Prioritizing in a Day

Determining one or two health priorities is a critical step to planning community programs and services. Ideally your group would use the Setting Priorities materials to choose the community's top health concern(s). The process in Setting Priorities is thorough and comprehensive, and it generates priorities that have broad support and that are well substantiated. However, it can take several weeks to work through the process.

If you are working under a tight deadline, consider using the worksheets here to help your community team choose a health priority in one day. This process is less thorough but quicker than the process in Setting Priorities. For example, by following this process you and your team skip the step of developing (and debating) criteria to use in choosing priorities, and instead use the criteria incorporated into these worksheets. Prioritizing in a day is done simultaneously with reviewing and analyzing the community health data, opinion information, and resources and environment information.

Be sure to review the information and worksheets in Setting Priorities. It includes some background information on determining priorities that might be helpful even if you use this truncated process to prioritize.

How to Prioritize Health Issues in a Day
This process assumes your assessment team has done the following:
- Defined community.
- Completed the Population Profile Worksheets, Health Profile Worksheets, and Nutrition & Physical Activity Profile Worksheets with as much information as is available for your community and state. If you are not able to find much local-level data, refer to the No Data Tip Sheet.
- Collected some community opinion information and completed the Community Opinion Summary Sheet.
- Collected some information on the community programs, services, policies, and environment and completed the Community Resources and Environment Summary Sheet.

There are six steps to Prioritizing in a Day:
1. Decide who will be involved in determining priorities. These may be the same people who were on the community assessment team, or you may want to include more people in this step.

2. Choose a leader/facilitator. This person should be perceived as neutral by the group. The leader should be skilled at managing conflict and managing dominant personalities.

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

1

3. Set a date for a four- to five-hour team meeting to choose the top one or two health priorities.

4. A week or two before the meeting, mail the completed Community Data worksheets, the Community Opinion Summary Sheet, and the Community Environment Summary Sheet to those who are involved with determining priorities. Ask people to review the materials before participating in the meeting.

5. Hold the meeting. The materials provided here include a draft agenda and worksheets to use during the meeting.

6. Record your top health issue(s) on the Prioritizing in a Day Top Issues(s) form, and record the health priority on the "Priority, Goal, and Objectives Summary Sheet."

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

2

Prioritizing in a Day
Sample Agenda

You need to add breaks to this agenda.

Climate Setting   **30 min**
- Welcome and Introductions
- Review and agree on our purpose and agenda
  - By the end of the meeting we will agree on 1 health priority (Several objectives and strategies should fit under the priority)
- Review and agree on the process we will follow to determine our community's health priority
- Divide into 4- or 5-person working groups

Community Data   **90 min**
- Small group work
- Report out to large group

Community Opinion   **60 min**
- Small group work
- Report out to large group

Community Resources and Environment   **60 min**
- Small group work
- Report out to large group

Health Priority   **30 min**
- Vote for the top health concern

Debrief   **15 min**
- Obtain agreement on the health priority
- Discuss next steps

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

3

Prioritizing in a Day
Community Data

You have 60 minutes to work on this activity.

Please review the Population Profile, Health Profile, and Nutrition & Physical Activity Profile data packets for your community. Feel free to make notes and use a highlighter on your data packets.

Work as a group at your table to answer the following questions. Record your findings on this sheet and prepare a summary on newsprint to share with the large group.

Considering the Population Profile data, answer the next two questions:

1. In a few sentences, tell a story about your community.

2. Compare your community's population data to the state's population data and describe the differences.

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

4

Considering the Health Profile data and Nutrition & Physical Activity Profile data, answer questions 3 through 7:

3. How does your community compare to the state? Are there any significant deviations? Even if your community has a similar rate of disease or behavior as that of the state, decide if that rate is acceptable or whether both rates are alarming.

4. Are there any special groups at risk identified through the data?

5. Are there other health, nutrition, and physical activity concerns?

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

5

6. With your group, identify 3 or 4 top health concerns for your community:

7. What health, nutrition, and physical activity indicators need more data or need to be investigated further?

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

6

Prioritizing in a Day

Community Opinion

You have 40 minutes to work on this activity.

At your table review the Community Opinion Summary Sheet. Work as a group to answer the following questions. Record your findings on this sheet and prepare a summary on newsprint to share with the large group.

Which of these perceptive data:

Are the same or support the 3 or 4 health concerns you identified previously?

Are different or contradict the 3 or 4 health concerns you identified previously?

Are there any new health concerns identified solely through this perception data?

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

7

Review the top concerns identified previously when considering only the community data. Considering your answers to the questions above, modify, or maintain, the list of 3 or 4 top health concerns.

What additional perception data would be useful? How would you collect it?

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

8

Prioritizing in a Day
Community Environment

You have 40 minutes to work on this activity.

Review the Community Environment Summary Sheet. Work as a group to answer the following questions. Record your findings on this sheet and prepare a summary on newsprint to share with the larger group.

Of this resources and environment information:

What validates the health concerns you have identified previously?

What contradicts the health concerns you have identified previously?

Are there any new concerns identified solely through this resources and environment information?

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

9

Review the 3 or 4 top health concerns from the Community Opinion worksheet. Considering the information here, decide on 3 top health concerns.

What additional resources and environment information would be useful? And, how would you get that information?

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

10

Prioritizing in a Day
Health Priority Vote

This sheet is for the group facilitator.

1. Compile into one list every group's top three health concerns. Write every concern exactly as the group has recorded the concern.

2. Review the list with the larger group and cross off any duplicate concerns as the group dictates.

3. Rewrite the list on flip chart paper, using multiple sheets of paper if necessary.

4. Distribute 2 round stickers to every person and ask them to place their stickers on the top concerns they view as priority. People can place both stickers on one concern if they like. (See the "Setting Priorities—Possible Techniques" handout for other ideas on group decision making.)

5. Count the stickers next to each health concern and determine the top 1 or 2 health concerns.

6. Make sure everyone in the group agrees with the top 1 or 2 health priorities.

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

11

Prioritizing in a Day
Top Issue(s)

Priority Health Issue: _____

Priority Health Issue: _____

The two questions below help you summarize the process your community followed in choosing a health priority. Grant applications often include a question requiring this information. Take some time now to record the process your community followed in choosing a health priority.

List the people and agencies involved in determining the Priority Health Issue(s):

Briefly describe the process followed to determine the Priority Health Issue(s).

Moving to the Future: Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Planning
Chapter 2: Determine Priorities and Write Goals & Objectives
Prioritizing – Overview, Prioritizing in a Day

12