

The Making of Healthy Cities

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12th Annual North American Collaborating Center Conference on ICF

**LIVING IN OUR ENVIRONMENT:
The Promise of ICF**

2006
JUNE 5 to 7
Vancouver, British Columbia (Canada)

Will talk about:

- Connection between health and kind of cities and communities we live in
- Important role you can have in building healthier cities
- Plea for creation of accessible and inclusive cities and communities

PLAN B

- Swan dive at low tide
- Predicted chance of walking again 50-50
- Set goal of walking 3 months after accident
- Rehabilitation process
- Walked out after 3 months
- Story raised visibility of spinal cord injury

Measuring Up: Creating accessible & inclusive communities

- Injury increased determination to help people with disabilities
- *Measuring Up*: guide assessing degree of participation of residents with disabilities
- Active participation: accessibility and inclusion

Our communities – a major determinant of health

- Injury fuelled passion for creating healthy communities
- Need to take a broad view of health
- Health is the product of many different, but interrelated factors – biological, social, environmental, cultural and economic

Planning livable cities: a basic form of health care

- Municipal governments make many decisions that affect health and promote wellness
- Let's ensure local officials take health into account while making decisions

Yesterday & today's urban diseases

- 19th century Western cities: diseases related to poor sanitation and contaminated water: cholera, diphtheria and typhoid
- 21st century Western cities: diseases relate to lifestyle: heart disease, asthma, emphysema, diabetes, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse
- Many of these health problems result from urban form and environmental conditions

Examples of health areas affected by built environment

- Diet and exercise: Car-oriented neighbourhoods reduce opportunities to walk & cycle. Infrequent shopping in super sized grocery stores reduces opportunity to have fresh food & proper diet
- Respiratory health: low-density development increases traffic, congestion and air pollution
- Mental illness: sprawl communities increase loneliness, inactivity & depression

Learning from public health research

- Jane Jacob's cautionary tale on use of scientific method
 - **Built form and community social life affect health outcomes every day and in times of crisis**
 - **Be careful what questions you ask and the indicators you monitor**

Imagine the ideal community

- Place built to human scale
- Daily life activities located within walking distance
- Housing and transportation options
- Meaningful and fairly compensated jobs
- Recreational and learning opportunities
- Human connections

Healthy communities

- Over 100 cities & towns around the world use « health » as criteria for making decisions
- « Healthy Communities » movement involves many sectors supporting local policies with positive impact on health

How you can help

- Take into account the link between built environment, community participation, health and quality of life
- ICF classification, an important tool that can inform policy decisions
- Reach out to city leaders to discuss data required
- Collective effort needed

June 2006 - World Urban Forum

- Vancouver will host third World Urban Forum
- Theme: « Our Future, Sustainable Cities, Turning Ideas Into Action »
- Opportunity to discuss concrete ways to address challenges of urbanization and showcase Vancouver

Conclusion

- Urbanization, great issue of 21st century
- Need to focus on preventing illness by creating healthy cities & communities
- Profound connection between health and type of communities we live in
- You can assist by providing research framework on quality of life and environmental factors informing local policy decisions