

# Health Policy Analysis

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Presented by the Institute of Health Services and Policy Research of the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR)

**Description** HOSA Canada is proud to partner with the Institute of Health Services and Policy Research and University of Toronto Health Policy professor Greg Marchildon in introducing our health policy analysis competition.

At HOSA Canada, we believe that policy analysis is an invaluable tool for the future leaders of the healthcare industry, especially in Canada with its single-payer system.

A policy brief is a summary of an issue, the presentation of available solutions and a recommendation on the best course of action given analysis of relevant factors.

- Rules and Procedures**
- a. Teams must submit their completed briefs to the link for submission found on <http://hosacanada.org/home/competitive-events/> by 11:59 PM EST March 9, 2018. Late submissions will not be accepted.
  - b. HOSA members may compete in this event in addition to the regular competitive event in which they are also competing
  - c. This competition is not restricted to HOSA members, but the registration fee and conference fee (\$95 total) will be deducted from their winnings if they are a part of the winning team.
  - d. Winning submissions will receive an award of \$1,500 CAD. Submissions from secondary students and post-secondary students will be judged and awarded separately. Limit 4 members per team; prize money will be split evenly between team members. Winners must receive their award on March 28, 2018 at the HOSA Canada Spring Leadership Conference held at the Metro Convention Center in Toronto, Ontario.
  - e. Submissions will be evaluated holistically by Professor Marchildon based on depth of research and analysis, feasibility, and appropriateness for intended audience.
  - f. Word limit for the principal body of the work is 1000, excluding citations, references, title, etc. Citations are to be formatted in APA style.

- Table of Contents**
- 1. Example of the Structure of a Policy Brief
  - 2. Each Section in Detail
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## 1. Example of the Structure of a Policy Brief

- I. Problem
- II. Context
- III. (Attempted solutions, if any)
- IV. Available Policy Options
- V. Recommendation

## 2. Each Section in Greater Detail

### Problem

- Gap between current status and objectives
  - OR emerging problem not being addressed
  - OR implementation of new knowledge/practice
- Economic impact and implications (costs if unresolved and benefits if resolved)

(Note: can also include societal implications- consider what has most impact on your audience. Decision-makers have hundreds of issues to worry about but only so much time. Why should this issue be prioritized? Align this issue/solution with their goals.)

### Context

- Scientific literature on factors affecting the issue  
(On how it may worsen or be improved)
- Is the issue a symptom of a larger, systemic problem?  
(If so, is it economically feasible to tackle that problem given existing constraints)

### Attempted Solutions (if any)

- Effectiveness of attempted solutions (incl. cost-effectiveness)
- Issues of ~ and if/how they might be rectified

### Available Alternatives

- Should be specific as possible and actionable
- Supported by evidence
- Evaluate what other entities (corporations, NGO's, countries, etc.) have implemented towards resolving the issue at hand

### Recommendation

- Must flow from argument
- Timeline and other relevant details for implementation (5 W's)

### 3. Helpful Tips

- Use active voice
- When editing, go through each sentence and see if it can be reworded or reordered in such a way that optimizes meaning per word (economy of words)
- Tailor brief to audience (the target decision-maker(s) that read(s) this brief)
  - Level of technical knowledge
  - Impact of issue, relevancy to their goals
  - Political/organizational influences/constraints
  - General openness to change
- State limitations of current knowledge and overall proposal
- Google something if you don't know it; if not on Google, try other search engines or directory of scholarly articles at your institution (postsecondary)

### 4. Additional Resources

- APA Style Guide: <http://www.bibme.org/apa>

Useful terms to search on the search engine of your preference:

- how write (effective) policy brief
- example policy brief
- policy brief best practices
- healthcare issues in Canada report

Various reports:

- Various links from Canadian Institute of Health Information: <https://www.cihi.ca/en/health-spending>
- Advisory Panel on Healthcare Innovation, *Unleashing Innovation: Excellent Healthcare for Canada* (2015) : [http://healthy Canad ians.gc.ca/publications/health-system-systeme-sante/report-healthcare-innovation-rapport-soins/alt/report-healthcare-innovation-rapport-soins-eng.pdf](http://healthy Canadians.gc.ca/publications/health-system-systeme-sante/report-healthcare-innovation-rapport-soins/alt/report-healthcare-innovation-rapport-soins-eng.pdf)
  - Summary: [https://www.cma.ca/Assets/assets-library/document/en/about-us/gc2015/keynote\\_naylor\\_english.pdf](https://www.cma.ca/Assets/assets-library/document/en/about-us/gc2015/keynote_naylor_english.pdf)
- Statistics Canada, *Difficulty accessing health care services in Canada* (2016): [www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-624-x/2016001/article/14683-eng.pdf](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-624-x/2016001/article/14683-eng.pdf)
- Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement, *Healthcare Priorities in Canada* (2014): <http://www.cfhi-fcass.ca/sf-docs/default-source/documents/harkness-healthcare-priorities-canada-background-e.pdf>
- Commission of the Future of Healthcare in Canada, *Building on Values* (2002): <http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/CP32-85-2002E.pdf>