**MEANING OF POLICY REVIEW**

It is a procedure that evaluates the effectiveness of a specific policy. When a policy is not working well, it is reviewed and managed to improve its effectiveness

It is also a process to evaluate the working of a particular policy. When a policy is not working properly a review is done. Sometimes a change in the policy may make it more effective.

**IMPORTANCE OF POLICY REVIEW**

1. It enables policy makers to learn about what worked or did not work, and what contributed to policy success or failure. Policy review builds on these evaluation results in order to inform decisions on whether and how such policy needs to change.
2. Regular review keeps the government up to date with regulations, technology and industry best practices.
3. Policy review ensures policies in the government are consistent and effective
4. Outdated policies can leave the government at risk. Old policies may fail to comply with new laws. they may not address new systems or technology, which can result in inconsistent practices.

**HOW TO CONDUCT A POLICY REVIEW**

**Outline.**

1. Basic definitions
2. Types of policies
3. Reasons for a policy review
4. Steps to conduct a policy review
5. Role of a community medicine in policy revision
6. Summary
7. **Basic definition**

**What is a policy?**

1. This is a set of ideas or a plan of what to do in a particular situation that has been agreed to officially by a group of people, a business organization, a government, or a political party.
2. A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government, an organization or individual
3. Is a law, regulation, procedure, administrative action, incentive or voluntary practice of government and other institutions.

-**Despite the different definitions of policy, characteristics remain to be**

a) It states specific principles

b) it is focused on action, stating who should do what

c) It is a statement of authority by a person or organization

-Thus, a good policy allows people to get on with any institutions core business more efficiently and effectively.

**REASONS FOR POLICY REVIEW**

**Reasons for policy review include:**

1. Policy is no longer followed
2. Policy is no longer effective or having the desired impact
3. New issues have arisen that mandate the policy to be amended
4. Changes to the mother policy make the existing policy redundant or non- compliant

**STEPS TO CONDUCT A POLICY REVIEW**

-The policy owner (government)is responsible for conducting a comprehensive review of the policy at a periodic interval or as required to stay updated.

**Step 1: need analysis**

In this stage, the policy custodian should identify all issues that trigger a policy review (review date for policy, policy gaps, legislative gaps, legislative change, an accumulation of a critical mass of issues in the policy issues log)

Regarding policy issues, the policy custodian will decide whether to:

1. Log the issues for a later review or development.
2. Address the problem through mechanisms other than the policy process or
3. Proceed with a review

**Step 2: Research**

-The policy custodian shall analyze any relevant information that could inform the policy review. This may include data analysis, literature review and best practice.

-The implications of the policy review should be determined with consideration to its impact on other policies, stakeholders, administration and systems development.

**Step 3: Drafting**

-Depending upon the extent of change, urgency and timing of the policy change, stakeholders will be consulted and have the opportunity to comment on the draft policy.

-The policy custodian may find that early consultation with critical stakeholders will inform the drafting stage of the policy.

**Step 4: Consultation**

-the stakeholders identified earlier must be consulted regarding the policy.

-Depending on the constraints operating on the policy, it may not always be possible to consult with all stakeholder groups, however these constraints should be made clear.

**Step 5: Approval**

-The final draft of the policy shall be submitted for final approval by the highest delegated authority and should be accompanied by a communication and implementation plan.

**Step 6: Implementation and communication**

-The policy custodian is responsible for implementing the policy and should maintain a record of progress against the communication and implementation plan.

**Step 7: Maintenance and Review**

-the policy issues log should be maintained by throughout implementation of the policy.

-To ensure the policy is being followed, it may be necessary to audit compliance with the policy or evaluate the policy.

**Results of a policy review**

1. No changes made.
2. Minor amendments made
3. Major amendments made
4. The policy is revoked as it is no longer required

**Role of community medicine in policy revision**

-Policy revision is an essential public health function.

-Any professional in the public health domain should be able to develop and review a policy in an evidence-based approach.

-Policies guide the allocation of resources and thus impact public health.

-One of the milestones for the preventive medicine milestone project is tto contribute to the development and implementation of a policy to improve community health efforts.

**TYPES OF POLICIES**

1. **Reactive policy**

Is a response to a problem or emergency. It is designed to remedy existing problems.

Reactive policy development happens quickly because the problems can be urgent.

1. **Proactive policy**

Is a type of policy that is designed to prevent a concern, problem or emergency from occurring.

Types of policies according to issues addressed that need to be reviewed by any government to enhance their effectiveness;

1. Financial and economic
2. Environmental
3. Industrial
4. Energy
5. Security and defense
6. Education
7. Health

**Summary**

-Policies are made to:

i) clarify functions and responsibilities.

ii) promote consistency

iii) Meet standards

iv) make decision making transparent.

-Policy development offers an opportunity to engage with the community on matters of importance to that community.