



HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT of the Massachusetts SMALL BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

February 2015

Businesses with fewer than 20 employees account for nearly 80% of all businesses in Massachusetts.



ASSESSING THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

Small businesses have a profound economic impact on Massachusetts – that is well known. But what of their health impact? How does the Commonwealth’s Small Business Technical Assistance program, which helps underserved and disadvantaged businesses with fewer than 20 employees, improve the physical and mental health of owners and employees? Can that benefit extend to customers, surrounding neighborhoods, nearby residents and other businesses?

These are questions that a team led by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council and the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies is determined to answer.

The team is conducting a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) on Massachusetts’ Small Business Technical Assistance. Our goal is to better understand the links between the program and health outcomes, and to use our findings to inform program funding and decision-making. The HIA is being performed in coordination with the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation and the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations.

Participate in the HIA

Participation is an essential element of an HIA. We believe stakeholders provide perspectives and input that capture shared as well as unique experiences.

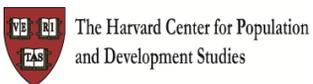
In this HIA, we will engage with a wide range of people who are familiar with small businesses in Massachusetts. These will include those who are funded by the Small Business Technical Assistance program, individuals and organizations with small business and public health expertise, and experts from state agencies, academic settings, and non-profit organizations.

If you are interested in learning more about the HIA or providing feedback, please contact us.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Interested in contributing to the HIA? Please contact us before June 2015.



WHAT IS A HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a process that uses data, health expertise, and public input to identify the possible health effects of a proposed change. HIAs are used to assess proposals such as new development projects or legislative policies to produce recommendations that minimize health risks and maximize health benefits.

An HIA's Six Steps:

1. **Screening:** Determine whether the HIA is likely to add value and influence decision-making.
2. **Scoping:** Create objectives for the HIA in consultation with stakeholders; outline process to identify potential health risks and benefits.
3. **Assessment:** Describe the current health of people and groups affected by the proposed change and predict the potential health effects if the change were to occur.
4. **Recommendations:** Produce practical solutions and strategies that can be implemented within the political, economic, or technical limitations of the proposed change.
5. **Reporting:** Share the findings with decision makers, affected communities, and other stakeholders.
6. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Monitor the changes in health and evaluates the usefulness of the measures that are implemented and the HIA process as a whole.

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www.healthimpactproject.org

The views expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Pew Charitable Trusts or the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



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