



## Risk Assessment

### Description:

This tool provides guidelines for conducting a risk assessment, a matrix for assessing potential risks, and a prioritization diagram.

### How it can be used:

A risk assessment is an effective process for identifying and assessing which factors could potentially and negatively affect the success of your health and wellness planning process. Using the guidelines, fill out the matrix to determine if there are significant risks to your health and wellness planning process, prioritize the risks, and identify possible ways to prevent, mitigate, or manage these risks.

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Risk represents two factors: first, the probability that something negative will happen, and second, the negative consequences or impact of it happening. A risk assessment identifies potential risks, estimates the probability that risks will occur, and measures the impact of the consequences.

Follow these four steps to conduct an effective Risk Assessment.

#### 1. Identify potential risks.

Identify existing and potential threats from a number of sources. Be thorough to ensure that all issues are considered. Examples of categories to consider are:

- Human – illness, injury, or death of a key individual, lack of sufficient staff, etc.
- Operational – lack of supplies, transportation challenges, communication failure, etc.
- Reputational – loss of community support, damage due to negative incident, poor quality, etc.
- Financial – lack of funding, poor financial controls, inability to control own budget, fraud, etc.
- Technical – outdated technology, technical failure, lack of trained technicians, etc.
- Natural – dangerous weather, natural disasters, disease outbreaks, etc.
- Political – changes in community leadership, government policy changes, etc.
- Structural – dangerous chemicals, poor storage for medications, deteriorated buildings, etc.

#### 2. Assess the risks

Consider the potential risks that your organization could face while you're implementing your Health and Wellness Plan. Write in the risks or threats in each category. Assess the probability and impact and then move to the matrix to assess priorities. Once you have identified your top priorities, fill in the green column with your strategies to avoid or manage the risks.





**Very High = 5**

**High = 4**

**Medium = 3**

**Low = 2**

**Very Low = 1**

Categories of Potential Risks or Threats	Probability	Impact	Actions and who is responsible
<i>Example only</i> Loss of Nurse in Charge	4	5	<i>Establish contingency plan with neighbouring community for emergency coverage. Actioned by: Health Director</i>
1. Human a. b. c.			
2. Operational a. b. c.			
3. Reputational a. b. c.			
4. Financial a. b. c.			
5. Technical a. b. c.			
6. Natural a. b. c.			
7. Political a. b. c.			
8. Structural a. b. c.			





On the matrix below, plot each of the risks that you've identified on the previous page by writing the number of the risk (e.g., 1a, 3b, etc.) in the square that corresponds to the probability and impact rating.

**Red** = urgent – must plan for these, they are likely to happen and will have serious impacts.

**Orange** = very important – plan for these, they are either very likely to happen, or will have serious impact if they do happen.

**Yellow** = discuss these, they are likely to happen without serious impacts or they may have serious impacts but are not likely to happen.

**Green** = discuss these last, they are not likely to happen and don't have serious impacts.

Probability	Impact				
	Very Low 1	Low 2	Medium 3	High 4	Very High 5
Very Low 1	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Orange
Low 2	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Orange
Medium 3	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
High 4	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Orange	Red
Very High 5	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Red	Red





### 3. Manage the risks

What are some ways you could work with your team to prevent/reduce/mitigate the risks? Create your risk management plan (far right green column in the Risk Assessment Matrix) based on the results of your assessment. Ensure that someone is accountable and that timelines are set out. Be careful that the cost of mitigating the risk isn't more than the cost of the risk itself. Some ways of managing risk are:

- **Use existing assets** – consider repurposing existing equipment, improving existing methods and systems, reassigning responsibilities, improving accountability and internal controls, etc.
- **Develop a contingency plan** – understand that the risk could happen but initiate a plan to minimize the effects (e.g., contingency plan, business continuity plan, etc.)
- **Seek new resources** – depending on where your vulnerabilities lie, you may need more funding or human resources to manage or respond to the risk (i.e., extra staff for pandemic outbreak)
- **Implement a schedule** – outline key activities to be completed daily/weekly/monthly/yearly to mitigate the risks (e.g., daily computer backups, monthly fire alarm testing, etc.)

### 4. Review Regularly

Depending on the severity of the risks, review the risk assessment monthly, semi-annually, or annually to:

- determine whether any risks have changed;
- ensure that mitigation plans are in place and making a difference;
- assess whether there are new risks to consider.

