

# Inform

Issue 24

August/September 2002

## Chair-based exercise pilot

**Physical activity trainers from the four Health and Social Services Boards recently participated in a new pilot initiative which was held at the Templeton Hotel, Templepatrick.**

During the course the participants were trained how to deliver a four-day leadership training course on chair-based exercises to health and care professionals such as physiotherapy assistants, occupational therapists, healthcare assistants and health visitors. The course, which covers 17 specific exercises, is designed to improve mobility, strength, flexibility and coordination and also includes assisted walking and games activities. As part of a series, it aims to promote independence and reduce the incidence of falls and injuries among older people.

Originally commissioned by the Department of Health, England, the courses were developed by Leicester College with support from a National Advisory Group.

This is the first nationally recognised and validated form of training in leading chair-based exercise sessions and an assessment of this pilot is now underway to examine whether it should be implemented throughout Northern Ireland. The evaluation will also determine the feasibility of using it to support local strategies for falls prevention and physical

activity and its potential to promote safe, effective and enjoyable physical activity among older people. The pilot has been funded by the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy Implementation Group (NIPAIG) and is being coordinated by the Health Promotion Agency.



**Pictured with trainer Mary Morris (left) are the physical activity trainers from the four Health and Social Services Boards, as they demonstrate one of the chair-based exercises they learned during their training course.**

## Annual report

The launch of the Agency's eleventh Annual Report will take place on Tuesday 24 September. The report provides a review of our work and details the progress we have made in achieving our objectives during the 2001-2002 financial year.

This includes a look at the priority health issues and initiatives we have worked on, the many partnerships and

alliances which have helped us accomplish our work and a summary of our financial statements for the year.

The report will be available from the Agency's website following the launch and we hope you will take some time to look at it and, if possible, send us your views and comments using the form provided.

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

**INSIDE:** Cancer conference  
Flu campaign  
Sexual health campaign evaluation  
Volatile substance abuse

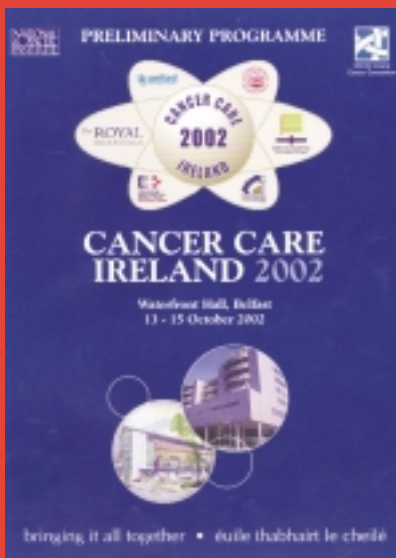


**Health  
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## Cancer conference

A major conference, 'Cancer Care Ireland 2002', will take place from 13 to 15 October at the Waterfront Hall, Belfast, under the theme 'Bringing it all together'. The Royal Victoria Hospital and Belfast City Hospital, who together make up the Northern Ireland Regional Cancer Centre, are jointly hosting the event.

A panel of international and local speakers including hospital doctors, primary care physicians, nurses and members of



the public are expected to take part in discussions based on shaping future cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment. It is anticipated that the event will attract approximately 300 delegates including many visitors from Britain and America.

Among the range of issues in the spotlight will be the increasing emphasis on the role of screening and awareness raising in

preventing and treating diseases such as lung cancer, which in recent years has overtaken the incidence of breast cancer among women in Northern Ireland. Other issues to be discussed at the conference will include cancer projects across Ireland and the key role of nurses in cancer services. The conference will open with a tour of the new facilities at the Royal Victoria Hospital.

Attendance fees for the event are as follows:

- **Full conference** (2 day rate) £280.00  
Late registration (after 31/08/02) £300.00
- **Monday 14 October** (1 day rate) £160.00  
Late registration (after 31/08/02) £180.00
- **Tuesday 15 October** (1 day rate) £160.00  
Late registration (after 31/08/02) £180.00

Fees include morning and afternoon refreshments, lunch, a reception at Stormont on 13 October and the conference dinner at Belfast City Hall on 14 October. PGEA approval is being sought and CME certificates will be available.

For further information on this event, or to request a preliminary programme, please contact Gail Henry, The Beeches Management Centre, Belfast. Tel: 028 9064 4811. E-mail: cancerconference2002@beeches.bmc.n-i.nhs.uk

## Promoting Health

The September issue of *Promoting Health*, will look at issues relating to children's health. There are articles on health inequalities among children in Northern Ireland, oral health, the Government's planned 'Free Fruit for Schools' scheme and parenting initiatives. Changes in the profile of child ill health, accident prevention, breastfeeding and the changing role of the health visitor will also feature in this issue.

We are currently working to reduce the postage costs associated with distributing *Promoting Health* as we now publish the complete journal on our website. If you normally receive the journal by post we would be grateful if you would complete the form at the back of the September issue to confirm whether you would prefer an e-mail alert for each issue as opposed to a printed copy. We will continue to print a reduced number of copies of the journal for our readers who do not have access to the Internet.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you are not on

## Safe routes to school

As reported in the previous issue of **Inform**, results from the the Safe routes to school pilot scheme were disseminated at a stakeholders seminar on 22 May 2002.

Following its evaluation, it has emerged that the Department for Regional Development's Roads Service division and the Department for Education (DE) will have a pivotal partnership role in ensuring delivery of the appropriate infrastructure improvements for this scheme. At present each Department is developing estimated costs in relation to their work responsibilities at each of the nine

the mailing list for *Promoting Health*, then why not take a look at the next issue at [www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk)

### Cancer journal

The December issue of *Promoting Health* will focus on cancer prevention in Northern Ireland. The journal will feature articles on the primary prevention of cancer through nutrition, physical activity and care in the sun as well as secondary prevention in the form of screening programmes. It will also touch on advances in cancer treatment and look at the regional cancer policy.

Other articles planned for this issue will include a review of the major cancer symposium planned for the Cancer Conference above, an introduction to the plans for the new cancer centre for Northern Ireland and an explanation of the work of some of the voluntary organisations working in this field.

To receive an e-mail alert for this issue of *Promoting Health* please contact Nina Campbell at [n.campbell@hpani.org.uk](mailto:n.campbell@hpani.org.uk)

schools who participated, with the intention of implementing Travel Plans at each one.

To help facilitate the process, schools are being invited to identify a school representative such as a teacher, parent or governor to liaise with the School Travel Plan Coordinator, appointed by the DRD and DE, to drive forward the preparation and implementation of these Travel Plans. The HPA will continue to work closely with DRD to ensure the project fits strategically with the Health Promoting Schools initiative and the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy.

# Sexual health campaign evaluation

During December 2000 the Agency launched a sexual health campaign using posters placed in the toilet or washroom areas of selected pubs and nightclubs across Northern Ireland. The campaign called 'Never underestimate peace of mind', aimed to provide young people aged 18 to 30, with information relating to sexual health.

We recently commissioned research to evaluate this campaign and our public information campaign on drugs. Both campaigns used this form of advertising and targeted the same age group. While both campaigns evaluated positively, the following information relates mainly to the findings from the sexual health campaign.

During the survey a total of 630 young people from 38 pubs and nightclubs in Northern Ireland were interviewed. Of these, 238 took part in the sexual health survey while 392 participated in the drug survey. The majority of the respondents (70%) stated that they had visited the venue within the last six months.

When respondents were asked if they had noticed any recent advertising or public information relating to sexual health, 61 per cent said yes. When asked where they had seen the advertising, the majority (82%) stated posters in toilets without any prompting. A large proportion (51%) also stated they had seen the advertising in a pub or nightclub.

Those aware of the campaign were then asked what they could remember about it. Responses to this question included 'safer sex' (40%), 'STDs/STIs' (22%) and 'chlamydia' (2%). When all respondents interviewed about the sexual health campaign were shown the campaign posters, more than two thirds (67%) stated that they were aware of them.

The respondents who participated in this survey were very positive when asked to give their opinion on the sexual health poster campaign. The majority agreed that 'the posters act as a reminder of the risks associated with having unprotected sex' (64%) and that 'the posters are a good way of giving us sexual health information' (54%). Moreover (70%) thought that 'locating posters inside toilets in pubs and clubs was a good idea'.

As well as providing a reminder of the risks of unprotected sex, respondents also stated that they had learned the following:

- some STDs/STIs do not have any symptoms (n=8);

- the risk of catching STDs/STIs is increasing (n=4);
- information about local GUM clinics (n=4);
- they need to be more careful (n=2);
- always to have safe sex (n=2);
- how easily STDs are passed (n=2);
- about chlamydia (n=2).

A large proportion (64%) also stated they would now be more likely to use a condom.

Findings from the evaluation of the Agency's drugs campaign will be available in the next issue of **Inform**.



## Design for Living conference

Following a positive evaluation of the first Design for Living conference, which took place in April 2001, the Design for Living partnership have announced plans to hold another conference early next year.

The partnership, which involves the Health Promotion Agency, Action Mental Health and the Youth Council for Northern Ireland, was formed to raise awareness of young people's mental and emotional wellbeing.

The next conference is expected to take place on

29 January 2003 at the Glenavna House Hotel, Newtownabbey and will be aimed at practitioners who work with or for young people. It will focus on the importance of good relationships and communication skills and how these issues impact upon the mental health of young people.

Two resources will be launched at the conference - one for young people and a practitioner's guide that will provide advice and information on issues and concerns that affect young people. Further information about this event will be available in a future issue of **Inform**.

# Volatile substance abuse

Volatile substance abuse (VSA) is a particularly serious and life-threatening form of drug taking. Figures from research conducted during the 1990s show that as many as one fifth of all teenagers have experimented with this form of drugs.

While a great deal of information is available about how to deal with the misuse of illegal drugs, until now there has been comparatively little information about volatile substances. To address this issue, the HPA has produced a resource aimed at all those who work with young people or who are likely to come across VSA in any capacity.

*Volatile substance abuse: a professional's guide*, is based on a resource produced by the Health Education Board for Scotland (HEBS). The resource aims to provide valuable information for professional workers in the statutory and voluntary sectors and to give pointers to the action that they may take in tackling this serious problem. The production of this guide has been informed by research carried out with professionals from Scotland and Northern Ireland as well as parents and young people and has been funded through the regional Drug and Alcohol Strategy. The guide will be launched and distributed in September and will also be available as a PDF from the Agency's website.



# Flu campaign

The Agency has been commissioned by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS), to develop and implement a public information campaign to support this year's flu immunisation programme, which will be launched in October.

The target will be to immunise at least 70% of those aged 65 years and over and 60% of individuals from the 'at risk' group. This includes people with chronic respiratory, heart or renal disease, diabetes and those who are immuno-compromised.

With the strain of flu virus changing every year, it is very important for individuals to receive the latest vaccine and to receive it well in advance of any outbreak in order to give the body time to develop the necessary antibodies to fight off the infection.

The strapline 'catch the vaccine not the flu!' will be retained for the 2002 campaign to ensure continuity with previous years' campaigns, however a number of new concepts have been developed for a television advertising campaign. These are currently being tested with the target groups.

The campaign will also involve radio and poster advertising and printed leaflets and posters, which will be distributed to GP surgeries, health centres and pharmacies. The leaflet will also be available to download from the Agency's website.

The flu vaccination programme is coordinated in each of the Health and Social Services Board areas by Consultants in Communicable Disease Control. It is implemented by GPs and nursing staff at primary care level and supported by community pharmacists, voluntary organisations and other health care staff.

# Contraceptive Education Service

The new public health strategy, *Investing for Health* recognises that sexual health is an important part of physical and mental health and that good personal and sexual relationships can promote health and wellbeing.

The HPA is committed to working towards improving the sexual health of people in Northern Ireland and works in collaboration with fpaNI (Family Planning Association) to make information accessible and available through the Contraceptive Education Service. This service is part funded by the HPA and provides:

- a telephone helpline and postal information service for professionals and the general public on a range of sexual health issues including pregnancy planning and prevention, contraceptive usage and details of family planning and sexual health services;
- a range of free leaflets covering all methods of contraception;

- publications for professionals including a quarterly newsletter containing UK-wide information on contraception and six Northern Ireland-specific factsheets on a range of issues including teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections;
- information on positive sexual health for consumer print materials and the broadcast media.

For further information contact fpaNI's helpline at:  
Belfast - Tel: 028 9032 5488 or  
Derry - Tel: 028 7126 0016.

Copies of the six Northern Ireland factsheets are available to download from the HPA's website:  
[www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk)

Sexual Health Week takes place from 5-10 August. This year's campaign will focus on educating young men about the risks of STIs.

## Autumn training schedule

As outlined in the February/March issue of **Inform**, the emphasis of the Agency's training programme has changed this year in response to a review, which examined the provision and uptake of our training courses.

As a result, we will no longer be producing an annual training brochure. Instead, a series of flyers will be distributed over the coming months to inform professionals of upcoming Agency training events.

Although full details were not available at the time of going to print, titles in this series will include:

- **Cook it!** (tutor training workshop);
- **Positive Partnerships** (a one-day workshop focusing on the skills of partnership working);
- **Stress management** (a two-day workshop which aims to raise awareness about stress and its management);
- **Motivational interviewing** (a workshop for health professionals to develop skills in brief motivational interview practice);
- **Boy to Man: survival skills** (a seminar highlighting key issues for professionals who work to improve the mental health of young men).

If you require assistance with your application, please contact Mary Patterson, e-mail: [m.patterson@hpani.org.uk](mailto:m.patterson@hpani.org.uk)  
For any other information on the Agency's training and professional development programme, please contact Máire Campbell, Regional Health Promotion Manager, Training and professional development at the Agency.  
E-mail: [m.campbell@hpani.org.uk](mailto:m.campbell@hpani.org.uk)

An evaluation report of the Agency's short course programme from April 2000 to December 2001 is available to download from our website. If you wish to submit your views on training, an online training needs assessment form is also available on the website.

## Get Active in the Community Awards scheme 2002

This year's 'Get Active in the Community Awards' scheme received an unprecedented response from the public, generating over 700 applications compared to 383 in the previous year.

After careful consideration, 150 groups were awarded cash grants of up to £500 to help fund a range of projects, to enable local people to take part in health-enhancing physical activities.

In selecting this year's recipients, priority was given to new and innovative projects; projects that specifically targeted young people (0-25) or older people (50+), projects which involved people with disabilities and/or disadvantaged groups; walking activities; cycling activities; dancing



## Up2You prizewinner

Pictured above with his prize of a Sony Playstation2, is twelve year old Martin Burns from St. Joseph's High School, Coalisland, County Tyrone, who won first prize in this year's Up2You competition.

Martin's name was the first entry to be drawn from all those who correctly answered the three smoking-related questions on the Agency's teen website [www.up2you.net](http://www.up2you.net)

Over 700 correct entries were received for this competition. A list of all the successful prizewinners will appear on the Up2You website later this month.

activities; projects which demonstrated that activities can be integrated into daily life and projects not receiving grants/funding from other bodies.

The judging panel also gave consideration to the distribution of the awards based on factors such as Health and Social Services Board area; urban and rural areas and equal representation of groups and communities.

The successful applicants will be asked to evaluate their projects and submit a final report by March 2003. The scheme is funded by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and was introduced by the Health Promotion Agency to complement the 'Get a life, get active' public information campaign.

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

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## Baby Friendly conference

A two-day conference, 'Enabling and Supporting Successful Breastfeeding', will take place on 13-14 November in Harrogate, England. This marks the fifth annual conference of the UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative, which aims to address a wide range of issues associated with supporting successful breastfeeding.

This year's presentations will look at recent developments in the Baby Friendly Initiative, as well as UNICEF UK's child exploitation campaign and the relationship between breastfeeding and health in adolescence and adulthood. Maternal diet during breastfeeding, safety issues related to bottle-feeding and breastfeeding and the weaning process will also feature.

The experiences of Northern Ireland's first Milk Bank for sick and premature

babies, established at the Sperrin Lakeland Trust, Fermanagh, will also be discussed during a case study on milk banking and hand expressing. There will also be a presentation on using Baby Friendly standards within a Sure Start programme.

Attendance fees for the conference are as follows:

Both days £115  
(£105 with discount)

Single day £65  
(£60 with discount)

Discount will be given to bookings received before 29 July or to parties booking 5 or more places. For further information on this event, visit the Baby Friendly Initiative website: [www.babyfriendly.org.uk/](http://www.babyfriendly.org.uk/)

## Antenatal screening leaflet

Following new guidelines issued by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Agency is producing a leaflet for pregnant women, which explains about blood tests that are carried out during a woman's first antenatal visit. The leaflet also contains a consent form, which should be completed by the mother at this time.

The blood tests look for possible health problems, which could affect mother or baby if undetected and untreated. From

October, the tests will screen a sample of the mother's blood for the presence of HIV, hepatitis B, syphilis and rubella, as well as to determine her blood count/haemoglobin level and blood group.

The leaflet is currently undergoing testing with pregnant women at focus groups throughout Northern Ireland and should be completed in September. It will then be distributed to Trusts providing antenatal services.



**Health  
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**Inform** is published bi-monthly by the Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland to provide information on current areas of work involving the Agency.

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[www.drugsprevention.net](http://www.drugsprevention.net)  
[www.smoke-free.co.uk](http://www.smoke-free.co.uk)  
[www.up-2-you.net](http://www.up-2-you.net)

## Web are we now?

Once again we'd like to remind our readers that the next issue of *Promoting Health* will be available to download from our website from early September. If you would like to receive notification of the December journal, which will focus on cancer prevention, please contact Nina Campbell. E-mail: [n.campbell@hpani.org.uk](mailto:n.campbell@hpani.org.uk)

Following developments in our work over the past year and in response to feedback received through our online web survey, the Agency will be re-launching its corporate website in early autumn.

It is hoped that the new website will prove to be a useful tool for health professionals and students with an interest in health promotion. Content on the website will include relevant information on the role of the Agency within the Health and Personal Social Services as well as in-depth information on our most current work. This will particularly focus on the priority health issues for Northern Ireland, the public and professional information campaigns run by the Agency, the resources and research we have published, together with details of the organisations with which we work. It will also contain general information on health promotion; a frequently asked questions section (FAQs), through which we hope to answer some of the common enquiries we receive; and a comprehensive range of links to relevant regional and international organisations.

The corporate website address will remain at: [www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk)