

Inform

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Suicide prevention in focus

A special Taskforce targeting suicide prevention has recently been set up by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS).

Under the chairmanship of Colm Donaghy, Chief Executive of the Southern Health and Social Services Board, the Taskforce will assess the progress being made in the implementation of the 10 actions relating to suicide prevention in Northern Ireland contained within the *Promoting Mental Health. Strategy and Action Plan 2003–2008*.

The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Shaun Woodward, has also asked the Taskforce to report on the barriers preventing further progress and to identify a way forward, including the development of a new suicide prevention strategy for Northern Ireland.

As part of this process the Taskforce agreed the need to engage with local stakeholders through a consultation exercise arranged in each of the Health and Social Services Board areas.

A series of five meetings organised by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) in partnership with the Boards' Investing for Health Partnerships, has already been held with representatives from the voluntary, community, statutory and private sectors together with relatives of bereaved families.

These offered a much-needed platform for groups and representatives to raise awareness of what is currently being undertaken and what requires further attention as a matter of immediate urgency.

High up on the list of priorities to emerge were concerns around more support for families; greater involvement of the community and voluntary sector; better coordination between all who have a role to play or a contribution to make; more resources and efforts to reduce the stigma around the issue and the need for better training and engagement of professionals including GPs.

The Taskforce is also planning to host a major international conference which will be held in Belfast on 25 August to further explore the issues and evidence base around suicide prevention.

Also over the summer months it will be undertaking a number of additional tasks, which include meetings with representatives of the political parties, churches and voluntary groups and other interested organisations and individuals.

The Taskforce has been asked to provide an interim report to the Minister by 31 October 2005 and a final report by the end of the year including a costed regional action plan.

Breastfeeding scheme receives a warm welcome



Celebrating the success of the 'Breastfeeding welcome here' scheme in Celebs sandwich bar is proprietor Ciaran Milligan, pictured with Michele Crooks and baby Patrick. Breastfeeding mums can look out for a window sticker and certificate on the premises of businesses that welcome breastfeeding mums.

For more on this story, see inside.

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

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- Investing for Health conference: papers sought
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 - Health promotion diploma in focus
 - Work Well gains national platform



**Health
Promotion
Agency**

HLCs reviewed at regional networking event

More than 50 delegates recently attended a regional networking event for Healthy Living Centres (HLCs).

Held during late June in the picturesque surroundings of the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, the event allowed stakeholders to review the impact of the HLCs to date and the challenges they now face especially in relation to sustainability.

This networking event was organised by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA), which is responsible for the development of a three year training and support programme for the 19 HLCs across Northern Ireland.

HLCs target the most disadvantaged sections or groups of the population and address the wider determinants of health and health inequalities, such as social exclusion, lack of access to services and socioeconomic deprivation.



Pictured at the Healthy Living Centres networking event are, from left: Alison Wightman, Community Change; Naomi McCay, HPA; Claire Keatinge, Age Concern; Kathy Ayers, Big Lottery Fund; Aodhan O'Donnell, HPA, and Breidge Gadd, Big Lottery Fund.

Applications sought for Advanced Diploma in Health Promotion

A part-time course leading to the Advanced Diploma in Health Promotion is to commence this September.

Applications are now being sought for the two year course, which is to be held in the Belfast Institute's Gerald Moag Campus at Millfield.

Validated by the University of Ulster, the advanced diploma aims to provide a coherent programme of study which facilitates the professional development of the students. It will enable them to apply health promotion theory strategically in their own practice and foster the development of enquiring, socially aware attitudes.

The course consists of six modules, three of which are studied in each year. Successful students will be eligible to seek entry to Level 3 (ie final year modules) of a number of degree programmes at the University of Ulster.

The theory and practice of health promotion, communication and research for practice are covered in the Year 1 modules.

The Year 2 modules include planning health promotion interventions, health promotion and public policy, and the psychology of health and illness.

The course runs from September to May and the entry requirement is a recognised professional qualification in an area relevant to health promotion.

It carries 120 CATS points at Level 2 (60 credits per year).

For additional information, contact the director of the course, Patricia Quinn at the Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education, College Square East, Belfast BT1 6DJ.

Tel: 028 9026 5057, Email: pquinn@belfastinstitute.ac.uk (or speak to the secretary, Tel: 028 9026 5037).

HPA training programme on course for success

Some of the popular courses run by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) have been scheduled to take place again later this year.

The Design for Living partnership, comprising Action Mental Health, the Youth Council for Northern Ireland and the HPA, has organised a rerun of their seminars on young people and self-esteem.

The three seminars, each with a slightly different focus, are being planned for the following dates:

- Child and adolescent mental health, 22 September 2005;
- Young people and relationships, 15 December 2005;
- Young men and self-esteem, 7 March 2006.

Dates in November and December have been planned for another important course, Changing health behaviour: principles and practice of motivational interviewing.

Scheduled for 7–8 November 2005 and 5–6 December 2005, this four day workshop has been designed to address the issues of health behaviour change. It aims to equip participants with a basic knowledge of the principles and practical skills of motivational interviewing.

Further information on these training events and an online booking form is available from the HPA website www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk in the events and training section or contact Claire Hind, Tel: 028 9031 1611.

All-island breastfeeding conference a great success

Several hundred delegates recently attended a high profile conference, 'Breastfeeding really matters'.

Organised by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) and the Republic of Ireland's Health Promotion Unit, the event took place in the prestigious surroundings of Belfast's Waterfront Hall.

This all-island event attracted 320 individuals from Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and from Great Britain.

The conference targeted health professionals, peer support mothers and representatives of voluntary breastfeeding support groups.

The key speaker, Dr Nils Bergman from South Africa, was extremely well received. In his talks, Dr Bergman detailed the science behind the development of the newborn baby's brain and explained how separation and stress can adversely affect the developing brain.

He stressed the importance of early 'skin to skin' contact and of breastfeeding for the wellbeing of babies.

This proved to be new information to many of those attending and was fascinating as it has implications for how newborns and particularly premature babies are cared for.

Other speakers included Dr Peter Blair a Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Epidemiologist from Bristol; Professor Stewart

Forsyth from Dundee; Margaret O'Leary from Limerick Hospital and Brigid Dougan of Homefirst Trust.

The event also raised the public profile of breastfeeding with significant media coverage including interviews with Dr Bergman on both BBC Radio Ulster and the UTV news. Local radio station, Citybeat also featured an interview with the HPA's Regional Breastfeeding Coordinator, Janet Calvert.



Pictured at the breastfeeding conference are, from left: Claire Kelly with baby Jorja; Dr Nils Bergman, Senior Medical Superintendent at Mowbray Maternity Hospital, Cape Town, and Janet Calvert, Regional Breastfeeding Coordinator, HPA.

Food for thought on maternal and child nutrition

A stimulating programme has been developed for a forthcoming conference on nutrition for mothers and their children.

Run by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA), the 'Maternal and child nutrition' conference is geared to meet the needs of allied health professionals, including dietitians, paediatric nurses, health visitors and midwives. It takes place on 25 October 2005 in the King's Hall, Belfast.

Dr Judith Hilton from the Food Standards Agency will talk about food safety during pregnancy and lactation while Dr Tony Williams, a senior lecturer at St George's, University of London, will present new evidence relating to weaning.

Dr Andrew Hill from Leeds University School of Medicine will outline influences on eating behaviour, such as how parents' attitudes to food can affect their children. Local speakers have also been invited to share their work.

The primary aim of this conference is to update and inform health professionals who provide nutritional information to expectant parents and young families on recent new guidance in relation to maternal and child nutrition.

For more information about attending the conference, contact Laura Donnelly at the HPA, Tel: 028 9031 1611 or Email: l.donnelly@hpani.org.uk

Flu immunisation campaign gets an autumn launch

The DHSSPS will launch its flu immunisation programme during October 2005.

The Health Promotion Agency (HPA) will support this programme through the implementation of a public information campaign to raise awareness about the benefits of the flu vaccination and to encourage those who are eligible to get their flu jab. As well as anyone aged over 65 years, those eligible for the flu vaccine include children and adults who have a serious medical condition including a chronic chest or heart condition, chronic kidney or liver disease and diabetes.

Children whose immunity has been lowered due to disease or treatment such as steroids or cancer therapy are also eligible

along with children who have previously been admitted to hospital with a chest infection.

Anyone who is living in a nursing or residential home and those people who are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person are also eligible.

The HPA's public information campaign will include television advertising.

Printed materials, including posters and leaflets, will also be developed to support health professionals involved with the immunisation campaign. The flu vaccine will be available in October and November 2005.

UNICEF baby friendly workshops held

The Health Promotion Agency (HPA) has hosted two UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) workshops.

The workshops, entitled 'Auditing practices to support breastfeeding' and 'Delivering in-house breastfeeding education' were facilitated by Sue Ashmore, Deputy Programme Director and Carmel Duffy, Professional Officer for UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative.

Delegates included breastfeeding coordinators, audit personnel, Sure Start Coordinators and health visitors and midwives involved in breastfeeding education.

The primary aim of the audit workshop was to equip participants to carry out an effective audit of breastfeeding practice within their own Trusts and compare audit results against BFI best practice standards.

The education workshop was aimed at enabling participants to plan and deliver effective in-house breastfeeding training for health care workers, in preparation for 'baby friendly' accreditation.

'Breastfeeding welcome here' scheme success (see front cover photo)

A range of catering outlets and other businesses in Northern Ireland are proving to be strong supporters of breastfeeding mums.

During May 2005 the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) launched a new scheme entitled 'Breastfeeding welcome here' which promotes locations such as shops, cafes and restaurants where mums are welcome to breastfeed their baby when they are out and about. All the businesses that join the scheme will display a window sticker and certificate stating 'Breastfeeding welcome here'.

Over 70 businesses throughout Northern Ireland have requested more information and 16 businesses are currently going through the process to become full members and be listed on the regional breastfeeding website www.breastfedbabies.org

The 'Breastfeeding welcome here' scheme is being supported by the HPA and the Northern Ireland Breastfeeding Strategy Implementation Group.

For more detailed information on the scheme, please visit www.breastfedbabies.org or email c.crossan@hpani.org.uk

Physical activity for older people highlighted

An exhibition of images taken from programmes developed and delivered through the Age Concern Northern Ireland/Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland partnership programme 'Actively Ageing Well' will be on display from 26 September to 20 October 2005 at the Waterfront Hall, Belfast. The exhibition has been designed to provide positive, inclusive and challenging images of older people engaged in physical activity. The photographs show clearly that there is enjoyment to be had from physical activity and from being part of the thriving network of community and older people's groups across Northern Ireland. For further information please contact Debra McVicker, Age Concern Northern Ireland on 028 9024 5729 or send an email to dmcvicker@ageconcernni.org

Papers sought for next IfH conference

A 'call to share' has been issued inviting papers for presentation during workshop sessions at the forthcoming 'Challenges and opportunities' conference.

This is the second regional Investing for Health (IfH) conference and is due to take place on Thursday 17 November 2005 at the Radisson Roe Hotel, Limavady.

Aodhan O'Donnell, Senior Manager responsible for public health at the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) explained: "A key aim of the conference is to provide an opportunity for those delivering upon the goals and objectives of *Investing for Health* to share their experiences.

"By inviting papers for presentation during the conference workshop sessions we will provide an insight into lessons learned to date and provide a means of informing one another of the different approaches used," he said.

Separate morning and afternoon workshops will each comprise four parallel sessions. Within each of these sessions, three papers, each 15 minutes long, will be presented followed by a discussion for 20 minutes and a plenary session.

- The morning session will link the first two conference themes of engaging people, communities and organisations and of building networks and partnerships.
- The afternoon session will then look at the second two conference themes of measuring outcome, impact and effect and of mainstreaming agendas, priorities and action.

Anyone wishing to have a paper considered for presentation at the conference workshops should submit a summary abstract. More information and guidance on submitting abstracts is available on the conference website www.ifhconference2005.net

The closing date for submission is 2 September 2005.

Board meeting

The next meeting of the Board of the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) will be on Wednesday 10 August 2005. The meeting will take place at 3.30pm at the HPA offices, 18 Ormeau Avenue, Belfast BT2 8HS. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Corporate strategy for HPA nears completion

A new corporate strategy for the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) is nearing completion. The document entitled *Strategic direction* will outline the direction and context of the HPA's work until 2008. Publication and distribution of the document is expected to take place in September when it will be available as both a PDF on the HPA corporate website and as a printed document, available from the HPA upon request.

International focus on healthy hospitals

Over 600 delegates from 40 countries recently attended one of the largest conferences on health promoting hospitals held to date.

Delegates from Northern Ireland benefited from networking with colleagues locally and from across Europe and were introduced to experiences and innovative ideas from around the world.

Held during May in Dublin, the all-island Health Promoting Hospitals conference took as its theme 'Empowering for health: practicing the principles'.

The World Health Organization, the two cross-border networks of Health Promoting Hospitals (HPH) and the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) were among the organisers of the event, which focused on how to empower hospital staff and patients to better manage their health.

Dr Naresh Chada, Senior Medical Officer, gave the welcoming address on behalf of the DHSSPS and both he and HPA Chief Executive, Dr Brian Gaffney, chaired key plenary sessions.

Six local presentations successfully came through the scientific committee's stringent and competitive review process:

- Anne-Marie Doherty (Causeway HSST) 'Improving working lives for staff';
- Jennifer Reynolds (Mater Hospital Trust) 'Meaningful day';
- Janet Sinnerton (Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust) 'Pulmonary rehabilitation';

- Noreen Baxter (Mater Hospital Trust) 'Patient empowerment in COPD';
- Karen Cunningham (Greenpark Healthcare Trust) 'The EFQM excellence model to create a latex safe environment';
- Lorna Hastings (Arts Care) 'Arts in health empowering patients and staff'.

The book of abstracts will be available soon on the following website, <http://www.univie.ac.at/hph/dublin2005/>

The 14th International Conference on Health Promoting Hospitals will take place in Palanga, Lithuania on the 24–26 May 2006. For more information contact the Lithuanian HPH network by email at: hphconference2006@kmu.lt



At the recent Health Promoting Hospitals conference in Dublin are, from left: Chris Fitzgerald, Department of Health and Children; Sean Power, Minister of State, Department of Health and Children; Dr Mila Garcia-Barbero, WHO and Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive of the HPA.

BBC Big Challenge: Working your way to health

The BBC Big Challenge is an ambitious campaign to encourage people at work to take small steps towards a healthier, fitter and more rewarding lifestyle.

The BBC Big Challenge has produced a booklet which advises employers and employees on how they can improve their health and performance at work. The Health Promotion Agency's healthy workplace initiative, Work Well, has several case studies from Work Well businesses featured in the publication.

As part of the campaign the BBC is running an award scheme from now until the end of December which aims to celebrate:

- employers who are already switched on to the importance of health in the workplace;
- unsung heroes in the workplace who go out of their way to inspire, encourage and cajole their colleagues to lead healthier and fitter lives;
- employers who rise to the challenge this year and make health in the workplace one of their top priorities in 2005 and beyond.

For more information on the campaign and how to get an information pack visit the BBC website at: www.bbc.co.uk/bigchallenge/healthyworkplace/

Social capital in focus: Connections for health

The Health Promotion Agency (HPA), in partnership with Age Concern, developed the Actively Ageing Well initiative with Big Lottery funding for a five year period from 2002. Actively Ageing Well provides a range of training, physical activity programmes and networking events designed to promote and develop opportunities for older people to increase the range and amount of physical activity undertaken.

The partnership has recently produced a report *Connections for Health* which summarises research reviewing the impact of the initiative on social capital in the communities where it took place. The research applied the new social capital outcome indicators developed by the Department of Social Development, through Community Evaluation Northern Ireland, as a means to test the impact of community development programmes on social capital.

Linda Barclay, the HPA's Director of Programme Development, explained: "In applying these indicators, the research identified social capital gains within and between communities, showing older people to be better networked, better informed and better skilled to make effective connections and make a positive contribution to society."

Connections for Health will be disseminated shortly.

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

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Congratulations to AHSM prize winner

The winner of the Association of Health Service Managers (AHSM) award for the 2004–2005 academic year has been announced as Gail Kerr.

The Health Promotion Agency (HPA) holds stewardship of the award, which was donated by the former Association of Senior Managers to fund health promotion with a specific focus on education for management in health.

Gail has been working as an oral health promotion facilitator for the past five

years. Within this role, she has been involved in facilitating improvements in the oral health of the Eastern Health & Social Services Board's population, particularly with regard to the very young and socially disadvantaged.

She achieved a very high academic standard in her studies and has also willingly shared her knowledge and experience of practice with other students.

The HPA extends its congratulations and wishes her every success in the future.

Working towards smoke-free hospitals

A successful workshop session that addressed the challenges of establishing and maintaining a smoke-free environment in a hospital setting was held recently.

Organised by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA), the event was aimed at helping senior hospital staff face the challenges of a smoke-free environment.

The workshop took place on 14 June at Loughry College, Cookstown, and included presentations by a variety of speakers.

Joe Travers from Sperrin Lakeland Trust talked about the tools available when implementing a smoke-free environment, while Lesley McDonald and Fiona Carroll

each shared their experiences of the steps they undertook to attain smoke-free status for the Ulster Hospitals and Community Trust.

Nikki Cinnamond, a smoking cessation specialist working in Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust, then discussed issues around a smoking cessation service in the acute setting.

Participants, who attended from all over Northern Ireland, were then given the opportunity for a round-table discussion which was very beneficial, producing a wealth of useful information. A report on the workshop will be available on the HPA website in late summer.

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



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 me, the editor, on r.kelly@hpani.org.uk or write to me at the editorial office below.

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www.drugsalcohol.info
www.smokefreenorthernireland.com
www.thesnackpack.net
www.up-2-you.net

Web are we now?

The breastfedbabies.org website has been updated to include details of the recently launched 'Breastfeeding welcome here' campaign.

Information is provided for both the public and interested businesses on how to join the campaign and contact details for businesses that have already pledged support.



Development of the Investing for Health conference 2005 website is currently full steam ahead and it is envisaged that the site will be launched shortly when you will be able to keep up to date with the latest conference news. The address is www.ifhconference2005.net

An improved contacts database is being developed on the drugsalcohol.info website which will allow users to search for specific services within their own geographical area.