

Inform

number two

december/january 1998/1999

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Major review of cardiology services

The Chief Medical Officer Dr Henrietta Campbell is chairing a Regional Review of Adult Cardiology Services.

The aim of the review is to shape the strategic direction of future cardiology services for Northern Ireland.

One important aspect of the review will focus on cardiac rehabilitation programmes and initiatives in Northern Ireland.

Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive of the Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland is chairing the subgroup on cardiac rehabilitation and secondary prevention.

Seasons

Greetings

Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year

Mission

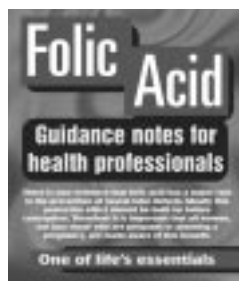
To make health a top priority for everyone in Northern Ireland

Launch of folic acid campaign

A major public information campaign to promote folic acid was launched by UTV personality Lynda Bryans on Tuesday 13 October 1998 attracting widespread news coverage. The campaign, featuring television and cinema advertising as well as printed information, will run until the middle of January 1999.

The campaign encourages women who could become pregnant, and women who are up to 12 weeks pregnant, to take extra folic acid to help prevent neural tube defects such as spina bifida. The television and cinema ads emphasise that folic acid is a vitamin and that it should be taken from before a woman becomes pregnant until the 12th week of pregnancy.

The pretesting of four potential approaches led to the selection of a TV ad that both attracts attention and provides information in a way that is clear and easy to understand.



The support materials include a leaflet, poster and magazine. The leaflet is available in health centres, pharmacies and major supermarkets. The magazine 'It's You!' contains information about folic acid along with general health information.

'It's You!' was designed to reflect the style of popular women's magazines.

The magazine was inserted into three popular Northern Ireland newspapers and distributed through pharmacies, hairdressers, dental surgeries and health centres. More than 1,000 entries have already been received for its featured competition.



Guidance notes for health professionals on folic acid were also produced and sent to GPs, practice nurses, pharmacists, midwives and health visitors. Health professionals are a trusted source of health information for the public and have an important role in highlighting the benefits of folic acid. The guidance notes were developed at the request of these health professionals.

The campaign will be evaluated in February 1999 and a report on the findings will be produced.

Public information on physical activity

The Agency is currently working on the development of a public information campaign to promote physical activity. This is scheduled to begin in March 1999.

Initially the campaign will focus on raising awareness of the health benefits of physical activity and will then encourage participation in specific activities such as walking and cycling.

BBC drug education programmes

The Agency has been working with BBC Education Northern Ireland to develop three television programmes about drugs. The Agency acted as consultant to the programmes and made a significant written contribution to the accompanying resource pack.

The programmes, developed for the BBC's 'Learning to be You' series, cover issues such as the risks of recreational drug use, heroin dependency and the impact drug taking can have on a family.

Transmitted as part of school broadcasts in October and November 1998, they are designed for pupils in Key Stage 4 (Years 11 and 12). The BBC intends to publish the resource pack in the New Year containing the three programmes, detailed lesson plans and extensive teacher notes.

Community development approach to promoting health

The Agency recently commissioned research into the training needs of professionals within the Trusts with reference to community development as an approach to promoting health.

The aim of the research is to help establish the best way to support educational needs through the development of suitable resources in the future. The Agency will be publishing a summary report of the research findings in the New Year.

Training and professional development

The Agency's short course training and professional development programme for 1998/99 is well underway. A new six day course on 'Training the Trainers in Stress Management' begins on 7 December and continues into January.

January marks the closing date for applications for the following courses: Social Aspects of Health; Research in Health Promotion; Returning to Study; Promoting Men's Health and Health Promotion Update.

For further information about any of the training courses visit the Agency's Website or contact Claire Hind on (01232) 311611.

Public information campaigns

Healthy Eating Circle

The future of the Healthy Eating Circle has been under further discussion by representatives from each of the partner organisations involved in the scheme.

Proposals have been made for three separate schemes to be developed to take forward the work in commercial outlets, which would include hotels, restaurants, coffee shops and pubs; workplace dining rooms and school dining rooms.

The Healthy Eating Circle is an award scheme for caterers to encourage and reward

healthy catering practice. The award was launched in November 1989 and membership of the scheme has grown to almost 800 catering outlets.

The membership is made up of a range of types of catering establishment, from hotels and restaurants to coffee shops, pubs, guest houses, workplace restaurants and school dining rooms.

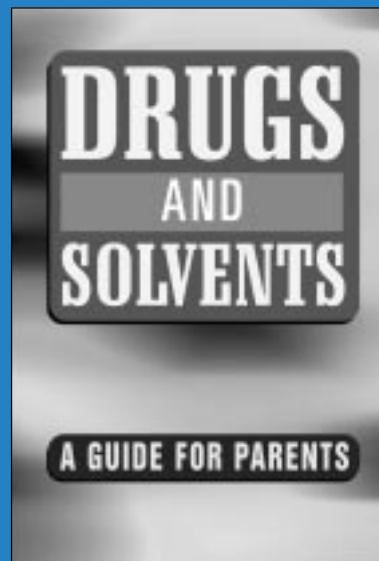
The Healthy Eating Circle is a partnership initiative between Environmental Health, the Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts and the Health Promotion Agency.

Northern Ireland Drugs Campaign

The Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland's Chairman, Douglas Smyth, welcomed Health and Social Services Minister John McFall MP, to a preview of Phase 3 of the public information component of the Northern Ireland Drugs Campaign at the beginning of November in the Agency.

Phase 3 was launched on Monday 16 November, to coincide with European Drug Prevention Week, from Sprucefield Shopping Centre, Lisburn. As reported in the last edition of *Inform*, Phase 3 will initially focus on the role parents can play in drug education and in January 1999 the focus will once again move to giving young people the facts about drugs.

Resources produced to support Phase 3



of the campaign are now available. The Agency has published 'Drugs and Solvents - A Guide for Parents'. The new booklet contains the latest information on where parents can get help and advice if they feel their child is involved with drugs. It replaces the popular 'Drugs - What Every Parent Should Know' and 'Drugs and Solvents - You and Your Child'. Copies of the booklets produced for young people in support of

Phases 1 and 2 have also been reprinted.

The evaluation of the third Phase of the public information campaign will begin in February and results will be available in May 1999.

Policy development and advice

Framework for workplace health

A draft framework for workplace health promotion is now being prepared following a two day workshop in September. The framework is being developed by the Health Promotion Agency and the Health and Safety Agency and should be available for consultation from December to February.

Employer organisations have been invited to a meeting in November and a workshop for trade unions is planned for February 1999. Enquiries from interested parties who would like to be briefed on the framework or to discuss the proposals in greater detail are welcome. Please contact Frank Kelly at the Health Promotion Agency.

Strategy implementation

The next meeting of the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy Implementation Group, chaired by Dr Paula Kilbane, will consider the involvement of district councils and the voluntary/community sector. The Group is also preparing an Annual Report for submission to the Minister in March.

A project officer is being appointed to support the development of the public information campaign and to assist the Health and Social Services Boards prepare for the appointment of physical activity facilitators from April 1999. The project officer will help put in place structures to support each facilitator and will begin the process of developing local networks and action plans.

Research, information and analysis

'Call it Quits'

Results from the evaluation of the Agency's 'Call it Quits' teenage anti-smoking campaign confirm the success of the campaign. The campaign featured three television advertisements which were broadcast from 25 February to 28 March 1998.

For evaluation purposes 628 questionnaires were completed by the campaign target group of 11-14 year olds.

When the respondents were shown the three 'Call it Quits' advertisements:

- 83% recalled seeing the 'He's dumped me' advertisement (awareness was higher among smokers and girls);
- 90% recalled seeing the 'Footballer' advertisement;
- 92% recalled seeing the 'Even if it kills me' advertisement;
- 58% said the 'He's dumped me' advertisement would change the way they thought about smoking (49% smokers and 62% non-smokers);
- 41% said the 'Footballer' advertisement would change the way they thought about smoking (32% smokers and 44% non-smokers);
- 50% said the 'Even if it kills me' advertisement would change the way they thought about smoking, with no significant difference in smokers' and non-smokers' views.

Healthy Living Centres

The Agency is working with the New Opportunities Fund to organise a roadshow on 30 November 1998 to consult on arrangements for the New Opportunities Fund's Healthy Living Centres initiative. The roadshow will explain the criteria for becoming a Healthy Living Centre and outline the mechanism for applying for funding under this initiative.

The New Opportunities Fund will be allocating around £13m for projects in Northern Ireland to help people of all ages maximise their health and wellbeing.

Mental Health

The Agency has been asked by the Department of Health and Social Services to take the lead in producing a strategy for mental health promotion accompanied by a framework for action.

A working group, representative of a wide range of interests in the area of mental health promotion, met for the first time in October. A departmental

'Eat Well to Keep Well' evaluation

Results from the evaluation of the 1998 Healthy Eating Campaign 'Eat Well to Keep Well' with the general public have been extremely positive. The campaign ran throughout June and focused on the protection fruit, vegetables and fibre can offer against cancer.

For the evaluation, 602 personal interviews were conducted with respondents aged over 16 throughout Northern Ireland.

A summary of the results showed that:

- more than seven in ten respondents (71%) had heard of 'healthy eating' advertising or publicity;
- when 'Eat Well to Keep Well' was specified over half (52%) said they had seen or heard of this;
- 81% of respondents had seen or heard of any advertising or publicity relating to fruit and vegetables (mainly from television);
- 69% of these said this advertising or publicity had increased their awareness that fruit, vegetables and fibre could help prevent cancer;
- when respondents were shown each of the elements of the Healthy Eating Campaign, 76% of respondents recognised at least one element;
- the majority (81%) of all respondents considered the cancer issue to be appropriate;
- there was a positive attitude to fruit and vegetables, eg 69% of all respondents agreed that eating more vegetables would help reduce the risk of getting cancer.

steering group will support the Agency and the working group throughout the project.

It is envisaged that the strategy and action plan will be completed by Spring 1999.

New Forum

An Inter-sectoral Forum has been set up by the Youth Council for Northern Ireland. The aim of the Forum is to address the issues which most affect children and young people.

The establishment of the Forum was one of the key recommendations from the successful Generation 2000 conference, organised by the Youth Council in 1997. The major issues affecting children and young people were also identified at the conference.

A number of 'cluster' groups have been formed to address these issues. One of the key areas is health and the Agency has been invited to lead this 'cluster' group. A number of meetings have been held to explore approaches that could be taken on an inter-sectoral level and a proposal is under development to take this forward.



Research Forum

The Research Advisory Group for physical activity has organised a Research Forum for 28 January 1999 at the University of Ulster, Jordanstown. The forum will be open to all those interested in research related to physical activity and health.

Speakers, Professor George Davey-Smith, Professor Stuart Biddle and Dr Nanette Mutrie will look at: how physical activity can help tackle inequalities in health; strategies to increase physical activity among disadvantaged members of the population and what helps or hinders people to become more physically active. Professor Colin Boreham and Frank Kelly will present local research.

The Group will also use the forum to develop a research agenda on physical activity for Northern Ireland and to create a database of research relating to physical activity and health in Northern Ireland.

For further details about the forum contact Patricia McCune at the Agency.

Email: p.mccune@hpani.org.uk

Research conference

A major conference 'Researching for Health: Challenges and Controversies' is being held at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh on 20-22 September 1999.

Organised by the Research Unit in Health and Behavioural Change at The University of Edinburgh, the conference aims to bring together researchers from a wide range of disciplines to discuss issues of central concern to the study of health and society.

Parallel sessions, workshops, round tables, plenary panels and poster sessions will explore different perspectives on health and its related behaviours and contexts.

Further information can be obtained from: Professor Stephen Platt, Research Unit in Health and Behavioural Change, Department of Public Health Sciences, The University of Edinburgh Medical School, Teviot Place, Edinburgh EH8 9AG. Tel: (0131) 650 6192.

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Immunisation resources

The Agency has produced information for the general public and primary care professionals as part of a strategy to rebuild confidence in the MMR vaccine. The MMR vaccine is given to children at 12-15 months and a booster at four to five years.

The posters and leaflets for the public reinforce the importance of the vaccine and give clear, scientifically based advice about the MMR vaccine.

The Agency has also produced a set of factsheets for health professionals about the MMR vaccine, the polio vaccine and the BCG vaccine. These will provide health professionals with information to help them deal with the concerns of parents.

The resources have been produced on behalf of the DHSS and the four Health and Social Services Boards using information that was prepared by the Health Education Authority and the Department of Health.

They are available from the Consultants in Communicable Disease

Promoting Health



The Agency has published the fifth issue of its quarterly journal 'Promoting Health'.

Focusing on health promotion issues related to

nutrition, articles include the evolution of our diet this century; teenage girls - calories and communication; catering in schools; vegetarianism; nutrition and oral health; and the impact of low income on diet. If you would like to be placed on the database to receive 'Promoting Health' on a regular basis please contact Ann Marie McCann at the Agency.

Control in each local Health and Social Services Board.

Due to a typographical error in the 'MMR - The Facts' leaflet the date referred to on the back page should read March 1998 and not 1988. We would be grateful if this could be brought to the attention of those distributing the leaflet.



New weaning resource

A new resource for Northern Ireland on weaning is currently in production. Comments and a draft text have been received from a range of health professionals involved with nutrition in infancy.

The resource will be pretested with the general public prior to publication which will be in early 1999.

Annual Report

The Agency launched its Annual Report for 1997-98 on 29 September. Copies can be obtained by contacting Ann Marie McCann at the Agency.



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 on the site, will be very welcome.