Conducting Environmental Scans for Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change in Comprehensive Cancer Control

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NIH NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE

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National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program

"Describe the process that the individual cancer control coordinator supported by this supplement will use for conducting an environmental scan of the local issues and barriers with regard to HPV vaccination uptake, e.g., legislation, policies, patient-provider communication, and state comprehensive cancer control plans and goals for HPV vaccination uptake. The environmental scan should also include HPV vaccination-related activities currently underway in the cancer center as well as a report of existing linkages between the cancer center and existing coalitions/programs."

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccination in Kentucky: An Environmental Scan

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Summer 2016

UK HealthCare
MARKEY CANCER CENTER
An NCI-Designated Cancer Center

UK University of Kentucky
College of Public Health

Administrative Supplement Funding
for NCI Cancer Centers (2014)

Environmental Scanning as a Public Health Tool: Kentucky's Human Papillomavirus Vaccination Project

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES — Volume 13 — August 18, 2016   Am score   3

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"Our goal is to help public health practitioners successfully apply this methodology in the context of public health practice and research."
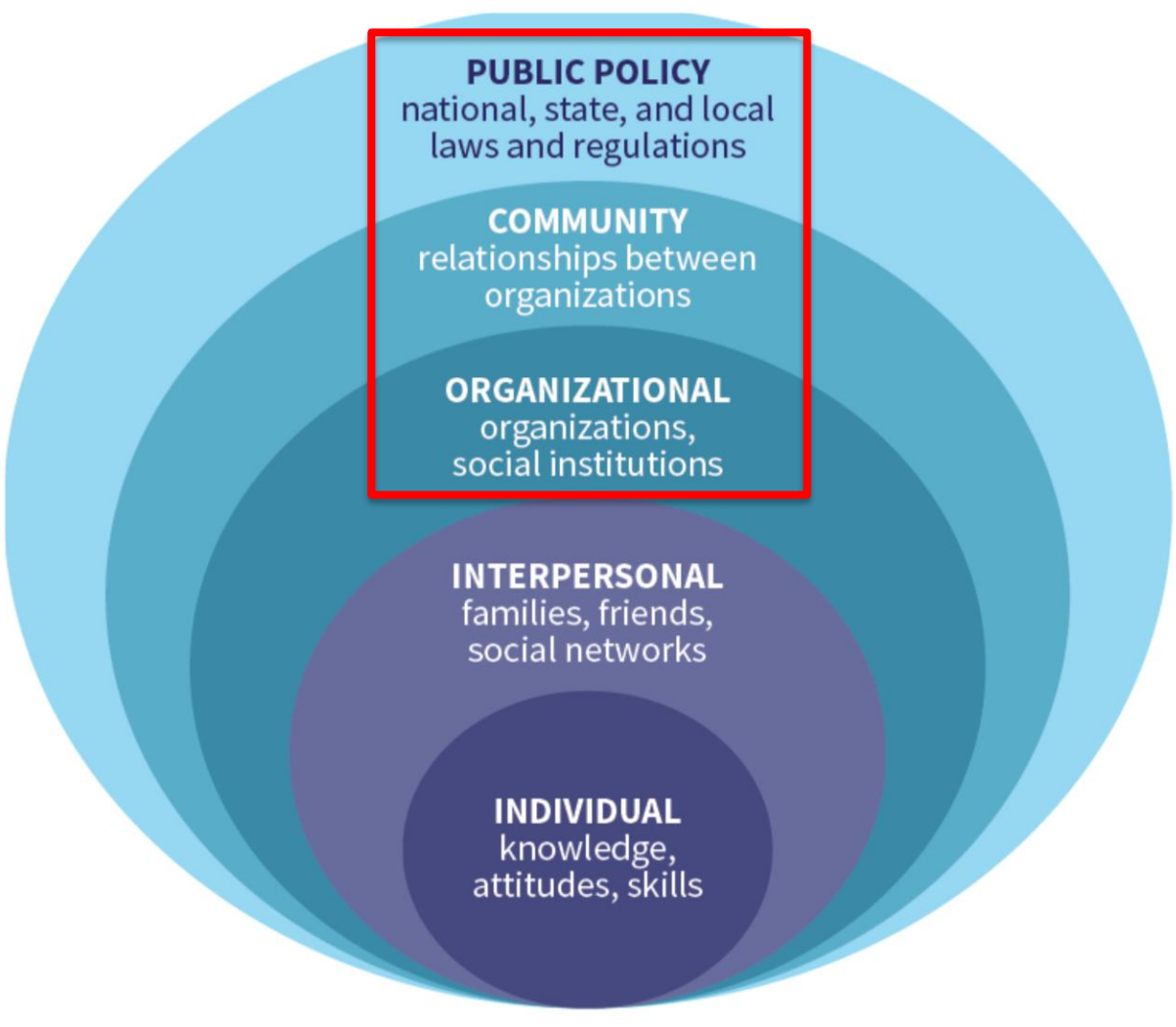
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Value of an Environmental Scan

Business

- Identify internal strengths and challenges / external opportunities and threats [SWOT analysis]

- Collect, organize, analyze data on assets and shortcomings in external and internal environments to guide strategic planning and decision-making

- Evidence-based information that an organization can use to improve strategy and performance
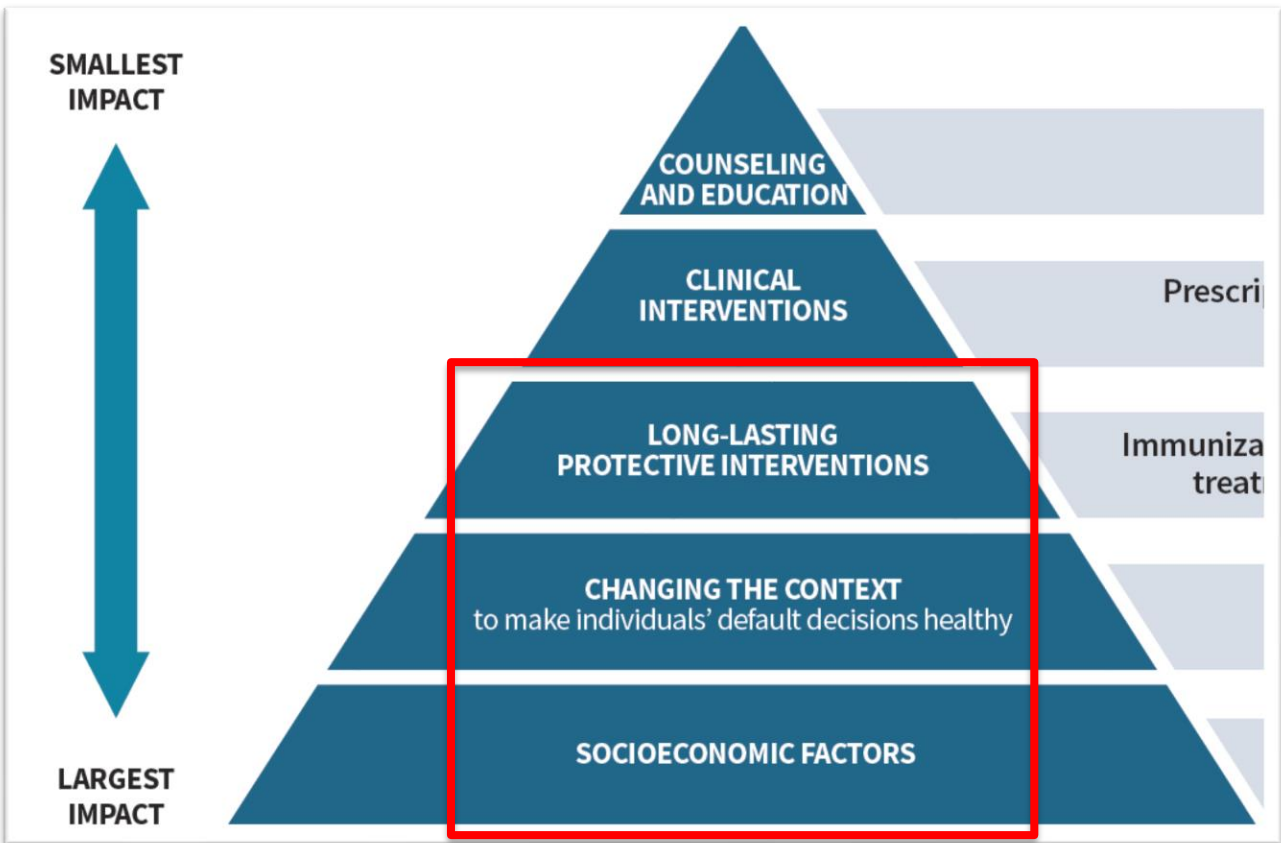
Public Health

- Collect, organize, and analyze health-related data

- Identify quality improvement opportunities and programmatic / research / evaluation priorities

- Identify gaps, trends and factors affecting the policy, social, economic and legal context to understand drivers of PSE change

- Guide interventions and educate decision makers and collaborators

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Socioecological Model

Health Impact Pyramid

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In 2016, we wrote…

"Despite its adoption as an assessment tool in various health care contexts, an environmental scan does not have a consistent definition or process in public health practice. In some instances, an environmental scan is used as an informal catch-all term akin to a needs assessment [or landscape assessment]; in other instances, it aligns with strategic planning and quality improvement initiatives…"

In 2021, Charlton et al. wrote…

Despite the potential of environmental scans to inform policy and practice, consensus on a working definition does not appear to exist and practical guidance to design and/or implement environmental scans is lacking in the literature. Guiding frameworks or models exist in the business and other sectors, yet few have been developed specifically in [a health services delivery context]…
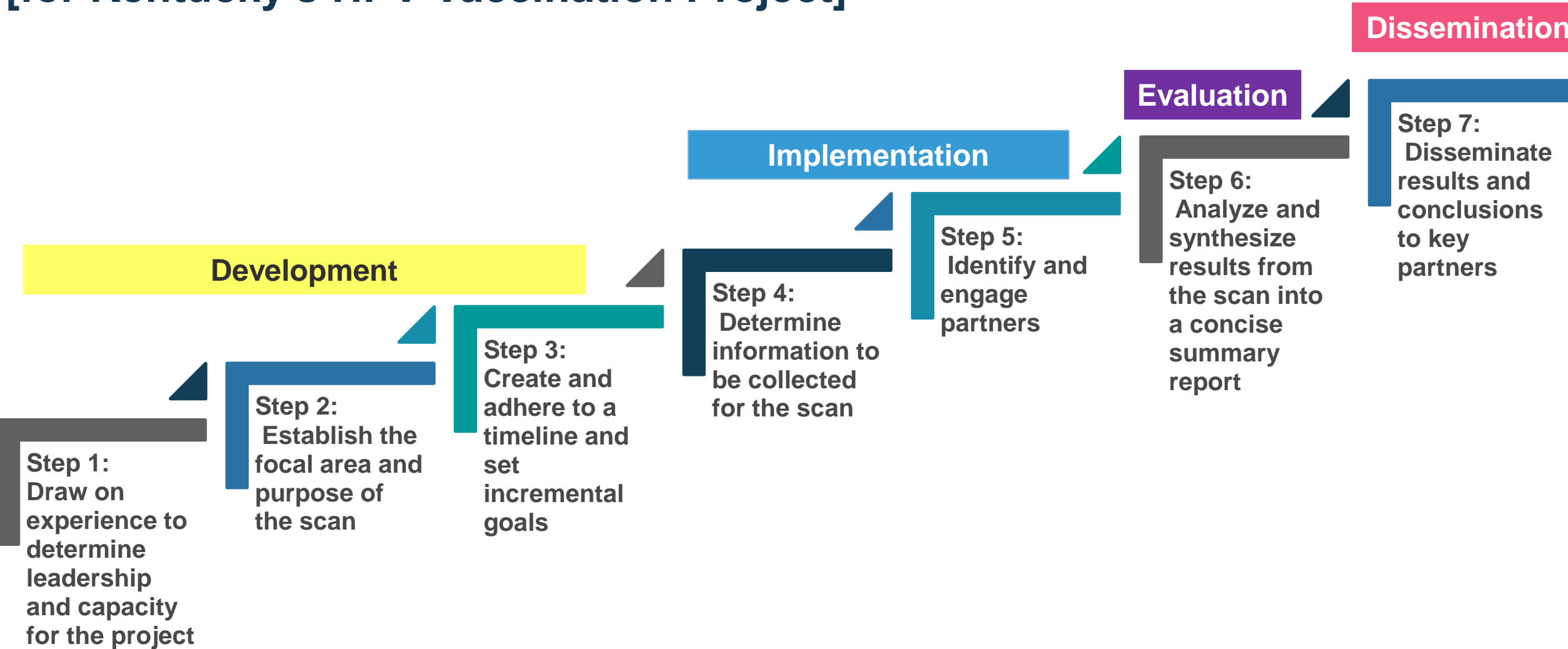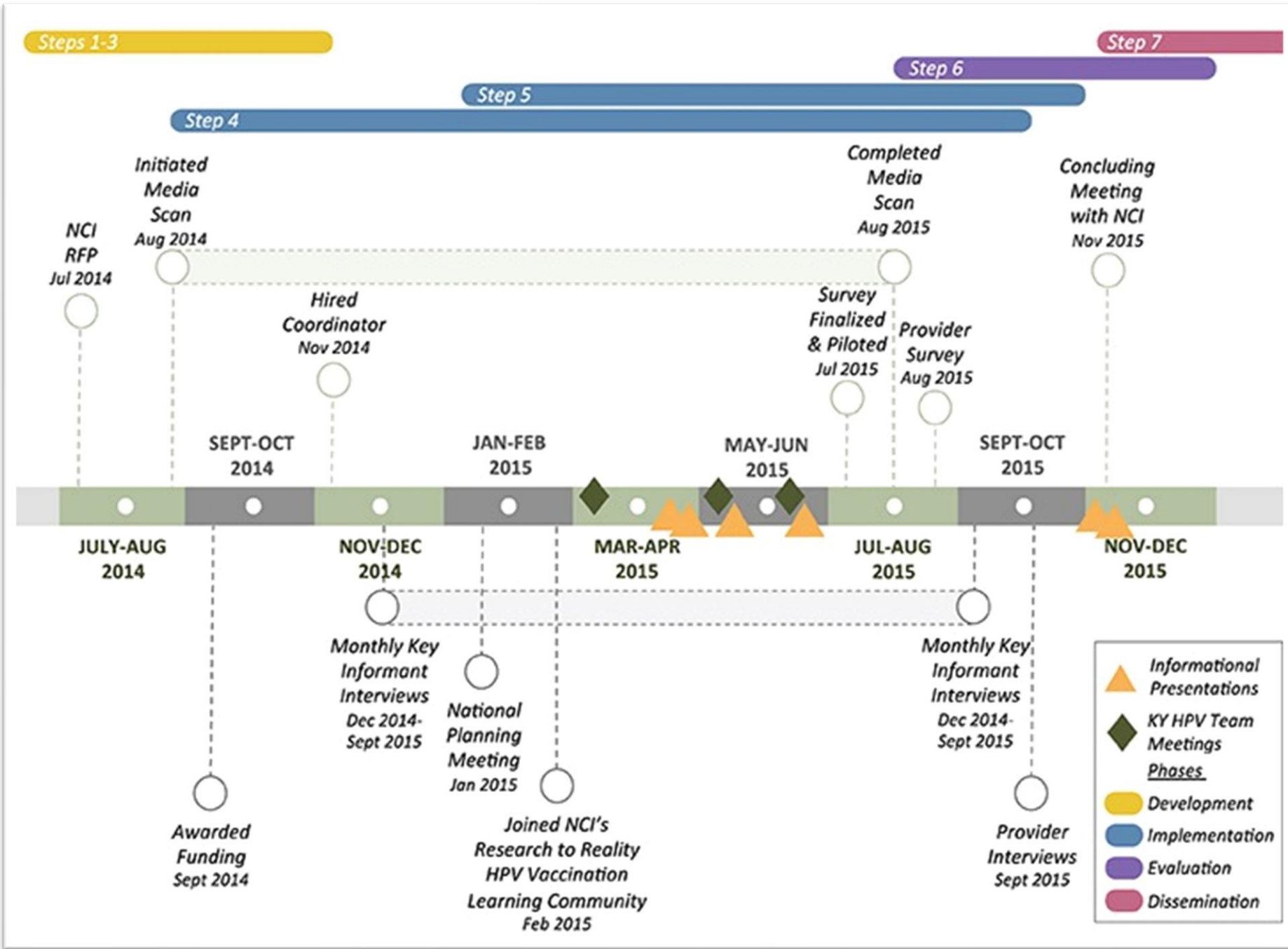
Kitchen Sink Approach

1. Identify and analyze local, regional, state, and national cancer control data relevant to HPV vaccination

2. Review current Kentucky Cancer Action Plan

3. Review other state comprehensive cancer control plans

4. Conduct a comprehensive, current literature review on HPV vaccination issues and barriers

5. Meet with and conduct key informant interviews with KCC members

6. Inventory past policy, systems, and environmental changes throughout KY

7. Scan the HPV vaccination research environment

8. Scan the public health practice and school policy environment

9. Conduct a media scan, including news stories and social media efforts

10. Generate research priorities

7 Steps of the Environmental Scan
[for Kentucky's HPV Vaccination Project]

Dissemination

Evaluation

Implementation

Development

Step 1: Draw on experience to determine leadership and capacity for the project

Step 2: Establish the focal area and purpose of the scan

Step 3: Create and adhere to a timeline and set incremental goals

Step 4: Determine information to be collected for the scan

Step 5: Identify and engage partners

Step 6: Analyze and synthesize results from the scan into a concise summary report

Step 7: Disseminate results and conclusions to key partners

Key Points: Development

- **Step 1: Identify a champion(s)** to lead the environmental scan

- **Step 2: Specify a purpose** of the environmental scan

  - *"The **purpose of the HPV environmental scan** was to identify all public health activities, research, and information related to HPV vaccination in Kentucky, develop or improve links with existing programs, synthesize findings into a usable format for dissemination to stakeholders, and look for applied research opportunities to increase HPV vaccination uptake."*

  - *"A **dynamic process of comprehensive assessment** aimed at exploring HPV vaccination in a manner that makes connections **not previously established** and highlights barriers and facilitators **not previously identified** with the goal of empowering partners with information for future strategic planning and decision making."*

- **Step 3: Establish a timeline** with specific milestones

Key Points: Implementation

- **Step 4: What information do you want to collect?**

  - Brainstorm all topics and resources; list remains dynamic; passive and active, person and non-person sources

  - Data sources, media / social media coverage, grey and published literature, strategic Google searches

  - Qualitative [focus groups/interviews] and quantitative [survey or other databases] data, case studies

  - Site visits, personal contacts, content experts, expert panels

  - Political, economic, social, legal, research contexts

- **Step 5: Create a diverse, iterative list of people and organizations that will have information** from Step 4

  - Partners are the key to success

  - Remain open to new connections

  - Share the purpose of the environmental scan and maintain engagement with them throughout the process

  - Include these partners in your final dissemination plan

USING DATA IN AN ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The following tips may be helpful as you consider how to find data during your environmental scan:

- To start, identify existing PSE change efforts around the health issue to set the stage for developing a realistic PSE agenda (sometimes called a policy agenda).
- Scan the **political context** – This can help you understand the relationship between stakeholders of the issue you want to address. Look for grey literature such as reports, white papers, government documents or any non-academic publications.
- Scan the **economic context** – Look at funding announcements and find out the types of grant proposals that are getting funded and who is funding them.
- Scan the **social context** – Think about social determinants of health such as housing, education and income and how demographic factors play a role in the health issue.
  - Identify nontraditional partners and stakeholders in these sectors and follow a "health in all policies" approach.
- Scan the **legal context** – Look at trends related to proposed and passed legislation to understand windows of opportunity, challenges associated with the legislative process and create the potential for successful advocacy.
- Consider public opinion and identify community champions. Conduct key informant interviews or hold community meetings to gather information you may still need to narrow your focus and set the stage for a successful PSE change initiative.
- Summarize the data (community assets and challenges) revealed in the environmental scan and determine if PSE change is feasible.
- Use data revealed in the environmental scan to identify the goal and determine the level of the PSE change effort (institutional, local, federal).

https://action4psechange.org/about-pse-change/step-2-scan/

https://www.acs4ccc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/PSE-in-CCC-Guide_FINAL.pdf

Conduct a Statewide Public Policy Scan

As you consider what PSE change interventions to pursue, it is helpful to first get the lay of the land. Policy scans compare policy options to identify the most effective policies for addressing the PSE change project issues. The **American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) (www.fightcancer.org)** and other national partners may provide up-to-date information on federal and state policy issues.

The general steps for conducting a policy scan are listed below.[13] Many public health tools and resources are available to help you through the process.

▶ **Research and identify possible policy options.**

How have other coalitions addressed this PSE change topic area? See what's been published recently on **PubMed Central (https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)** so you can learn about best practices from different communities.

▶ **Describe the possible policy options.**

For each policy option, identify the population that will be affected, the political and environmental context, and the financial costs and benefits. A professor from your local university, regional staff from **ACS CAN (www.fightcancer.org/about/where-we-work)**, or a policy analyst from a nonprofit health organization may be ideally suited to help you with this step.

▶ **Rank the possible policy options and pick the best one.**

Rank the policy options based on health impacts, economic impacts, and feasibility. This process will not always be straightforward and might require thoughtful prioritization. Solicit and incorporate feedback from your coalition partners.

For more information about conducting a public policy scan, see CDC's interactive and informative **POLARIS** website (www.cdc.gov/policy/polaris/policyprocess/policyanalysis/).

Key Points: Evaluation and Dissemination

- **Step 6: Analyze and triangulate the data; synthesize the results** into meaningful conclusions as related to the purpose of the scan

    - Identify evidence-based strategies, research / programmatic priorities, intervention target areas, PSE change

    - The information gleaned from the scan is actionable

- **Step 7: Share the results with all vested parties** through reports, white papers, cancer action plans, presentations, etc.

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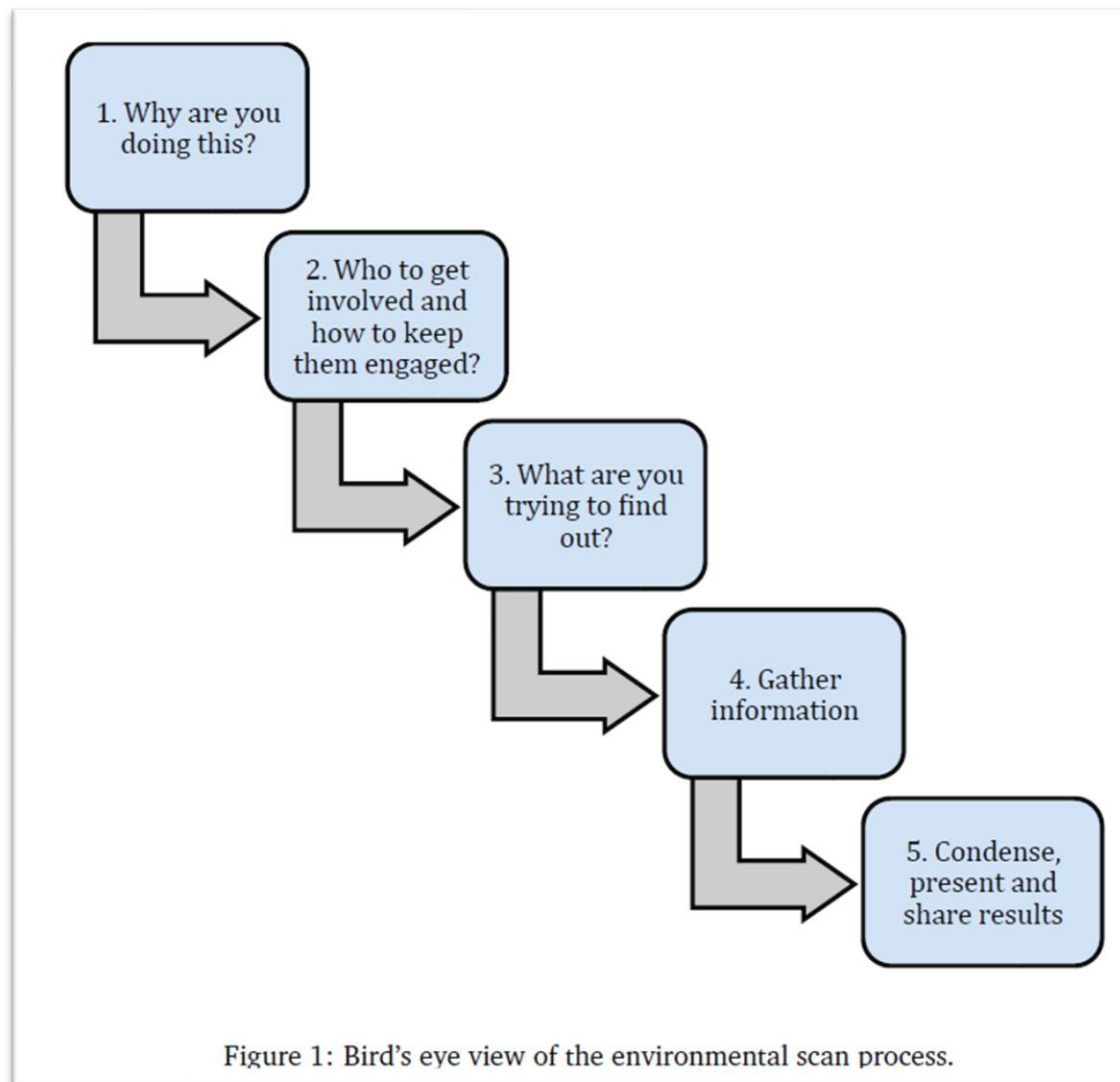University of Kentucky
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https://ukhealthcare.uky.edu/sites/default/files/hpv-es-report-final-november-28-2016.pdf

Administrative Supplements for NCI-Designated Cancer Centers to Support Collaborations to Enhance HPV Vaccination in Pediatric Settings:
A Summary Report

PREPARED BY NOVA RESEARCH COMPANY
FOR THE NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE
DIVISION OF CANCER CONTROL AND POPULATION SCIENCES

https://healthcaredelivery.cancer.gov/hpvuptake/DCCPS_HPVvax-report_FINAL_508compliant.pdf

Shahid, M., & Turin, T. C. (2018). Conducting comprehensive environmental scans in health research: a process for assessing the subject matter landscape: the basics of environmental scan.
Journal of Biomedical Analytics, 1(2), 71-80.

Figure 1: Bird's eye view of the environmental scan process.

Needed Resources

- Champion(s)

- Volunteers / workgroup members

- Dedicated time and effort

- Social capital

- Access to phone/video/computer

- Access to PubMed, cancer registry, behavioral data

- Academic and/or other organizational partners / subject matter experts

- *Money* = incentives for surveys or interviews, contractors/ consultants, analyst, travel