

Inform

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August / September 2007

Up-2-You winners celebrate

The serious health effects that alcohol can have on young people have been highlighted through a competition run by the HPA.

Six out of 10 young people (aged 11–16) in Northern Ireland have had an alcoholic drink and research shows that the average age for young people to have their first drink here is 11 years.

The competition, run through our health website aimed at 11–14 year olds, www.up-2-you.net is a way of encouraging young people to learn the real facts about alcohol and dispel some of the myths that can circulate among this age group.

Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive of the HPA, said: "Young people need to be more aware of health issues so that they can make informed choices about their own health. They are more at risk from the effects of alcohol than adults because their bodies are still developing and they are less able to control their drinking, which may lead them to taking unnecessary risks.

"Alcohol can affect young people more quickly than adults and can cause damage to parts of the brain that control memory, learning and behaviour. In addition, alcohol is high in calories and can be a factor in unwanted weight gain. These are just some of the facts that young people may be surprised to learn on www.up-2-you.net "

Ten lucky winners were picked from a record number of over 3,600 competition entries. Prizes included iPod nanos, camera mobile phones and vouchers for a leading clothes or sports shop.

The next Up-2-You competition will be launched in the autumn.



Julie Neill, Health Development Officer at the HPA, with some of the Up-2-You competition prize winners.

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

INSIDE:

- New nutritional standards for school meals
- Research and evaluation review 2005–2006
- The settings approach – developments
- Training and events: September 2007–February 2008



**Health
Promotion
Agency**

New appointments



Dr Gillian Gilmore

Gillian has taken up the post of Health Intelligence Manager on a fixed term contract. She will manage a range of research, information development and evaluation activities in areas such as tobacco, nutrition and physical activity. Gillian previously held the post of Research and Information Officer in the HPA and prior to this worked as a Research Associate in the University of Ulster. She holds a BSc (Hons) in biomedical science and a PhD in health and life sciences from the University of Ulster.



Laura Hunter

Laura has joined the HPA as a Health Development Officer on a secondment basis. She will be working primarily in the areas of smoking and healthy workplaces. She previously worked for the Eastern Health and Social Services Board for six years as a Contract Officer and, more recently, as an Information Officer. She graduated from the University of Ulster with a BSc (Hons) in business.



Michael Johnston

Michael has joined the HPA as a Publications Officer on a temporary basis. An English and Politics graduate, Michael has spent over 12 years in the writing and editing business, with experience in editorial, publications and communications projects for public bodies. He co-owns and manages Editorial Solutions, a

Belfast-based agency that provides copywriting and editing support services to organisations throughout Ireland.

'Minding your head' website poster launched

A new poster is now available to promote the 'Minding your head' website, which is an integral part of the major public information campaign on mental health.

The poster will be widely distributed to health service providers, community support groups, educational institutions, public facilities, police stations and prisons. It promotes the message 'Everyone needs to look after their mental health' and encourages people to log on to www.mindingyourhead.info for mental health information and support advice.

Visitors to the site also have the opportunity to win £50 for submitting their comments via the feedback form.



Research and evaluation review

A summary report of HPA research activity during 2005–2006 will be available in August and offers researchers, health professionals and other professional groups an overview of the main findings.

Eight research and evaluation projects were completed. These included a training needs assessment of primary care health staff which examined access and use of IT to determine the feasibility of e-learning as a way forward for training provision.

Also included are key findings from the evaluation of the Smokers' Helpline, commissioned to determine the contribution and impact of the telephone helpline on the attempt to increase quitting activity and reduce smoking prevalence among adults.

Other projects completed included evaluation of the Work Well pilot initiative, a theatre in education project and an initiative aimed at increasing awareness of fuel poverty among frontline primary care staff. The report also includes a summary of the final stage of the evaluation of the 'Fresh fruit in schools' initiative and the annual evaluation report on 'Get active in the community cash grants awards 2005–2006'.

The results are used to measure effectiveness of our work as well as provide an evidence base for future work. The review will be available in print and as a PDF document.

Mental health update

The Northern Ireland suicide prevention strategy has identified depression awareness training for GPs and primary care staff as one of its priorities. Now additional training seminars for GPs are being organised in partnership with local trusts and the voluntary sector between September and December.

Five 'Train the Trainer' seminars are also planned for November to support the development of a whole practice approach to mental health promotion. For further details on these events contact Donna Beer at the HPA on 028 90 311611 or email d.beer@hpani.org.uk

NI Healthcare Awards

HPA Chief Executive Dr Brian Gaffney recently sat on the judging panel for the Smoking Cessation Project of the Year Award as part of the Northern Ireland Healthcare Awards for 2006.

GP Patricia Davidson won the smoking cessation award at the ceremony held in Belfast, in recognition of her practice's efforts to help as many patients as possible to stop or decrease their smoking. Patricia and her team have been providing smoking cessation services since 1990 when health promotion was introduced into general practice.

No Smoking Day 2007

The UK's annual No Smoking Day (NSD) took place on 14 March under the slogan 'Make a fresh start'. The HPA again provided funding to include Northern Ireland in the annual research to assess awareness of, and participation in, the event, which was the 24th NSD.

Questions were entered on a local omnibus survey, with 1,021 interviews carried out on a sample of adults aged 16 and over.

The evaluation found that 80% of respondents were aware of the NSD date, the same figure as last year and one that remains higher than the Great Britain figure (55%). Awareness was highest among 35–44 year olds (84%) and lowest for those aged 45 and over (78%). The greatest improvement in awareness observed was among the youngest age group, ie 16–24 years (80% in 2007 versus 75% in 2006).

Awareness remains high among smokers (88%), with the greatest awareness among those smoking 21 or more cigarettes per day (89%) and lowest among those smoking five or less per day (84%). Encouragingly, given the introduction of smoke-free legislation in Northern Ireland in April, the percentage of smokers who reported 'I like smoking and have no intention of stopping' has halved this year, with only 6% happy with their smoking status compared to 13% in 2006.

A PDF file of the summary evaluation report will be available soon on the HPA website.

HPA support continues for flu campaign

The HPA will again be supporting the flu immunisation programme with the print and distribution of a range of flu immunisation posters and information leaflets.

The posters and leaflets will be distributed to GPs, pharmacies, nursing and residential homes, and the central health promotion resource services in each of the local health and social services board areas.

Occupational health departments in each of the health and social care trusts will also have a supply of flu immunisation leaflets and posters.

Copies of the leaflets and posters will be available in the autumn as PDF files from the HPA website www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk



Health Promoting Hospitals conference

The fourth All Ireland Health Promoting Hospitals (HPH) conference 2007 takes place at the Armagh City Hotel on 23–24 October. Entitled 'The hospital without walls: a community asset', the conference will highlight the contribution of hospitals and the wider health services in improving the health of the population throughout the island of Ireland.

It is aimed at those involved in public health, health promotion, patient care, community development, hospital and healthcare governance, organisational development, quality, developing and/or implementing service frameworks and commissioning, as well as senior managers and planners.

Participants can expect to gain:

- a greater insight into the potential of the hospital setting in strengthening community action for health;
- the ability to build ongoing commitment to alliances and partnerships in promoting social responsibility for health;
- an understanding of how to implement the WHO/HPH health promotion standards;
- an understanding of the HPH concept;
- new contacts through networking opportunities.

Dr Blake Poland, an internationally renowned author and lecturer from the University of Toronto, will be a keynote speaker. Dr Poland has published numerous papers on theory and method in health promotion research.

His recent and ongoing research interests include community development as an arena of practice for health professionals, hospital/community collaboration, settings for public health practice, and the social context of collective lifestyle practices.

A dynamic conference programme is planned to promote learning, participation and information exchange. The programme offers a mixture of plenary, parallel and poster sessions, along with networking sessions on key areas of interest.

For further information, please visit the conference website www.hphconference2007.com



The settings approach

Focus on HLCs

The HPA is working closely with Healthy Living Centres (HLCs) to provide support on issues such as sustainability, raising their profile and increasing recognition of the services they provide and the impact they have within local communities. The support programme, funded by BIG, (the Big Lottery Fund), and developed over the past number of years, concludes in August.

Recognising the role HLCs play in supporting communities to improve health and tackle inequalities, the HPA has committed to partnership working beyond the conclusion of the support contract. This will build on the activities already developed and ensure a collaborative approach in working to address the challenges HLCs face.

An ongoing focus for the HPA is to provide support and to facilitate the development of the HLC Regional Alliance. The alliance, which was launched in Stormont in December 2006, provides the facility for collaboration, networking and joint working across all 19 HLCs.

The alliance also provides a voice for HLCs across Northern Ireland, a platform to raise issues, a channel to connect with stakeholders, and a vehicle for others to consult and engage with HLCs.

The alliance is increasingly the focus for collective action and informs the development of HLCs. Prior to the local Assembly elections, the alliance met with the five main political parties to begin a process of engagement and lobbying. This process is still continuing.

A core activity of the alliance is to recognise and reflect on the work developed over the past five years. This helps to inform the future direction of HLCs and influences the development of new structures and services. A celebration event held in April helped profile this work and allowed for a discussion on how the HLC 'model' can be maintained and developed within the new environment.

The importance of having a record of user views and feedback prompted the HLC Regional Alliance to produce a DVD containing a snapshot of the impact HLC activities have had on local communities and users.



At the HLC Celebration Event, from left, Siobhan Livingstone, Research Officer and Dr Leslie Boydell, Associate Director, Institute of Public Health in Ireland; Danny Power, Chairperson, Health Living Centre Alliance; Breidge Gadd CBE, Chairperson, Big Lottery Fund; and Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive, HPA.

Investing for Health conference 2007

The third Investing for Health (IfH) conference will take place on Wednesday, 5 December, in the Armagh City Hotel and will be entitled 'Sharing learning and informing the future of Investing for Health'.

Delegates will reflect on the broad spectrum of work contributing to achieving the goals and objectives of IfH whilst providing a timely opportunity to review the future direction of the *Investing for Health* strategy.

The conference seeks to build commitment and explore the opportunities that exist to ensure that the potential of IfH is fully realised by sharing the lessons and experiences of implementing IfH and encouraging debate about its future direction.

Further details on the conference, the programme and booking details are available on the conference website www.ifhconference2007.net

Healthy workplace training feedback

The four-day training course 'Creating healthy workplaces' took place at the Millennium Community Outreach Centre, Belfast, in June. The aim of the course was to equip participants with the skills and knowledge to either advise and support other organisations in creating healthy workplaces, or implement a programme within their own organisation.

Twelve people from a range of disciplines attended the training, including human resource managers, trade union representatives, health promotion specialists, environmental health officers, and health and safety advisers.



ach – developments

Building on the work of individual HLCs and networks, eg Belfast HLC Network, the alliance has continued to develop close relationships with statutory sector partners, in particular health structures. For example, the health and social services boards have played key roles in working alongside HLCs in developing services, providing ongoing support to HLCs and recognising the role they play in engaging local communities around key health issues.

Since their establishment, HLCs have undertaken continuous monitoring of their programmes and completed independent evaluations. In addition to this, the Institute of Public Health in Ireland (IPH), commissioned by the DHSSPS, undertook an evaluation of HLCs in Northern Ireland. The IPH reported the positive impact HLCs were having in providing services to local communities, engaging the 'hard to reach', building community capacity and impacting positively on the physical and mental health of regular users.

HLCs – moving forward

HLCs continue to look forward and seek to influence the development and delivery of services. The alliance will meet the chief executive of each new health and social care trust, and has also facilitated a 'HLC tour' in June for David Sissling, Chief Executive Designate of the HSCA.

The alliance is also finalising proposals to undertake a health economic study – as recommended in the Institute of Public Health evaluation report – to help profile them as a value-for-money initiative and an effective approach to tackling inequalities and improving health.

The alliance will also shortly publish a 'framework' document which sets out core principles and values underpinning the approach adopted by HLCs in tackling inequalities within local communities. The key characteristics and strengths contributing to the success of the HLC model will be highlighted as well as the opportunities which exist to further strengthen the HLC approach.

The alliance has agreed an ongoing plan of action for the remainder of 2007 which focuses on influencing, demonstrating impact, building the evidence base and continuing to develop the profile and value placed upon the work they undertake within local communities.



Members of the HLC Regional Alliance and the HPA meeting with David Sissling during his Healthy Living Centre tour.

The feedback was extremely positive with all participants rating the course as 'good' or 'very good'. Many of them reported they were now more confident about speaking to businesses about creating a healthy workplace. All of them felt the toolkit was a valuable asset in helping them plan and implement workplace health programmes.

The next course is scheduled to take place in October. For further details contact Sarah Reid at email: s.reid@hpani.org.uk

The training is based on the *Healthy workplace guide* developed by the HPA and which is available to download at www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/workwell/workwellworkplaceguide32006.htm

Healthy prisons conference report

The Northern Ireland Prison Service and the HPA held a joint conference in autumn 2006. The conference highlighted the transfer of lead responsibility for prison healthcare to the health service, and provided the opportunity to consider the settings or "whole systems" approach to health improvement supported by *Investing for Health*.

This approach calls for comprehensive and integrated programmes of action which consider the inter-related nature of health risk factors, and tackle issues at a personal and organisational level.

The key speakers' presentations, along with abstracts of the parallel sessions have been collated into a report which is now available as a PDF file on the HPA website at www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/alliances/prisonsreport.html



Prison-based health promotion provides access to a hard-to-reach group and prisons are also workplaces with unique opportunities to support workers' health.

The report will add to the knowledge base of tackling inequalities in health at policy and operational levels.

The settings approach – developments (cont'd)

Healthy schools toolkit

A healthy school is one in which all members of the school community work together in a planned way to promote health and wellbeing. It is based on a whole school approach and adopts a process of self-evaluation and action planning.

A healthy school aims to do this in three key elements of work that are also important for school development planning:

- ethos and environment;
- quality of learning and teaching;
- quality of management.



Through the whole school approach, schools seek to promote and protect the physical, mental and social wellbeing of its whole community and achieve this by developing policies, practices and structures to underpin sustainable programmes of action. The HPA tested this whole school approach on 200 schools locally between 2002 and 2006 and a toolkit was subsequently developed that aims to support principals and staff to consider the elements that make a school a healthy place.

The toolkit and a number of case studies outlining this process are available on the HPA website.

HPA Healthy Settings Coordinator (Schools), Joan Murphy, has been meeting with representatives from the Eco-Schools Programme and extended schools to align the toolkit with other toolkits. She has also met with education and library board staff regarding support for healthy schools in Northern Ireland. Further information on healthy schools is available on the HPA website.

UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative conference

The UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative conference 'The world of breastfeeding: learning from each other' is coming to Belfast for the first time on 11–12 October. This event is the highlight of the breastfeeding calendar in the UK and usually attracts around 700 delegates.



The programme this year includes well-known internationally renowned experts in the area of infant feeding including Dr Peter Hartmann of Australia, Karin Cadwell and Cindy Turner-Maffei, USA, and Professor Mary Renfrew, University of York. For more information and to book a place go to www.babyfriendly.org.uk/conference or call 0870 606 3377.

Healthy eating book launched for schools

In an initiative supported by the HPA and the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland (FSANI), supermarket group J&J Haslett has launched a book for primary schoolchildren designed to convey the healthy eating message.

The Maceys annual school trip is written in language children can relate to, using fun characters to promote a serious message in a light-hearted, easy to understand way. The publication is part of a long-term strategy by J&J Haslett, to promote better health in Northern Ireland.

Tom Uprichard, Delivered Business Director, J&J Haslett, said: "The focus of the book is health promotion and, through our Maceys characters, features clear healthy eating and physical activity messages."

Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive of the HPA, said: "We know that children's eating patterns and their attitudes to physical activity can be shaped and influenced by parents, teachers and their peers. This exciting initiative provides a useful tool for the classroom to introduce and reinforce the messages about healthy eating and active living."

Maria Jennings, Head of Consumer Choice at FSANI, said: "As every parent knows, getting little ones to eat well can be difficult. The Maceys book marks a positive step towards improving children's diets, which is a key issue for FSANI!"

Almost 100 children attended the launch where they heard the story of *The Maceys annual school trip*. A total of 40,000 books will be distributed free of charge to every primary three class in Northern Ireland.



Morris McAllister, FSANI Director; Tom Uprichard, Delivered Business Director, J&J Haslett; and Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive, HPA; with two of the pupils at the event.

Sexual Health Week

Sexual Health Week, coordinated by fpa (Family Planning Association), runs from 6–12 August. This year's focus is on encouraging the use of condoms, a theme the HPA strongly supports. Recent local figures show an increase in sexually transmitted infections including HIV and AIDS. Further information is available on www.fpa.org.uk

Training and events: September 2007–February 2008

The events/training section on the HPA website www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk will be kept updated with further information. There will be an online booking facility for most events unless otherwise stated.

19 September–10 December Design for Living Partnership Young people and self-esteem seminars

19 September

Child and adolescent mental health, Simon Ward

2 October

Promoting mental health through physical activity, Ken Fox

7 November

Young men and self-esteem, Trefor Lloyd

10 December

Self-esteem and relationships, Dr Tony Humphreys

19–20 September and 11–12 October UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative

19 September

Audit workshop

20 September

'Delivering in-house breastfeeding education' workshop. For further information, contact Lesley Blackstock on 028 9031 1611 or email: l.blackstock@hpani.org.uk

11–12 October

Annual conference – 'The world of breastfeeding: learning from each other'. For further information, go to www.babyfriendly.org.uk



23–24 October 4th All Ireland Health Promoting Hospitals conference Armagh City Hotel

'The hospital with walls: a community asset' conference will explore the potential of, and the challenges for, hospitals and



communities, in order to build commitment and inform future work to reinforce hospitals as healthy settings. For more information, see the related article in this issue and the conference website www.hphconference2007.com

8–9 November and 6–7 December Changing health behaviour: principles and practice of motivational interviewing

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.

5 December 3rd Investing for Health conference Armagh City Hotel

This 'Sharing learning and informing the future of Investing for Health' conference will reflect on the broad spectrum of work contributing to achieving the goals and objectives of IfH whilst providing a timely opportunity to review the future direction of the strategy. It seeks to build commitment and explore opportunities to ensure that the potential of IfH is fully realised. Further details are available on the conference website www.ifhconference2007.net



15–16 January and 26–27 February 2008 Healthy settings: theory, policy and practice

For further information on this four day University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) accredited course which is taking place in Belfast, contact Claire Hind at email: c.hind@hpani.org.uk

Actively Older

The Actively Older project recently organised five training days throughout Northern Ireland for members of the Ageing Well Network. These sessions helped participants understand the risk management of events and activities with older people, and outlined five key steps to risk assessment. A good practice guide on *Risk and physical activity* was made available to members of the network. If your group is interested in joining the Ageing Well Network, contact Age Concern NI on 028 9024 5729.

Actively Ageing Well

The Actively Ageing Well initiative, funded by BIG (the Big Lottery Fund), hosted an event in May to highlight key points from the final evaluation of Actively Ageing Well conducted by Community Evaluation Northern Ireland (CENI). Key speakers included Evelyn Gilliland, CENI, and Bob Laventure, British Heart Foundation National Centre for Physical Activity and Health, Loughborough University. Bob was commissioned to develop a series of good practice factsheets for use by health and other professionals, and leaders of older people's groups.

These can be downloaded from the HPA or the Age Concern websites.

The Actively Ageing Well initiative finished in June and the learning and unmet need identified has been used to develop Ageing Well Reach. This three year project began in July and will benefit 1,200 older people from 40 older people's groups across Northern Ireland.

The project focuses on involving 'hard to reach' older people from rural and deprived areas, older men and smaller, emerging groups. It will deliver activities that encourage physical activity, good mental health and healthy eating.

Ageing Well Reach will be funded through the Big Lottery Reaching Communities' Northern Ireland programme. All the Ageing Well initiatives have been developed in partnership with Age Concern Northern Ireland.



Highlighting the factsheets are, from left, Bob Laventure, Loughborough University, Dr Brian Gaffney, HPA; and Alan Herron, Age Concern NI.

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'Resilience' theme for World Mental Health Day

The Mental Health Promotion Network plans to mark World Mental Health Day on 10 October with a series of events focusing on the theme of 'resilience'.

The network was established in November 2005 and is facilitated by the HPA. Membership includes representatives from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors involved in mental health promotion work throughout Northern Ireland.

The aim of the network is to share good practice, identify training needs, influence policy, update members, share information and offer professional support.

The HPA is supporting the initiative by providing funding for a keynote speaker to attend the events, which will take place on 8–9 October. The speaker, Dorothy Rowe, who is a clinical psychologist and author, will speak on the theme of resilience across the life span.

For further details on plans to celebrate World Mental Health Day in your area, contact:

- Belfast HSC Trust, Margaret Woods.
Tel: 028 9041 7455; Email: margaret.woods@belfasttrust.hscni.net or caroline.kelly@belfasttrust.hscni.net
- South Eastern HSC Trust, Esther Lynch.
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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.getalifegetactive.com
www.hphconference2007.com
www.ifhconference2007.net
www.knowyourlimits.info
www.mindingyourhead.info
www.spacetobreathe.org.uk
www.thesnackpack.net
www.up-2-you.net

New nutritional standards for school meals developed

The HPA has continued to work with the Department of Education (DE) to develop new nutritional standards for food in schools. The standards will be implemented from September.

Since last year's consultation by DE on the proposed revised standards. The HPA has been working with DE, the education and library boards, a dietetic manager representative, and the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland to finalise and agree the standards since last year's consultation by DE on the proposed revision.

The revised standards aim to encourage children and young people to make healthy food choices that will enhance and protect their health. The emphasis is on increasing the availability of fruit, vegetables, low fat starchy foods like potatoes, rice, pasta and bread, as well as reducing the amount of meat products that are high in fat and salt, and sugary and fatty puddings and desserts. The standards also focus on providing water, milk and fruit juices in preference to sugary and fizzy soft drinks.

To support this work, the HPA recently provided training, in partnership with community dietitians from the four health and social services board areas, on the Royal Institute for Public Health's diploma in nutrition and health for senior school meals staff. A further training course is being planned for the autumn.