

Inform

Issue 31

October/November 2003

HPA survey reinforces call for smoking ban

Figures released by the Health Promotion Agency add new weight to the case for a ban on smoking in public places in Northern Ireland. The figures were highlighted during the launch of our 12th *Annual report* on Thursday 25 September.

Smoking has been one of the HPA's major priorities during the past year, with the graphic 'Every cigarette is doing you damage' public information campaign raising awareness of the hazards of smoking to health. Now this latest research shows that there is much support from people in Northern Ireland for smoking to be banned in a variety of public places.

"We have been working hard with a range of organisations and groups to raise awareness of the dangers of smoking and the need to provide support to smokers who wish to stop," said HPA Chief Executive Dr Brian Gaffney. "A recent survey which questioned people on their attitudes to smoking showed that most were in favour of a ban on smoking in specific areas."

"For instance, when asked if smoking should be banned in all restaurants, around three out of every five people surveyed agreed this should be the case. When asked if there should be a total ban on smoking in hospitals, almost nine out of ten people surveyed agreed."

Smoking is just one of the HPA's many business areas highlighted in the *Annual report*, which provides an overview of work undertaken during the year 2002-03.

Other health issues featured in the report include alcohol, drugs, nutrition, physical activity, sexual health, mental health, breastfeeding and health protection.

To support our work on all health and business areas, we have upgraded our corporate website as part of our commitment to making health information more accessible for the public and professionals. This can be visited at www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk



Adam McCune, Web Development Assistant for the HPA, highlights features of the new-look corporate website for Alice Quinn, Chair of the HPA, at the launch of this year's *Annual report*.

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

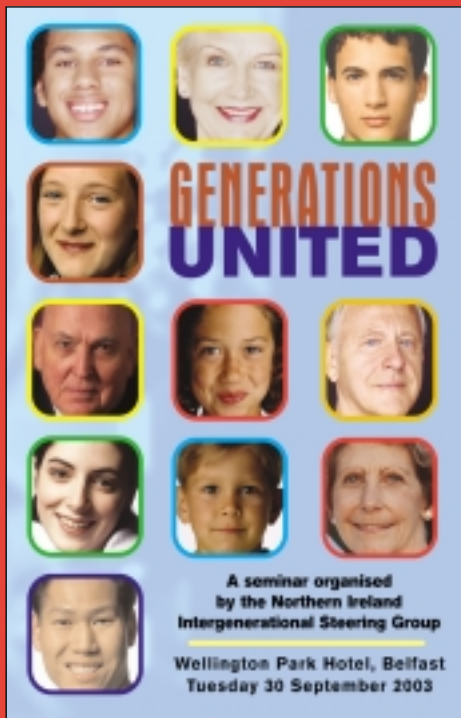
INSIDE:

- *Active for later life*
- *Birth to five* advice for mums
- Generations united
- Investing for Health conference



**Health
Promotion
Agency**

Generations united



A half day seminar organised by the Northern Ireland Intergenerational Steering Group was held on Tuesday 30 September at the Wellington Park Hotel in Belfast. The steering group is facilitated by Age Concern, and the HPA is one of a number of organisations represented on the group.

Intergenerational practice promotes the social inclusion of young people and older people. It

seeks to establish an environment of mutual respect in which young and old can share experiences, knowledge and skills.

The seminar was aimed at highlighting examples of good practice in intergenerational working, and offered a forum for debate and discussion about practice.

Further information about intergenerational practice and the work of the steering group may be obtained from Age Concern on 028 9024 5729 or email info@ageconcernni.org

Recruitment drive

To enable us to fulfil a challenging remit in supporting *Investing for Health*, we are seeking to fill a number of key posts.

- **Senior Manager: Public Health** - Senior Manager Spine Point 17
- **Coordinator: Health Promoting Hospitals** - A&C Grade 8
- **Substance Misuse Programme Manager** - A&C Grade 7
- **Mental Health Programme Manager** - A&C Grade 7
- **IT Manager** - A&C Grade 6

The closing date for receipt of applications for all posts is 4.00pm Friday 10 October. Full job descriptions and application forms for all posts may be obtained by accessing the website www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk

Health Promoting Schools abstract selected for International Healthy Cities Conference

The 2003 International Healthy Cities Conference being held in the Waterfront Hall, Belfast, from 19-22 October has attracted considerable international interest with over 300 abstracts being submitted for inclusion.

This will ensure the programme will be a dynamic working conference for people involved at local, national and international levels to promote strategic work for urban health.

Fairy Godfather training

In 2002 fpaNI, in partnership with the HPA and with funding from DHSSPS, produced a video and support materials to enable teachers in post primary schools to implement and/or review their policy on relationships and sexuality education (RSE). Entitled *The Fairy Godfather*, the resource supports the Department of Education guidance document on RSE and recommendations contained in DHSSPS's *Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Strategy and Action Plan 2002-2007*.

Further funding was received from DHSSPS to provide training to enable teachers to use the resource effectively. The training evaluated very positively and some key learning outcomes emerged for those who have responsibility for developing and implementing policy:

- many teachers struggled with the concept of RSE as a subject and were wary of using interactive methods. They were comfortable with issuing factual information on subjects such as STIs, contraception and pubescent changes but were not confident about approaches to addressing issues such as feelings, values, attitudes, beliefs and relationships;
- schools where pupils had physical and/or learning disabilities had concerns that CCEA's guidance document did not address, eg staff involved with pupils are not always teachers;
- pre-qualification training of teachers focuses on supporting them to be 'specialists' in a subject. The teaching of RSE has implications for pre-qualification training, eg it could include group and personal development work, particularly in relation to issues such as sexuality and relationships. It could also be useful to explore how subjects such as History, English and Art can be used effectively within an RSE programme.

Binge drinking evaluation

Preliminary evaluation results of the HPA's recent 'binge drinking' campaign, which ran from 6 March to 22 June this year, are very encouraging. Over 70% of the sample representing the adult drinking population in Northern Ireland were aware of the television advertisement, with over 40% of these having full recall of the 'Everybody can enjoy a drink - nobody enjoys a drunk' slogan.

The key message concerning the negative effects of excess drinking would appear to have been successfully transmitted to the target audience, and the advertisement was highly rated in terms of its plausibility and relevance. Further developmental work is now being carried out in preparation for possible future phases of the campaign.

On behalf of Health Promoting Schools - an Investing for Health partnership - David Porter, Health Promoting Schools Coordinator based at the HPA, has been selected to present an abstract paper at parallel session D8 on Monday 20 October between 2.15pm and 3.45pm.

Further information on the conference is available on the conference website www.healthycitiesbelfast2003.com or by contacting Belfast Healthy Cities on 028 9032 8811.

Training and development

Cocaine use in Northern Ireland - myth or reality?

This one day seminar took place on 9 September with 84 delegates attending. The aim of the seminar was to increase awareness about cocaine use in Northern Ireland and learn from experiences elsewhere in the UK and Ireland.

Guest speakers included key personnel from PSNI drugs squad, HM Customs and Excise, Drugscope (a major UK drug charity), and the National Advisory Committee on Drugs (Republic of Ireland).

The event was very well received and evaluation feedback indicated that participants found the information most useful in supporting them in their work. An evaluation summary of the event will soon be available from our website at www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/work/training/evaluations

Young people and self-esteem

This one day seminar was held on 17 September and 25 participants attended. The aim of the seminar was to update

professionals from a wide range of backgrounds in mental health.

The focus was on child and adolescent mental health and the event was facilitated by YoungMinds, a training organisation specialising in this field. This was the first in a series of three mental health seminars, the next of which is being held on 4 December.

Further information regarding this seminar and other training events can be obtained from Máire Campbell or Claire Hind at the HPA or from our corporate website www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk

Upcoming training events

- Evaluating your Work one day workshop, 7 October
- Positive Partnerships one day workshop, 17 November
- Young People and Self-Esteem seminar on self-esteem and relationships, 4 December



Attending the cocaine seminar held at Rosspark Kells are, from left, John Whiting, Senior Investigation Officer, HM Customs and Excise; Rob Phipps, Senior Manager, Health Promotion Agency; Roy Lyall, Drugs Education Officer, PSNI; Mairead Lyons, National Advisory Committee on Drugs (Republic of Ireland); and Harry Shapiro, Director, Drugscope.

HPA represented at world health tobacco conference

HPA Health Development Officer, Kelly Warnock, attended the 12th World Conference on Tobacco or Health in Helsinki, Finland, from 3-8 August.

A comprehensive week-long programme of oral presentations and poster sessions on a variety of tobacco control topics took place.

Some of the important issues covered included:

- strategies for harm reduction - benefits of cutting down and the development of clean addictive nicotine and NRT;
- legislation on environmental tobacco smoke - many were of the opinion that if Ireland succeeded in implementing

its ban on smoking in public places next year, the United Kingdom and Europe would follow;

- how best to take forward the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control - the first ever global treaty on health recently approved by WHO;
- new initiatives with youth and pregnant women - two of the three target groups outlined within the DHSSPS's recently launched Tobacco Action Plan.

Many of the agencies that had previously run the 'Every cigarette is doing you damage' campaign are now running testimonial mass media anti-tobacco advertising. This is having a great impact in America and Australia.

Latest journal examines the role of collaboration



The HPA has published the September issue of *Promoting Health*, which focuses on the role of international collaboration in promoting public health to coincide with the International Healthy Cities Conference which takes place in Belfast on 19-22 October.

This collection of articles underlines the collaborative nature of public health

promotion, at a global and local level. It also shows how we can learn from a range of influences and how we can be proud of many of the effective areas of health promotion which we in Northern Ireland have to share with others.

Articles in this issue look at the Healthy Cities movement as it enters a new phase of development, WHO efforts in combating non-communicable diseases and the role of the EU in health promotion.

The excellent work of organisations such as the HDA, Nicare, the World Bank, WHO European Office for Investment for Health and Development and the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) is also examined.

The progress of the CINDI programme (Countrywide Integrated Noncommunicable Diseases Intervention), of which the HPA is the main point of contact for the UK, is also charted.

Birth to Five book updated for mums

The HPA is publishing an updated version of the Northern Ireland edition of the *Birth to Five* book, which was originally produced by the Department of Health in England.

This book provides a complete guide to parenthood and the first five years of a child's life - including information on nutrition, behaviour and illnesses.



It is available to first time expectant mothers through primary care services in their Health and Social Services Board areas. The publication, which will be distributed by the Central Health Promotion Resource Services, complements the *Pregnancy Book*, published by the HPA earlier this year.

World Mental Health Day seminar promotes learning

A seminar to mark World Mental Health Day will be held at the Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast, on 10 October. Educating for Mental Health is the theme of the event which is organised by the Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health.

The seminar will highlight the relationship between learning and mental health, eg the importance of the potential for the educational setting to have a health promoting and prevention role. Speakers will present strategies to promote learning and mental health in further and higher education. These include Mark Dooris, Director of the Healthy Settings Development Unit, University of Central Lancashire; Alexandra Brown, Head of Health and Welfare, University of Plymouth; and Paul Fleming, Academic Coordinator of Public Health, School of Nursing, University of Ulster.

For more information please contact the Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health on 9032 8474 or email Judith Lee, Director for Education, j.lee@niamh.co.uk

On the move

Rob Phipps, Senior Manager, has been appointed as the new Northern Ireland Drugs and Alcohol Strategy Coordinator. We wish him well in his new role at the Department.



Breastfeeding resource list developed by HPA

The next issue of *Keeping Abreast*, the newsletter of the Breastfeeding Strategy Implementation Group, will be available during October.

It features news on activities during National Breastfeeding Awareness Week, information on the optimal duration of exclusive breastfeeding and highlights a new report that examines the evidence of effective interventions to increase the incidence of breastfeeding.

A breastfeeding educational resource list has been developed by the HPA. This publication provides information to professionals and lay groups who provide breastfeeding education and training.

Summary reviews and details of availability of key and new breastfeeding educational resources feature on the resource list. The resource list will be distributed with *Keeping Abreast* and will be available as a PDF from our website www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk

Bridging the ageing gap with physical activity

The HPA and Age Concern Northern Ireland recently joined forces to help launch and disseminate the British Heart Foundation's *Active for later life* resource.

The launch took place at Oxford Island Discovery Centre near Lurgan, and attracted over 130 policymakers and practitioners from all sectors, including health promotion, local government, regional and local branches of age-related groups, residential and caring services, and the private sector, including care providers and the fitness industry.

The resource aims to support all those involved in developing physical activity programmes for older people. It includes summaries of evidence and recommendations, policy and strategic connections, as well as a series of working papers and practical guidance documents and ideas on programming physical activity opportunities for older people

At the seminar, participants received a complementary copy of the resource and had the opportunity to familiarise themselves with its contents and to hear how it relates to Northern Ireland. A workshop was held in the afternoon for delegates to consider how to apply it in their own setting.

The feedback from the evaluation forms was very positive - 95% of delegates reported that the event achieved its stated aim.

To order copies of *Active for later life* contact the British Heart Foundation order line on 01604 640016, or the BHF National

Centre for Physical Activity and Health, on 01509 223279. A Northern Ireland supplement to the resource is available by contacting Lesley Mailey (l.mailey@hpani.org.uk) at the HPA.



Getting physical at Oxford Island during the launch of *Active for later life* are, from left, Angela Corr, Physical Activity Coordinator, Southern Area Health Promotion Department, Armagh; Rita McKechnie, Fermanagh District Council; Siobhan Weir, Regional Health Promotion Manager for Physical Activity, HPA; and Zandra McCluskey, Fitness NI, Belfast.

HPA seeks feedback on communications



The HPA is committed to achieving high quality standards in all its communications practice, internally and externally.

As part of our work to ensure this is possible, a revised *Communications strategy* has recently been produced by the Agency, which sets out the aims, objectives and monitoring arrangements for our planned communications in the short and long term.

A review of systems and procedures for achieving a consistent approach and quality standard for all aspects of

communication has also been carried out. The results have been summarised as a series of protocols for use by all staff.

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we would welcome any feedback you may have about any of our communications, including our publications.

We would like to know what is working, what is most useful, where you feel there may be gaps or to hear about any other issue you would like to raise. Please contact Tony Sheridan on 028 90 311611 or email t.sheridan@hpani.org.uk

'Vision to action' for debate at public health forum

Sustaining public health in a changing world: Vision to action, is the title of the 12th annual public health forum to be held in Brighton on 19-22 April 2004.

The event will re-emphasise commitment to action: action in local communities and across borders; action through healthy public policy; and action guided by skills, experience, evidence and renewal of commitment of purpose.

The first day will focus exclusively on international health, the other three days following the traditional pattern of the annual forum including UK, European and international papers.

The forum will incorporate the 10th International Congress of the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA). The WFPHA is an international non-governmental organisation bringing health workers throughout the world together for professional exchange and action.

For further information, contact the Conference Secretariat: Hampton Medical Conferences
Tel: 020 8977 0011
Fax: 020 8977 0055
Email: publichealth@hamptonmedical.com
Or visit www.ukpha.org.uk/conferences/worldcong.html

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Helping to celebrate and challenge the IfH agenda

Celebrate and Challenge! is the title for the inaugural Investing for Health (IfH) conference, to be held in the Slieve Donard Hotel on Wednesday 3 December. The HPA is a collaborator in the conference along with the DHSSPS IfH team, and the IfH partnerships of the four Health and Social Services Boards.

Supported by the Ministerial Group on Public Health, which comprises the 11 Government departments, the event will aim to celebrate the work that is helping to achieve the goals and objectives within IfH, and build commitment to tackle the challenges ahead through improved partnership working.

The objectives of the conference are:

- to develop greater understanding of the IfH agenda;
- to recognise and validate successes at a local and regional level;
- to foster better networking and information exchange between IfH partners;
- to help mainstream the strategy across and within key partners' work programmes.



The event is intended to appeal to a wide range of people from the voluntary, community and statutory sectors, and social partners, reflecting the cross cutting nature of IfH. Special emphasis will be placed on the advantages and challenges of working in partnership, which are key to addressing the social, economic and environmental factors impacting on health and wellbeing.

The steering committee is seeking examples of initiatives that demonstrate commitment to improving health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities that could be included as posters/displays within the conference programme. For further information contact John at Creative Events on 028 9023 5001 or email info@creativeevents.co.uk



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

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www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk
www.thesnackpack.net
www.up-2-you.net

Web are we now?

In September the updated design for the HPA's corporate website at www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk went live.

The new design allows visitors to the website to find our press releases and publications more easily and also enables users to sort these resources by date, title and subject area. This is the beginning of several changes to make our information more accessible to our audiences.

Complementing the new design were several updates to the content of the website including a new equality section. Following the successful launch of the online recruitment facility, we have been receiving online applications for all positions advertised in September.

The drugs and alcohol information website (www.drugsalcohol.info) has also been updated to include the proposed legislation changes on reclassification of cannabis in Northern Ireland, a PDF of which has been made available for download.