POLICY DEVELOPMENT

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Six Stages of Policy Development

1. Issue identification and policy definition: Scoping Paper
2. Clarification of policy issues and preferred options
3. Release of formal discussion paper
4. Development of final policy paper
5. Implementation
6. Evaluation and Review

Policy Development

Consultation with all concerned parties is critical at all states of the policy development cycle.

The gathering and evaluation of evidence is also critical at every stage.

Stage One

Do we need a new policy or can the issue be addressed through other means?

If a policy is required then a scoping paper should be prepared.

Scoping paper should identify:

- Need for the policy
- Issues addressed
- Intended policy objectives
- Benefits, costs, and risks
- Target audience and key stakeholders
- Line of authority required (Minister, CHO, CEO, etc)
- Timetable for the policymaking process

Scoping paper (continued)

- Timetable should name the documents to be produced & any other key deliverables
- Roles & responsibilities (leader, team members, other stakeholders)
- Consultation arrangements
- Resources required for policy analysis and consultation within the timeframe
- Implementation issues to be addressed
Stage Two - Clarifying

Key steps include:
- Consultation
- Qualitative and quantitative analysis
- Involvement of key service delivery organisations
- Implementation strategy

Stage 2 continued

- Consultation should follow the guidelines articulated in the Scoping Paper
- Don’t forget that authority can be shared through membership of the project team or the establishment of reference groups
- Political consultation is critical

Stage Three – Discussion Paper

- The discussion paper covering the issues clarified in Stage 2 should be released for wider consultation with the community, other parts of government, stakeholders and others involved in service delivery, supply or use.

Stage 4 – Final Policy Paper

- Project team assesses comments on discussion paper and prepares the final policy document. The policy is then submitted to the appropriate person (Minister, CEO, Cabinet, etc)
- If appropriate person/body requires refinements, project team to address them within a refined final document

Stage Five - Implementation

- Preparation for implementation should take places throughout the policy development process and should not come as a surprise.
- Mechanisms for delivering the policy should have been developed and tested in the consultation and analysis processes.

Stage Five - Implementation

- The final policy should include an implementation plan that identifies:
  - Performance measures;
  - Key deliverables; and
  - Responsibilities for implementation.
- Sometimes responsibility for parts of policy implementation are written into legislative regulations, performance agreements, etc.
Stage Six – Evaluation and Review

• The policy must be monitored and reviewed – again this should have been well thought out and articulated in earlier stages of the process.
• Evaluation and review closes the policy development cycle but may be useful for identifying new issues or refining the policy in an ever-changing world.
• A specific review timeline should be included in this part of the process.

Policy Documents should

• Be concise;
• Be action oriented;
• Outline the present situation;
• Identify the problem being addressed;
• Clearly state the benefits of the new policy; and
• Use plain language.