

Health in All Policies

2011 Course Evaluation Summary

Background, methods and overview

The Health in All Policies (HiAP) Summer School 2011 was convened by the Government of South Australia with technical support from the World Health Organization (WHO) – Geneva and Western Pacific Regional Office. The summer school was held from 28 November – 2 December 2011 at the Education Development Centre, Hindmarsh.

The summer school was lead by Course Director Professor Ilona Kickbusch, Programme Director, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, and Course Co-Director Ms Carmel Williams, Manager, Health in All Policies, Department of Health. The Course Directors were assisted in their role by a group of international faculty and guest lecturers.

The summer school received a high level of local and international interest, and was attended by 32 participants; 13 from Australia and 19 international. Fourteen countries were represented from the European, Western Pacific, Americas, South East Asian and Eastern Mediterranean WHO regions. Participants were broadly classified as either practitioners (78%) or academics (22%). Three PhD students attended the course.

As the Health in All Policies Summer School 2011 was the first course of its kind to be held globally, participants were asked to provide detailed feedback and creative suggestions to improve future courses. The purpose of the evaluation was to gauge the summer school participants' response to particular aspects of the course, including the course content (curriculum), opportunities for skill development and participant interaction, and course structure. Participants were invited to complete hard copy evaluation sheets at the completion of each day between 28 November and 2 December 2011 (Days 1 to 5). Participants also completed an overall evaluation of the course on Day 5.

Overview of feedback

Twenty eight summer school participants completed the overall course evaluation, a response rate of 90%. **All respondents either strongly agreed (50%) or agreed (50%) that the summer school met their expectations.** All respondents also reported that, as a result of the summer school, they had a better understanding of HiAP (79% strongly agreed, 21% agreed), and were enabled to act on HiAP in their context (57% strongly agreed, 39% agreed and 4% somewhat agreed).

Themes from participant responses

- The number of participants (approximately 30) was considered appropriate for the course style and location
- The interactive adult learning activities, with a focus on knowledge, skills and use of participants' experiences, was considered to be a successful delivery style
- Overall, the content was relevant and helpful in furthering participants' understanding of the social determinants of health, HiAP and the interconnectedness of local, national and international action
- The site visit to the City of Marion was informative and useful for understanding how HiAP works at the local level
- The South Australia day case study presentations were welcomed by participants as they provided perspectives from the other sectors and an opportunity to interact with HiAP practitioners from South Australia
- The opportunity to network with others working in the social determinants space from other jurisdictions and countries was identified as a highlight
- The lectures on governance for health and the negotiation dance were identified as key concepts for many participants

Participant comments

"Overall the course was informative, well structured and inspiring. This work although in embedded in historic public health is also future thinking and I commend the support of SA government and WHO. I felt privileged to be in the room with such knowledge and expertise."

"It well exceeded my expectations. The HiAP summer school has been the most significant professional development experience of my career. It both consolidated my existing skills and understandings and expanded my concepts and potential directions for HiAP. I feel qualified and equipped to take my own practice of HiAP, particularly relating to creating change, to the next level."

"I have so much that I can take back to my jurisdiction. The experience has reinvigorated my passion for public health."

"I expected to learn how to bring the theory into practice and to see what we can learn from SA. The course met those expectations and went beyond that (eg global view). All this will allow me to be more strongly involved in advocacy for HiAP and possible implementation of HiAP."

"the case studies made me think strategically about how I would incorporate HiAP principles into the existing mechanisms to strengthen or improve partnerships for future projects....hearing from planners, decision makers, implementers and evaluators watching the unfolding of the whole HiAP process."

Course highlights

Participants were asked to identify what they liked most about the course, with the responses focusing on the course structure, faculty and content.

- The interactive adult learning approach, with a focus on knowledge, skills and use of participants' experiences was considered to be a successful approach in delivering the course
- The use of participant workshops and small groups allowed for more detailed discussion.
- The diverse exercises supported by informative course materials and theory
- Site visits to Marion and the Kuarna Living Cultural Centre
- Access to world leaders in public health policy – experience and stories was the glue that brought the concepts together
- Clarity of faculty and guest lecturer explanations, ability to put issues into context and highlighting and reflecting on the most important learnings
- Passion and commitment from the team and stakeholders and openness to follow up
- Identification of key concepts, frameworks and challenges both intellectual and practical
- The opportunity to network with others working in the social determinants space in other jurisdictions and countries was also identified as a highlight
- The South Australia day case study presentations

Suggested improvements

Overall, the summer school was considered highly successful and participants reported that it met their learning and professional needs. As this was the first time the summer school had been delivered, the organisers requested participants to indicate improvements to future courses. The suggested improvements included below are based on participant feedback and the reflections of the Course Directors and summer school organising committee.

Improvements suggested by both the participants and course directors included:

- More explicitly connect course lectures and readings with overall course aim, and the aims and objectives of each day to minimise content overlap
- Provide a wider variety of examples of the HiAP approach tailored to different situations and countries
- Continue to use the interactive learning approach but incorporate a wider variety of tasks/groups activities e.g. hypotheticals, debates which utilise participant posters and provide more opportunities for participants to share their experiences
- Incorporate content which covers the HiAP process in greater detail e.g. challenges encountered during implementation and how they were addressed, implementation plans, and monitoring
- Explore the possibility of providing electronic copies of course materials

In addition, the course directors identified the following improvements:

- Better clarify expectations around assumed knowledge prior to course, and better tailor courses to participants' knowledge and experiences – both national and international audiences – once the composition of the course is finalised
- Dedicate time to the reflection and review of key concepts, both at the beginning of each day and throughout each day, as well as additional time for question and answer sessions
- Consider the timing of the site visit and tie the content more closely to the South Australia day

Next steps

The feedback from participations and the reflections of the Course Directors and summer school organising committee will be incorporated into future training courses on HiAP, and be included in the HiAP training manual being developed in 2012.