

Inform

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Corporate Strategy

The Agency has just published its Corporate Strategy for the period 1999 to 2002. It is designed to establish a basis for consultation on the Agency's three year corporate plan for 1999-2002 and its annual business plans.

The strategy sets out the Agency's strategic goals and objectives which reflect those in the Regional Strategy for Health and Social Wellbeing and Well Into 2000.

It highlights the importance of environmental, political, financial and social issues to people's health. The following areas have been identified as priorities for a broad health promotion approach: the reduction of inequalities in living standards which will both reduce inequalities in health and raise the overall health status of the population; improvements in

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Laying the foundations for the way ahead

Promoting health in the future

The Health Promotion Agency is committed to developing a system of open and regular consultation with stakeholders and key groups in the development of its planning process and the production of its corporate plan.

A series of meetings to begin the discussion process was held in the Agency between 24 February and 2 April 1999.

Representatives from six sectors were invited to attend these meetings.

These included voluntary and community groups; environmental health, transport and related interests; health promotion specialists; health and social services; research and training interests and the education and youth sector.

A number of objectives were set and agreed for the outcome of each meeting, but it was emphasised that the process was seen as the beginning of a longer-term initiative.

Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive of the Health Promotion Agency, welcomed the opportunity to renew existing links and establish new working relationships.

During the course of the meetings, discussion was held on priorities for health promotion from both a local and regional perspective.

The general consensus was that it would be useful to meet again to take forward some of the issues which had been raised.

The Agency is producing a summary document outlining the issues raised and discussed during the meetings and this will be circulated to all those who attended or who expressed an interest in further information.

Anyone else who is interested in receiving a copy of this document should contact Janet Stanage at the Health Promotion Agency. Telephone (01232) 311611, fax (01232) 311711 or e-mail: j.stanage@hpani.org.uk

Corporate Strategy

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the environment; the extension of effective services and policies and the development and dissemination of good practice and information to support people who wish to maintain and improve their health.

This strategy underlines the Agency's commitment to communicating with other organisations which are involved in policy development, research, training and practical health promotion.

The Agency would welcome comments on the strategic direction set out for achieving its goals and objectives and in particular any proposals to partner or complement any aspects of its work.

Campaigning for health

A photocopyable resource entitled *Campaigning for Health* has been produced for schools. It has been developed to address the many requests the Agency gets from students wishing to receive information about health promotion campaigns.

The resource explains how public information campaigns on health issues are planned, developed and delivered by the Health Promotion Agency.

As an example of this process it uses the recent campaign undertaken by the Agency to promote the benefits of taking folic acid.



Public information campaigns

Food Awareness Week

The UK-wide Food Awareness Week will take place from 10-16 May 1999.

The theme of the week is 'It makes sense to enjoy at least 5 portions of fruit and veg every day'. It highlights the health benefits of eating more fruit and vegetables. Work to support this theme will build on the public awareness achieved during the Health Promotion Agency's 1998 Healthy Eating Campaign.

The week is organised by the British Dietetic Association and will be supported by a range of organisations, including a number of food companies.

For those wanting to organise activities to support the week, 'Eat Well to Keep Well' leaflets and posters, produced by the Health Promotion Agency, highlighting the 5-a-day message are available from the Central Health Promotion Resource Services in the Health and Social Services Board areas.



Get a Life, Get Active

A public information campaign to promote participation in physical activity is currently being developed and will be launched in June 1999. The campaign entitled 'Get a Life, get Active' aims to get more people to be more active, more often.

The campaign which is targeting the 40 plus age group, particularly those who do not take much exercise, will include television advertising as well as a range of support materials such as posters and leaflets. A cash grant award scheme is also being developed to support community groups which

organise events to encourage people to become more active.

Further details on the campaign will be given at a briefing day for those involved in promoting physical activity.

This will take place on Thursday 6 May 1999 at Ballyearl Leisure Centre, Doagh Road, Newtownabbey. If you have not received information about the briefing day and would like to attend, contact Lesley Whan at the Agency.



Folic acid competition

The folic acid wordsearch featured in 'It's You' magazine generated a huge response from throughout Northern Ireland. The Agency received over 2,000 entries!

The competition ran in conjunction with the public information campaign on folic acid which took place from October 1998 to January 1999. The magazine was widely distributed through pharmacies, health centres, dental surgeries, hairdressers and was inserted in two regional newspapers.

First prize of £100 went to Mary Keyes from Castlereagh, Belfast and two runner up prizes of £50 each went to Berni Allen from Strabane and Sister M Byrne from Londonderry. Just in case you are wondering the answer to the wordsearch was 'vitamin'.

And the winner is... Pictured with over 2,000 entries for the folic acid competition are: Margaret Slane, left, Marketing Manager, Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland and Angela McComb, Nutrition Programme Manager for the Health Promotion Agency.



Research, information and analysis

Sugar-free medicines

The Agency has been commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Services to assess the need for information on, and promotion of, the benefits of sugar-free medicines.

Members of the public were interviewed to establish their knowledge and awareness of sugar-free medicines. A separate questionnaire was carried out with health professionals to establish attitudes and current practice in relation to sugar-free medicines.

Activate review

The recent review of the Activate Health Programme generated some very positive findings. Results indicate that the programme is valued both by Activate tutors and health promotion coordinators.

The review was undertaken with 136 tutors, 17 leaders, 22 trainers and 16 health promotion coordinators. This sample represents approximately 50% of the professionals involved with Activate. The main findings were:

- Overall satisfaction with the training programme was high with 89% of tutors and leaders being either very or quite satisfied.
- 80% of tutors/leaders who responded claimed to have run some sort of course - 43% had run a full Activate course while 37% had run at least one Activate module. This compares favourably with the 1996 survey which reported that only 52% had conducted any course.
- Tutors and leaders had a high opinion of the course materials with more than 80% of those surveyed

describing them as either very good or quite good. Promotional material for the programme was, however, found to lack a targeted approach due to the ongoing development of the programme with a variety of groups such as heart health, and learning disability.

- Activate is perceived as a flexible and adaptable programme with the holistic approach taken by the programme considered a key strength.

The Agency will discuss the findings of the review with programme partners to plan the development of the programme over the next three years. A full research report will be available on the Agency's Website in due course.



Policy development and advice

Food and Nutrition Strategy workshop

A one-day workshop to take forward the implementation of Northern Ireland's Food and Nutrition Strategy took place on 30 March at the Stakis Park Hotel, Templepatrick.

Representatives of all sectors with an interest in food, nutrition and health, including the food sector, health, education, voluntary and community sectors attended the workshop.

The outcome of discussions at the workshop will form the basis of a draft Implementation Plan, which will then be consulted on through sectoral meetings to be held over the next few months.

European conference on tobacco

Rob Phipps, the Agency's Alcohol and Drugs Programme Manager, attended the 2nd European Conference on Tobacco or Health from 23 to 26 February 1999.

He co-presented a paper in respect of young people and smoking in Northern Ireland with Gerry McElwee from the Ulster Cancer Foundation.

Particular emphasis at the conference was placed on tobacco and young people, approaches to cessation and tobacco control. With the Government's recent publication of the Tobacco White Paper the issues raised and discussed were both worthwhile and timely.

Short course training

The Agency's ongoing short course training and professional development programme has a number of courses planned for May.

A one day course on 4 May 1999 entitled 'Needs Assessment - Involving Local Communities' is designed to enable participants to explore different approaches to including local communities in health planning. This course will be held in the Agency and will examine a variety of methods of needs assessment and consultation.

The course facilitators are Anne Lazenbatt, DHSS Research Fellow and Deirdre Fullerton, Lecturer in Research Methods in Health Promotion at the University of Ulster and the closing date for applications is 16 April 1999.

Len Almond, Director of the Exercise and Health Research and Development Group at Loughborough University will be facilitating two courses at the Agency in May.

The first, 'Putting Physical Activity on Dietitians' Agenda' is for Dietitians in hospital and community settings who wish to encourage physical activity alongside dietary advice. The course will be accredited for 4.5 learning hours towards the Diploma in Advanced Dietetic Practice. It will take place on 10 May 1999 and the closing date for applications is 22 April 1999.

The other, 'Putting Physical Activity on Nurses' Agenda' is designed for nurses who wish to encourage physical activity as part of their patient education role in promoting health. This course will be held on 11 May 1999 and the closing date for applications is also 22 April 1999.

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

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Publications and resources

New weaning resource

The new resource on weaning 'Weaning made easy' is now available from the Central Health Promotion Resource Services in the Health and Social Services Board areas.

The leaflet was written by the Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland, Community Dietitians from the Health and Social Services Trusts and the Northern Ireland Paediatric Group Dietitians, in association with Health Visitors and the Regional Oral Health Promotion Group.



was produced in conjunction with the Health Education Liaison Group and is based on the criteria for a health promoting school tested in Northern Ireland as part of the European Network of Health Promoting Schools project between 1995 and 1998.

The guide is aimed at enabling schools not only to raise their level of health promotion but also to contribute significantly to the health of their pupils.

Copies of the guide will be made available to all school principals and school health education coordinators in April 1999. For further information about this work please contact Linda Barclay at the Agency.



Mental health database

A database of initiatives relating to mental health promotion has been compiled and published by the Agency. It is designed to support the development of a regional strategy to promote mental health.



Protect your child - be wise - immunise

The Agency's booklet 'Protect your child - be wise - immunise', which gives advice to parents on childhood immunisations, has been amended for use with minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland.

The booklet has been translated and printed by the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre (MCRC) into Chinese, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali and Arabic. Copies will be available from MCRC in May. Contact MCRC, Tel: (01232) 244639.

Health promoting schools criteria

The Agency has published a self-assessment guide for schools wishing to work towards becoming a health promoting school. This

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.