

Erratum to Version 3-4

Principles and Practice of HIA

13. Comparative risk assessment (CRA) and environmental burden of disease assessments (EBD) may use mortality, morbidity (for EBD only) and DALYs (a summary measure of health to combine several of the health outcomes resulting from one or more specified determinant) as measures of health impacts. While these methods are usually restricted to a limited set of health determinants (EBD guides on 10 environmental risk factors are currently available, and six more are in preparation), chiefly those whose impact can be easily quantified, HIA is broader in that it attempts to include an assessment of change in all the relevant determinants as a result of a specific proposal. HIA also includes other forms of evidence and involves stakeholders. HIA makes usually no attempt to combine all the impacts within a summary measure of health. Furthermore, unlike most CRAs or EBDs, HIAs aim to produce recommendations to improve the proposal being assessed.

23. Different kinds of evidence may be appropriate within health impact assessment, both quantitative and qualitative depending on the kinds of impacts and questions to be answered. For example, comparative risk assessment or environmental burden of disease assessment (EBD) may provide quantitative estimates of the health risk associated with particular health risks. These estimates could be used within an HIA to apply to a specific proposal that may increase or decrease these risks. Qualitative evidence may, among other things, provide insights into ways in which a proposal may affect perceptions and general wellbeing of affected communities. Quantitative and qualitative sources provide different, but equally valid, kinds of evidence about the likely impacts of a proposal. Therefore health impact assessments draw on differing disciplines and perspectives. So far as is possible it is desirable to quantify each impact or give some assessment of its size. The nature and direction (beneficial or harmful) of each impact should be described.