



Centre for Health Systems
and Technology (CHeST)

A UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO RESEARCH THEME

Commercial determinants of health: ‘Moving from the bottom to the top of the cliff’

Professor Robin Gauld

Dept of Management & Dept of Preventive and Social Medicine

Co-Director, Centre for Health Systems and Technology

Dunedin School of Medicine & Otago Business School

NZ Women in Medicine Conference

18 May 2024



Overview...

- The commercial outlook today
 - (in business and in health)
- Influencing the policy agenda when a 'policy window' opens?
 - If policy influence is the goal
- How might we think differently about health funding?
 - If we want to improve equity in an increasingly commercial health delivery environment (noting health markets are inequitable)

1. Commercial outlook





Commercial environment today...

Business

- We live in a market economy where business is crucial
- A business evolution is in process
- Sustainability and ethics questions are driving this
- The leaders are primarily focused on people and planet
 - Profit remains important but purpose is fundamental
- How long until businesses in various consumption areas start to directly tackle determinants of health?
 - There are many yet the corporates and multinationals are key



Commercial environment today...

Health

- Expanding use of private services
- Growth in private hospitals
- Move of specialists to the private sector
- Increase in those holding/providing private insurance (incl Iwi)
- ASMS members seeking private cover
- Growing unmet need
- Does the commercial model undermine equity and access goals?



Commercial environment today...

Health

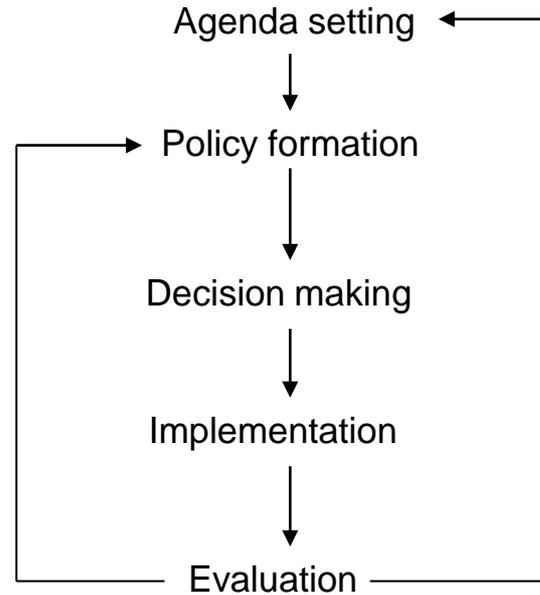
- Are we satisfied with the situation?
- Would we like to pursue change?
- How do we influence policy?
- Policy is complicated
- Need to be ready for action when opportunity arises



2. Influencing the policy agenda



‘Stages’ model of the policy process





Agenda setting

- Process by which certain issues make it onto policy agenda from much larger number of issues worthy of political attention



Agenda setting (2)

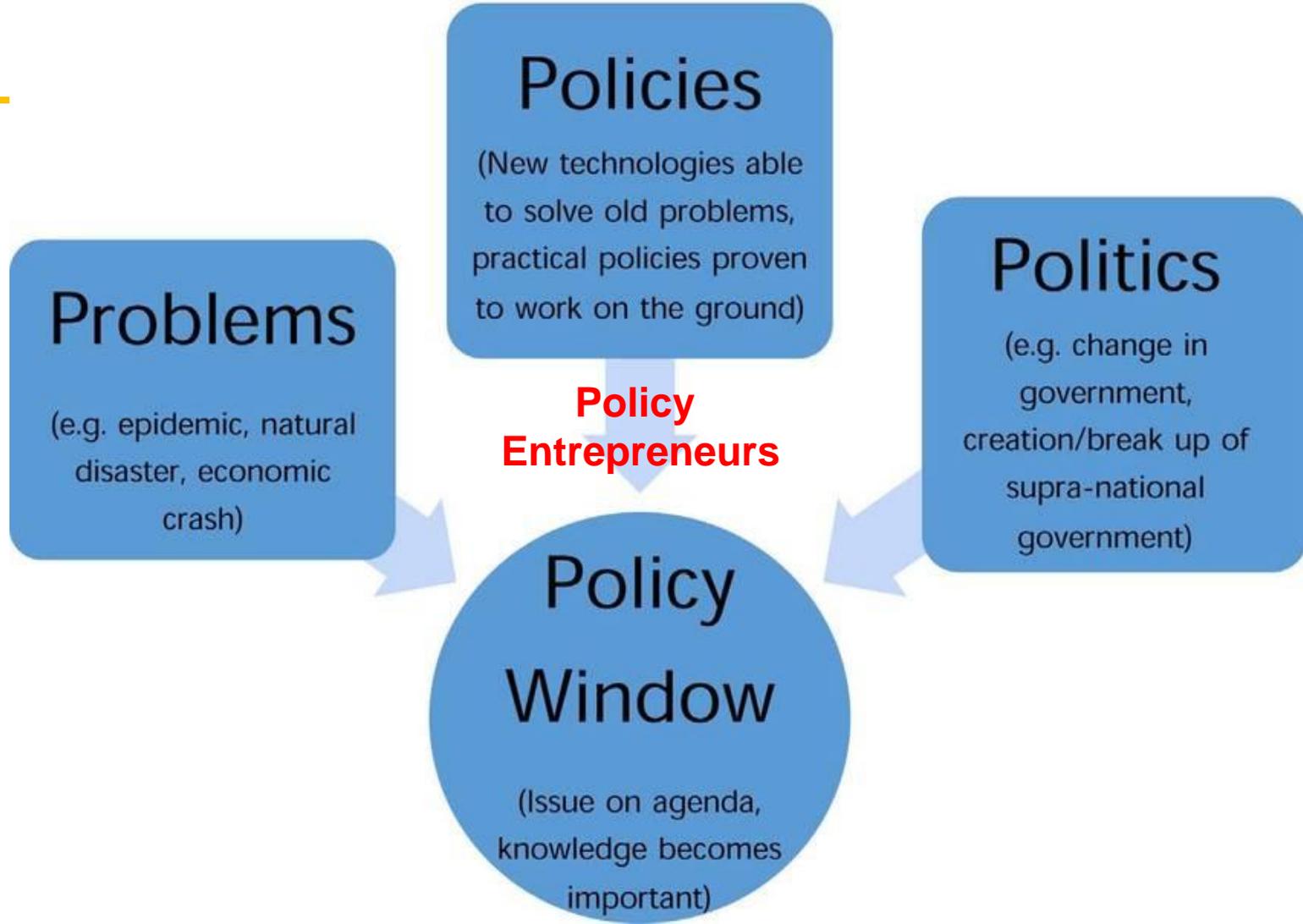
- Kingdon model (1984): Three policy streams:
 - Problems: are there perceived problems that require attention?
 - Policy (solution): ideas and policy work exist, to be picked up and placed on the agenda
 - Politics (political will): driven by changes in govt, national mood, interest group campaigns, etc.

(J Kingdon 1995. *Agendas, alternatives and public policies*. Boston, Little Brown & Co)



Agenda setting (3)

- Kingdon...
 - revolving around the three policy streams are 'visible' and 'hidden' participants
 - Visible: politicians, organised interests
 - Hidden: researchers, academics in policy stream
- Policy entrepreneurs, media, interests, a serious failure, change of govt, new piece of research, new technology, etc will help open a policy window





What's needed when the window opens?

- Research – evidence into policy; having the evidence packaged correctly
- Practical solutions – workable models of delivery that can be swiftly articulated into policy
 - An implementation plan
- A sustained coalition of the willing, ready to step in with assistance



3. Thinking differently about funding...





We have...

- Always had tax-based funding for health along with other funding streams
- There are other methods
- None is perfect; each has complexities and flaws
- If **universal access and equity** are key goals then only one method achieves this...



...Social insurance

Social insurance

- Similar to ACC
- In Germany and other EU countries; also Japan, South Korea, Taiwan
- Is focused on the same level of coverage and accessibility to services regardless of socio-economic status
- Often seen as a means of building solidarity within the community and delivers on equity
- ACC could run this
- Would make access provider-agnostic
 - Public and private sectors still exist but private no longer just for better off and insured



Centre for Health Systems
and Technology (CHeST)

A UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO RESEARCH THEME

Kā mihi!

robin.gauld@otago.ac.nz

www.otago.ac.nz/healthsystems