



## ASSIGNMENT

# Environmental Scanning for Healthy Public Policies



## BACKGROUND

Environmental scanning is a process that is used by organizations to assess internal strengths and challenges and external opportunities and threats<sup>1</sup>. Environmental scans are used to understand the context of a topic or issue; to collect, organize, and analyze data on to identify links and gaps and guide planning and decision making<sup>1</sup>. They often incorporate multiple strategies to do so, including document reviews and stakeholder consultation.



Environmental scanning in the policy-making process assists in the identification of what policies exist on a particular topic and where they are located. Environmental scans for healthy public policies can help guide their development and implementation by feeding into the process of policy diffusion.

<sup>1</sup> Wilburn, A., Vanderpool, R. C. & Knight, J. R. (2016). Environmental scanning as a public health tool: Kentucky's Human Papillomavirus vaccination project. *Preventing Chronic Disease*, 13. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd13.160165>.



### SCENARIO:

Your jurisdiction is considering developing a policy (or amending an existing policy) to address one of the following issues:

- > Radon
- > Complete Streets
- > Electronic Cigarettes
- > Waterpipes
- > Sunless Tanning

As a Policy Analyst, you are required to complete an environmental scan to identify policies that address the issue to help inform the development of your own jurisdiction's policy approach.

### ASSIGNMENT:

Complete an environmental scan on your selected public health policy issue. For this assignment, please include the following:

- 1. Pick a jurisdiction to start from**  
(province, territory or municipality)
- 2. Choose a policy issue from the list**
- 3. Describe the importance of the issue in relation to public and/or population health, and briefly describe the available evidence on policy interventions addressing this issue.**
- 4. What jurisdictions have policies addressing the issue?**
  - Use the [Prevention Policies Directory](#) as a starting point to develop a table of policies, capturing important information (e.g., jurisdiction, policy name, policy type, year, description of the policy).
  - Use the Directory's refinement tools to manipulate your search results.
  - Refer to the listing of other policy databases on the [Directory's website](#) if you require international policy information.
- 5. What themes have arisen from your scan of policies? Is there a myriad of policy options, or is there a more definitive policy intervention on this issue?**
- 6. What policy option(s) would you recommend your jurisdiction consider adopting/amending? Why?**
- 7. How will you present this information and to whom?**