

# Creating supportive environments for health

## What boat do you want to be in?



Prepared by Dr Anne Andermann, Isabelle Barbeau and Chantal Vinet, with input from Dr Elizabeth Robinson, for the Public Health Department, Cree Health Board, 2014

# The true story of 2 boats

## Unhealthy boat

- Usual meals served
  - Fried steak
  - Mashed potatoes with gravy
  - Ice cream



## Healthy boat

- Healthy meals served
  - Oven-roasted meats
  - Baked potatoes
  - Low-fat frozen yoghurt



# Out to sea for 6 months

- The sailors were not told to do anything differently
  - They chose what they wanted from the cafeteria menu
  - They ate as much food as they wanted
  - They were not told to do any exercise

The only difference between the two boats was the type of food that was served on board.

Thus, only their environment changed, and any differences found after 6 months has

**NOTHING TO DO WITH  
INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR CHANGE**



# What they found

## Unhealthy boat

- Usual meals served
  - On average:
    - Gained 3kg
    - Waist grew 3-5 cm
  - Especially those who were already overweight, **gained even more weight**

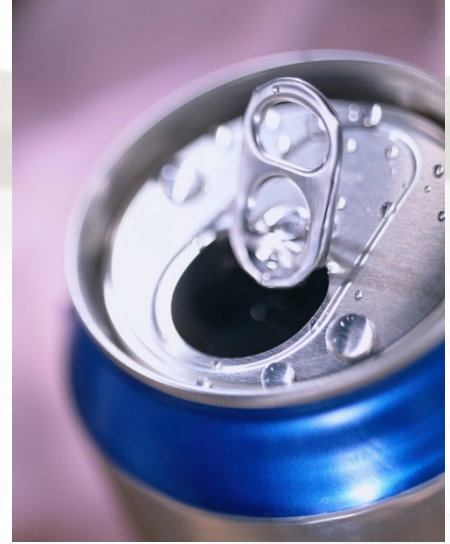
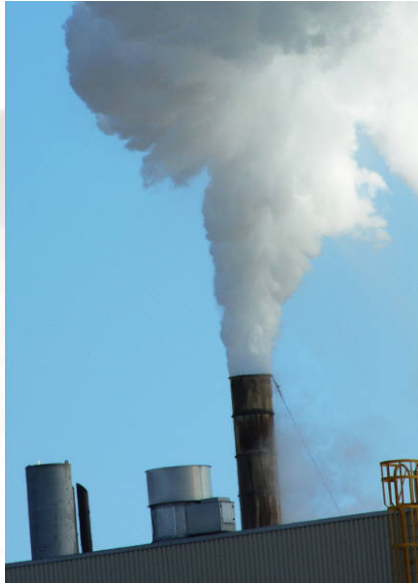


## Healthy boat

- Healthy meals served
  - On average:
    - Lost 5kg
    - Waist shrunk 5cm
  - Especially those who were already overweight, **lost even more weight**



# We are products of our environments



# Too much preaching about individual behaviours

Don't eat  
that, it's not  
healthy

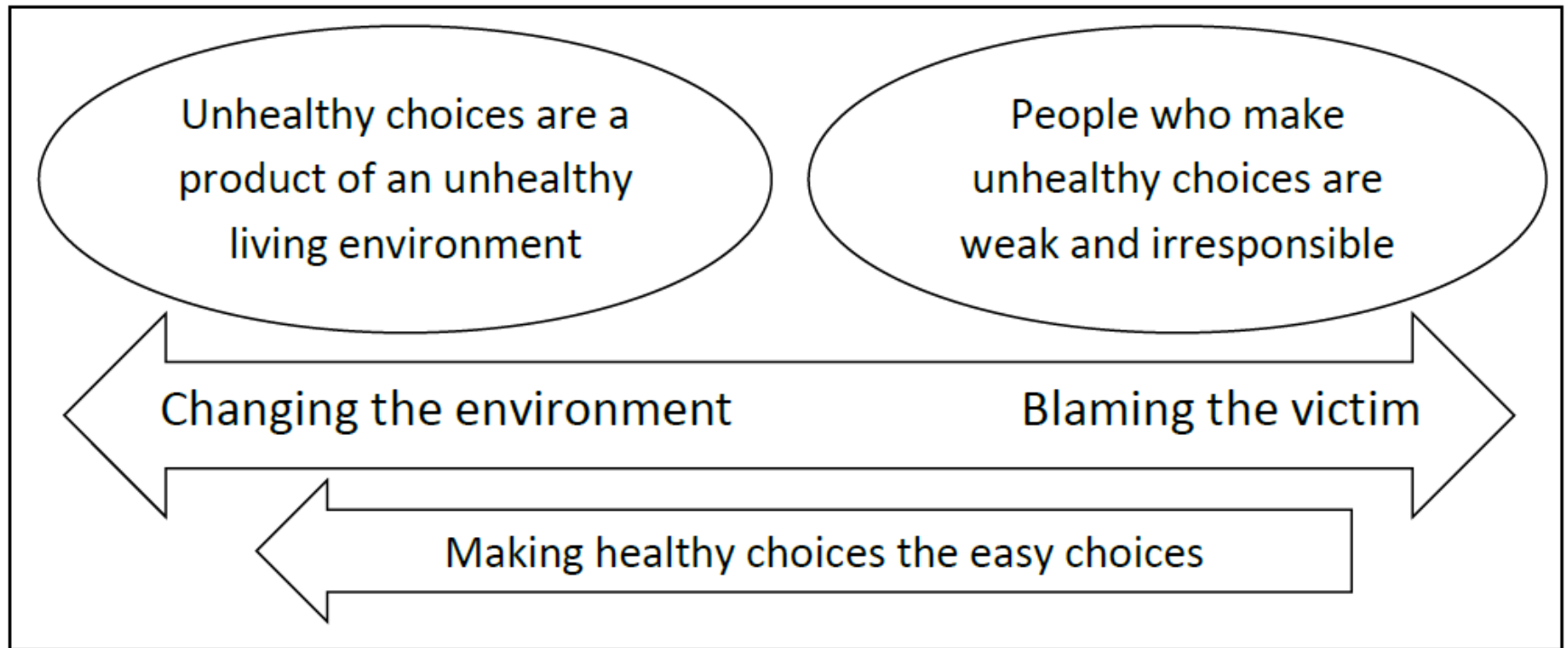
You should  
quit smoking

You drink  
too much

Do more  
exercise

# Stop blaming the victim !

Figure 2.9 Creating supportive environments is needed to make the healthy choices the easy choices





# Making the healthy choices the easy choices





# Healthy individuals

- The health of individuals depends on the health of their family, community and society...

individual



family



community



# Healthy populations

- So, what makes entire populations healthy?



# Population health approach

The frontline health worker  
(e.g. doctor, nurse)



seeks to improve the  
health of their  
PATIENT

The public health  
professional

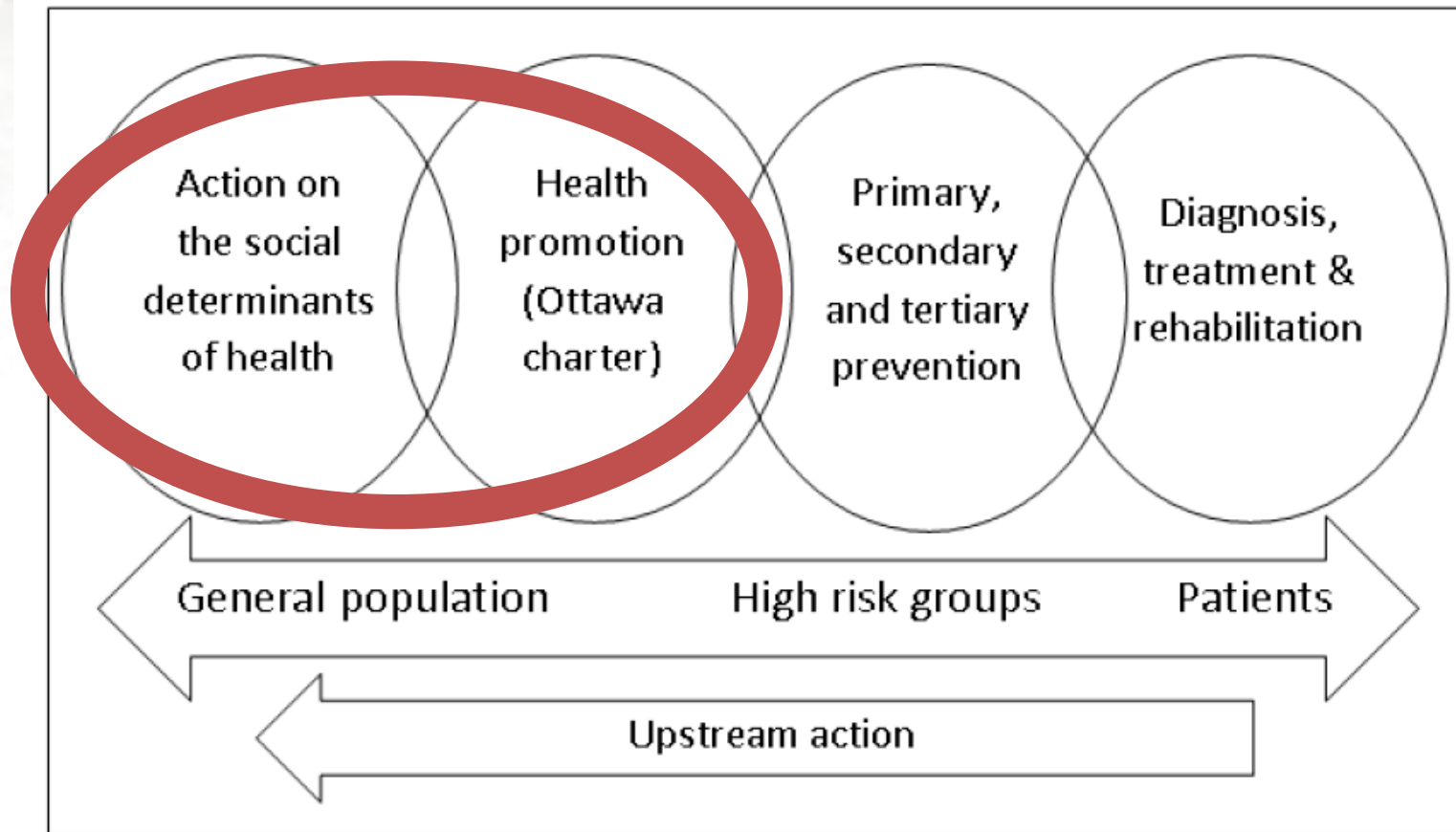


seeks to improve the  
health of the entire  
POPULATION



# Continuum of strategies

Figure 2.6 A continuum of strategies is required to improve population health \*



# The big picture

- Making the connections: our city, our society, our health...

<http://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/our-work/research-methods-tools/systems-thinking/making-the-connections/>

# Objectives for this session

1. Clarifying the concept of “supportive environments” (environnements favorables a la santé) which overlaps, but is distinct from “environmental health”
2. Begin to develop a repertory of “supportive environments” being developed in Region 18
3. Discuss how to go about working on creating even more “supportive environments” as part of your work plans for the coming year (and in liaison with the liyuu Ahtaawin initiative)



# Timeline

- TOTAL 90 MINUTES:
  - 15 minutes:
    - Introduction (Anne)
  - 5 minutes:
    - Clarifying concepts (Anne)
  - 25 minutes:
    - Repertory of supportive environments in our region (Chantal)
  - 40 minutes:
    - Developing future initiatives on supportive environments as part of our work plans and liyuu Ahtaawin (Isabelle)
  - 5 minutes:
    - Working more “upstream” on supportive environments and healthy public policies requires working differently (Chantal)

# Overlapping concepts

## Environmental health

- A branch of public health that focuses primarily on the impact of the physical environment (air, soil, water, food) on health, including the built environment (i.e. urban planning, sidewalks, parks, walking & cycle paths...)
- Involves health protection, as well as disease prevention & health promotion strategies

## Supportive environments

- One of the 5 axes of the Ottawa Charter
- Encourages the development of physical, as well as social, economic and political environments that are conducive to health
- Requires intersectoral action and multi-level interventions to effect change on a large scale

# Ottawa Charter

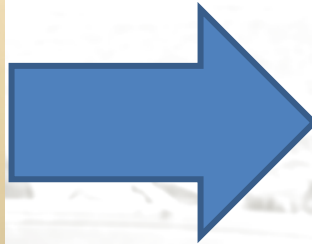
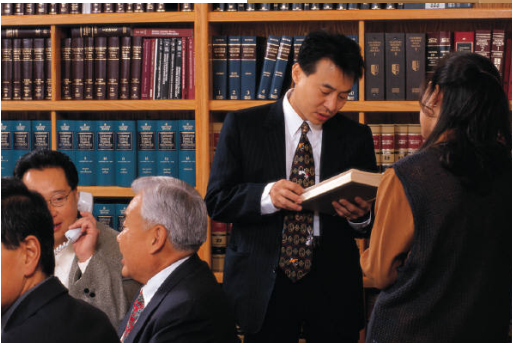
- Health promotion action means:
  - Build healthy public policy
  - Create supportive environments
  - Strengthen community actions
  - Develop personal skills
  - Reorient health services



First International Conference on Health Promotion, Ottawa, Canada, 21 November 1986  
<http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/previous/ottawa/en/>



# Policies shape our environment



# The Sundsvall Statement

- “The Sundsvall Conference identified many examples and approaches for creating supportive environments that can be used by policy-makers, decision-makers and community activists in the health and environment sectors. The Conference recognized that **everyone has a role in creating supportive environments for health.**”

Third International Conference on Health Promotion, Sundsvall, Sweden, 9-15 June 1991  
<http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/previous/sundsvall/en/>

# Example

**Safer playgrounds**

REVIEW

CMAJ

PUBLIC HEALTH

## Keeping children safe: rethinking how we design our surroundings

Andrew W. Howard MD MSc

Previously published at [www.cmaj.ca](http://www.cmaj.ca)

Only recently has the concept of designing the environment to promote public safety and health been widely accepted. We have known for decades that the incidence of childhood injuries, which among children over one year of age is the leading cause of death, is not only a result of individual behavior but also of the built environment. Rather than trying to change individual behavior, urban planners have begun to focus on designing the built environment for well-being across the life span. Designing built surroundings that meet those needs, while reducing the incidence of childhood injuries, it is crucial that urban planners adopt a proactive style of planning aim to minimize physical risk to children. At the same time, it should maximize opportunities for physical activity.

### Key points

- Injury is the leading cause of death among children in the industrialized world, and often involves failure to negotiate a built environment.
- Safety should be considered when designing the built environment to substantially reduce injuries and fatalities.
- Perceived lack of safety is a major barrier to the use of active modes of transportation such as walking or cycling.
- A safer environment can lead to improved public health, physical activity levels and quality of life, and reduced pollution.

**Safer schools**

**Safer recreational water**

**Safer walking routes**

**Safer homes**

# MSSS wants to know...

Quelles actions ou mesures la DSP de votre région a-t-elle prises, depuis 2008, pour encourager les environnements favorables à la santé ?

- Réalisation par la DSP d'une étude ou recherche sur les EFS
- Réalisation par la DSP d'une recension ou d'une veille informationnelle sur les EFS
- Prise de position publique de la DSP sur les EFS
- Publication par la DSP d'un rapport sur les EFS
- Développement par la DSP d'un plan ou d'une politique pour encourager les EFS



# What examples exist in our region?



Chantal

# Examples of supportive environments

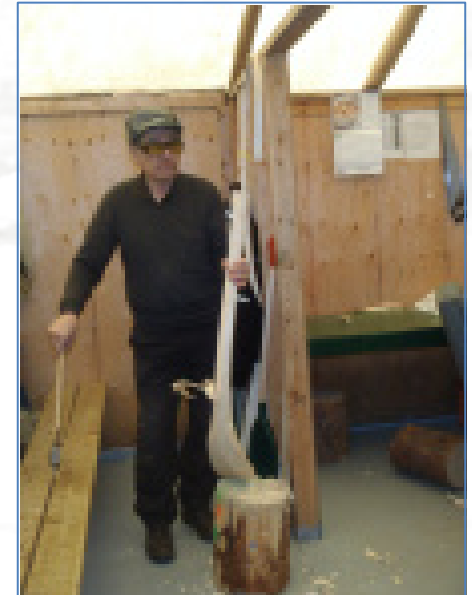
- Restaurants and stores that sell healthy foods
- By-laws that prevent smoking in public places
- School policies against selling junk-food and pop
- Urban planning that promotes “active transportation”
- Social norms that empower women and girls and oppose family violence

# Examples in our region

- Getting grocery stores and restaurants to sell healthy food that is accessible and affordable
- Healthy food policies in local daycares and health clinics(for consumers & employees)
- School breakfast and healthy snack programs
- Parenting support programs and parent-child activities (e.g. annual winter triathlon)
- Family support services (food bank, clothing bank, drop in centre, etc.)

# Murray's lodge: A holistic example

- Physical activity: walking to the lodge, going hunting
- Healthy food: serving traditional food
- Social cohesion: communal kitchen, working together, socializing
- Fostering cultural identity: elders teaching the traditional ways





# Taking it to the next level

**When developing  
our work plans,  
how can we focus  
even more on  
creating supportive  
environments for  
health?**



# Let's build the healthy boat !

What would the healthy boat look like for Region 18?



# Game time !

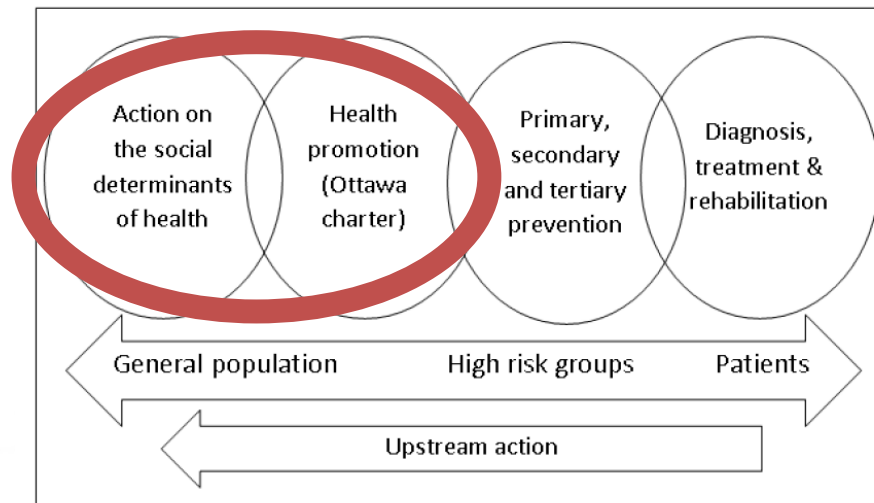




# Working differently

- Working more “**upstream**” and creating more supportive environments for health requires new ways of working with a wider range of partners

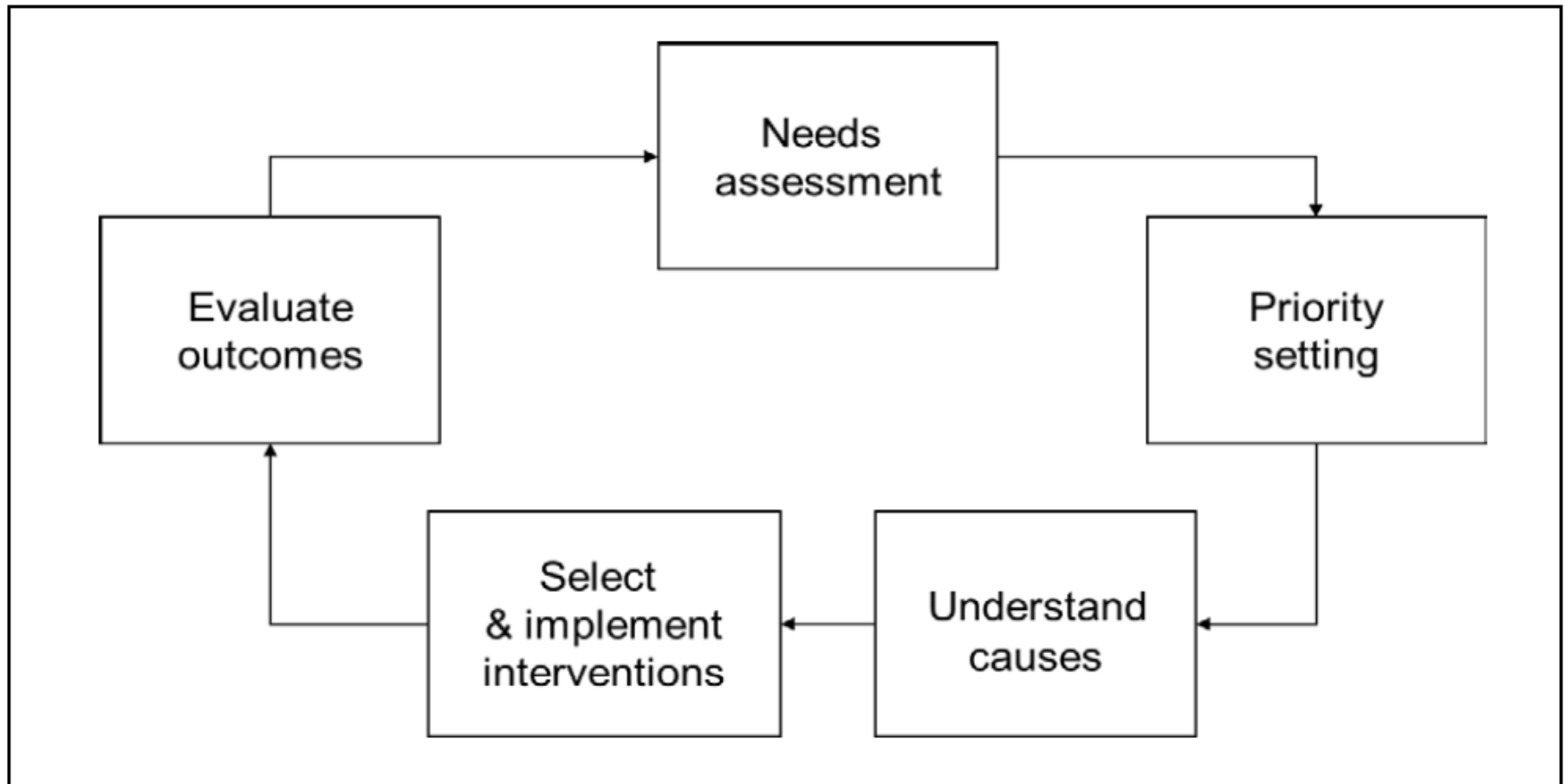
Figure 2.6 A continuum of strategies is required to improve population health \*





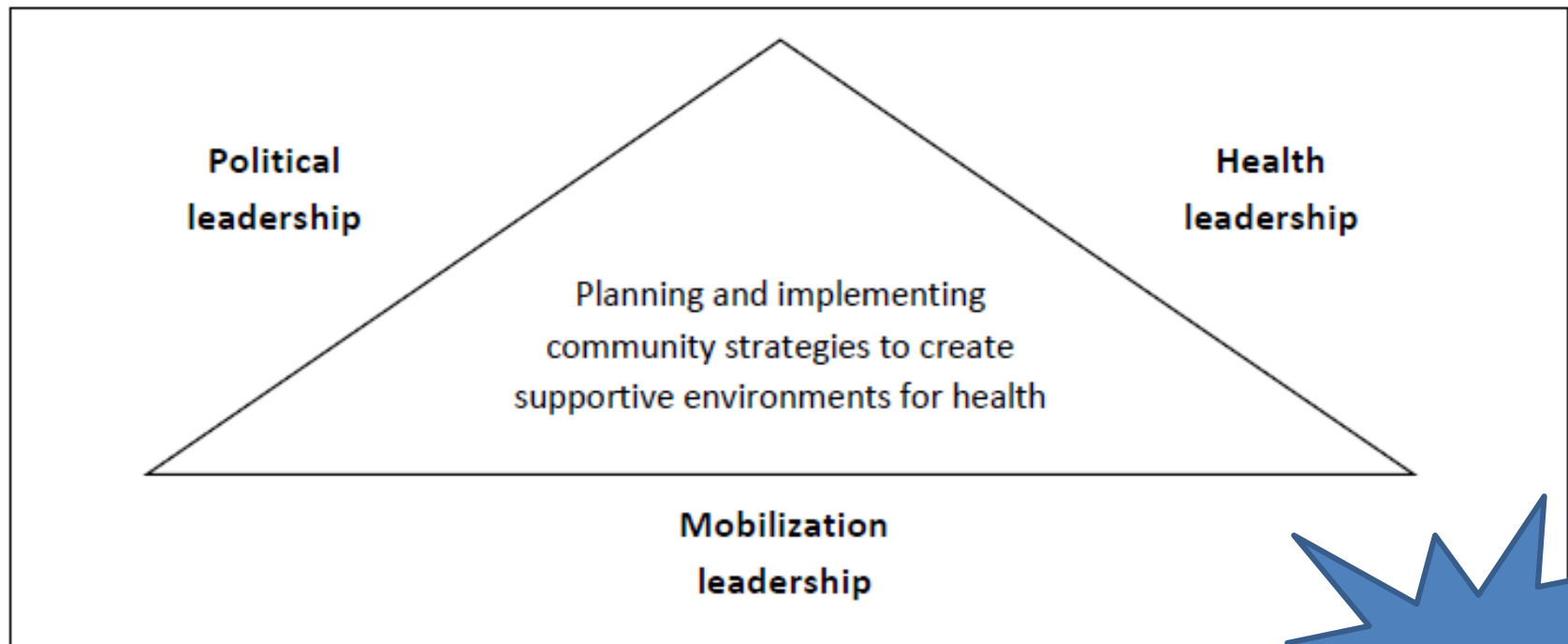
# Requires “big picture” health planning

Figure 2.5 The health planning cycle



# and engagement of local actors and leaders

**Figure 7.2 Tackling the social determinants takes multiple types of leadership \***



\* Adapted from: Bourque D. *Concertation et partenariat: Entre levier et piège du développement communautés*. Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2008.

Chantal

## Further reading:

Andermann A.

*Evidence for Health:*

*From Patient Choice to*

*Global Policy.*

Cambridge: Cambridge  
University Press, 2013.

