

Inform

Issue 50

December 2006 / January 2007

Season's greetings

As 2006 draws to a close we take this opportunity to thank those of you who have worked with us and supported us during the past year in our work to help improve the health of everyone in Northern Ireland.

We look forward to the New Year, to welcoming a smoke-free Northern Ireland from 30 April and to strengthening and building relationships.

In a period of great change in the area of public health, we are confident that through continued collaboration and partnership we can continue to achieve our joint aim of better health for all in our community.

The Chair, Board, Chief Executive and staff wish you a very happy and peaceful Christmas and good health in the New Year.

'Know your limits' binge drinking awareness campaign launched

A new binge drinking awareness campaign was launched in October by the HPA to encourage the public to think about how much they drink and to know the limits when it comes to alcohol.

The campaign is the latest phase of the HPA's drive to raise awareness of binge drinking and uses hard-hitting television advertising to highlight the impact this type of drinking can have on health.

The campaign also includes a new website www.knowyourlimits.info which is packed with information including facts about alcohol, units, hangovers, when not to drink and where to get help.

A unit calculator wheel to help people work out the units of alcohol they are consuming, an information leaflet and a poster are other elements of the campaign.



Pictured during the launch of the public information campaign on binge drinking are, from left, Alice Quinn, Chair of the HPA; Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive, HPA; and Minister for Health, Mr Paul Goggins, who is logging onto the campaign website www.knowyourlimits.info

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

INSIDE:

- Cooking bus visits Northern Ireland
- Healthy Schools
- HPH conference call for abstracts
- Training and events



**Health
Promotion
Agency**

New appointments



Joanna Whitlaw

Joanna joins the HPA as a Clerical Officer on an 18 month contract. Previously she held administrative posts at the Ulster Hospital and the Northern Ireland Civil Service, based at Stormont and the Child Support Agency. Joanna holds a BA in French and Spanish from the University of Ulster.

HLC update

The HPA has entered the third year of the Healthy Living Centres (HLC) Support and Development Programme and has supported the establishment of the HLC Regional Alliance.

The alliance, which comprises all 19 HLCs, aims to raise the profile of HLCs, demonstrate their impact and lobby for continued support. The alliance has produced a briefing paper to highlight its aims and activities and is holding meetings with key stakeholders such as political parties, Government departments and health structures. The HLC Regional Alliance will be officially launched on Monday 11 December at the Long Gallery, Parliament Buildings, Stormont.

Along with partners, including the Eastern Investing for Health Partnership and North and West Belfast Health Action Zone, the HPA supported the 10 Belfast HLCs to develop a joint business plan which has been submitted to the Eastern Health and Social Services Board.

The plan identifies the contribution HLCs have made to local health improvement, their contribution to policy and strategy and sets out their vision for moving forward within a restructured environment.



Breastfeeding educators attend UNICEF course

A group of 21 educationalists from Queen's University, Belfast, University of Ulster, Beeches Management Centre and various HSS Trusts in Northern Ireland were supported to attend the UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative course at Antrim Area Hospital from 18–20 September.

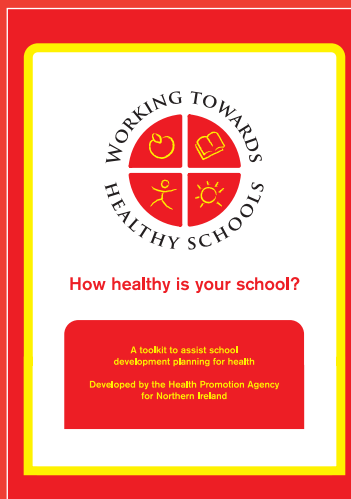
The idea for providing a breastfeeding management course specifically for those involved in breastfeeding education was proposed by the Northern Ireland Breastfeeding Education Interest Group. It is hoped that the course will help to ensure consistency for everybody involved in breastfeeding education.

Healthy schools

The regional Coordinator of the pilot Health Promoting Schools initiative for 2002–2006, has completed his secondment to the HPA, ensuring that the objectives and expected outcomes for the initiative were fulfilled.

Certificates of recognition for undertaking the planning process to become healthy schools have been awarded to a total of 199 schools. A selection of case studies, highlighting the experiences of schools participating in the HPS initiative, are available on the HPA website at www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Work/hpschools/cases.asp

A healthy schools toolkit to assist school development planning for health and wellbeing, which takes a whole school approach, will also be published soon on the website as a PDF document. A report of the evaluation of the pilot will also be disseminated in the New Year. A funding proposal for continuing work to support schools is under development and more information on this will be communicated through future issues of **Inform**.

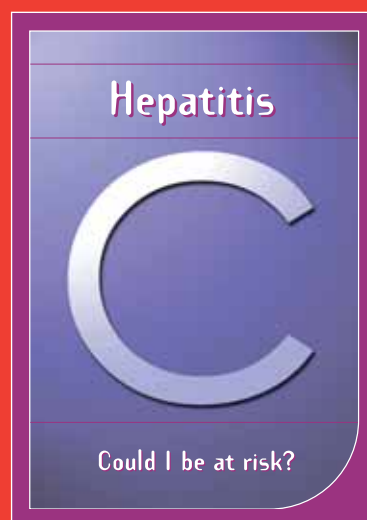


Hep C information

In support of the forthcoming DHSSPS action plan for the prevention, management and control of hepatitis C in Northern Ireland, the HPA has produced a leaflet for the public – *Hepatitis C: Could I be at risk?*

We have also produced a pack for professionals containing a booklet about the disease, a copy of the public leaflet and a copy of the leaflet that accompanies results from the Regional Virus Laboratory, Royal Hospitals.

These packs will be distributed to relevant health professionals and the public leaflets will be available in GP surgeries and pharmacies after the action plan is launched. Additional copies will be available from the central health promotion resource services of the Health and Social Services Board areas.



All-island breastfeeding conference success

The 2nd all-island breastfeeding conference took place on 6 October 2006. This year the conference was jointly organised by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Association of Lactation Consultants in Ireland (ALCI) and the HPA.

The conference theme was 'Breastfeeding in a bottle-feeding culture' and was attended by almost 400 individuals involved in breastfeeding promotion and support.

Health Minister for the Republic of Ireland, Mary Harney TD, opened the conference and lent her support for improving breastfeeding rates in Ireland. Key speaker, Dr Jack Newman from Canada, gave an excellent presentation acknowledging the many social, psychological and physical barriers to breastfeeding.

Carmel Duffy, Deputy Programme Director with the UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative, provided a very useful insight into the importance of skin-to-skin contact and how to make this happen for mother and baby. During the day attendees enjoyed other excellent presentations of examples of projects from throughout Ireland.



Pictured at the conference are, from left, Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive, HPA; Catherine Murphy, Assistant National Director, Population Health, Health Service Executive, Republic of Ireland; Mary Harney TD, Minister for Health and Children, Republic of Ireland; Dr Jack Newman, Paediatrician, University of Toronto, Canada; and Maureen Fallon, National Breastfeeding Coordinator, Health Service Executive, Republic of Ireland.

Investing for Health

The HPA is currently working to produce the *Investing for Health update 2006* report, which highlights a range of activity contributing to the broad goals and objectives of *Investing for Health*. The publication, which will also report on progress against the targets contained in the strategy, will be available soon.

The HPA, along with the Community Development and Health Network, facilitated a meeting on 1 December 2006 to examine issues relating to community planning and how it relates to health. The meeting in the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre provided an opportunity to discuss and jointly consider a vision for community planning and the values and principles that underpin it.

Reprints available

The HPA has recently reprinted 59 of the most popular leaflets and posters on alcohol, nutrition, physical activity, sexual health, smoking and substance misuse.

To obtain copies of these reprinted materials, please contact the central health promotion resource service in your local Health and Social Services Board area.



All-island HPH conference success

The third annual all-island Health Promoting Hospitals (HPH) conference, which brings together delegates from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to exchange experiences, knowledge and examples of good practice, took place in Wexford in October.

The conference emphasised the important contribution of the HPH concept in leading organisational change at a time when structures have changed in the Republic of Ireland and are changing in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland was well represented with keynote speakers, chairs, presenters and posters. Ann Maybin, a Public Health Practice Development Nurse from Causeway HSS Trust, won best poster, as voted by the delegates.

The book of abstracts and presentations from the conference are available upon request from the HPA based Coordinator of A Healthy Service - Supporting health in hospitals at Email: b.porter@hpani.org.uk



Pictured with her winning poster at the conference is, left, Ann Maybin, Public Health Practice Development Nurse, with Ann Marie Doherty, Head of Health Improvement, both from Causeway HSS Trust.

2007 HPH conference – call for abstracts

The 15th International conference on Health Promoting Hospitals (HPH), to be held in Vienna, Austria, from 11–13 April 2007, has called for the submission of abstracts on models, projects, interventions or studies on the main conference issues. Papers are also welcome on a number of additional issues.

Full details of both the main and additional issues are available at www.univie.ac.at/hph/vienna2007/html/abstract.htm and the deadline for abstract submission is 20 December 2006.

Health benefits of eating fish highlighted

A fishing trawler dropped its nets at Belfast's City Hall in October hoping to catch the public's interest in eating two portions of seafood a week and marking the launch of Seafood Week, which ran from 6–13 October.

Seafood Week is organised locally by Northern Ireland Seafood, funded by Building Sustainable Prosperity and organised nationally by the Sea Fish Industry Authority.



Pictured at the launch of Seafood Week 2006 at Belfast City Hall are, from left, Maria Jennings, Food Standards Agency; Adrian Elmore, Elmore Fish; Laura Donnelly, HPA; and Paul Kerr, Northern Ireland Seafood.

Laura Donnelly, Health Development Officer for nutrition at the HPA, said: "We want to encourage everyone to make healthy food choices, and that includes eating two portions of fish each week, one of which should be oily. White fish, such as haddock, plaice and whiting, is very low in fat and rich in protein. Oily fish, such as salmon, mackerel and herring are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which are beneficial for heart health."

The 'two a week' campaign aims to raise awareness of the wide variety of seafood available from the Irish Sea and the health benefits of eating it regularly.

Reprint of Sound mind resources distributed

The *Sound mind* resources aimed at helping young people aged 13–18 promote and maintain their mental health and emotional wellbeing have been reprinted and distributed to all post-primary schools during this school term. The leaflet for young people is accompanied by a support guide for teachers, parents, youth workers and peer educators and is available online at www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk

The Design for Living partnership between the HPA, Action Mental Health and The Youth Council for Northern Ireland has seen demand for the resources double this year. In response, the number of resources printed revised to meet this increase.

The Student's Union at Queen's University, Belfast, also plans to distribute 6,000 copies of the credit card sized resource to young people who are taking part in a research project being co-ordinated by the Institute of Child Care Research.



Smoking seminars

In preparation for the incoming smoke-free legislation in Northern Ireland, the HPA recently worked with the Tobacco Control Group of the Chief Environmental Health Officer's Group to develop and deliver two seminars for environmental health staff.

These aimed at raising awareness of the proposed legislation and at answering questions and issues relevant to the proposals.

The seminars took place on 10 and 19 October and participants were welcomed by Alice Quinn, Chair of the HPA. Contributions from Nigel McMahon, DHSSPS, Gerry McIlwee, Ulster Cancer Foundation, Mark McBride, Westcare Business Services, and Scottish Environmental Health colleagues stimulated a lively debate and ensured that the seminar objectives were realised. Around 130 participants attended each seminar.

A wide range of comments and questions resulted from the seminars and detailed notes were taken that will be used to inform the development of further information.

Enquiry into mental health and wellbeing

The HPA is represented on the board of the three year enquiry into mental health and wellbeing in later life. The aim of the enquiry is to raise awareness of issues facing older people, influence policy and improve service.

The first report from the enquiry, focusing on what helps to promote good mental health and wellbeing, was launched in Northern Ireland at the Ageing Well conference on 11 October.

To assist the second stage of the enquiry, which will focus on the provision of support and services, the HPA, in partnership with Age Concern, was instrumental in helping to set up a study site of older people and their carers in Northern Ireland. The HPA also hosted a round-table discussion in October where those involved in services within the study site met to debate any issues raised.

The findings from study sites throughout the UK were reported at the enquiry board meeting in London on 24 October 2006 and will form the basis for the second report.

HPA welcomes date for smoke-free legislation

Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive of the HPA, has welcomed the announcement that Northern Ireland workplaces and enclosed public places will be smoke-free from 30 April 2007.

"The date has now been set and we will be working with the Department of Health and the Minister over the coming months to raise awareness about the legislation and encourage support and compliance among the general public and businesses, as well as highlighting the serious threat that second-hand smoke is to our health.

"The implementation of this legislation will be fundamental in tackling smoking-related illnesses and will undoubtedly bring long-term beneficial effects for all in Northern Ireland."

Drug awareness campaign launched

A drug awareness campaign was launched on 22 November by the HPA. The campaign involves the display of posters in the washroom areas of pubs and clubs popular with 18–30 year olds.

The campaign will be visible until the end of March 2007 and features the topics of cannabis; mixing drugs; mixing drugs and alcohol; cocaine; and Ecstasy.



'Cooking Bus' visits Northern Ireland

Pupils from Aughnacloy Primary School were the first children in Northern Ireland to experience the Food Standards Agency's Focus on Food Cooking Bus when it paid its first ever visit to Northern Ireland.

Visitors from schools and community groups from all over Northern Ireland had the opportunity to experience 'hands-on' cooking sessions that aim to encourage people to have a positive attitude about the food they eat.

Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive of the HPA, said: "We are delighted to support this initiative. The Cooking Bus is an excellent way to introduce people of all ages to cooking in a safe environment while at the same time promoting the healthy eating message."



Pictured during the Cooking Bus event at the Odyssey, Belfast, are, back from left, Morris McAllister, FSANI Director; and Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive, HPA; along with pupils from Aughnacloy Primary School.

Actively Ageing Well

The five year Big Lottery Fund supported Actively Ageing Well partnership initiative between Age Concern and the HPA was formally concluded at two major events in September and October.

The initiative aimed to increase participation and provide physical activity opportunities for 60 older people's groups in Northern Ireland.

On 20 September, a celebration was held to mark the achievements and participation of the 60 groups. This event also saw the launch of a book of poetry and stories written by participants about the impact of the initiative on their lives.

On 11 October a conference was held to disseminate the evaluation results for the initiative. Both events were very well received. Work is continuing until March 2007 and further learning from the initiative will be brought together through the development of a series of factsheets relating to older people and physical activity.

Training and events - December 2006–February 2007

11 December 2006

Young people and self-esteem – self-esteem and relationships

Dr Tony Humphreys, a leading consultant clinical psychologist, will facilitate this seminar on self-esteem and relationships.



Further information and an online booking form are available under training and events at www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk

11 January 2007
Sexual health seminar

As part of an annual series of sexual health seminars, the HPA in partnership with the Sexual Health Information and Exchange Group is planning to hold a morning seminar focusing on the sexual health needs of young people at risk of social exclusion. The seminar will take place on the morning of 11 January 2007 at Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn.

Further information and an online booking form are available under training and events at www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk

15 January 2007
Working with groups – Facilitation and group work skills

This one day workshop is designed to enhance facilitation skills, and skills in managing and running groups.



The overall purpose of the workshop is to enable participants to develop confidence in their ability to run groups – by understanding how to give purpose and direction to the group and how to enable members to participate and interact effectively with one another.

Further information and an online booking form are available under training and events at www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk

2007
The settings approach to health improvement – accredited training opportunity

In March 2005 and May 2006, the Health Promotion Agency, in partnership with the Healthy Settings Development Unit at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), held awareness seminars for commissioners and practitioners about commissioning and implementing the settings approach to improving health.

Following on from the positive reception of these seminars, the HPA is now proposing to support a new UCLan accredited course 'Healthy settings: theory, policy and practice in Northern Ireland'.

The HPA would like to establish the level of interest in such a course before entering into further negotiations with UCLan.

Participants will:

- be enrolled as a UCLan student with full access to their WebCT learning environment and university facilities (including remote library access, e-journals etc);
- gain a level four university certificate in 'Healthy settings: theory, policy and practice' (equivalent to 20 credits at level four).

The HPA, as part of its commitment to *Investing for Health*, is prepared to subsidise the cost of the course for Northern Ireland participants. The fee will be £150 per person, as opposed to the normal fee of £450.

The assessment based course is structured in two blocks of two days, one month apart. The learning outcomes will enable participants to:

- examine factors that influence health in and across settings;
- review policies and frameworks relevant to healthy settings;
- understand the settings approach and methods;
- apply theory to practice;
- take an integrated approach;
- make links to national and local priorities;
- show an awareness of issues relevant to evidence and evaluation.

If you are interested in applying for this course and gaining accreditation, please register your name and contact details with Claire Hind on Tel: 028 9031 1611 or Email: c.hind@hpani.org.uk

January 2007
The role of workplace health

The HPA, along with the Investing for Health team and the Health and Safety Executive, is planning to hold a seminar at the end of January to explore the role of the workplace as a setting for improving health. The seminar will provide information on the important role a health promoting workplace can play in health improvement and put forward a number of best practice examples. Further information will be available soon on the HPA website.

February 2007
Sexual health resource events

The HPA has provided funding to support a series of sexual health resource events that are being organised by members of the Sexual Health Information Exchange Group (SHIEG) in each HSS Board area. The aim of these local events, which are being organised to coincide with the week St Valentine's Day 2007 falls in, is to showcase local resources, information and assistance available in each area. The events are planned for the following dates and further information will be available on the HPA website during December 2006.

- The Northern HSS Board event will take place on 13 February 2007
- The Eastern HSS Board event will take place on 14 February 2007
- The Western HSS Board event will take place on 15 February 2007
- The Southern HSS Board event will take place on 16 February 2007

'Actively Older Project' supports physical activity

A new project managed by Age Concern Northern Ireland, the Actively Older Project, aims to support community and older people's groups to develop safe, risk managed and sustainable physical activity programmes with people aged 50 plus. The project is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and will be delivered in partnership with the HPA.

Project activities will be open to all groups and organisations affiliated with the Ageing Well Network. There are currently over 350 affiliated groups. Activities and services will include information and training days, good practice guides, activity leadership programmes and regional networking events.

Events will provide information on issues relating to physical activity programmes, including:

- risks and responsibilities for community and older people's groups planning physical activity programmes;
- involvement of older people in planning and delivery of physical activity programmes;
- evaluation of health changes in older people due to participation in physical activity programmes.

It is hoped that the Ageing Well Network will expand further over the duration of the project, and that the number of trained and insured older volunteers leading physical activity programmes will increase.

Demand for such a project has been clearly established through the success of the Actively Ageing Well project, and through ongoing consultation with local groups and stakeholders.

A project management group will steer and monitor the project, and there will be ongoing consultation with groups that represent older people in order to ensure that the project remains relevant and useful to all involved.

If you would like more information about the project please contact Jackie Balmer, Actively Older Coordinator, Ageing Well Network, Age Concern Northern Ireland, 3 Lower Crescent, Belfast BT7 1NR.
Tel: 028 9024 5729; Fax: 028 9023 5497;
Email: jbalmer@ageconcernni.org

First business meeting of WHO HPH held

The HPA acts as Northern Ireland coordinating centre for Health Promoting Hospitals (HPH) and recently welcomed senior managers and coordinators who drive the initiative within the Trusts to the first business meeting of the World Health Organization (WHO) HPH.

These meetings give the Trusts the opportunity to come together twice a year to discuss relevant issues, share experiences and make recommendations to the Regional Steering Group.

Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive of the HPA, outlined the role and responsibilities of the coordinating centre and the potential for the group to work closely with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the DHSSPS in advocating Northern Ireland hospitals as champions in driving the HPH concept forward throughout the HPSS.

Dr Naresh Chada, Senior Medical Officer with the DHSSPS and Chair of the Regional Steering Group, added support to the concept and looked forward to working with everyone.

Barbara Porter, Coordinator of A Healthy Service – Supporting healthy hospitals, took everyone through the Healthy Service section on the HPA web site www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Work/hphospitals/menu.htm

The site is used to highlight new developments, up-to-date reading lists and the database of health promotion activity in hospitals across Northern Ireland.

The next meeting will be held in January 2007.

'Get a life, get active' competition winner

Beth McCracken from Ballymoney was one of the winners in the HPA 'Get a life, get active' top tips competition. Beth provided her top tips for fitting more activity into a busy lifestyle and won £50 cash.

"You're better to divide your exercise into two or three categories so that you're not tied to a particular time and it's less boring. To make time – get up 15 minutes earlier, cut out watching a lot of soaps on the telly, some things must go. It's all about changing your routine. It can be done – I do it," said Beth.

Thank you to everyone who entered the competition. To read more top tips and find out how to get active, visit www.getalifegetactive.com



Pictured after receiving her cash prize of £50, Beth McCracken proudly shows off her stepometer that helps her to 'Get a life, get active'.

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

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Dr Angela Bell – angela.bell@cemach.org.uk or

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Health Promotion Agency

We hope that **Inform** is meeting your needs in terms of providing timely and relevant information about the HPA's work. We are always striving to improve our communications so we would welcome any comments you would like to make about **Inform**. Please contact the editorial office by email at t.sheridan@hpani.org.uk or contact us in writing at the address below.

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www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk
www.breastfedbabies.org
www.drugsalcohol.info
www.getalifegetactive.com
www.knowyourlimits.info
www.smokefreenorthernireland.com
www.thesnackpack.net
www.up-2-you.net

Up-2-You website updated

The HPA's website for young people www.up-2-you.net has been updated with new information and an interactive feature on alcohol. A new competition has also been added, and postcards and posters promoting the website are being distributed to schools.

The website is aimed primarily at young people in school years 8, 9 and 10 and focuses on information about smoking, but also includes information about drugs and alcohol.

The competition involves answering three questions: two on alcohol and one on the forthcoming smoke-free legislation. Anyone interested in entering the competition is encouraged to go to www.up-2-you.net to find out the correct answers.

These can be posted to the HPA, using the postcard supplied to schools or submitted online to win prizes, including two iPod nanos, camera mobiles with £50 of calls and vouchers for a leading clothes or sports shop.

The competition is open only to residents of Northern Ireland aged 18 and under, and the closing date for entries is Monday 9 April 2007.



Julie Neill, Health Development Officer for the HPA launches the Up-2-You competition with pupils from Fort Hill Integrated College, Lisburn.

Board meeting

The next meeting of the HPA Board will be held on Thursday 8 February, 2007. The meeting will take place at 3.00pm at the HPA offices, 18 Ormeau Avenue, Belfast, BT2 8HS. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Web are we now?

The web development team has been involved recently in the online design and implementation of the Work Well employee healthy workplace questionnaires. Each organisation in the scheme can encourage their staff to fill in the online survey that will eventually lead to a detailed report for the employer on the health and wellbeing of their workforce.

The HPA corporate website at www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk has also seen substantial information updates and additions in key areas such as publications and areas of work.

The Health Promoting Schools section has been updated with the Healthy Schools database that encourages the sharing of ideas across the network. The searchable database facility makes navigation to particular information more easily accessible.

The team is also involved in several new exciting projects that will support the HPA's upcoming work. Details of this work and any other new developments will feature in future issues of **Inform**.

