Discussion questions

Choose from these questions, or develop your own, to guide small group or plenary discussions during your session.

**General health equity and SDH questions:**

* How have the social determinants of health or health equity issues come up in your own practice?
* What can EPHPs do to take a broader or more upstream approach to practice?
* Do you see challenges due to knowledge, jurisdiction, communication, practical knowledge, legal mandate?

**Health equity in practice – general questions:**

* What kind of health equity issues have you encountered in your work?
* What were the challenges for you or your clients?
* How have you responded?
* What changes would help you feel more comfortable or effective in similar situations?

**Enabling organizational capacity questions for EPHPs:**

1. What opportunities exist for EPHPs to work with   
   (1) other disciplines within public health, and   
   (2) other agencies outside the health system   
   to take a more upstream approach to health protection and promotion?
2. What does it mean to address the gap between the most and least privileged?   
   Consider how implementing an EPH intervention/program could either increase or lessen the health equity gap (e.g., tobacco legislation, restaurant inspections, etc…).
3. What are some opportunities for advocacy that EPH programs can play a role in?   
   (e.g., basic income, housing, HBE, toxins in the environment, drinking water, etc.)
4. Consider your provincial PH and EPH mandates. Where are SDH noted?   
   Are there any conflicting mandates, and how could these be aligned/rationalized?
5. How can leaders at different levels (including managers, directors, MOHs) support integrating HE into EPH work?
6. What organizational activities can ensure that an organization is accountable to address HE?  
   (e.g., health status reports, strategic plans, community reports, QI initiatives, performance appraisals, program plans, regulatory mandates, etc…)  
   How can these reflect the intersection of EPH and HE?

**Enabling organizational capacity questions for senior staff or leadership:**

1. What opportunities in your health region might be leveraged toward action on health equity and social determinants of health?

* Are there other public health professionals are involved with the social determinants of health and health equity?
* Are there other professionals outside of public health that are involved with these issues?
* Are there any standards, policies, tools, or strategic plans that highlight the importance of health equity to the public health mandate? (e.g., equity protocols, public health standards, health equity impact assessment tools, healthy communities frameworks, etc.)

1. How might EPHPs be recognized for time spent working from a health equity & social determinants of health perspective?

* If an individual EPHP is interested in doing this work, how can they make it happen?
* Are there opportunities for EPHPs to be involved in organizational activities to support this? (e.g., performance appraisal, continuous quality improvement, program planning)
* Can individual efforts be shared/highlighted in staff meetings, internal newsletters, etc.?

1. What training would facilitate the application of an equity lens in practice and/or involvement with community coalitions?

* Are there professional development opportunities being offered to other public health staff that would support EPHPs?
* Where can you look to learn more about the social determinants of health and health equity?
* Could health equity be introduced in staff meetings or training sessions?
* How might a role for EPHPs be more clearly stated?

1. How could health equity and the social determinants of health be worked into CIPHI competencies or Board of Certification requirements for environmental public health practice?

* Are there opportunities to influence the education and training of EPHPs?
* Can social determinants of health be incorporated into student EPHP placements?
* How can training standards incorporate health equity so that institutions and educators are more likely to address these issues?

1. What kind of management support or regional/provincial policy would help implement an equity lens in environmental public health practice?

* What would make it possible for your health region/health unit to support EPHPs to work on social determinants of health and health equity?
* Are there managers or executives in your organization who might champion this work?
* What is needed from the provincial level to support this work? From your supervisor/manager? From your MOH?