

NWMPHN'S

Health Needs Assessment Framework

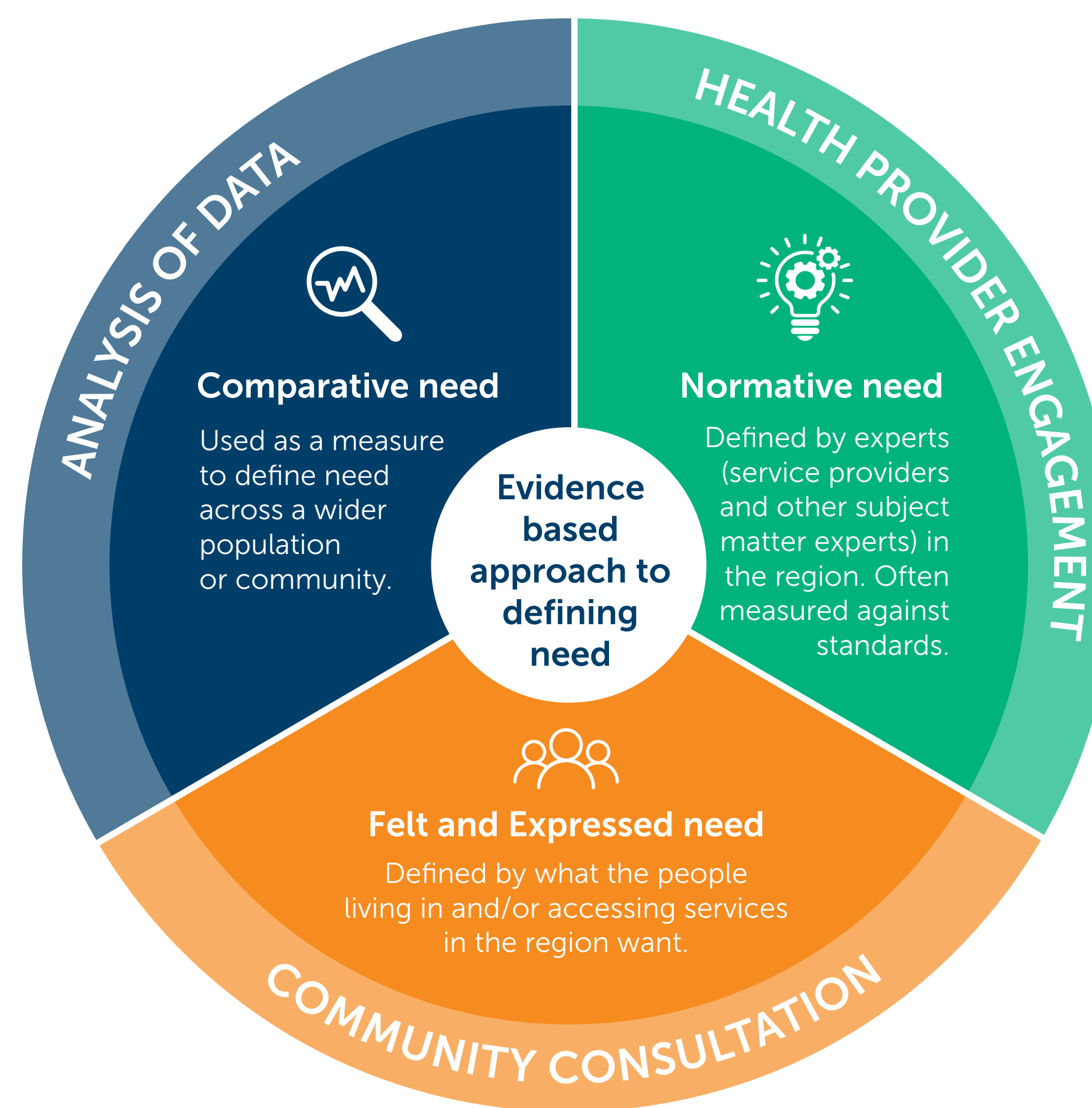
An evidence-based approach to defining and quantifying need

To ensure equitable access to health care across its catchment, NWMPHN created the Health Needs Assessment Framework.

The Framework, which includes a method to quantify need using the Social Determinants of Health, recognises that the issues that the health system needs to address, especially in disadvantaged areas, are multi-faceted and require a holistic, collaborative system approach.

An evidence-based approach to defining need

A needs assessment implies there is a gap between the current conditions (*what is*) and the ideal conditions (*what should be*). Needs are relative and what is necessary depends on your point of view.



NWMPHN's evidence-based approach considers 4 types of need:

- comparative
- felt
- expressed
- normative

Each type is better understood through 3 types of evidence:

- analysis of data
- community consultation
- health provider engagement

The Health Needs Assessment Framework

The Health Needs Assessment Framework renders what can be a complex conceptual approach practicable and actionable.

It includes our evidence-based approach to defining need and shows how we bring that to life through a systematic and pragmatic process to identify and prioritise need in the most effective and equitable way.

One of the key differentiators of our approach is how we make sense of the vast volumes of data analysed.

We quantify need by grouping the population health data into 5 metrics, each with distinct indicators researched and assessed against a set of key criteria.

The metrics are:

- population
- socio-demographic factors
- risk factors
- access to health services and geographic environment
- health conditions and consequences

Benefits of this approach

This makes a complex conceptual approach to understanding need practical, actionable and more efficient.

It ensures more time is spent on actually drawing insights from the data.

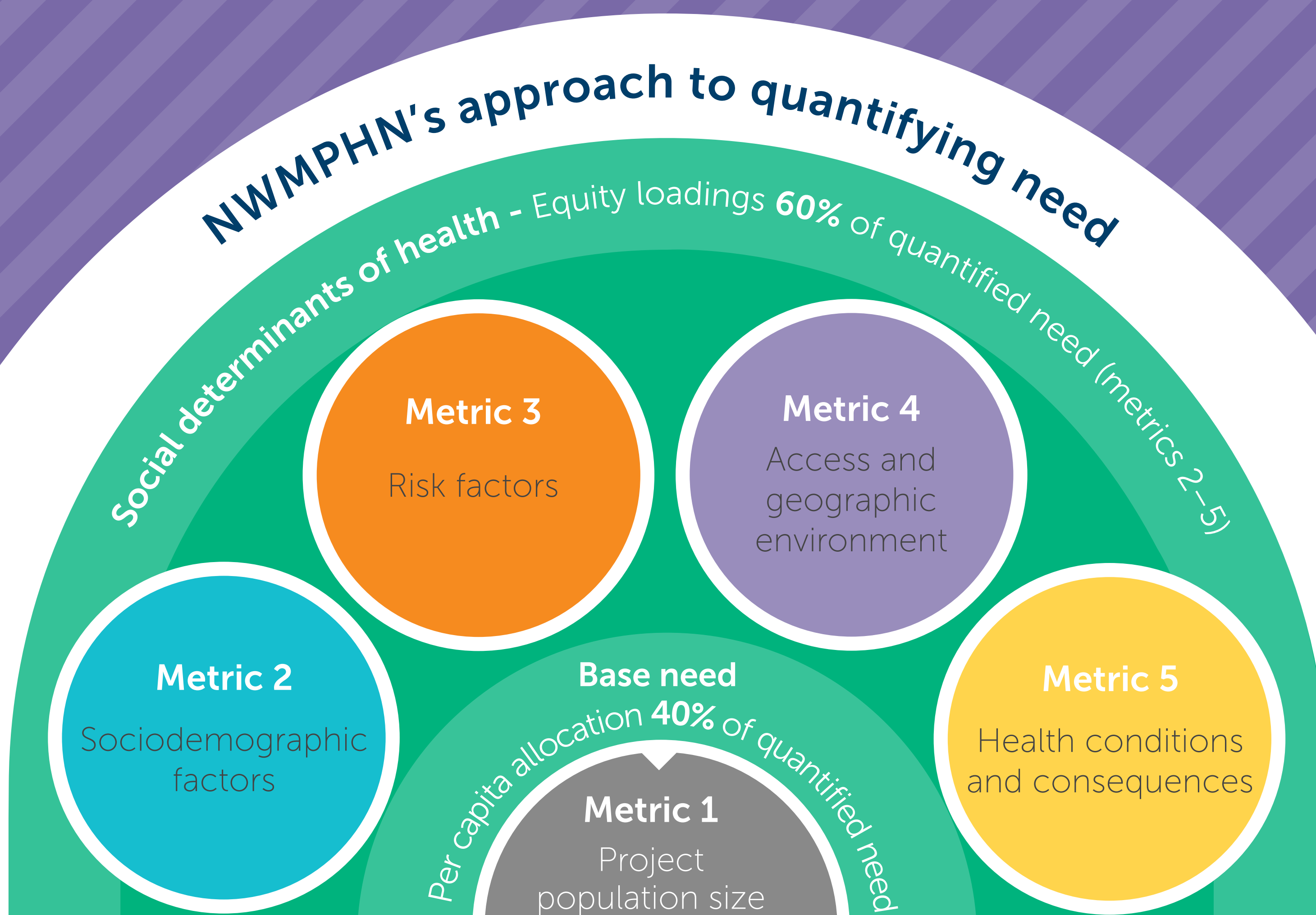
Using the quantification model to determine equitable distribution of commissioning funds gives stakeholders confidence that funding decisions are well researched and evidence based.



Case study: Assessing the needs of Victorians in the West Metro region

In late 2022 NWMPHN joined with the Royal Melbourne Hospital, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Royal Women's Hospital, Mercy Health, Western Health, Royal Children's Hospital and the Western Public Health Unit to develop the West Metro Health Service Partnership Population Health Needs Assessment. It uses NWMPHN's methodology and framework.

This is an 8-month project to reveal the health care needs of people in Melbourne's west. The insights gained will inform new programs and align initiatives across regional networks. It has been delivered over 4 stages with the final one, defining priorities, concluding in August 2023. The full West Metro Health Service Partnership Population Health Study is set to be published in September 2023. It will play a valuable role in informing project design and service mapping for at least the next 3 years.



For more information

Contact hna.admin@nwmpnhn.org.au or visit nwmpnhn.org.au



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