the community.

☐ Clear strategic alignment to your Strategic Community Plan and Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

☐ Summary of how your PHP was developed.

☐ Infographic on demographics and local health data.

☐ Established objectives and policy priorities.

☐ Describe your public health activities in an action plan (see Stage 4.1 – action planning).

☐ Measuring success and reporting (see Stage 4.1 - Review).

☐ Showcase the health and wellbeing work your LGA is already doing through case studies.

How we can support you

Liaise with your communications department to ensure positively framed imagery and messaging.

Provide feedback on draft PHP versions, including infographics and other related documents.

Stage 5. Finalise the public health plan and communicate the results

5.1. Conduct further engagement (if required), finalise your plan and communicate the results

Ensure internal and external stakeholders, including elected members and community understand how their contributions informed the decision-making process and confirm they have been heard correctly.

Considerations:

☐ Seek approval from your council to release a draft copy of your PHP for community feedback.

☐ Revise the draft PHP based on the feedback received (where required/applicable).

☐ Obtain council approval on the final PHP (if required).

☐ Celebrate the success and adoption of the PHP and communicate the results to all participants involved in the community engagement and your local community.

How we can support you

Provide feedback on draft PHP versions.

Offer suggestions on communication strategies informing community about the PHP.

Image description: Smoke Free Town Centres, City of Vincent

List of available templates

Action plan and reporting template

Community Engagement Plan

Position description forms
- Senior Public Health Officer
- Health Promotion Project Officer

Project Logic Model and Implementation Plan

Terms of Reference

List of available resources

Community Engagement - Tips for Public Health Planning.

Values Based Messaging — Common Cause Australia

Evaluation Framework and Implementation Guide

Image description: Use of outdoor recreational facilities at Nedlands foreshore.

This resource has been informed by:

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