

## IPH Newsletter

### Vol 5 Issue 3 – September 2011

#### Welcome to Public Health News in Ireland

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#### **Spotlight on the Health Well – Health Inequalities Hub**

Tackling health inequalities is the focus of IPH work. Following the success of its Obesity Hub, IPH is developing a Health Inequalities Hub on the Health Well website. The Hub is an authoritative source of health inequalities related evidence, data and good practice; it supports the strategic development and implementation of health inequalities strategies across the island. A preliminary version of the Health Inequalities Hub website is now available ([click here](#)). Please visit the website and let us know what you think and how you would like to see it developed. Give feedback [here](#) or complete the online form on the Hub website. For more information please contact Kevin Balanda ([kevin.balanda@publichealth.ie](mailto:kevin.balanda@publichealth.ie)) or Helen McAvoy ([helen.mcavoy@publichealth.ie](mailto:helen.mcavoy@publichealth.ie)).

[Access preliminary Health Inequalities Hub website](#)

**Growing Health – a health impact assessment on a Community allotment/garden project**



*Representatives of the HIA Steering Group*

In 2009, the North-West Cross Border group identified community allotments/gardens as a mechanism to enhance health in the region. Derry, Donegal, Limavady, Magherafelt and Strabane Councils together with the Public Health Agency (PHA) and the Health Service Executive (HSE) developed a programme of activity to support healthy living in the region as part of an INTERREG funding application.

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was undertaken to maximise the health outcomes of the project and to provide a baseline of health status in the area, review international evidence and engage potential users to determine local health impacts. Recommendations have been incorporated into the funding application. The project was launched at the Northern Ireland Allotment and Community Garden Forum meeting on 9 September.

[Access further information here](#)

### **Crossing Bridges – health in all policies**

Crossing Bridges is an 18 month project that builds on work already completed, 'Closing the Gap' (2004-2007) and 'DETERMINE' (2007-2010). This will complement 'Joint Action on Health Inequalities' (2011-2014) to advance the implementation of Health in All Policies (HiAP) approaches in EU Member States. It will develop evidence led methods and build capacities as part of the overall mission to improve health equity within and between states. This project focuses on transport/planning and education. IPH is work package leader for the education strand in partnership with North West Health (UK) Brussels Office. The final reports of the working groups will be released shortly and assist in the development of capacity-building training to take place in 2012.



[Access further information here](#)

### **Health in Strategic Environmental Assessment**

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is mandatory under European legislation and a number of assessments have now been undertaken across the island of Ireland. IPH undertook research to explore the extent to which health was incorporated into SEA in a manner which would suggest a good understanding of the many social and economic factors which strongly influence health.



The research identifies that a consideration of health is not routinely included in SEAs. There is a need to build capacity and change mindsets in how SEAs are undertaken to more completely factor in the health impacts. A focus on integrating health into other

assessments can make better use of limited resources and this report will inform debate in the area to widen future opportunities for enhanced health.

[Access Consideration of health in SEA on the island of Ireland report](#)

### **Fuel Poverty News**

IPH has completed a report on fuel poverty and older people with Dublin Institute of Technology. This is funded by the Centre for Ageing Research and Development in Ireland. The final report presents findings from national datasets, from primary research exploring how older people respond to cold weather and findings from an analysis of excess winter deaths. IPH is currently developing a communications plan to support the dissemination of the report and translation of this research into policy and practice.

A suite of [fuel poverty](#) indicators is now available as part of the Health Well Community Indicators. These indicators relate to households lacking central heating, households in fuel poverty, and dwelling age. Further indicators are being developed. We welcome your feedback and ideas on other indicators.

[Access the fuel poverty indicators](#)

### **Regional launches of the Obesity Hub**

The Obesity Hub (<http://www.obesityhub.info>) is an authoritative source of obesity related evidence, data and good practice; and supports the strategic development and implementation of obesity prevention and management strategies across the island. On 25 August IPH and The Research & Education Foundation at Sligo General Hospital co-hosted a regional launch of the Hub. The address was given by Dr Nazih Eldin, Obesity Lead in the HSE. The launch was followed by a workshop: "Working with data on the Health Well". Materials can be accessed [here](#).

The final regional launch, co-hosted by IPH and University of Limerick, was held on 13 September. Materials can be accessed [here](#).

## **Consultations**

### **Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) and Public Health Agency (PHA) – Community Development Strategy**

The HSCB and the PHA have jointly issued a draft strategy for community development in health. IPH welcome the strategy and its clear recognition of the role community development has to play in improving health and tackling health inequalities. IPH call for HIA to be recognised as a tool to support community development and outline how this may be incorporated into the strategy.

[Access IPH response](#)

[Access the original consultation](#)

### **Department for Regional Development - Revised Regional Transportation Strategy**

Transport and health are closely linked. Transport promotes health by enabling access to people and places and providing opportunities for physical activity. However it also threatens health through risk of fatality, injury, pollution, noise, congestion, stress, and severance of communities by roads. IPH welcome the revised Strategy which concentrates on moving people rather than vehicles. At its core is a move towards greater sustainability which will contribute positively to growing the economy, improving the quality of life for all and reducing the transport impacts on the environment.

[Access IPH response](#)

[Access the original consultation](#)

## Resources

### IPH has a new look!

Check out the new IPH website which has been substantially updated and remodelled. The new website will make it easier for you to understand how we structure our work and to access our resources. We welcome feedback.

<http://www.publichealth.ie>

### New instructional videos for the Health Well

To take full advantage of The Health Well [website](#), learn about the main features of the website and how to use them IPH has produced five new instructional videos, available online, that explain some of these features:

- Data resources on The Health Well ([access here](#))
- PHIS 2011 Data Tables ([access here](#))
- Community Profiles ([access here](#))
- Searching and browsing the structured catalogues ([access here](#))
- User accounts ([access here](#))

### Obesity Intervention Assessment Web Tool

Details gathered during an audit of obesity related interventions have been included in the [Intervention Catalogue of the Obesity Hub](#). To help people understand this information we are developing an obesity intervention assessment web tool. Using these details of interventions and their evaluations the web tool will help users assess and compare interventions. IPH and PHA co-hosted a workshop to gain feedback for further development of the web tool; two further workshops in Limerick and Dublin were held. The web tool will be launched in October.

For further information please contact Nadine McQuillan on [nadine.mcquillan@publichealth.ie](mailto:nadine.mcquillan@publichealth.ie)

## Events

### HIA Forum

HIA Forum meetings provide participants with the opportunity to hear about and discuss issues relevant to HIA at a local and central government level. Join us for what promises to be lively and informative discussions.

#### **18 October 2011: How HIA can support local government and action on health inequalities.**

##### **Mount Errigal Hotel, Letterkenny, 9.45am – 1pm**

This session will consider how HIA can be used as a tool to work with local government on health inequalities. Representatives from Donegal County Council and the HSE will review how HIA can complement the local government agenda. What difference does HIA really make will be considered by reviewing how the HIA on Dove Gardens, Derry really influenced the planning process and redevelopment.

#### **8 November 2011: HIA: a tool to support policy development.**

##### **IPH Office, Belfast, 1.00pm – 4.30pm**

How and where does HIA fit into the policy cycle? Why should a consideration of health be given at the policy development stage? These are questions that will be



discussed at the event which will be co-hosted with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) with a view to capturing the value of HIA as a policy support tool. Guest speakers include; Dr Margaret Douglas, Scottish HIA Network and Dr Salim Vohra, Institute of Occupational Medicine.

Further information at <http://www.publichealth.ie/hiaforum>. There is no charge to attend these events however registration is essential. To book your place please contact Leah Friend at [leah.friend@publichealth.ie](mailto:leah.friend@publichealth.ie)

### **10<sup>th</sup> Comprehensive HIA training course – open for applications 12-14 March 2012, Clarion IFSC, Dublin**

This all-island training course explains HIA and empowers participants through action learning to conduct a HIA. Participants will hear from those who have undertaken HIAs and engage in workshops to apply HIA tools to a case study scenario. IPH particularly welcome applications from participants who have identified a proposal to progress HIA. Further information and on-line application at <http://www.publichealth.ie/ireland/hiatraining/comprehensivehiatrainingcourse>

### **Two day Interagency Cross Border Conference ‘Well in your skin’ - 30 September – 1 October 2011**

‘Well in your skin’ is organised by Border Counties Childhood Network and Early Years, the organisation for young children in Northern Ireland and is supported by other agencies working together to promote children and families’ health and wellbeing across the island of Ireland. The event aims to raise awareness of research highlighting rising obesity levels and the problems this will cause for children, families and society.

[Access further information and booking details here](#)

## **Contact us**

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