

Inform

number one

september/october 1998

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Keeping you informed!

Welcome to the first issue of *Inform*.

This new bulletin will keep you updated on current areas of work in which the Health Promotion Agency is involved.

It contains information on policies and programmes, campaigns and research. Details on how to contact members of Agency staff are included so that more information on specific areas of work can be obtained.

Each bimonthly bulletin will also highlight recent publications and resources.

We hope *Inform* will help keep you in touch with the Agency and its work. Please let me know if you have any suggestions on how it could be more useful, or if you know other colleagues who would find it helpful to receive a copy.



Dr Brian Gaffney
Chief Executive

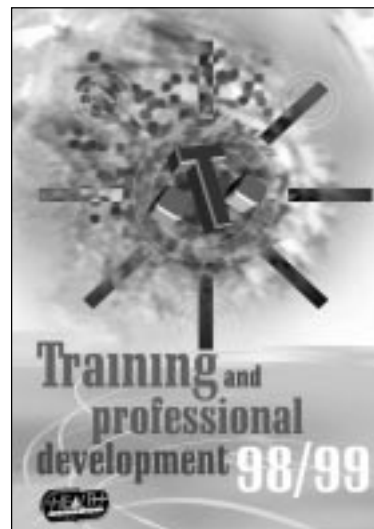
New training opportunities

A new series of courses for people working in health promotion is set to get underway in October with the launch of the Health Promotion Agency's short course programme for 1998/99.

Courses are being offered on topics such as sexual health education, alcohol, men's health and health and safety for schools. There are also courses in stress management, advocacy and advanced group skills.

The majority of courses carry accreditation and are designed for anyone with a key role in promoting health within the community, voluntary and statutory sectors in Northern Ireland. The training prospectus, outlining courses from October 98 to June 99, will be available from late September with details also available on the Agency's Website.

www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk



Health Promotion Forum

Health promotion specialists are finalising a combined response to 'Fit for the Future' following a two day forum organised by the Agency and the Society of Health Promotion Specialists in May.

More than 60 delegates, including health promotion managers, commissioners, coordinators and health promotion specialists at Board, Trust and regional level examined the implications of the 'New Approaches' paper for health promotion.

The coordinated response to the paper will be circulated to delegates for consultation before being sent to the New Approaches Unit at the Department of Health and Social Services. The forum also provided the opportunity to strengthen links and focus on the future planning and delivery of health

promotion in the light of recent local, national and international policy development.

Activate Health Programme

Two new training modules are being developed for the Activate Health Programme. These have been written by Activate tutors with advice from health professionals.

The coronary rehabilitation module 'Heart Health' is a community intervention programme for people who have been discharged from hospital-based rehabilitation programmes.

The second new training module gives tutors advice on skills and approaches for working with people with a learning disability and on how to amend and adapt Activate resources to make them more suitable for use with these groups.

The September edition of Activate News will include details of planned in-service workshops.

Workplace health promotion

The Agency is collaborating with the Health and Safety Agency to develop a framework for workplace health promotion. The framework will consider ways of integrating health and safety issues, occupational health and health promotion into the workplace.

A two day consultation workshop will be held in early September and a draft framework document will subsequently be made available for consultation.

Northern Ireland Strategy on Alcohol Misuse - Policy Development Project

In June 1998 the Department of Health and Social Services began a review of the issue of alcohol misuse in Northern Ireland. The Agency, along with a range of other health bodies, is playing an active role within this review process. Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive, is a member of the Quality Control Steering Group and Rob Phipps, Alcohol and Drugs Programme Manager, is a member of the Project Team. The next meeting will be held in September.

Food and Nutrition Strategy

The Agency is continuing to lead the implementation of Northern Ireland's Food and Nutrition Strategy.

The strategy document 'Eating and Health: A Food and Nutrition Strategy for Northern Ireland' was published in November 1996. It outlines targets, action areas and action points to promote positive changes in the nutrition and health of the population here.

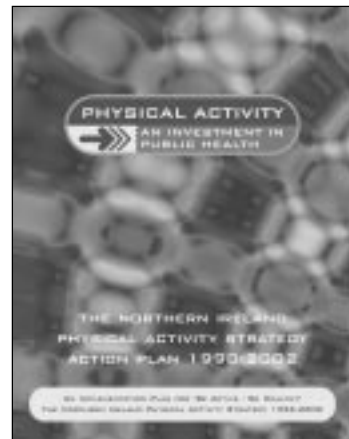
Children, young people and those on low income were identified in the strategy as the groups which should be given priority. During the forthcoming months, meetings will be held with members of key groups identified in the strategy.



Policy development and advice

The first meeting of the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy Group which oversees the implementation of the Strategy Action Plan will be held on 22 September. Dr Paula Kilbane, Chief Executive of the Eastern Health and Social Services Board, will chair the group.

The Agency is facilitating the implementation of the strategy and has met with Sports Council representatives to discuss issues of common interest between the Strategy Action Plan and the Strategy for the Development of Sport. As a first step a joint



policy paper is being prepared to clarify objectives and identify joint working areas.

The Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy aims to reduce the proportion of sedentary people and increase the number of people exercising to recommended levels, by 2002. A number of priority groups, including young people and those aged over 50, have been identified.

Research, information and analysis

Drugs

Phase II of the Northern Ireland Drugs Campaign which finished in January 1998 has now been evaluated. The Agency commissioned a survey of 2,700 school children aged between 10 and 17 years old and 300 young people aged 16-17 years who are currently in employment. Findings showed that 80% of 14-17 year olds (the target group of the campaign) has remembered at least one of the three television advertisements of the campaign.

Folic Acid Research

The Agency carried out research with over 400 health professionals to assess their awareness, knowledge and information needs in relation to folic acid. The professionals surveyed included GPs, pharmacists, health visitors, practice nurses, family planning doctors, dietitians, health promotion co-ordinators, family planning nurses and family planning association staff.

The research findings are being used to develop support materials for health professionals as part of a public information campaign on folic acid to be launched in October.

Results from the survey showed that:

- All professionals recognised the importance of folic acid to preconceptual/pregnant women.
- 89% of health professionals think that a public information campaign in Northern Ireland is necessary.
- Leaflets were identified as the most popular way for health professionals to increase their own knowledge about folic acid and as one

of the most appropriate ways for providing information to the public.

Qualitative research in the form of focus groups was carried out to ensure that information produced for the public is attractive, interesting and easy to read.

Nutrition

The Agency is carrying out an evaluation of the handbook on nutrition it produced for professionals in 1997/98. Fieldwork will take place during September.

Healthy Eating Campaign Review

As the Healthy Eating Campaign is entering its 10th year the Agency will be carrying out a review in the Autumn.

The review will include the views of professionals and groups currently involved in promoting the campaign. It will also examine how the scheme is currently managed and will reflect on the evaluation results of the nine campaigns to date.

Call it Quits

Evaluation of the Agency's 'Call it Quits' teenage anti-smoking campaign took place over the summer. The campaign featured three television advertisements broadcast over the period 25 February to 28 March 1998. Each advertisement featured a freephone number for young people wanting help or advice to stop smoking. Evaluation results will be available on request from the Agency. Major findings will be featured in a future issue of *Inform*.

Public information campaigns

Drugs Prevention Week and Campaign

Phase III of the Public Information Campaign on Drugs will be launched during European Drug Prevention Week which runs from 16 to 22 November 1998.

The first part of the campaign will encourage parents to talk to their children about drugs. It will include television advertising and a new booklet will be produced replacing 'Drugs and Solvents - You and Your Child' and 'Drugs What Every Parent Should Know'. This part of the campaign will run from 16 to 30 November 1998.

Young people aged 14 to 17 will also be

targeted in Phase III of the campaign. The three television advertisements, produced and broadcast for Phase II, are to be broadcast on television and in cinemas during January 1999. Copies of the booklets produced for young people in support of Phases I and II will also be reprinted.

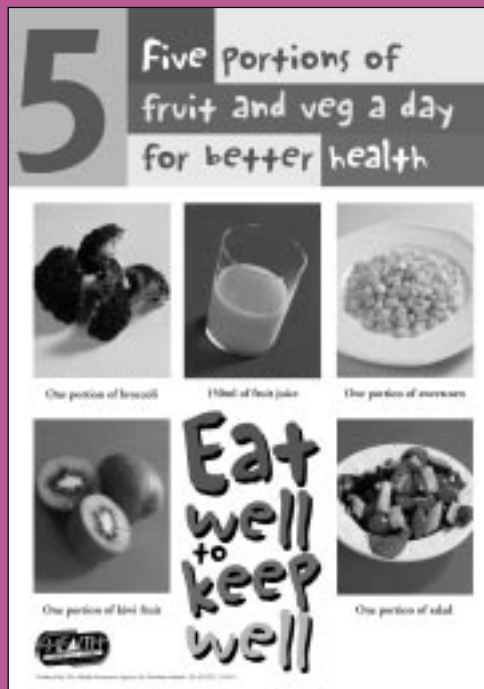
Folic Acid

A major public information campaign promoting the benefits of taking folic acid to prevent neural tube defects will be launched on 13 October. The campaign which is targeting women aged 16-45 years old will include television advertising, a magazine, a durable resource for health professionals and a leaflet for the public to reinforce advice given by professionals.

Eat Well to Keep Well

A month long healthy eating campaign 'Eat Well to Keep Well' was held in June. The campaign focused on the protection offered by fruit, vegetables and fibre against some cancers.

Public awareness of the campaign and its messages and any dietary changes reported as a result of the campaign, were assessed during July in a survey of 600 adults. Results will be available in the Autumn.



No Smoking Day 1998

Results from the evaluation of this year's No Smoking Day point to continuing success for the campaign. The Agency produced a television advertisement to promote the day in Northern Ireland. It featured the campaign slogan 'Ready, steady, stop', the date (March 11) and a free telephone helpline offering advice and support to those wishing to stop.

For evaluation purposes 560 interviews were carried out in Northern Ireland with adults aged 16+.

- 80% of respondents knew that Wednesday 11 March 1998 was No Smoking Day.
- Overall 18% of respondents who smoked and were aware of No Smoking Day tried to stop smoking on that day.
- 64% of all respondents had seen or heard advertising or publicity for No Smoking Day.

- TV advertising (seen by 59% of respondents) was the most frequently quoted source of awareness.

Health Behaviour of School Children

Fieldwork for the Health Behaviour of School Children (HBSC) Study has been completed. It was carried out with over 3,000 school children aged 11, 13 and 15 during February 1998.

HBSC is a World Health Organisation collaborative cross-national study. Its aim is to increase understanding of health-related behaviour and lifestyles of young people.

The study is carried out every four years. Northern Ireland is one of 26 countries taking part in the 1997/98 study. The first study was carried out in Northern Ireland in 1992 and then repeated in 1993/94. A report of the latest study will be available in the Spring of 1999.

Evaluation of Activate

During September 1998 the Agency will be commissioning research to evaluate the Activate Health Programme.

Activate is an initiative which aims to help people in the community promote their own health through learning about health issues, relaxation techniques and how to become more physically active. The main objectives will be to review the structure, training, content and professional views of the programme.

Baseline physical activity research

The Agency has commissioned research to inform the development of a physical activity public information campaign beginning in March 1999.

The aim of the research is to establish a baseline of knowledge and attitudes relating to physical activity among adults aged 16+.

The research objectives are to explore:

- understanding of the link between physical activity and health;
- perceived benefits derived from physical activity;
- barriers to participation;
- motivational factors for participation;
- the source of current messages about physical activity;
- type of activity currently participated in (if any);
- level of participation in such activity;
- type of activity adults might participate in.

Fieldwork will take place during Autumn 1998.

Not to be missed!

The Agency is delighted to be working with Citybeat Radio on a regular health slot for its magazine show being broadcast on Tuesdays from 7 - 9pm.

The show will focus on different health issues and will feature information of both topical and general interest. The broadcasts will begin in September. Citybeat Radio can be found on 96.7FM.

For information on specific areas of the Agency's work contact:

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Publications and resources

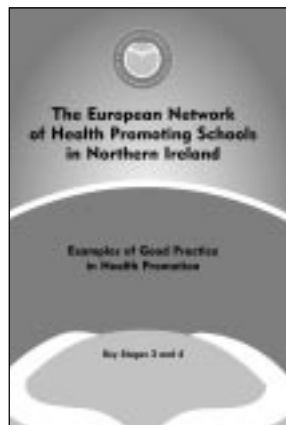
Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland Annual Report
The Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland will launch its Annual Report for 1997-1998 on 29 September.

Promoting Health



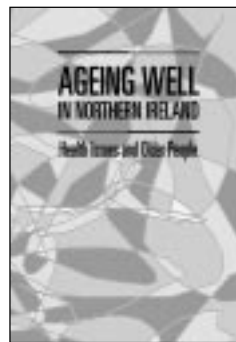
The Agency has published the fourth issue of its journal 'Promoting Health'. This latest issue concentrates on health promotion in schools and was published in September to coincide with the new school year. Articles in the new journal include: European Network of Health Promoting Schools; how education can influence healthy lifestyle choices and sex education in schools.

European Network of Health Promoting Schools



The Agency has published 'The European Network of Health Promoting Schools in Northern Ireland - Examples of Good Practice in Health Promotion'. The publication contains examples from 13 post-primary and three special schools who participated in the European Network of Health Promoting Schools project during 1996/97.

Ageing Well



'Ageing Well in Northern Ireland - Health Issues and Older People' was published in March 1998. This summary report of the Ageing Well initiative was prepared by Margaret Woods, Age Concern Northern Ireland, on behalf of Age

Concern and the Health Promotion Agency. Ageing Well is a health promotion programme for people over 50 years of age.

Community Development and Health Network Annual Report

The Agency continues to work with the Community Development and Health Network as part of its commitment to the principles of targeting health and social need. The Agency has recently worked with the Network on producing its annual report for 1997-1998.



National Heart Forum Report

The Agency is one of the members of the National Heart Forum which is due to release a report entitled 'Social Inequalities in CHD: Possibilities for Action' in October. The report examines the reasons for the social class difference in the disease and sets out strategies and policy options to reduce these inequalities. Available from the Stationery Office. Tel: (0171) 8739090.

Immunisation for 10-18 year olds

This leaflet has been translated by the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre (MCRC) into Chinese, Urdu, Hindi and Arabic. Available from MCRC. Tel: (01232) 244639.

Website: www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk

The Agency's website features a range of information about the Agency and its work. The site will be regularly updated to provide a current source of information for anyone with an interest in health promotion. Any comments you may have or suggestions for additional information you would like to see there, will be very welcome.