

Inform

Issue 23

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Breastfeeding conference

On 8 May a major regional conference on breastfeeding took place in the Culloden Hotel, Holywood. The conference was organised by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) in association with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's Breastfeeding Strategy Implementation Group.

The event was attended by 207 delegates and among these were health visitors, community and hospital midwives, parentcraft coordinators, education professionals, paediatric dietitians and health promotion coordinators.

During the conference delegates heard about the importance of breastfeeding to maternal and infant health, the ongoing implementation of the Breastfeeding Strategy and the role of the Regional Breastfeeding Coordinator, Janet Calvert who was recently appointed to the HPA.

The keynote speaker was Gill Rapley, Assistant Programme Director, UNICEF, UK who spoke about informed choice for mothers and implementing best practice. Maureen Fallon, National Breastfeeding Coordinator for the Republic of Ireland, referred to the importance of evidence-based practice and the development of an all-island approach to the promotion of breastfeeding. The promotion of UNICEF's Baby Friendly Initiative in hospital and community settings was also discussed.

Preliminary findings from the 2000 Infant Feeding Survey conducted and published by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), show an encouraging upward trend in relation to the number of mothers breastfeeding. However more needs to be done to increase these numbers and particularly to encourage more mothers in low-income groups to breastfeed.



Pictured during the Breastfeeding Conference at the Culloden Hotel, Holywood, are (left to right): Dr Miriam McCarthy, Chair of the Breastfeeding Strategy Implementation Group, DHSSPS; Janet Calvert, Regional Breastfeeding Coordinator, HPA; Bairbre de Brún, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety; Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive of the HPA and Maureen Fallon, National Breastfeeding Coordinator, Department of Health and Children, Dublin.

MISSION: To make health a top priority for everyone in Northern Ireland

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**Health
Promotion
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Promoting Health

The June issue of *Promoting Health* takes a look at *Investing for Health* - the new strategy for health improvement.

Following an introduction from the First and Deputy First Ministers, the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Bairbre de Brún explains how *Investing for Health* came into being. In her address she outlines the challenges ahead and her hopes that all those who can impact on the wider determinants of health, will come together to help make better health a reality for everyone here.

The articles in this issue present the views of a wide variety of professionals on how the new public health agenda should be implemented. Dr Bill McConnell suggests that real engagement can help us prevent disease as opposed to just dealing with the end results. Dr Carolyn Mason considers the future for nurses in delivering the public health agenda.

William Francey, Director of Health and Environmental Services for Belfast City Council explains why he agrees health improvement is too important to leave to the health service while Ken Forbes outlines strategic links with local

councils. Alan Burke proposes that Environmental Health Officers should be enabled to use fully their broad health credentials to promote health.

Stephen Peover looks at how the education sector can contribute to health development. Frances Cuning and Carol Tannahill outline some of the recent changes that have taken place to the structure of public health and health promotion in England and Scotland. Mary O'Neill considers the future for health promotion services in the new policy climate. Seamus McAleavey and Eleanor Gill emphasise the role of the community and voluntary sector in helping reduce health inequalities. And finally Viv Speller from the Health Development Agency discusses work underway in England to develop the skills of the wide range of people who contribute to health improvement.

Promoting Health is available on subscription to health professionals, as a PDF from the Agency's website and from all public libraries. The Agency is currently reviewing subscriptions to the journal so if you no longer wish to receive *Promoting Health*, please let us know by contacting Ann Marie McCann. E-mail: a.mccann@hpani.org.uk



New appointment

Arthur McVeigh has been appointed to the Health Promotion Agency as a Graphic Designer/Production Artist. Arthur is a graduate from the University of Ulster, York Street, Belfast where he obtained a BA Hons in Design.

In his new role he will be part of a small team involved in supporting and developing the Agency's corporate

identity across a range of printed materials as well as being involved in the development and maintenance of the Agency's websites.

Arthur has formerly worked for Creative Media in Omagh and more recently for Lairdesign in Belfast.

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Go Walking - physical activity public information campaign

With the arrival of the longer evenings and fairer weather the Agency will be launching the 'Go Walking' physical activity campaign in June.

The campaign will include a re-run of a television advertising campaign promoting walking, which was broadcast in June and August last year. The television advertisement with the catchy soundtrack will go on air from 17 to 30 June and again from 9 to 22 September on UTV.

Support materials including posters and leaflets promoting walking will be printed and a supply will be sent to the Physical Activity Coordinator in each Health and Social Services Board area. The Agency will also distribute these materials directly to GP surgeries, pharmacies and local councils.

The sustained public information campaign is one of the main elements in the implementation of the *Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy*. The campaign employs a variety of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible are aware of the health benefits of regular, moderate physical activity and to encourage them to participate in physical activity.

Get Active in the Community Awards scheme

During April 2002 the Agency launched the fourth annual 'Get Active in the Community Awards' scheme. Over 5,000 application forms were distributed to voluntary and community groups as well as to every school in Northern Ireland.

The 'Get Active in the Community Awards' scheme is one of a number of approaches used to support the *Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy* and public information campaign. The scheme was developed by the Health Promotion Agency in collaboration with Disability Action and the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action and is funded by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

To date the Agency has received over 700 applications for this year's scheme. These will be processed over the next few weeks and further details of the successful projects will be announced in a later issue of **Inform**.

New sexual health poster campaign

A new series of sexual health posters targeting 18 to 30 year olds will be launched on 13 June at the Health Promotion Agency and will soon be displayed in pubs and nightclubs across Northern Ireland. These venues were selected as the most appropriate place to display the posters because of the large number of 18 to 30 year olds who regularly attend them.

Thirteen different poster designs have been developed for this new series, which address a wide range of sexual health issues such as condom use, safer sex, contraception and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). While two of the posters deal with the issue of STIs in general, a further three posters have been developed to provide information and raise awareness about specific infections, namely chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis.

Chlamydia and gonorrhoea are highlighted in the new posters, as these are two of the most commonly diagnosed sexually transmitted infections in Northern Ireland. While the number of people infected with syphilis in Northern Ireland is relatively low, there has been a recent increase in the number of people diagnosed with it.

In addition to the 13 posters, two leaflets have been produced and these will be distributed via plastic units attached to the posters. The first leaflet provides information about safer sex and contraception and the second leaflet provides information about syphilis.

An evaluation of the Agency's previous sexual health poster campaign has been carried out. Further information about the findings will be published in the next issue of **Inform**.



Safe routes to school

The HPA, together with a number of other public sector organisations, has been working with the Department for Regional Development's Transportation Unit on a Safe Routes to Schools project.

The development of Safe Routes to Schools, or a School Travel Plan, involves a multi-disciplinary approach, which aims to improve safety and remove barriers to walking, cycling and using public transport to and from school.

The aim of this scheme is to bring health benefits to children

who opt to walk or cycle to school, as well as environmental benefits to Northern Ireland, by reducing congestion, pollution and supporting safer travel to school.

Results from the nine schools who participated in a pilot scheme for Northern Ireland were recently disseminated during a seminar, which took place in the Eco Centre, Ballymena and will be featured in the next issue of **Inform**.

To find out more about Safe Routes to School, visit: www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk

NIPAIG Prize winner

In the December/January 2002 issue of **Inform**, we announced a prize draw for a bicycle and cycle helmet, sponsored by the Department for Regional Development in partnership with the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy Implementation Group.

From the many correct entries received one lucky prizewinner was recently drawn. Our congratulations go to Nadine Grant from Omagh, who will receive a voucher worth £200 to spend at her local cycle shop.

Results of **Inform** readership survey

Many thanks to all our readers who replied to the recent readership survey for **Inform**. We received 107 completed surveys and are grateful for your responses and helpful comments.

Responses came from a wide variety of readers including health promotion officers, managers, health visitors, community dietitians, teachers, development officers, medical consultants, specialist nurses, health promotion commissioners, drugs education workers, social workers, a journalist and an MLA. A brief summary of the results is outlined below.

Format of Inform - The vast majority of respondents said they valued receiving **Inform** and want to continue to receive it. The majority reported liking the format and timing of the newsletter as well as the layout and presentation, with 90% of respondents finding it easy to read.

Content - Almost 60% of respondents read more than three quarters of the content with 81.6% reading more than half of it. Almost 60% reported keeping **Inform** for future reference while 15.9% 'note the relevant facts and pass it on'. Encouragingly 61.7% said that more than one person reads their copy.

Almost 73% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the amount of detail provided about the Agency's work however 16.8% had no strong views on this. Almost 60% reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the notice given for events, publications or campaigns. Just over 20% had no strong views and 5.6% were dissatisfied with the amount of notice given.

Improves understanding - The majority of respondents (73%) were satisfied or very satisfied that **Inform** improves their understanding of the Agency's work, although almost 20% had no strong views and four respondents were dissatisfied. The majority of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied that **Inform** improves their understanding of

the Agency's role, is helpful to them in their job and is relevant to their work.

Most liked aspects of Inform - The aspects of **Inform** that respondents liked best were: up-to-date information (34%); easy to read (22%); varied articles (17%); information on campaigns (14%); length (13%); layout (13%); relevant information (9%); timetable for training (8%); concise (7%); information on new resources (6%); contact details (5%) and bright colour (4%).

Least liked aspects - Only 22% of respondents answered on the aspects of **Inform** that they liked least, so actual numbers for each aspect were very small. However they asked for more information on specific topics such as dental information (n=2) and mental health (n=1), what others are doing in the field (n=3), and what can be done in schools (n=1).

Additional comments - Seventeen respondents made additional comments. Of those, five respondents said **Inform** was useful, several added suggestions for other topics to be included, two people reported that they were happy with **Inform** and two made comments about its distribution.

Use of electronic media - Seventy per cent of respondents did not answer the question about downloading **Inform** from the Internet, suggesting they may not have attempted this. Of those who answered this question 13% were satisfied or very satisfied with the time taken to download **Inform** and 7% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with this.

Conclusion - In general most comments were positive about **Inform**. The majority of respondents read most of **Inform** and then circulated it to their colleagues. They were largely satisfied with its content and layout. Where respondents have expressed dissatisfaction with any aspect of **Inform**, we will be working to address these issues where possible.

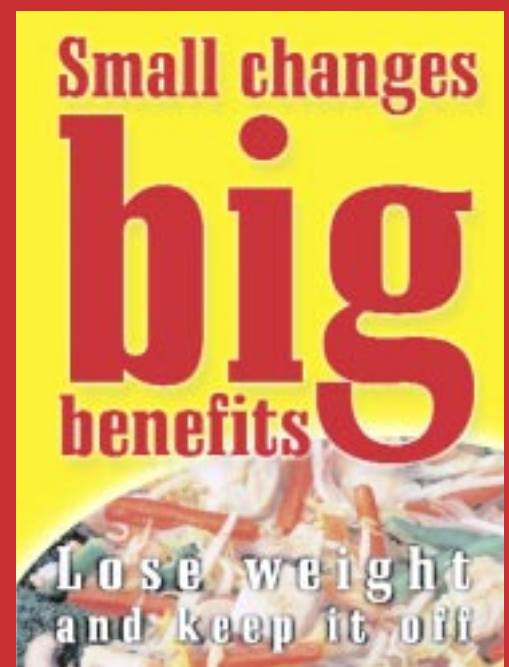
June focus on weight management

During June the Health Promotion Agency will be supporting a UK-wide 'Weight Wise' campaign. The campaign aims to highlight the health risks of being overweight and to encourage adults to take steps to reduce and control their weight, through dietary changes and increased physical activity.

The Agency has produced a new leaflet called *Small changes, big benefits*, to support the campaign. This provides a step-by-step guide to weight loss focusing on *The Balance of Good Health* and ways of increasing physical activity. It also includes a chart to help members of the public assess whether or not they are overweight, and by how much. A3-size posters are also being produced to promote the initiative.

The leaflet will be made available to the public through pharmacies and the waiting areas in doctors' and dentists' surgeries. Professionals wishing to organise local activities to support this initiative can obtain copies of the leaflet and promotional posters free of charge from the Central Health Promotion Resource Services in their local HSS Board area from 31 May. The leaflet is also suitable for use by Dietitians, GPs, Practice Nurses and other members of the primary care team when providing weight loss advice to individuals.

The initiative will be launched at a press facility in the Agency on 6 June and will be promoted through media activities during the four-week period.



Association of Health Service Managers Awards

The Association of Health Service Managers (AHSM) Awards was held on 15 March at the University of Ulster, Jordanstown.

Since 1997 the HPA has held stewardship of this award fund, which was kindly donated by the former Association of Senior Managers to fund health promotion with a specific emphasis on education.

Each year the award is offered to the student who achieves the highest scoring assignment from the Health Promotion Planning and Management module, which forms part of the University of Ulster's Postgraduate Diploma/MSc in Health Promotion. This course was selected by the AHSM and the Agency as an appropriate channel for the funds as it combined elements of management and health promotion and during its development, received a sizeable input from the Agency.

This year the award was presented to two students, Anne Moore and Fiona McMullan.

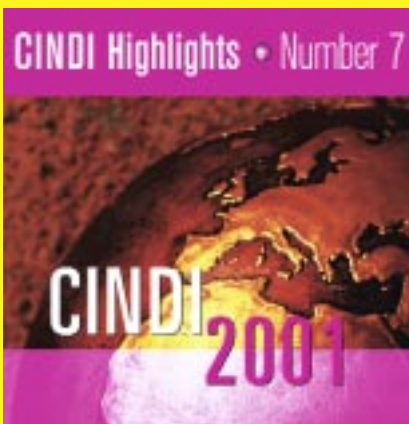


Pictured above are (left to right): Michael Gorman, Course Director, MSc Health Promotion, University of Ulster, Jordanstown (UUJ); Karen Casson, Lecturer in Health Promotion, UUJ; Anne Moore, student, UUJ; Fiona McMullan, student, UUJ and Paul Fleming, Coordinator of Public Health, UUJ.

CINDI Highlights

Highlights of the work carried out in 2001 by the 27 countries from the Countrywide, Integrated, Noncommunicable Diseases Intervention (CINDI) Programme, a World Health Organization (WHO) initiative, have just been published by the Agency.

The CINDI Programme aims to establish cooperative projects to help prevent and control noncommunicable diseases and to promote healthier lifestyles. Its priorities include reducing smoking, poor nutrition, alcohol abuse, physical inactivity and psycho-social stress. It also works to share best practice and promote the exchange of information through the development of international networks.



Managed by the Chronic Disease Prevention Unit in the WHO Regional Office for Europe, the Council of CINDI Programme Directors and the CINDI Programme Management Committee, the HPA coordinates CINDI activities in Northern Ireland as a 'demonstration area' for the United Kingdom.

The annual publication of *CINDI Highlights* is one of the ways the HPA fulfils its remit as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Training and Research in Communications and Information Technology in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention.

CINDI Highlights is distributed to members of the CINDI network including many countries from the former Soviet Union. As well as publicising the work of members, it shows how this work fits in with the wider movement for health improvement and is used to lobby for further funding from Governments or Ministries for Health.

European health promotion conference

The fifth European conference of the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE), will take place from 11-13 June in London.

The title of this year's conference is 'New Dimensions in Promoting Health: Linking health promoting programmes with public policies'.

Hosted by the Health Development Agency, the focus of the conference will be to work on key policy areas that determine health and to consider how such policies can be enhanced to achieve the greatest health benefits at the lowest possible cost.

In particular, the conference will explore how public policies across the areas of environment, education and employment

can be enhanced to improve the population's health and will build upon the four previous IUHPE conferences held in Rotterdam, Athens, Turin and Helsinki/Tallin.

During the conference delegates will hear keynote addresses from a range of speakers from employment, education and environment and will be encouraged to engage with participants from other sectors outside of health. This will be followed by case studies and facilitated group sessions to enhance the study of each sector area in detail.

The event is open to everyone involved in health promotion and public health development with particular emphasis on the environment, education and employment sectors. For further details of this event including registration fees visit www.newdimensions2002.co.uk

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No Smoking Day 2002 evaluation

This year's No Smoking Day (NSD) took place on 13 March under the slogan 'a day to remember'. As in previous years the Agency commissioned research to evaluate the campaign in Northern Ireland.

The questions asked during the survey were the same as those used to evaluate the campaign in Great Britain and were included in a Northern Ireland omnibus survey. A total of 1,158 interviews were carried out with a representative sample of the adult population with the aim to track awareness and claimed participation in the day.

The evaluation revealed that more than two thirds of those interviewed (65%) were aware that Wednesday 13 March 2002 was No Smoking Day. While this level of awareness is very good, it is lower than last year when the level of awareness was extremely high at 86%. A possible reason for this decrease in awareness may be that there was no television advertising to promote this

year's campaign. Previous campaigns have included a television advertising campaign, which is broadcast during the week leading up to NSD.

Once again awareness levels in Northern Ireland remained higher than those recorded for Great Britain (55%). When looking at participation, this year's evaluation showed that one third of smokers (33%) who were aware of NSD participated in the day by quitting for a time, cutting down, accessing information or by taking part in an event or competition. Again this figure represents a decrease on last year's results, when 40% of smokers aware of NSD claimed to have participated.

The proportion of smokers aware of NSD who made a quit attempt was 13%, which was slightly higher than the 9% reported for Great Britain. Further details on this year's campaign can be found in the *No Smoking Day 2002 Evaluation Report*, which is now available from the Agency's website at: www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk

Immunisation materials

The new range of materials on childhood immunisation were launched by Bairbre de Brún, the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, on 17 April 2002 at the Stewartstown Road Health

Centre, Belfast. These were designed to complement the MMR materials that were produced in 2001. All previous immunisation leaflets other than MMR should now be discarded.



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Web are we now?

Following the launch of the immunisation materials by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on 17 April, PDFs of the three public information leaflets are now available from the Agency's website. Translations of these are also online in Arabic, Cantonese, Hindi, Irish and Urdu.

The website for the All-island Physical Activity Conference in November is now live. At present the site www.getalifegetactive.com contains brief information about the conference, details of administration staff and an invitation for professionals to submit abstracts on examples of evidence-based clinical or community-based interventions that promote and support physical activity participation. Those which particularly focus on sustainable transport and communities, obesity, mental health, workplace health, targeting social need, primary care, disability, young people and older people are most welcome. Application forms and the conference programme should be available from the website later this month.

The Agency's teen site Up2You.net has just been updated. The site's online competition to win a Playstation2 received over 700 correct entries and the lucky prizewinner will be announced on the site later this month.