

From Science to Art: How are policy decisions made?

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Australian Health Reforms: Some new policy advisory bodies

- **Australian 2020 Summit**
- **COAG Working Group on Health and Ageing**
- **Ministerial Council on Ageing**
- **Ageing Consultative Committee**
- **National Advisory Council on Mental Health**
- **Australian Suicide Prevention Council**
- **National Health Registration Authority**
- **National Workforce Agency**
- **National Primary Health Care Reference Group**
- **National Preventative Health Taskforce**
- **National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission**

How are policy decisions made?

- **Perspectives from 20 years of public health practice including most recently as Chief Health Officer and Executive Director Public Health of the State Government of Victoria**
- **Reflect on success factors for policy advances in Tobacco Legislation, Drugs Services, Legionella Control, Food Regulation, Gene Technology, and HIV Prevention**
- **Draw from personal experiences of leading Deakin University's bid to establish a Rural and Regional Medical School**

How able is the intervention?

Efficacy and Safety



Potential Health Impact



Policy and Political Fit



Cost and Sustainability



Capacity for Action



Responsibility, Monitoring

Reli able ?

Valu able ?

Accept able ?

Afford able ?

Feas able ?

Account able ?

Managing the Policy Process

means undertaking

Political Analysis and Strategy

Key components of political analysis and strategy

- **Issue**
- **Source**
- **Benefits**
- **Timing**
- **Methods**

Issue

- **Respond to a perceived problem**
(eg HIV Strategy)
- **Demonstrate strong constituency of support in and outside government**
(eg Food Regulation)
- **Articulate clearly what is needed**
(eg Drugs Services)
- **Present a simplified construct and manageable actions** (eg Legionella Control)

Source

- **Demonstrate credibility and status with community, politicians and government**
(eg Tobacco Legislation)
- **Forge alliances with a range of groups - health and other**
(eg Food Regulation)
- **Provide unanimity of advice**
(eg HIV Strategy)

Benefits

- **Focus on solutions not adding more problems** *(eg Legionella Control)*
- **Demonstrate short term as well as long term 'pay offs'** *(eg Tobacco Legislation)*
- **Create multiple 'wins' for different stakeholders** *(eg Food Regulation)*
- **Emphasise that consequences and risks are worse from not acting** *(eg Gene Technology)*

Timing

- **Place pre election so action can be included in forward commitments**
(eg Drugs Services)
- **Avoid mid term unless significant resources are not required**
(eg Gene Technology)
- **Build on existing policy or entry points**
(eg Tobacco Legislation)

Methods

- **Develop supportive and constructive relationships** *(eg Drugs Services)*
- **Demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment** *(eg HIV Strategy)*
- **Use media creatively** *(eg Tobacco Legislation)*
- **Reinforce message from different angles** *(eg Food Regulation)*

Political analysis and strategy – the four P's

- **Position** eg clear actions and optimal timing
- **Perception** eg benefits, reframe issue to fit context
- **Players** eg new groups, alliances, community
- **Power** eg lobbying, media, influential individuals, campaigns, protests

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How do you build links with government departments?

- **Solutions focused**
- **Empathy and realism**
- **Trust with 'no surprises'**
- **Mutual respect and help**
- **Credibility, constituencies**
- **Quality and performance**

How does government manage interest groups and lobbyists?

- **Investigation**
- **Correspondence**
- **Meetings**
- **Briefings**
- **Working groups**
- **Commissioned research**

How do departments brief Ministers and/or advisers?

- **Formal Ministerial briefings**
- **Discussions with Advisers**
- **Discussions with Ministers**
- **Eliciting support from other senior colleagues eg Secretary**