

# Review of the Health Promotion Agency's annual short course programme

April 2000 - December 2001

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# Introduction

The Health Promotion Agency (HPA) is the only provider in Northern Ireland of an annual short course programme for health promotion at regional level. Courses and seminars provided in this programme are based on assessed need and are targeted at those who have a key role in promoting health in Northern Ireland, such as GPs, health visitors, social workers, teachers, nurses, health promotion specialists, as well as those from the community, voluntary and private sectors.

An annual training prospectus, outlining details of courses on offer, is published and distributed to over 3,000 individuals and organisations in the voluntary, community, statutory and private sectors within Northern Ireland.

The courses and seminars relate to the key priority areas identified by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and also to generic training for health promotion work. The programme changes from year to year and covers a range of topics: skills based courses; health topics; approaches to health promotion; the management of health promotion.

A system of quality assurance has been developed and particular emphasis is placed on the importance of providing this programme in partnership with other organisations and institutions. Since the programme was launched in 1996, 33 courses have been provided in partnership with other organisations and institutions, such as the fpaNI, the Ulster Cancer Foundation, University of Ulster and the Queen's University of Belfast. Where possible, courses carry accreditation and are endorsed through certification by the HPA.

On average the HPA has been offering between 15-20 courses each year. The courses are usually offered as multi-disciplinary training and fall into one of the following categories;

- skills based course, eg training for trainers;
- health topics, eg alcohol, nutrition;
- approaches to promoting health, eg motivational interviewing, community development;
- the management of health promotion, eg contract design, programme planning.

In 1999 the HPA commissioned research to evaluate the effectiveness of the short course programme in order to make recommendations for the future. The results from the research appear to suggest that positive changes to practice were made following training. Levels of satisfaction with the courses were in general high, and participants believed the courses met the stated objectives. Participants identified some barriers to the application of knowledge, namely management reluctance and lack of resources. Some recommendations for the way forward included using electronic media as a way of updating participants and providing useful, flexible resources, as well as the need to be more responsive to demand.

## Planning and implementation of the training programme

In order to be more responsive to the training and development needs of those working to promote health, the HPA changed the short course programme to cover two periods beginning in September 2000. This meant that two training brochures were produced within the year in order to reduce waiting time between needs analysis results and timetabling of courses and seminars. The current training periods are January-June and September-December.

The organisation and management of the short course and seminar programme is guided by the following principles:

- knowledge and research;
- best value;
- partnership;
- quality.

A needs assessment questionnaire is distributed biannually to over 3,000 individuals and organisations from statutory, community, voluntary and private sectors. Its aim is to identify the key training and development needs for practitioners in helping them to be more effective in their role. The questionnaire is a simple one, which does not require much time to complete, yet is very effective in identifying key areas for development. The data from these questionnaires is analysed and then used to inform the development of the next short course and seminar programme. A lead time of three months is given to allow sourcing and production of courses and seminars.

The HPA's health promotion work is driven by an evidence-based ethos. This is implicit at every stage in the production of the short courses and seminars, starting with the needs analysis which is carried forward at every stage and included in the end of course/seminar written evaluations.

The HPA's health promotion programme managers, who work in the key priority areas, are also well placed to research needs and provide information to inform the development of short courses and seminars. The HPA also uses its network of groups and organisations to assess need.

Extensive knowledge and sound research are also important in sourcing competent facilitators to conduct training and development programmes. The HPA has worked with many organisations since the inception of the short course programme. These partnerships have enabled the provision of focused, targeted programmes of training to a wide-ranging audience in helping to raise awareness and develop skills in promoting health.

A key objective of the short course and seminar programme is to provide knowledge and skills at best value to all our customers. The HPA achieves this by subsidising training, which in turn creates wider access.

The quality ethos is key to the organisation of the short courses and seminars. The HPA is an Investor in People organisation and the internal systems which drive staff development have been involved to create the framework necessary to manage an external programme of training and professional development. This includes the structures to support comprehensive needs analysis, researching programme design, marketing/advertising, delivery/presentation and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation is ongoing throughout the process, supporting the continuous improvement ethos.

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# A community development approach to health issues

26 February and 23 April 2001

Community development as an approach to promoting health is an area that was identified as a training need through needs analysis. The aim of this two day course was to explore the community development approach to health, using a training resource pack developed by the Community Development and Health Network. The pack covers 16 units related to community development as an approach to promoting health.

The HPA proposed that a “taster” session be adapted from the pack which could be delivered over two days and would give participants enough information to enable them to adopt such an approach in their workplace. A further course could then be developed incorporating the remaining units if a demand was identified through the post course evaluation.

The course facilitator was Kathy McMonies, an independent consultant and trainer with a background in community development in the health and education sectors, in England, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Sixteen delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds including general practice, community development, pharmacy, dietetics, health visiting, housing, podiatry, occupational health, education and health promotion.

A key finding from the post course evaluation highlighted the fact that the most useful aspects of this course appeared to be learning about the effectiveness of community development as an approach to promoting health.

When asked what impact this course will have on work practice, participants' comments included:

- *“Raised awareness of community development approach, which can be used when planning and implementing projects”.*
- *“Big impact, has given me the push to do something on community development”.*
- *“To challenge and change”.*

# Alcohol education and young people

5, 6 April 2000

The issue of 'teenage drinking' is one which has attracted wide publicity across Northern Ireland. Through the HPA's Alcohol programme, a knowledge gap was identified among professionals concerned about what they should be saying to young people about alcohol.

In response, this two day course was developed, the objectives of which were:

- to enable all the issues surrounding teenage drinking to be covered in depth;
- to examine the prevalence of teenage drinking in Northern Ireland;
- to look at the various education approaches and broader prevention strategies suitable for working with young children.

The course was facilitated by Rob Phipps, Regional Health Promotion Manager for Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs with the HPA.

Seventeen delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds including education, social work, nursing, youth work, community work and health promotion.

Key findings from the post course evaluation included:

- The feedback concerning the usefulness of the course was very positive, particularly with reference to opportunities for information sharing, networking and drawing on the experience of others.
- The course allowed exploration of ideas in order to develop practical application of techniques.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"It will be used to implement a programme of health issues for 16-19 year olds in the college setting".*
- *"Greater awareness of the needs of adolescents".*
- *"More clarity, fresh ideas and better working knowledge".*

# Concepts in physical activity: an introduction

25 October 2001

As part of the implementation of the Physical Activity Strategy for Northern Ireland, the Health Promotion Agency commissioned research to evaluate the knowledge and training needs of professionals in relation to physical activity and health. This research provided clear evidence of the need for training on a broad range of physical activity issues. This one day course addressed one area of need identified from the survey by offering participants a comprehensive introduction to the role of physical activity in health and an introduction to the theoretical concepts that underpin physical activity.

The course was facilitated by Dr Marie Murphy, who has been a lecturer in exercise physiology at the University of Ulster, Jordanstown for 10 years. She is also course director for the Northern Ireland Institute of Coaching Fitness Instructor Courses.

Fourteen delegates attended this course from a range of backgrounds including nursing, physiotherapy, physical activity coordinators, development officers and managers.

Key findings from the post course evaluation included the following:

- The feedback highlighted several areas of interest from the course including resistance training and the benefits of and barriers to physical activity.
- Also mentioned was the value of practical ideas on specific programmes and networking with others within the field.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"Self motivating for myself to continue and improve my drive to promote physical activity".*
- *"More confidence when trying to promote exercise to clients".*
- *"Hopefully to provide the framework for a strategy to be implemented in the near future".*



# ***Cook it!* Training for trainers**

**9 October 2001**

This short course was designed to train trainers in the delivery of the completely revised *Cook it!* programme.

*Cook it!* is a community-based nutrition education programme, which is ideal for use in a wide variety of settings, including mother and toddler groups, men's groups, groups preparing young people to leave residential care, sheltered accommodation for older people, hostels, Women's Aid groups and the rehabilitation of offenders.

The course was facilitated by Angela McComb, the HPA's, Regional Health Promotion Manager for Nutrition and three community dietitians: Ruth Balmer, Causeway Health and Social Services Trust; Claire Holmes, Sperrin Lakeland Health and Social Services Trust and Grainne McMacken, North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust.

Twenty eight delegates attended this course from a variety of backgrounds including nursing, education, catering, management, dietetics, childcare and healthcare.

Key findings from the post course evaluation include the following:

- The feedback concerning the usefulness of the course was very positive, particularly with reference to the usefulness of the pack and how it would enable delegates to initiate a *Cook it!* programme.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, many of the delegates expressed the opinion that the training and pack would be highly beneficial in influencing others within their workplace and provided them with valuable information to be shared with colleagues.

# Copyright and permissions

4 December 2001

Effective health promotion requires the integration of a wide range of skills. The successful dissemination of information has always been a key issue and over the last few years there has been an increasing interest in developing innovative ways of getting information to a range of groups. One option is through publishing information using a variety of media.

When written information is produced or reproduced it is important to be aware of the legal issues this involves. This concise one day course took participants through the essential aspects of editorial law. It provided an opportunity to find out what the important issues are, how to deal with copyrighted material and how to avoid potential problems.

The course was facilitated by Richard Balkwill, who has over 20 years' experience in educational and children's reference publishing, latterly as a publishing director at Heinemann.

Eleven delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds including publishing, management, research, environmental health and dietetics.

Key findings from the post course evaluation include the following:

- The feedback concerning the usefulness of the course was very positive, particularly with reference to copyright legislation, practical applications of theory, and an understanding of how to avoid problems with copyright issues.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"More aware of copyright issues. Very relevant to my work".*
- *"The course will be very helpful in ensuring that we are able to negotiate the correct agreements with other contributors (authors, photographers etc)".*

# Current Issues in Health Promotion: training for trainers

2, 3 May 2001

This two day introductory course was designed to train trainers in the delivery of Current Issues in Health Promotion, a training resource developed by the Health Promotion Agency in partnership with health promotion specialists to be delivered to multi-disciplinary groups of professionals who have a role in promoting health. It provides an excellent opportunity for professionals to update themselves by learning about changes in concepts and approaches to health promotion in recent years.

The course was facilitated by Breda Teahan, Area Health Promotion Manager of the Southern Area Health Promotion Department and Chris Totten, Health Promotion Coordinator of the Down Lisburn HSS Trust.

Eleven delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds including nutrition, physiotherapy, physical activity, education and health promotion.

Key findings from the post course evaluation include the following:

- The feedback concerning the usefulness of the course was very positive, particularly with regard to the chance to actually deliver sessions and the opportunity to see how others approached the subject.
- The course allowed exploration of the units and the development of the activities within the workshops.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"It will enable me to be a more effective trainer, communicator, professional".*
- *"It is good to have a tool/resource to take away for future reference".*
- *"Bring everything together! Consolidate the reason behind what we do".*

# Drugs and the family

3, 4 September 2001

This two day course aimed to equip participants with skills to support families experiencing drug-related problems. Adapted to suit the needs and experience of participants, the course covered the following areas:

- exploring family relationships and how they may be affected by drug use;
- understanding the needs of those in a relationship with a drug user and developing practical ways of addressing these needs;
- developing practical support and counselling skills.

The course was facilitated by Hywel Sims, the Chief Executive of ADFAM National, the national charity for the families and friends of drug users.

Fourteen delegates attended this course from a variety of backgrounds including drug therapy, drug education, youth work, drugs coordination and education.

Key findings from the post course evaluation include the following:

- The feedback concerning the usefulness of the course was very positive, particularly with reference to opportunities for information sharing, networking and drawing on the experience of others.
- The course highlighted the needs of all family members and how best to meet those needs.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"The importance of exploring the needs of the wider family without pre-judging the situation".*
- *"It has helped me gain a better knowledge of drug and family dynamics. This will benefit me as I train as an addiction counsellor".*

# Evaluation in the health promoting setting

21, 22 June 2001

This two day course aimed to equip participants with a sound knowledge of the principles and process of evaluation, with specific application to the health promoting setting.

Participants gained the appropriate research skills and confidence to effectively undertake evaluation and learned how to present and disseminate the findings. Day two provided the opportunity, through practical workshops, to reinforce the knowledge gained. Topics covered in the course included:

- What is evaluation?
- Approaches to evaluation
- Process evaluation
- Outcome evaluation
- Analysis of data
- Reporting and dissemination of findings

This course was jointly facilitated by Karen Casson and Paul Fleming. Karen lectures in research methods to postgraduate health promotion students at the University of Ulster at Jordanstown and has extensive research experience in the arenas of health, social care and housing. Paul coordinates health promotion at the University of Ulster at Jordanstown and has extensive experience of planning, implementation and evaluation of health promotion programmes in a range of settings.

Sixteen delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds including education, nursing, administration, community, research and health promotion.

Key findings from the post course evaluation highlighted the value of advance planning, adequate resources and setting objectives. The course also offered a good mix of theory and practice.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"Evaluation integral part of work. The course has laid the foundation to do this and also give me confidence to seek further resources to carry out effective evaluation".*
- *"Identify the importance of thinking clearly in relation to evaluation and not doing it for the sake of evaluation".*

# Involving young people: positive participation for health

12 November 2001

The importance and value of consulting with and involving young people in health promotion work is being increasingly recognised. This training course was designed to help candidates consider the benefits of encouraging the participation of young people in their work and to assist in thinking through the different levels involved in this process. The course was based on a planning and training resource entitled 'Positive Participation', that provided a 'tool kit' for getting started or reviewing practice.

The aims of this short course were:

- to explore the principles and practice of consulting and involving young people;
- to familiarise the participants with the 'Positive Participation' resource pack;
- to action plan - how to use the pack in participants' own settings.

The course was facilitated by Judith Emanuel, a lecturer in education for primary health care at the University of Manchester and also an independent consultant.

Eleven delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds including education, social work, nursing, oral health, health promotion and community development.

Key findings from the post course evaluation included the following:

- the importance of consulting and involving young people from the onset;
- methods used in collecting information and the pitfalls to avoid;
- the value of having an opportunity for informal conversation with the other delegates to gain insight into other professional roles.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"This course provided new and fresh ideas to work on in the future and people to contact for assistance, resources and networking".*
- *"Training manual will provide great resource in programme planning".*
- *"More awareness of the importance of consulting with young people".*

# Is consultation participation?

16, 17 May 2001

The Regional Strategy for Health and Social Wellbeing 1997-2002 states that commissioners and providers should continue to explore different approaches to involving users, and potential users of services, and their carers in the decision making process. In practice, consultation and participation have proven problematic for statutory agencies, voluntary bodies, community organisations and the public.

This two day course was developed to help participants design a process of participation when working to promote health. It provided information about effective, creative and sustainable consultative processes as well as skills in applying some tools and techniques.

The course was facilitated by Tara Haughian of Sustainable Northern Ireland Programme (SNIP).

Thirteen delegates attended the course from a variety of fields including health promotion, programme management, oral health and research,

Key findings from the post course evaluation included the following:

- It was widely agreed that the knowledge of the tools and the applicability was of great value.
- The course offered the delegates the opportunity to build confidence in using more creative approaches and at the same time alerted them to the pitfalls and dangers of carrying out participation exercises.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"This course will encourage me to become involved in and facilitate participative activities and give me confidence to guide and support others to do so".*
- *"Now aware of possibilities so improved confidence, new skills, personal development".*
- *"It will enable me to progress particular areas of work".*

# Is substance misuse becoming a gender issue?

6 March 2001

This seminar examined the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol among young females in Northern Ireland.

Recent prevalence data concerning the use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs among young people in Northern Ireland suggests that there are some specific gender issues which could be examined. This is particularly the case in respect of smoking among 15 and 16 year olds, but there would appear to be similar issues in respect of alcohol and illicit drugs.

The seminar addressed the following key areas:

- looking in more detail at the differences in substance use behaviour between young males and females in Northern Ireland;
- examining reasons for these differences;
- considering the implications of this in respect of participants' current and future work.

The seminar was facilitated by Rob Phipps, Regional Health Promotion Manager: Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs, for the Health Promotion Agency. Also contributing were Dr Rosemary Kilpatrick, Queen's University, Graduate School of Education; Naomi McCay, Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland; Dr Kieran McEvoy, Queen's University, Department of Criminology; Jorun Rugkasa, Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland and Richard Ives, EducaRI.

One hundred and twenty four delegates attended the seminar from a wide variety of backgrounds including education, law enforcement, medicine, research, youth work, drugs education, voluntary sector, health promotion and social work.

Some of the key findings from the post seminar evaluation are as follows:

- It was widely agreed the presentations were of great relevance as they included quality information, were well presented, and contained useful knowledge about the situation in Northern Ireland.
- The topic of solvent misuse was rated highly among delegates as a significant issue and one most were unfamiliar with the extent of use and the age group involved.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"Up-to-date information on preventative methods. Impact on health/social/psychological, especially solvent abuses/deaths/dangers".*
- *"Good application of how to approach different aspects of youth work".*
- *"There is a lot of information and contacts we can use as we are a community drug awareness project".*
- *"As a school nurse this will keep VSA and alcohol abuse uppermost in my mind while dealing with school kids".*
- *"I am involved in presenting anti-drugs talks and I will definitely use information received here today".*



# Lobbying for health

3 October 2001

Changes in government and in the funding climate in Northern Ireland have led to an increased need for people involved in health promotion to become skilled and confident in the art of lobbying.

This one day practical workshop addressed questions including:

- What is lobbying?
- Why should you lobby?
- When should you lobby?
- What could you lobby about?
- Who could you lobby?
- How should you lobby?

The course was facilitated by Suzy Swain, who has a background in management training, economic development, community development and most recently, community relations.

Thirteen delegates attended the course from a range of backgrounds including health promotion, community development, research and information, and education.

Key findings of the post course evaluation highlighted the complexities of lobbying, how to plan your action and aids to lobbying.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"More awareness of process of lobbying and recognition of how we lobby without realising it and how we can be more structured".*
- *"I hope to put some of the methods into practice, get my issues across".*
- *"It will allow for a more focused and I am certain a more effective campaigning ability".*

# Meeting the mental health needs of young people

11 December 2001

This one day workshop aimed to provide participants with a theoretical model underpinning positive mental health and suicide prevention, including assessment and intervention strategies.

At the end of this workshop participants had:

- examined current theory on mental health promotion with young people;
- explored strategies for intervention.

The facilitator for this course was Dr Peter Gallagher, who has spent almost 15 years specialising in child and adolescent mental health. He has been head of Specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services at Homefirst Community Health and Social Services Trust since 1989.

Twenty three delegates attended the workshop from a range of backgrounds including teaching, nursing, medicine, social work and occupational therapy.

Some of the key findings from the post course evaluation highlighted the importance of listening to young people and gaining information and the signs to look for in suicidal young people.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"It should help a lot in terms of understanding self-harm and other psychological problems in young people".*
- *"More aware of listening to the young person rather than jumping to conclusions".*
- *"Highlighted the difference in approach needed for children compared with adults".*

# Obesity and weight control: a major public health issue for the 21st century

15 February 2001

The increasing levels of both overweight and obesity are well documented. This is recognised as a major public health concern in Northern Ireland as in the rest of the United Kingdom and Ireland.

This one day seminar aimed to provide an overview of the topic of obesity in both children and adults. The speakers outlined the current theories relating to the development of overweight and obesity; how they can be measured and classified; the health and other consequences of being overweight or obese; and presented strategies for its prevention and management.

Eighty two delegates attended this seminar from backgrounds such as education, nursing, occupational health, health promotion, oral health, nutrition and dietetics, and cardiac rehabilitation.

This seminar was facilitated by Dr Susan Jebb, Dr Barbara Livingstone and Professor Andrew Prentice. Dr Livingstone is presently a Reader in Nutrition with the University of Ulster. Dr Jebb is a State Registered Dietitian with over ten years' experience in the field of nutrition research. Professor Prentice has recently moved to create the new MRC International Nutrition Group at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Some of the key findings from the seminar evaluation results showed:

- an overwhelming majority of delegates felt the management strategies and practical reinforcement of previous knowledge was of most value to them;
- the course offered up-to-date, relevant information and question time was beneficial to hear the views of those from a variety of professional backgrounds.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"A greater awareness of how to advise patients on how to manage problems with being overweight".*
- *"Made more aware of taking the lead to make all patients aware of lifestyle changes with perhaps less emphasis on diet and perhaps more emphasis on activity".*
- *"Development of obesity support service in my trust."*
- *"Up-to-date knowledge on which to base advice for teachers/nutritionists".*

# Physical activity and primary care: training for trainers

1 December 2000

As part of the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy, the Strategy Implementation Group commissioned a toolkit which includes information and resources and can be delivered through training to the primary care team in 1-2 hours. This one day course was developed to train trainers in the provision of information and skills to primary care teams. The toolkit looks at the role of physical activity in the programme of care in relation to coronary heart disease, asthma and diabetes. The course aimed to pilot the toolkit, and participants provided feedback on any amendments needed.

The course was facilitated by Len Almond, Director of the British Heart Foundation National Centre for Physical Activity and Health at Loughborough University.

Twenty six delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds including, health promotion, leisure, nutrition, general practice, health visiting and physiotherapy. Three participants attended from the Republic of Ireland.

The post course evaluation highlighted that the most useful part of the course appeared to be linking the specific medical conditions to the implementation of physical activity schemes.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"Provide opportunity to start setting up a GP referral scheme".*
- *"Gave me idea/direction to go".*
- *"Make me more aware of varying medical and emotional conditions".*
- *"It has given a broad view on ways that the importance of physical activity can be developed in primary care".*
- *"I thoroughly enjoyed the course mainly because it was an insight for me personally, leisure centre staff need to be made aware that all people who come through their doors may not be "fit" to undertake all or indeed any of their prescribed fitness routines. Much more awareness and flexibility needed. Sure after today that our centre is not as "user friendly" as we thought".*

# Physical activity, nutrition and bone health

4 May 2000

Osteoporosis is a major health issue for Northern Ireland. Research conducted through the HPA's Physical Activity and Nutrition programmes highlighted the need for a training programme focusing on bone health. This one day course was designed in response to this identified need, the objectives of which were:

- to highlight the role of lifestyle interventions in optimising bone health at different stages of the life cycle;
- to address ways in which research findings and recommendations can be translated into practical advice for maintaining and improving bone health in different client groups.

The course was facilitated by Katherine Brooke Wavell, a lecturer in Human Biology at Loughborough University with whom the HPA has been working in partnership for a number of years.

Nineteen delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds including physical activity, nutrition, physiotherapy, nursing and health promotion.

Some of the key findings from the post course evaluation are as follows:

- The most useful part of the programme appeared to be in highlighting the inter-relationship between bone health, physical activity and nutrition.
- The research was highlighted as useful in helping to increase knowledge about the key facts surrounding this health issue.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"Consolidate knowledge and reinforce practical skills re advice on prevention".*
- *"Further knowledge on physical activity enables me to be more specific with patients' needs".*
- *"I feel informed enough to be aware of problems and implement help".*
- *"Help me promote prevention of osteoporosis".*

# Practical applications of motivational interviewing to influence health

7 November 2000

Motivational interviewing is an area which health promotion specialists, and others who work to promote health, had identified as a training need in research conducted during 2000. It has been proven to be a very effective method of intervention to help clients to progress through the change cycle and to adopt healthier behaviours. Whilst the process of becoming fully trained in motivational interviewing is a lengthy one, this course was developed to provide participants with an appreciation of the underlying principles of motivational interviewing as well as some techniques that could be incorporated into their everyday practice.

Prior to attending this course, participants were asked to record a real-life discussion with a client, transcribe it and submit it to the facilitator, in order to explore and demonstrate the application of motivational interviewing strategies.

The course was facilitated by Jeff Allison, who trained under Dr Stephen Rollnick, one of the originators of motivational interviewing. Jeff has extensive experience in the field of addiction, using motivational interviewing as a technique for intervention.

Thirteen delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds including nursing, social work, psychology, psychiatry, dietetics and health promotion.

The post course evaluation highlighted the fact that all aspects of this course were very useful. The role-play and demonstration of motivational interviewing techniques through practice proved useful for participants to gain practical skills to use in the workplace.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"Will potentially influence my work in relation to smoking".*
- *"Develop emphatic, non-confrontational style".*
- *"Will use to develop new training approaches".*
- *"I feel I need more training and will strive to get this. This will form a basis for further training".*

# Securing resources

19 October 2000

Funding has become an issue of increasing importance in Northern Ireland, not only for those in the community and voluntary sectors but also for those employed in health and social services. The HPA has a key role in promoting the development of partnership working between community, voluntary and statutory sectors to promote health at all levels. Research carried out through training needs analysis identified a gap in training for professionals around the issue of securing funding that will ensure the sustainability of projects.

This one day course was designed in response to this need. Its objective was:

- to help participants manage the process of securing resources by addressing administrative elements, finance, management of information and joint funding approaches.

The course was facilitated by Stevie Johnston, the then Project Manager with the Workers Education Association, with whom the HPA has established a strong partnership through its Alliances for Health Programme.

Eighteen delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds including environmental health, health promotion and the voluntary and community sectors.

The post course evaluation showed that the most useful parts of the programme were:

- learning centred on the practicalities of preparing funding proposals;
- good practice techniques;
- networking opportunities; and
- the resources provided in the form of an information pack to guide preparation of proposals.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"I feel more confident now in talking about funding".*
- *"I will have more confidence when undertaking completion of a funding application".*
- *"Enable me to put better applications together with partner organisations".*

# Settings for health

27 November 2001

The move to a settings approach in health promotion presents particular challenges to health promotion specialists and health promoters. There is an increasing need to underpin programmes with adequate needs assessment and evaluation. This course aims to explore the development of a research culture by addressing research approaches which facilitate a sound evidence-based approach to health promotion in a range of settings.

The course was designed to provide participants with:

- an introduction to health promotion settings;
- an understanding of how research can enhance work in health promotion settings;
- an introduction to effective research approaches for work in health promotion.

The facilitators for this one day course were Paul Fleming and Karen Casson. Paul Fleming has headed health promotion at the University of Ulster since 1992. He has extensive experience in health promotion both as an academic and a health promotion specialist. Karen Casson lectures in research methods to postgraduate health promotion students at the University of Ulster at Jordanstown. She has extensive research experience in the arenas of health, social care and housing.

Eleven delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds such as dietetics, health promotion, community development, counselling and management.

Some of the key findings from the post course evaluation are as follows:

- The feedback concerning the usefulness of the course was very positive, particularly with reference to the need for a strategic approach to research, research methods for different situations and the importance of building evaluation into the start of projects.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"It has given me a good overall view of research which will have impact on deciding what ways to proceed with areas in work which can be evaluated".*
- *"It will enable me to consider carefully the requirements inherent in quality research and analysis of qualitative and quantitative information".*



# Smoking cessation: guidelines for professionals in helping clients to stop smoking

1 November 2001

In 2001 almost 3,000 people in Northern Ireland will die from smoking related disease. The average loss of life expectancy is around 16 years. Around 29% of adults in Northern Ireland currently smoke, and at least 70% of them want to stop. The challenge for the primary care sector is to provide effective support to patients in order to help them stop smoking.

This seminar looked at the issue of smoking cessation and its implications for professionals involved in helping people stop. It introduced a range of innovative techniques that have been successfully used to support smokers who want to give up.

The afternoon session of this seminar was facilitated by Rob Phipps of the Health Promotion Agency, Cathy Pielou of the Eastern Health and Social Services Board, Fiona McConnell of the Northern Health and Social Services Board, Louise Hynes of the Southern Health and Social Services Board, Mark McBride of the Western Health and Social Services Board and Gerry McElwee of the Ulster Cancer Foundation.

Dr Chris Steele facilitated the evening session. Dr Steele has pioneered a series of successful techniques to help clients stop smoking. He is the resident doctor on the popular 'This Morning' television show where he regularly appears to provide medical advice to viewers.

Forty nine delegates attended the seminar from a wide variety of backgrounds including nursing, medicine, education, oral health, health promotion, specialist cardiac medicine and smoking cessation coordination. Some of the key findings from the post course evaluation highlighted the usefulness of finding out about the variety of projects and work being carried out in Northern Ireland and a better understanding of how programmes are managed and analysed.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"Finding out what has been happening in other boards will encourage me to possibly use some of their ideas in my area of smoking cessation".*
- *"Very good information gained about what is happening around the province regarding smoking cessation".*
- *"Given me contacts to use for further information regarding smoking cessation issues".*

# The skilled facilitator

11, 12 December 2000

The need for skills in facilitation and training were identified in the needs analysis. The HPA identified this course through the Health Education Board for Scotland (HEBS), which had run the course on previous occasions. The two day course was aimed at supporting those who work to improve health and increase their effectiveness in facilitating learning. It focused on the identification of personal processes in facilitating groups in order to utilise the experiential learning cycle to achieve success.

The course was facilitated by Vincent Maguire, a training and development consultant with a background in the community and voluntary sector. He is experienced in management and training on economic development projects.

Although this course was offered in response to the needs analysis, the attendance was relatively poor. Only seven attended, some applicants having cancelled at the last moment. Participants came from health promotion and community sector backgrounds.

The post course evaluation highlighted the usefulness of the course in terms of linking theory to practice.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *'Better awareness/understanding.'*
- *'Application of model in practical group work setting, with a view to increased confidence as facilitator and to transfer this to the group also.'*
- *'I gained some very helpful insights into personality types and behaviours, which I can use in all aspects of my work.'*

# Training for trainers in stress management

9, 10, 11 April and 4, 5, 6 June 2001

The importance of teaching stress management in the workplace is becoming increasingly recognised, as is the need for appropriately qualified trainers. This Oxford, Cambridge and RSA (OCR) Examination Board Certificate in Stress Management was designed to help participants develop the skills and competence to carry out stress management training. It also aimed to provide a good basic understanding of the causes and physiology of stress; stress related problems, alleviation methods and coping strategies.

Basic communication, presentation and teaching skills were included to enable successful participants to run stress management groups or carry out in-house stress awareness training. This course is delivered in two modules, of three training days each, with an interval of approximately six weeks between modules.

The course facilitators were Marion Tyler and Jane Thomas. Marion Tyler has served on the Executive Committee of the International Stress Management Association (ISMA) for more than seven years and is an active member of the ISMA Validation of Trainers Committee. Jane Thomas is the Senior Cardiac Rehabilitation Sister involved in the education of cardiac patients and their relatives.

Fifteen delegates attended the training session from backgrounds such as education, nursing, training, occupational health, health and safety, and mental health.

Some of the key findings from the post course evaluation are as follows:

- The feed back from the course was extremely positive, highlighting the value of practical, useful information delivered in a professional, helpful manner.
- The training manual was very thorough and well presented.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"It will have a huge impact on me implementing programmes into my organisation and it had a positive impact on me personally".*
- *"It will change day to day self management and potential to contribute at strategic planning level".*
- *"Confidence and accreditation to carry out programmes".*

# Training for trainers: stage I and II

## 24, 25 April and 22 May 2001

This three day course aimed to enhance the training skills of those involved in health promotion. Participants explored how people learn, the impact of learning styles on training, the process of identifying needs and contracting training. Participants had the opportunity to develop and put into practice the skills necessary for planning and designing effective courses.

They also practised the skills for managing and presenting a training session, and considered the processes and strategies for feedback and evaluation.

The course was facilitated by Mike Smith who has been a senior training consultant with CCDU Training and Consultancy Ltd for many years.

Fourteen delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds including education, oral health, training, management, community development and health promotion.

Key findings from the post course evaluation included the following:

- The feedback received from the evaluations of both sessions was very positive, with particular reference to the relevance of subject material and how it will affect future planning.
- The course addressed common problems and situations with practical solutions.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"Better understanding of learning needs that I will take into consideration when working with groups"*.
- *"Greater expertise/confidence in contracting/planning and training"*.
- *"A lot of ideas and tips about how to meet the needs of participants and contractors as well as clear and practical information about design and delivery"*.

# Using focus groups in a community setting

20 November 2000

The use of focus groups is a very effective method of obtaining information to inform research in a variety of settings. This skills based course was designed in response to results from the HPA's needs analysis exercise. The community setting was highlighted in particular through the needs analysis.

The course was a comprehensive induction to focus group research and aimed to provide skills to those who conduct focus groups in the community as part of their health promoting role, as well as those who commission focus group research. The aim of the course was to provide participants with the skills and confidence to use focus groups, and to communicate effectively when commissioning research. Participants were also given the opportunity to experience being part of a focus group.

The course was facilitated by Yvonne Barlock and Alan Ross. Yvonne is an independent consultant with a background in qualitative research and has published widely on a variety of subjects including smoking, diet and exercise. Alan Ross is also an independent research consultant with a background in communications and health.

Twenty four delegates attended the course from a variety of backgrounds in the statutory sector, including health promotion, research and social work.

The post course evaluation highlighted the fact that it was very useful, specifically the practical application of using focus groups.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"I am taking away a lot of relevant information".*
- *"I hope to facilitate focus groups and now have the background information about how to go about it".*
- *"Can improve on nitty gritty aspects - will be more imaginative - confident in doing it correctly".*
- *"A big impact. I will be conducting focus groups with both workers and clients and have never done this before - very useful".*
- *"I will now have a methodology to apply in conducting focus groups and some very good practical guidelines and good planning techniques".*

# Young men's health promotion: issues and approaches

16, 17 October 2001

This two day course was designed to address the key issues affecting the promotion of men's health and to explore effective approaches for intervention. The course aimed to investigate the implications for professionals in their practice, and to help participants develop the skills and confidence to work to promote men's health.

The course was facilitated on day one by Matt Crozier of YouthAction Northern Ireland. He has extensive experience delivering training and support to those wishing to develop their skills and knowledge in work with young men.

The second day was facilitated by Georgie McCormick who is currently manager of services and training with fpaNI.

Nine delegates attended the course from backgrounds such as nursing, sexual health promotion, education and counselling.

The post course evaluation was very positive. The findings indicated the value of knowing how to engage young men in a positive way, the practical ideas and resources used during the course and planning programmes for young men.

When asked what impact this course would have on their work practice, participants' comments included:

- *"More informed decision making and more effective programme planning"*.
- *"Practical ideas for work"*.
- *"A raised awareness of the needs of young men when working in a group situation"*.

# Training and professional development in 2002 - 2003

Following the HPA's review of the management of its current training and professional development programme and an analysis of current uptake of training courses, some changes are being introduced. The emphasis in 2002-2003 will be on establishing a training events and opportunities programme linked to the priority public health issues, with the aim of updating practitioners on effective practice.

The HPA will therefore not be producing a short course brochure in the usual way. A series of seminars and training events will be organised during 2002-2003 in order to further regional programme development in priority areas. Information about these events will be forthcoming during the year. The HPA will be continuing to develop courses and training materials, and to provide support for health professionals in various curricula.



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