

## LESSON 4: IDENTIFYING POLICY OPTIONS

In this lesson, you learned how to conduct an environmental scan for potential policy options, and how to use that information to select policy options for further analysis. The objectives for this lesson included:

- **Explain how to conduct an environmental scan for potential options.**
- **Identify a range of potential policy options.**
- **Select potential policy options for further analysis.**

### KEY POINTS

- Track down previous work to see if existing policy options can be applied to your current problem. To find potential policy solutions for the problem, review:
  - Policy briefs and documents from CDC, professional associations, stake holders, peer-reviewed publications or policy organizations.
  - “Best practices” or “promising practices” from CDC and other states or locations.
  - Editorials/discussion pieces by CDC, and professional associations.
- Reflecting on the different factors that affect health can help determine the interventions that can be used to address a problem.
- Sources of information about policy options include the peer-reviewed literature, grey literature, and policy documents from stakeholder groups, professional associations, and non-profits.
- Study each option to determine if it has been effective in the past, and whether it’s likely to be effective in your current situation.
- When developing new policy options, it is important to consider a broad, systemic perspective to avoid creating policies with good intentions but possible unintended consequences. One tool that has been used by some policy makers as a way of thinking about policy is the six-question framework.
- Thinking from a systemic level enables you to identify which public health problems will be important to address in the future, and it also provides context for the time it might take for a policy to begin to address a trend.

