CONNECTING RESEARCH, POLICY & PRACTICE: A BUILT ENVIRONMENT FORUM IN ALBERTA

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A Built Environment Forum in AB: Why?

Although we know BE influences our health and well-being, gaps exist:

- Understanding the complexity of the BE impact on population health
- Lack of communication about the impact of the BE between diverse stakeholders in AB
- Unclear path for where and how to take action

Addressing the BE;

- is complex
- requires system-level change
- can be supported by intersectoral collaboration
A Built Environment Forum in AB: Why?

The BE Forum was a venue to:

- Develop collaborative relationships
- Identify what’s happening in Alberta in the areas of research, policy and practice
- Identify and establish priorities for future action in Alberta
A Built Environment Forum in AB: What, When & Where?

**Forum Format:**
- One-day workshop in Edmonton, Alberta – January 2011
- Mixed structure: Keynote speakers, expert panel, Pecha Kucha, facilitated workshop hosted by advocacy coalition
- 50 experts and stakeholders from various sectors; researchers, transportation engineers, urban planners, architects, civil service representatives, community programmers and government representatives
A Built Environment Forum in AB: Who?

Built Environment Forum Planning Committee:

Alberta Health Services

Public Health Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé publique du Canada

Alberta Centre for Active Living

Research and education for the promotion of physical activity

APCCP

Alberta Policy Coalition for Chronic Disease Prevention
A Built Environment Forum in AB: Recommendations for Action

1. Implement Economic Incentives & Taxation
2. Increase Public Education and Advocacy
3. Address Zoning and Land-Use
4. Promote Active Transportation
5. Enable Collaboration
A Built Environment Forum in AB: Reflections on Process

- Follow-up survey with forum participants
  - Did you make new connections?
  - Have you engaged in recommended action?
  - In the future, would you suggest a forum approach?
  - What other approaches would you use?

- Literature review on forum approach
  - What has been done in this area?
  - What mechanisms or factors add value?
A Built Environment Forum in AB: Reflections on Process

- What worked well
  - Among planning committee:
    - Resources to bring people together
    - Organizational diversity and support among members
    - Creation of a formal report and wide dissemination
      - 2,487 web hits to date
  - Among participants
    - Existing connections
    - Existing organizational priorities regarding BE
    - Diversity of stakeholders in attendance
    - Experience in the built environment
A Built Environment Forum in AB: Reflections on Process

What we could have done differently

- More “cross-pollination” among groups
  - Move from experts to co-learners
  - Facilitate area- or topic-specific connections
- Provide participants with questions/materials ahead of time
- Consider who is represented
- Create a knowledge translation plan
A Built Environment Forum in AB: Reflections on Process

- What we could have done differently
  - Facilitate movement from priorities to action
    - Open brainstorming with broader group of engaged participants, but a core group needed to create momentum
  - Value of “co-responsibility” and accountability
    - Identify key players for recommendations generated
    - Ensure presence of different sectors and levels of government
    - Identify core group of interested players and set timelines to meet again
A Built Environment Forum in AB: Questions and Discussion

- Questions?
- How does this relate to your experience?
  - Bringing diverse stakeholders together?
  - Identifying action areas and recommendations?
  - Moving from prioritizing to action?

Summary report and forum proceedings can be accessed at:
References


