



**Health**  
Promotion  
Agency



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



# Health Promotion Agency

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# Health Promotion Agency

Putting  
health first

The Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland (HPA) was set up to help improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in Northern Ireland. It does this by making credible information on health more accessible and working with individuals, communities, organisations and government to facilitate greater awareness and opportunity to achieve health for all.

Through a range of activities, often carried out in collaboration with other organisations, the Agency seeks to shift the emphasis of modern health services towards prevention, protection and education. It works to educate individuals about choices that can protect and improve our own health. Similarly, it works in partnership with communities, organisations and government to put in place strategies, policies, initiatives and activities to support and promote the health and wellbeing of the wider population.

The implementation of regional strategies involves addressing major public health issues such as nutrition, smoking and physical activity. It also involves working to increase awareness and understanding of health issues and to both encourage and make it easier for everyone in Northern Ireland to make healthier lifestyle choices. Successful achievement of this work should result in better quality of life for the public in Northern Ireland and a reduced burden placed on treatment and rehabilitation services.

The HPA is a special agency of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS). It operates under the direction of a management Board and its statutory functions are:

- advising the DHSSPS on matters relating to health promotion;
- undertaking health promotion activity;
- commissioning and carrying out research and evaluation;
- providing training and professional development to health professionals and those with a remit to promote the health of the public;
- providing information to the public and professionals through a range of media;
- working with and supporting other organisations involved in health promotion.

The Agency works to achieve agreed objectives as specified in its business plan. These are organised under a range of priority areas, including alcohol, smoking, drugs, nutrition, physical activity, mental health and sexual health. It is also committed to working with others through its Alliances for Health programme to target social need and reduce inequalities in health.

### Using this report

Health promotion is not a single-issue function. To state only that the Health Promotion Agency met its objectives would inadequately communicate the breadth of work engaged in during the year. We hope this report gives a flavour of how each element of the Agency's work, and our partnerships with others, has contributed to meeting our targets and objectives during 2000-2001. It is important to state that it is the sum of the parts - the policy development and advice; research, analysis and evaluation; training and professional development as well as the public and professional information - that makes the work so important to improving people's health in Northern Ireland. If you only have time to scan the report, reading the 'introductions' in the left hand columns at the beginning of each section provides an overview of the work the Agency was involved in and details some of the goals and objectives met during this year.

To meet its 2000-2001 objectives the Agency delivered its work through four business areas:

#### Policy development and advice

The Agency played an important role in providing policy advice on many issues to the Minister for Health via the DHSSPS and to other Government departments.

#### Research, analysis and evaluation

The Agency was involved directly or through commissions in a wide range of primary and secondary research to inform and evaluate health promotion policy and practical interventions.

#### Training and professional development

The Agency provided a range of training opportunities to develop professional practice and increase capacity in health promotion.

#### Public and professional information

The Agency designed and implemented integrated information campaigns targeted at professionals or defined groups within the general population. These were based on assessed need and subject to comprehensive evaluation.



# A view from the Chair



I would like to begin by paying tribute to the previous Chairman, Mr Douglas Smyth OBE, who was appointed to the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service in June 2000 and to Mr Anthony Harbinson, acting Chairman in the interim period.

I congratulate the Agency on its success this year, regionally, nationally and internationally. Becoming accredited as a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre is confirmation of the Agency's role, both as a regional centre of excellence in health promotion and as a contributor to health promotion policy and practice at a global level. Nationally the Agency has worked hard to achieve its objectives and corporate goals. Accreditation as an Investor in People underscores its commitment to staff, just as the preparation of the Agency's equality scheme underpins its commitment to the public.

This year's programmes were successfully delivered in the context of demanding deadlines and an ongoing quinquennial review. Despite these pressures, the outstanding commitment of staff enabled the Agency to deliver objectives across a wide range of areas in support of regional priorities to improve the health of everyone in Northern Ireland. A highlight was the expert seminar on tobacco which saw world experts come to Northern Ireland to share up-to-date knowledge and practical experience of tackling the smoking epidemic.

The context in which we live here makes the promotion of good health even more essential and every effort must be made to create an inclusive, peaceful society, as positive mental health is compromised by ongoing political uncertainty. I welcome the recognition in *Investing for Health* of the requirement for interdepartmental work between all Government departments in the pursuit of health, as clearly this approach can bring considerable benefits for the whole community.

The Agency operates under tight funding constraints and delivers value for money. However I intend to explore with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety ways in which a more timely release of programme specific money can be achieved as this would ensure more thorough planning for maximum programme impact. Similarly we will strive to streamline our internal working practices in pursuit of best value. In the coming year we intend to enhance existing partnerships and develop new partners across the whole area of health promotion to maximise the benefits of collaboration and coordination.

We want to take our ten years experience, keep the best of what we have learned, and embrace the changes happening around us in society. We are prepared to challenge in order to achieve change - and to be challenged too. The readiness to adapt to and apply new technologies and techniques and a commitment to evaluating our work are key to this ability to embrace change.

I hope I can bring a commercial perspective to bear and contribute to establishing the Agency as an organisation that represents a quality investment in securing positive health and wellbeing for the whole community.

To conclude I would like to congratulate the Chief Executive, directors and staff for their many achievements during the year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alice Quinn".

Alice Quinn  
Chair

# Chief Executive's report

The Agency celebrated ten years in existence during the past year, having been formally established in October 1990. It has grown from a small and enthusiastic unit, raising awareness of the importance of health promotion, to an organisation that this year was accredited as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Training and Research in Communications and Information Technology in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. To have been recognised as a centre of excellence is both gratifying and extremely motivating for all Agency staff. I look forward to working with WHO and the prospect of learning from Europe and sharing our experience and expertise.

Our work this year involved a wide range of activities, from high profile information campaigns to collaborative work on the development of strategies to address regional health priorities. Such strategy and policy development has allowed us to build on previous initiatives and effective practice. This was clearly so in the development of new phases of integrated strategies to increase participation in physical activity and to reduce smoking.

Particularly rewarding are the new partnerships that have been cemented this year with the voluntary and community sectors, not just to progress the aforementioned issues but in other programme areas such as sexual health, mental health and our work to target specific audiences such as young people and older people.

Health promotion was specifically mentioned by the North South Ministerial Council as an area for cross border collaboration and it was pleasing to take a lead through the all-island campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of folic acid.

Closer to home I feel that new commitment has been shown to public health and health promotion through the consultation process around *Investing for Health*. This is the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's process which will form the basis of our new public health strategy. The HPA played a major part in facilitating this consultation process with colleagues from a wide range of sectors.

I am proud that the Agency, as the regional health promotion organisation, has maintained the highest standards across all this work, in policy, research, public and professional information and training, while continuing to take an innovative approach to communicating with others through electronic media.

This high quality is also reflected in our corporate activity and I am pleased to say that the Agency was one of the first to have its equality scheme approved by the Equality Commission. All of these achievements are due to the Agency's main resource - the staff. I personally value their hard work and commitment shown during the past year. The Agency has come a long way in ten years but lost none of its enthusiasm or energy for making health a top priority for the people of Northern Ireland and I am sure that this effort will be validated in the recommendations to follow our recent quinquennial review.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Gaffney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Dr Brian Gaffney**  
**Chief Executive**





Tackling  
regional  
priorities

# Alcohol

Alcohol misuse is a major public health issue in Northern Ireland. Binge drinking is an increasing problem among both adults and young people.

The HPA has been working to reduce the harm caused by alcohol misuse through its contribution to the new Alcohol Strategy for Northern Ireland, the provision of information to professionals via seminars and publications, and research into binge drinking in Northern Ireland.<sup>1</sup>

The completed Alcohol Strategy for Northern Ireland was launched in September 2000. The HPA met its strategic objective in this area through its significant contribution to the development of the strategy as a member of the project team led by the DHSSPS Policy Development and Review Unit. The strategy, the first of its kind to be developed by the Department, aims to reduce the harm caused to individuals and society by the misuse of alcohol.

The strategy contains five key objectives, which are also the main action areas. These are:

- to encourage a responsible approach to drinking;
- to promote effective treatment services;
- to protect individuals and communities from alcohol-related harm;
- to develop a research and information programme;
- to implement and manage the strategy effectively.

The HPA made a presentation at the launch of the strategy to highlight the importance of health promotion in tackling alcohol-related issues.

Also in September 2000, in acknowledgement of the need for wider discussion and debate on alcohol and its impact across all sectors of society in Northern Ireland, the HPA launched a regional Alcohol Forum. The Forum is intended to bring together all those in the statutory and voluntary sectors whose work is involved with alcohol as a public health issue in its broadest sense.

In March 2001, the HPA organised a seminar, which explored the social costs of alcohol and included speakers from an accident and emergency department, the police and a women's aid organisation. The seminar also allowed people to hear at first hand the current thinking of the Government with regard to moving forward on the Alcohol Strategy and the experiences in Wales of combining drug and alcohol strategies.

...the HPA commissioned further qualitative research into the issue of binge drinking which will help provide an evidence base to support the Alcohol Strategy and to inform the HPA's future work in this area.

The latest version of the HPA resource *Alcohol matters: a factfile for professionals* was also launched at the seminar.<sup>2</sup> The update includes an expanded section on the laws governing the sale and consumption of alcohol, as well as new figures on alcohol consumption and binge drinking in Northern Ireland, drawn from the research conducted by the HPA in 1999-2000.<sup>3</sup>



As a result of the data gathered in this quantitative study, the HPA commissioned further qualitative research into the issue of binge drinking which will help provide an evidence base to support the Alcohol Strategy and to inform the HPA's future work in this area.



# Tobacco

Smoking remains the largest preventable cause of death in Northern Ireland, killing approximately 2,800 people every year. The HPA's targets in this area are mainly driven by *Smoking Kills*, the Government's White Paper on Tobacco published in 1998.<sup>4</sup>

Work to support the objectives outlined in the paper this year included the development and coordination of the second phase of a public information campaign for young people, research to inform the next phase of public information aimed at adults on low incomes, support for No Smoking Day, and the sharing of information and experience through an international expert seminar.

In line with the framework outlined in the White Paper on Tobacco, the HPA continued to focus its public information work on young people, one of the key target groups. Building on the *Up 2 You* campaign developed in 1999-2000, a second phase of the public information campaign was produced. Research carried out for phase 1 and the evaluation of phase 1 allowed the HPA to refine its approach to this important group.<sup>5</sup>

Phase 2 of the campaign was launched in March 2001, incorporating a 'teen' magazine, a television advertisement and a website. A second issue of the *Up 2 You* magazine retained the elements which had evaluated well last year, while updating the content and style. It was distributed to second and third form pupils in schools across Northern Ireland.

The original television advertisement was revised and extended to promote the redesigned *Up 2 You* website, which was also publicised via postcards placed in popular 'teen' magazines and mousemats distributed to the IT departments in schools. This approach resulted in a much higher awareness of the website than in the 2000 campaign and the site continues to be updated regularly to maintain interest.

On average the prevalence of smoking has fallen in recent years. However smoking prevalence is falling faster in some socioeconomic groups than in others and as a result the Government has identified adults on low incomes as another key target group. In January 2001, the HPA commissioned qualitative research into the particular barriers to smoking cessation experienced by adults on low incomes. The research suggested that although

most smokers would like to be ex-smokers, they see the process of quitting as an extremely unpleasant and difficult one. They are also reluctant to recognise smoking as an addiction, rather than just a habit, and are sceptical about the value of nicotine replacement therapy. The research will be used to inform public information work targeting this group in the next financial year.

Each year, the HPA supports the No Smoking Day campaign, which is aimed at supporting smokers who wish to stop. The slogan for this year's campaign was *Kiss it Goodbye*, which was first used in 1992 and proved extremely successful. Evaluation from previous years' campaigns had highlighted that smokers would appreciate more notice of No Smoking Day to enable them to prepare themselves to quit. The HPA responded by producing a television advertising campaign which ran in the weeks preceding No Smoking Day to raise awareness of the date and to give smokers time to prepare to stop smoking.

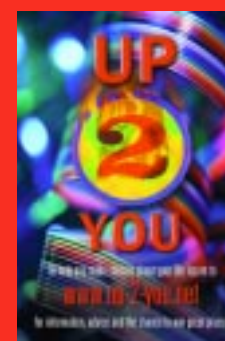
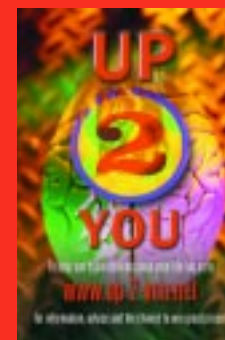
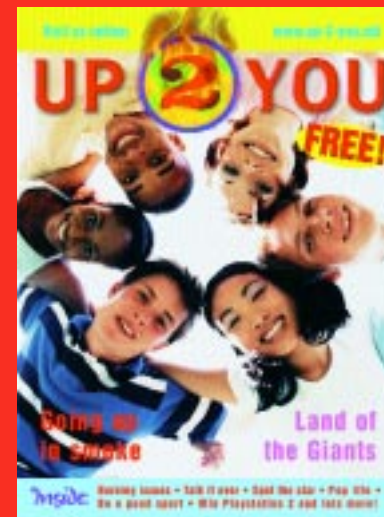
...awareness of the Day was high with 86% of those surveyed aware that 14 March 2001 was No Smoking Day.

Evaluation of the 2001 campaign in Northern Ireland showed that awareness of the Day was high with 86% of those surveyed aware that 14 March 2001 was No Smoking Day.<sup>6</sup> This was higher than last year when 81% of respondents were aware of the Day. As in previous years, awareness was higher among smokers (92%) than non-smokers (84%). Participation was also high, with 40% of those who smoked and were aware of No Smoking Day participating in some way, and 16% stopping smoking for all or part of the day, or longer. These very positive results were higher than those achieved in Great Britain where 71% of those surveyed were aware of the campaign and 7% made a quit attempt.

Sharing knowledge and experiences with others in the field of tobacco control is essential, so to support the tobacco control work being carried out here by health professionals, the HPA organised an expert seminar in March 2001. Speakers from Massachusetts, California and Australia presented their experiences of

developing successful tobacco control strategies, outlining their approaches and the resources necessary to make a significant impact. The HPA also contributed to the global sharing of experiences in this field with a presentation on the *Up 2 You* campaign made at the 11th World Tobacco or Health conference in Chicago in August 2000.

The HPA continues to support government work in developing a coordinated approach to tobacco control through its contribution to Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) and membership of the Inter-Departmental Working Group and its cessation sub-group.



# Drugs

The misuse of drugs has become an increasingly important issue in Northern Ireland over the past ten years, as the number of young people experimenting with drugs rises.

During the year, the HPA fulfilled its commitments to support the health-related objectives of the Northern Ireland Drugs Strategy.<sup>7</sup>

These included contributing to regional groups on drug prevention, developing a new public information campaign on drugs aimed at 18-30 year olds, work to make information on drugs accessible to professionals via the Internet and research into volatile substance abuse in Northern Ireland.

The HPA continued to support the wider initiatives against drug misuse through its contributions to the Central Coordinating Group for Action Against Drugs and the Northern Ireland Committee on Drug Misuse. It also facilitated the Drugs Information Exchange Group, which is the only regional forum involving the voluntary and statutory sectors in Northern Ireland for the exchange of information and views on drug prevention.

The HPA was also involved in the planning of the first regional conference on harm reduction, organised by the Drug Coordination Teams in September 2000.

Research carried out in 1999-2000 into the attitudes of 18-30 year olds in Northern Ireland towards drugs and drug use was used to inform a public information campaign aimed at this age group launched by the HPA in February 2001.<sup>8</sup> Employing the medium of convenience advertising, which had previously proved very successful in conveying targeted sexual health promotion messages to this age group, the campaign was designed to support work being done by the Drug Coordination Teams at local level. Convenience advertising posters are displayed in the washroom and toilet cubicle areas of popular pubs and clubs throughout Northern Ireland. This method of communication allows the HPA to target its messages accurately at specific groups and gives young people the privacy to take in the message.

Ten posters were created to promote a range of messages highlighting the harmful effects of specific drugs such as Ecstasy, the dangers of mixing drugs and alcohol, and information about reducing the risks associated with drug taking. A short leaflet was also developed and made

available from a dispenser attached to some of the posters. All the posters in the series promoted the National Drugs Helpline.

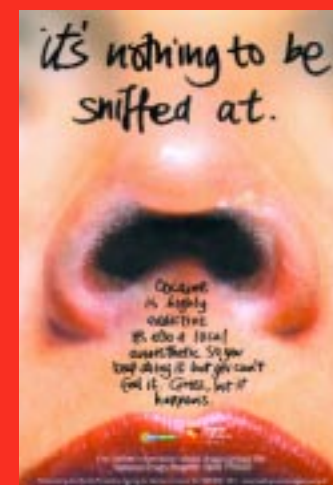
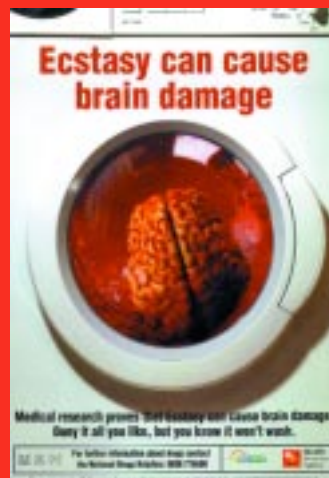
The HPA also began a new initiative to make information on current issues relating to illicit drug use available to professionals in the voluntary and statutory sectors via the Internet. The HPA's bid for funding for this initiative was the only successful regional application in the second phase of grants made available by the DHSSPS for new drugs projects. Under the guidance of a regional advisory group, development work is underway on the content and interface of a website, which will cover statistics, theory, regional resources and organisations. Based on the information contained in the publication *Illicit drug use in Northern Ireland: a handbook for professionals*, the new website will provide the opportunity to

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make new statistics and developments available much more quickly than is possible in print.<sup>9</sup>

In order to inform future work, the HPA commissioned qualitative research into the attitudes, knowledge and information needs of parents, professionals, retailers and environmental health officers (EHOs) with regard to volatile substance abuse. The research highlighted that parents were more concerned about other types of illicit drugs, but would welcome information and advice on how to approach this issue with their children. Retailers and EHOs reported a lack of awareness of the issues and relevant legislation. Professionals in this area reported being generally aware of the specific characteristics of volatile substance abuse, but would welcome more information on the issue.

The HPA also published a report on the evaluation of the four phases of its public information campaign on drugs which has targeted 10-17 year olds and parents since 1997.<sup>10</sup> The evaluation showed that, within the limitations of a restricted budget, the campaign did achieve positive changes in young people's knowledge of and attitudes towards drugs and drug use. The report also made a number of recommendations for future campaigns.



# Nutrition

Good nutrition plays a vital role in ensuring good health. It helps prevent heart disease, some cancers, obesity and oral disease. Work this year aimed to support the objectives outlined in the Food and Nutrition Strategy for Northern Ireland.<sup>11</sup> In 2000-2001, the HPA took the strategy forward through the development of a Strategy Action Plan.<sup>12</sup>

It also fulfilled objectives relating to the preparation of baseline research into eating habits in Northern Ireland, the provision of information for the public and professionals on issues such as weaning, healthy eating, and nutrition for the under fives, and the redevelopment of the *Cook It!* community nutrition programme.

The HPA achieved a key goal in this area when, following extensive consultation, the completed *Northern Ireland Food and Nutrition Strategy Action Plan* was submitted to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for approval in September 2000. The HPA was also involved with the DHSSPS review of the progress of the oral health strategy for Northern Ireland.<sup>13</sup>

To inform the implementation of the Food and Nutrition Strategy, the HPA commissioned research in 1999-2000 with adults aged 18-75 in Northern Ireland, looking at eating patterns, shopping habits, attitudes to food and factors influencing food choices.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, in households with children aged 5-17, the adult mainly responsible for food preparation was also asked about the children's eating patterns.

The findings of the adult survey were prepared for publication while the findings of the survey into children's eating patterns were published in *Eating for health? A survey of eating habits among children and young people in Northern Ireland*.<sup>15</sup> Both surveys highlighted eating patterns which include too many fatty and sugary foods and not enough of the foods that are beneficial to health, such as fruit, vegetables and fish. In the young people's survey, two specific groups - older girls and young people from low income households - need particular attention to help them achieve a healthy diet. These reports will be excellent reference documents for dietitians, health promotion specialists, health visitors, oral health professionals, doctors and teachers.

The popular resource *Weaning made easy: moving from milk to family meals* was updated in line with suggestions made by the UNICEF/Baby

To support the work of the Early Years Teams in the Health and Social Services Trusts, the HPA worked with a range of professionals and organisations to prepare nutritional guidelines for feeding the under fives in the childcare setting.

Friendly Initiative. The leaflet *Eat well, keep well and reduce your risk of cancer*, which explains the health benefits of fruit, vegetables and fibre in protecting against many types of cancer, was also updated.

The HPA teamed up with SuperValu to promote healthy eating by writing a series of leaflets about healthy eating for children; fat; fibre; salt and healthy eating in pregnancy. These are available from all SuperValu stores. The HPA also collaborated with the supermarket chain to promote good nutrition among young people through a regional recipe competition *Healthy eating for kids, by kids*. Young people were invited to translate key healthy eating messages into nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.



### All-island campaign

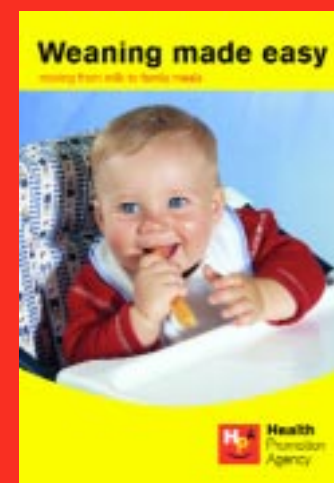
The *Folic acid, one of life's essentials* campaign was launched as an all-island campaign by Bairbre de Brún MLA and Micheál Martin TD, Ireland's Minister for Health and Children in November 2000. Created by the HPA in 1998, this campaign helped raise awareness in Northern Ireland of the benefits of folic acid in pregnancy from 65% to 84%. The all-island campaign aimed to build on these results to raise awareness of the link between folic acid and the prevention of neural tube defects, such as Spina Bifida, in newborn babies. The campaign ran in November and December 2000, and March 2001. The television advertisement, broadcast on UTV, RTE, TV3 and TG4, was accompanied by a radio advertisement and a leaflet distributed through pharmacies.

In December 2000, the HPA invited all schools in Northern Ireland to outline current nutrition initiatives taking place in their school in order to facilitate the sharing of information, ideas and good practice. The report *Learning to eat well: Nutrition initiatives in schools* presents a summary of the work taking place, who is involved, evaluations and recommendations.<sup>16</sup>

To support the work of the Early Years Teams in the Health and Social Services Trusts, the HPA worked with a range of professionals and organisations to prepare nutritional guidelines for feeding the under fives in the childcare setting. *Nutrition matters for the early years* provides information on healthy eating for the under fives, guidance on menu planning and sample menus, meal ideas and snack suggestions, special diets, food safety and food hygiene.<sup>17</sup> The guidelines will also be a useful reference document for those involved in childcare provision in day nurseries and playgroups.

During the year, the HPA has supported the Department of Education in developing nutritional standards for school meals, which will apply to primary and post-primary schools, and nurseries attached to primary schools.

Following the evaluation of the *Cook It!* community nutrition programme, work has been ongoing with community dietitians to revise and update the programme materials.<sup>18</sup> *Cook It!* was originally launched in 1995 to support healthy eating for families on a low budget. The evaluation indicated that *Cook It!* is a user-friendly, valuable and enjoyable approach to nutrition education in a community setting, but highlighted a number of areas which could be enhanced. The revised materials are based on the "Balance of Good Health" model, which helps people to understand and enjoy healthy eating.<sup>19</sup>



# Physical activity

Regular physical activity can help to maintain good physical and mental health, but 80% of the Northern Ireland population is not active enough. The HPA has been working to improve this situation through its facilitation of the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy.<sup>20</sup>

Work to meet objectives in this area has included the development of a sustained public information campaign, support for community and voluntary groups encouraging people to get more active, an international conference on health-enhancing physical activity, and the preparation of training on physical activity for primary care staff.

In line with its strategic objectives, the HPA continued to facilitate the implementation of the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy which promotes a multi-agency approach to encouraging participation in physical activity. Following the review carried out in March 2000, the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy Implementation Group (NIPAIG) has been working to identify ways in which other Government departments can link into the strategy and achieve some of their objectives, especially those relating to TSN, through physical activity. The second issue of *NIPAIG News* was published in October 2000 and reported on ongoing work related to the strategy at community level.

The public was encouraged to go walking and cycling when phase 2 of the *Get a Life, Get Active* public information campaign was launched in May 2000. This focused on the health benefits of walking and cycling as two forms of exercise suitable for all ages and relatively easy to incorporate into everyday life. As well as television advertising throughout May and June, the HPA produced useful guides to accompany the campaign. The first detailed a wide range of walking and cycling events taking place during the summer while the second offered guidelines for anyone wishing to organise their own event, including tips on planning and promoting an event, and advice on safety and legal issues. Other campaign materials included leaflets on walking and cycling, and promotional items such as posters, T-shirts, sweatshirts, certificates and badges for use by those organising events to link into the campaign.

A major conference entitled *Health Enhancing Physical Activity and Active Living for You and Your Community* was held in Belfast in October

2000. This was organised in partnership by the HPA, Belfast City Council, the Eastern Health and Social Services Board and Belfast Healthy Cities, in collaboration with the European Network for the Promotion of Health-Enhancing Physical Activity (HEPA) and the WHO Healthy Cities Multi City Action Plan on Active Living. Almost 250 delegates from all over Europe attended, including health and exercise professionals, representatives of the voluntary and community sectors, local authority and education personnel, and policy makers involved in HEPA and Active Living at international, national and local levels. Among other presentations, local DHSSPS economist Caspar Swales presented his research into the economic benefits to the health service of increasing levels of physical activity.

The walking and cycling television advertisements were broadcast again in March 2001 in preparation for phase 3 of the campaign, planned for June 2001. Evaluation of phase 2 showed that, when prompted, 83% of those surveyed recalled seeing advertising about walking and 79% about cycling.<sup>21</sup> Those who were aware of the campaign

...the charter explains how the two organisations will work together to create and develop opportunities for people to become more active...



were more likely to have recently increased their level of physical activity than those who had not (36% compared to 22%).

The campaign also incorporated the successful *Get Active in the Community* awards scheme. This scheme is designed to help community and voluntary groups offer their members new opportunities to take part in health enhancing physical activity. In its second year, the scheme awarded grants of up to £250 to 96 community and voluntary groups, with priority this year given to proposals that promoted walking and cycling opportunities. This extremely popular scheme, developed by the HPA in collaboration with Disability Action and the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, is funded by the DHSSPS. Following evaluation carried out with previous recipients, the maximum grant available in 2001 has been increased to £500.<sup>22</sup>

Partnerships are essential for the success of the Northern Ireland Physical Activity Strategy, and the HPA was delighted to cement its relationship with the Sports Council with the signing of a joint charter in October 2000. Launched at the Health Enhancing Physical Activity and Active Living conference, the charter explains how the two organisations will work together to create and develop opportunities for people to become more active and to maintain lifelong participation in sport. The HPA also played a key role in contributing to the Northern Ireland Cycling Strategy and the Walking Forum, both led by the Department for Regional Development.<sup>23</sup>

Following a workshop organised by the HPA and the Environment and Heritage Service in November 2000 to explore the potential of developing a Northern Ireland-led *Walking the Way to Health* initiative, a joint submission was made to the New Opportunities Fund's Healthy Living Centre programme (see page 25).

A training course on physical activity for primary care staff developed for NIPAIG by Loughborough University was piloted in December 2000 as part of the HPA's training and professional development programme. Feedback from those who attended will inform the final draft of the training materials.



# Sexual health

Good sexual health is an important element of our total wellbeing, and access to accurate and unbiased information about sexual health issues is essential.

This year, the HPA has taken forward its work in this area through its contributions to the Working Group on Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood, the creation of a new public information campaign on contraception and sexually transmitted infections, and by continuing to provide information for the public and professionals through the Contraceptive Education Service.

The HPA continued to contribute to the multi-sector Working Group on Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood convened by the DHSSPS. The Group fulfilled its key objective of developing a coordinated report aimed at establishing action to be taken on reducing teenage births and supporting teenage parents and their children. After wide consultation, the report *Myths and Reality: Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood in Northern Ireland* was published by the DHSSPS in November 2000.<sup>24</sup>

During this year, the HPA developed and launched a new convenience advertising campaign aimed at encouraging 18-30 year olds to protect their sexual health. A set of seven posters was developed highlighting a range of sexual health issues such as condom use, contraception, sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia, and sexual health services available to young people in Northern Ireland. A credit card-sized leaflet entitled *Never underestimate peace of mind*, which provides more detailed information and relevant contact numbers, was made available from dispensers attached to some of the posters.

Convenience advertising posters are displayed in the washroom and toilet cubicle areas of popular pubs and clubs in Northern Ireland as well as in the university students' unions. The HPA has been successfully using this method of communication since 1995 to target sexual health messages at young people. Displaying information within this type of enclosed environment is a particularly useful way of conveying sensitive information, as it allows the HPA to target specific groups accurately, and affords the young people privacy to read the message. The campaign will be evaluated in the

coming year, but the posters have already attracted much positive feedback.

The HPA has provided part funding for a Contraceptive Education Service (CES) in Northern Ireland since 1994. The service is managed by the fpaNI (Family Planning Association) and aims to provide accessible and accurate information on all aspects of contraception and sexual health to both the public and professionals. The service also works to enable individuals to access screening and family planning services.

CES provides a telephone and postal information service, materials for the public and for professionals, and a media information service on contraceptive issues. Demand for the telephone helpline service has increased considerably over the last five years. During 2000-2001 the helpline responded to 18,658 enquiries. This represents an increase of 12% on the previous year.

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# Mental and emotional health

The HPA has been working to promote the mental health of young people in Northern Ireland in partnership with the Youth Council for Northern Ireland and Action Mental Health.

This partnership carried out research into the issues that worry young people and how they deal with them, and organised a conference for young people and those who work with them to address and respond to the issues identified.

The main focus of the HPA's mental health work this year has been young people, and the development of recommendations made at the Youth Council for Northern Ireland's Generation 2000 Conference in 1997. As a member of the Children and Young Persons' Intersectoral Forum, set up to take forward the conference recommendations, the HPA has been exploring the points raised in relation to the mental and emotional wellbeing of young people with a range of organisations.

Over the year the HPA developed a partnership with the Youth Council for Northern Ireland and Action Mental Health to promote positive steps that young people can take to support their mental wellbeing. Based on the successful *Design for Life* competition organised by Action Mental Health, the Design for Living partnership was developed over the year to plan a youth and practitioners' conference to be held in April 2001.

Two pieces of research were undertaken to support this initiative. The first was a secondary analysis of the 1997/98 Health Behaviour of School Children survey data relating to mental and emotional health. The survey gathered responses from a representative sample of 6,589 pupils in Primary 7 to Year 12. The subsequent report *Minds Matter: Exploring the mental wellbeing of young people in Northern Ireland* provides an overview of aspects of mental wellbeing, including how young people between 11 and 16 years old perceive their own health, their body image and how they feel about their lives.<sup>25</sup> It also examines their relationships with friends and families, how they feel about school, their use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs, and their levels of physical activity. This analysis found that:

- Young people have concerns about a range of issues that impact both positively and negatively on their emotional wellbeing.
- Overall, girls in Northern Ireland are more likely to report feeling unhealthy, unhappy or lonely than boys. Older children of either sex are more likely than younger ones to report these feelings.
- Young people who participate most frequently in physical activity are more likely to consider themselves as healthy and happy. This may be linked to the gender differences reported above, as boys are more likely than girls to engage in frequent physical activity.

...the HPA developed a partnership with the Youth Council for Northern Ireland and Action Mental Health to promote positive steps that young people can take to support their mental wellbeing.

- As they get older both boys and girls report more difficulty in communicating with parents.
- Those who used drugs, solvents, alcohol or cigarettes on a regular basis reported spending

time with friends more often, feeling more confident and finding it easier to form new friendships than others. These social aspects of substance misuse need to be taken into account in efforts to promote wellbeing.

During 2000, the partnership also commissioned new research among young people aged between 16 and 25 in Northern Ireland. This research aimed to understand more about the worries that young people have, to find out what they do to help themselves feel better, and where they get help or advice in times of difficulty. This research was made possible through a grant from the Challenge 2000 Fund.



The research showed:

- The most common worries were over money, appearance, performance at school or in further and higher education and employment.

- Social interaction, including relationships with family, partners, girlfriends and boyfriends was another common source of worry.

- Although 79% of respondents reported feeling okay or optimistic about the future, one in five felt anxious about it or felt the future looked hopeless or filled with problems. Females were more likely to have a negative view of the future and this trend was more marked among older respondents.

- More of the older participants worry about a return to the Troubles and about crime and violence.

- Listening to music, socialising and talking with friends, family or partners were the most common ways to feel better when worried or feeling down.

- Few young people would seek the help of a professional, eg a teacher or youth leader or go to an advice agency or service.

The report on the research, *Design for living: research to support young people's mental health and wellbeing*, was published to coincide with the Design for Living conference in April 2001.<sup>26</sup> The information gathered was also used to develop a youth information pack and to inform the conference planning in order to provide a learning experience for young people on ways to support their mental wellbeing.







Together  
for health

# Alliances for health

The Agency's effectiveness as a regional provider of health promotion services is greatly increased by working with others. It therefore maintained a wide range of formal and informal working relationships, and actively sought opportunities to communicate and collaborate with colleagues in all sectors to promote health.

The results of this collaborative work are detailed below and include submissions to the New Opportunities Fund (NOF), the development of a Public Health Alliance for Northern Ireland, guidelines for youth workers, and a range of other outputs.

The sharing of information with others and learning from others is fundamental to developing better health promotion practice and maximising scarce resources.

The Alliances for Health programme, set up in 1999, contributed significantly towards achieving the Agency's corporate goals in the area of collaboration with a view to reducing inequalities in health.

The paper *Promoting Health through Alliances - Collaboration for Health Promotion between Health and Social Services and the Voluntary and Community Sectors in Northern Ireland* was prepared following a series of consultation workshops with those working in a wide range of organisations.<sup>27</sup> This is the first paper to record the collaboration between these sectors and provides a useful tool to support other organisations in promoting health through alliances.

The HPA contributed to a wide variety of working groups to develop opportunities for joint action. These include the Health and Education Liaison Group (HELG), the NI Environmental Health and Health Promotion Joint Working Group, the Inter-agency Brainstorming Group on Men's Health, and a working group established by the Youth Council for Northern Ireland.

HELG is a group of education advisers and health promotion representatives from each Education and Library Board and Health and Social Services Board area which acts to coordinate health promotion in schools. This year, a sub-group of HELG began to develop a proposal for a system of regional and local support, advice and training for the establishment of a health promoting schools initiative in each Board area.

The working group established by the Youth Council for Northern Ireland was set up to develop health promotion guidelines for the

youth sector. The aim of the guidelines is to assist youth workers to address health issues within their practice. A policy researcher was appointed to review the literature on health promotion policy in the sector, carry out a needs assessment of youth workers and identify examples of good practice. The results of this research will provide a framework for the guidelines.

A working group established by the Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment was asked to develop a healthy living programme to meet the needs of the 24,000 students attending local Colleges of Further and Higher Education. In January 2001, the Agency hosted a regional meeting to support this group. Relevant organisations and individuals met college staff, heard about the project's progress, and made links with colleges in their local area to support the programme.

The HPA was represented on the management committee of the Community Development and Health Network until September 2000. The two organisations then began work to establish a more formal partnership which it is hoped will develop a programme of work to support the promotion of health through community development.

## Public Health Alliance

The Agency facilitated a seminar in June for interested parties to discuss the development of a regional Public Health Alliance. Participants from a wide range of backgrounds agreed on a collective desire to establish a Public Health Alliance for Northern Ireland. They discussed the possible functions, outputs, relationships, structures and principles of such an Alliance.

An Interim Group was formed to take forward the development of the Alliance and the Agency was asked to facilitate this process. Membership of this group reflects the organisational and geographical diversity of the main group. One of the group's first tasks was to make arrangements to respond to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's recent consultation paper *Investing for Health*.<sup>28</sup> The paper, which will go on to form the basis of the new public health strategy for Northern Ireland, sets out the Department's ideas on new approaches to public health.

### Healthy Living Centre partnerships

The Agency continued its partnership with Age Concern which was established to develop an Ageing Well Network in Northern Ireland. This year the work specifically resulted in the submission of a successful stage one application to the New Opportunities Fund's Healthy Living Centre programme.

The Agency was also a partner in another successful stage one application with an initiative designed to tackle inequalities in health led by Action Cancer. This initiative proposes offering a mobile service to take health promotion, screening and support and information services to disadvantaged, marginalised and isolated communities.

A partnership between the Agency and the Environment and Heritage Service and supported by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland and the Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN), was also put forward for approval by NOF. This application was for funding to develop a network of signed walking routes across Northern Ireland and a decision had not been made by the time of print.

The Chief Executive of the Agency represents the health promotion specialist sector on the Northern Ireland Healthy Living Centres panel.

### Regional health promotion planning

Agency staff met on several occasions with representatives from the health promotion services of the Health and Social Services Trusts, the Commissioners for health promotion from the four Health and Social Services Boards and Departmental colleagues from the Health Promotion Policy branch of the DHSSPS. These joint discussion days provided a forum to examine the challenges in meeting the regional agenda, identify areas of common interest and raise strategic issues requiring a joint approach. An important outcome of these meetings was the establishment of a regional research in health promotion group and the ongoing discussion about developing the training forum.

In February 2001 the Agency facilitated a further meeting with health promotion colleagues to discuss the DHSSPS consultation paper *Investing for Health*.<sup>28</sup> The meeting took advantage of the opportunity provided by the consultation period, to enable a wide variety of individuals and organisations to help shape future action in relation to public health. Participants welcomed the chance to debate aspects of the paper.



# National and international links

This year the HPA reinforced its position as a regional centre of excellence in health promotion when it was designated a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre.

The Agency worked to both keep abreast of new developments and contribute to the wider health promotion context through its links outside Northern Ireland. It remained a member of the European Network of Health Promotion Agencies (ENHPA) and the CINDI network. It also strengthened its cross-border links by collaborating on an all-island public information campaign.

## World Health Organization recognition

The Health Promotion Agency was officially designated as a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Training and Research in Communications and Information Technology in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. Dr Marc Danzon, Regional Director of WHO Europe, notified the Agency of this prestigious appointment in November 2000.

A network of collaborating centres is responsible for supporting WHO Europe's work. They are internationally recognised centres of excellence that have made formal agreements with WHO to contribute to work in

specific areas and through agreed programmes of activity.

The Agency will be working with WHO in a number of areas including the Countrywide Integrated Noncommunicable Diseases Intervention (CINDI) Programme, major surveys, projects aimed at further developing health promoting settings and a variety of communication, education and training initiatives. The designation of the centre will be effective for a period of four years and Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive of the Agency, will be Head of the Centre.



Pictured on the balcony of Parliament Buildings, Stormont, with the official certificate of recognition for the Health Promotion Agency as a WHO Collaborating Centre are: (left to right) Dr Erio Ziglio, Regional Advisor, World Health Organization; Ms Bairbre de Brún, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety; Dr Brian Gaffney, Chief Executive of the Health Promotion Agency and Ms Alice Quinn, Chair of the Health Promotion Agency.

## CINDI

The HPA published the sixth edition of *CINDI Highlights*.<sup>29</sup> This publication reported on work happening in the 27 countries belonging to the CINDI (Countrywide Integrated Noncommunicable Diseases Intervention) Programme network, to prevent noncommunicable diseases (NCD) such as heart disease, cancer and respiratory diseases.

The CINDI Programme is a major initiative of the World Health Organization (WHO). Members of the network share information and work cooperatively to tackle smoking, unhealthy nutrition, alcohol misuse, physical inactivity and psycho-social stress and to promote healthier lifestyles. Northern Ireland is a demonstration area for the CINDI Programme in the UK.

## Cross border collaboration

A European Commission proposal sets out the Community's broad health strategy for 2001-2006. It outlines how the Community is working to develop a public health programme and to achieve a coherent and effective approach to health issues across a range of policy areas.

In October 2000, the Agency was part of a focus group convened by the All Ireland Institute of Public Health to advise on an action plan for Ireland's response to the new EU Public Health Programme, and its participation in European public health.

Participants in the focus groups assessed current public health priorities in Ireland, commented on the capacity of the EU programme to accommodate these priorities, and highlighted opportunities to strengthen links between Ireland and Europe for public health.

These issues were further explored at a seminar in November to provide information for a wider audience about developments in public health in Europe.

The first all-island public information campaign on health was launched in November 2000 when the Agency joined forces with the Department of Health and Children in the Republic to promote folic acid. This collaboration provided the opportunity to share experience and knowledge and also to learn from each other. More detailed information about this campaign appears on page 15.

"This is a tremendous achievement for all of us and I would like to acknowledge the hard work and effort that the Agency and its staff have put into achieving this status."

*Bairbre de Brún, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, commenting on the HPA's designation as a WHO Collaborating Centre.*



A close-up, high-angle photograph of a person's face, focusing on their right eye which is looking downwards. The person is wearing thin-rimmed glasses. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on the forehead and nose, and deep shadows on the right side of the face. The background is a soft, out-of-focus greenish-grey.

# Developing capacity

# Research

Well designed research is fundamental to effective health promotion. It can establish evidence of need and help to guide the development of appropriate resources. Evaluating the outcomes of activities and interventions in turn underpins recommendations for future work based on evidence of effectiveness.

The HPA carried out a wide range of research activities this year to inform and evaluate a number of health promotion interventions.

It published a summary report of the results of earlier research work.<sup>30</sup>

The HPA also worked in an advisory capacity on two large-scale population studies.

## Research and evaluation review

For the first time, the Agency published a summary report of its research activities during 1999-2000.<sup>30</sup> This was designed to provide researchers, health professionals and other interested parties with an overview of the main findings from the research undertaken or commissioned by the Agency, together with recommendations for future health promotion work.

The publication reports on research into a wide range of topics including: adult drinking patterns; attitudes to illicit drugs among 18-30 year olds; adults' and children's eating habits; the economic benefits of implementing the Physical Activity Strategy for Northern Ireland; and the attitudes among school children towards smoking. It also reports on evaluation of the Agency's training programmes, including the *Cook It!* programme, the short course training

programme and the primary care health promotion training programme. The results of post-campaign evaluative research for several of its major public information campaigns, including those on physical activity, drugs and smoking are also included.

This sharing of information in the form of this research and evaluation review was another initiative to support the Agency's drive to promote greater collaboration between those working to promote the health of the public in Northern Ireland.

Other research carried out by the Agency during 2000-2001 is detailed in the preceding programme sections of this Annual Report. The results of a number of these research projects were also published as stand alone reports for those requiring more detailed findings.



## The Agency acted in an advisory capacity for several important population studies.

### Advisory role

The Agency acted in an advisory capacity for several important population studies. It contributed to the planning groups of the Health and Wellbeing Survey, the Young Persons Behaviour and Attitudes Survey and a group investigating the sexual attitudes of young people.

The Health and Wellbeing Survey is a general survey of the adult population carried out every two years. This year's survey focused on general health, social support and exclusion, psycho-social stress as well as smoking drinking, disability and physical activity.

The Young Persons Behaviour and Attitudes Survey is organised by the Social Steering Group of the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. It is a survey of first to fifth form pupils in Northern Ireland and asks about a number of issues, including smoking, drinking, drugs, nutrition, self-esteem, other mental health issues and participation in sport.

The Agency also contributed to a steering group of academics, teachers, health professionals and voluntary groups who guide the fpaNI (Family Planning Association) and the University of Ulster's research into young people's sexual attitudes. This is a three year study which began in 2000.

# Training and professional development

**Growing evidence of need for health promotion skills underpins the HPA's commitment to providing relevant training and professional development opportunities in Northern Ireland.**

**The Agency's comprehensive range of courses was well subscribed and post-course evaluations were very positive.**

This year the Agency's training and professional development programme was offered bi-annually to enable more flexibility in the development of programmes and more effective response to needs analysis. Two brochures were produced, presenting a wide range of courses, seminars and professional development opportunities to support those working to promote the health of the public.

The courses and seminars were developed in response to a regional needs analysis and aimed to support the regional priorities relating to education and training of professionals in health promotion. Needs analysis research is conducted on an ongoing basis in cooperation with a range of organisations in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors in order to establish current training needs of professionals involved in the field. This research forms the evidence base for the development of all short courses and seminars at the Agency.

A special feature of this year's programme was the two 'leading edge' seminars on alcohol and tobacco that evaluated particularly well. The emphasis was on keeping professionals up-to-date with best practice and new research and they featured international speakers who successfully combined a new perspective with a local focus. These were developed in response to key areas identified in the needs analysis, and the Agency plans to build on their success in the coming year.

Once again all of the courses were well subscribed and positive evaluations continued to

provide supportive evidence of need and the encouragement to continue this valuable work. In total 345 participants were trained in a range of courses relating to health promotion. All courses and seminars were open to a wide range of professionals with many being subsidised to ensure greater accessibility. Several new courses were developed, again in response to identified need, to support health promotion in the community setting. These included courses on securing resources, community development and using focus groups in a community setting.

## **Links with academic institutions**

The Agency continued to support academic institutions, namely, the University of Ulster, Belfast Institute for Further and Higher Education (BIFHE) and Stranmillis University College, with the development of courses related to health promotion. The Agency was represented on the course committees of these institutions, where advice and guidance was provided on a range of issues relating to the management and development of health promotion-related courses.

## **Association of Health Service Managers Award**

On 13 March 2001, the HPA hosted the annual presentation of the Association of Health Service Managers (AHSM) Award. The HPA holds the stewardship of an award fund, donated by the former Association of Senior Managers.

The award fund was set up to support education for health promotion. It is awarded for the

highest scoring assignment from the Health Promotion Planning and Management module, which forms part of the University of Ulster's Postgraduate Diploma/MSc in Health Promotion. This course, which the Agency helped develop, was felt to be appropriate as it successfully combined elements of management and health promotion. This year's award went to Pauline Kennedy, employed in the Causeway Trust, who achieved the highest ever score for this module.

### Activate Health Programme

The Activate Health Programme is a training programme which aims to help people learn about health issues, relaxation techniques and how to improve their health by becoming more physically active. The programme is managed by the Agency and delivered in the community by trained Activate tutors and leaders. There are approximately 39 Activate trainers (who train others to deliver the programme), 278 tutors (who deliver the whole programme to people in the community) and 34 leaders (who are trained to deliver one or more elements of the programme).

Since the programme's launch in 1992, it has been considerably developed and now offers additional modular training for the learning disabled, heart health, and a 50+ module focusing on older people's needs.

The Activate Health Programme also contributed to meeting the Agency's collaborative objectives. Offering community and voluntary groups access to accredited training greatly increases the opportunities for local individuals to take part in physical activity. This year saw formal partnerships with Age

Concern and the Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke Association consolidated, as each offered Activate training within their own organisation and to others.

The Agency organised a workshop for Activate tutors who may use the programme with people who have learning difficulties. The aim of the course was to share new ideas for making some of the Activate programme activities more 'user-friendly' to people with learning difficulties. Work was also carried out to explore new approaches to assessing Activate course participants. The use of continuous assessment methods was piloted, whereby participants were asked to provide feedback on elements of the course on a regular basis as opposed to simply at the end. Further piloting will be carried out before a change is made to the assessment process.

The Agency would like to acknowledge the tremendous work of the many trainers, tutors and leaders who make the Activate Health Programme a reality for a wide range of individuals and groups.

This year saw formal partnerships with Age Concern and the Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke Association consolidated...







Reaching  
others

# Communications

**Effective communication is crucial to the success of the Agency's work. An important part of health promotion is getting relevant information to those who need it, when they need it and in an appropriate format.**

**This year the HPA further developed its electronic communications capacity and has been encouraged by the feedback to its new websites. As well as meeting stated objectives, the HPA fulfilled a number of in-year commitments to additional DHSSPS priorities.**

**It also continued to review the impact of its communications to ensure they remain effective.**

## **Updated corporate identity**

This year saw the introduction of the HPA's 'new look' following a comprehensive review of its corporate identity. Given the changing environment in which the Agency carries out its work, and the new media through which it communicates, it was considered timely to find a visual approach that would communicate a strong, positive identity across all media and take the Agency confidently into the next ten years and beyond.

At the core of the new corporate identity is a striking logo. This was designed to project a friendly, open and accessible image, underline a commitment to health and reinforce the Agency's emphasis on people. By continuing to project a strong, clear presence the Agency hopes to present as a key player in promoting health and also to reflect the importance of health promotion as a central force in improving the health of the public.

## **HPA celebrates ten years**

This was a special year for the Agency as it celebrated its tenth anniversary, having been formally established on 1 October 1990. On 28 September, representatives from many organisations who have worked with the HPA were welcomed to an informal celebration at its Ormeau Avenue premises. On 5 October a more formal dinner was held at Parliament Buildings to mark the occasion. Dr Joe Hendron, Chair of the Northern Ireland Assembly's Health Committee, hosted the evening and the guest of honour was the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Ms Bairbre de Brún.

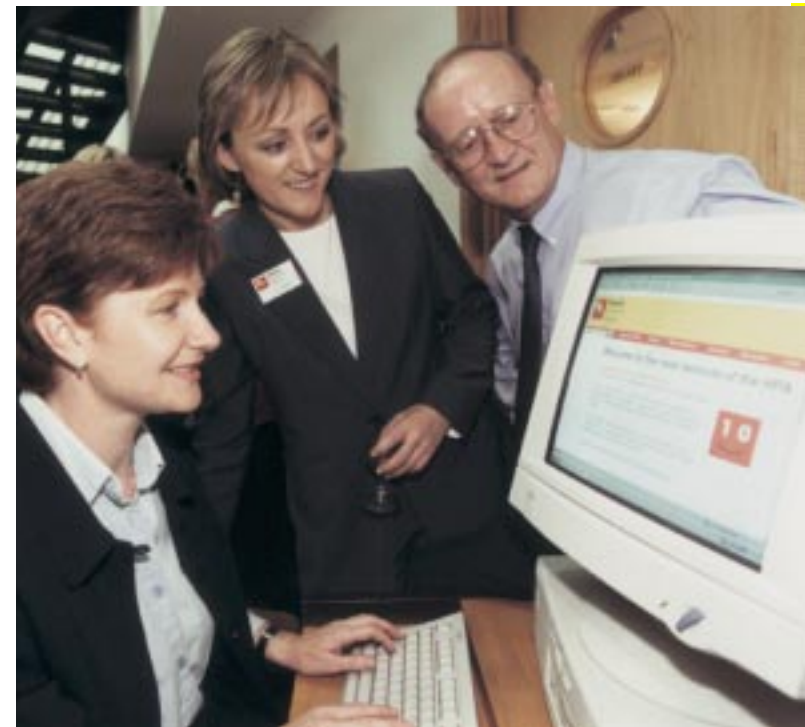
The Agency extends special thanks to a number of sponsors who made these anniversary

celebrations possible. These included the Bank of Ireland, The Dairy Council for Northern Ireland, Glaxo Wellcome, Tropicana and McNaughton Paper (NI) Ltd.

## **Electronic communications**

The Agency continued to develop its expertise in electronic communications. It can now offer many of its resources online through its corporate website at [www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk). This allows many more people to obtain information and speeds up access. Visitors to the site can download information, order Agency publications, sign up for press releases, view campaign material such as television advertisements and access a wide range of valuable links.

Established to mark the new Millennium, the Agency's Millennium Babies website [www.bornintheyear2k.com](http://www.bornintheyear2k.com) continued to provide clear and reliable advice and health information



for parents of babies in Northern Ireland. During the year the site was regularly updated with news stories and up-to-date information about pregnancy, child health and family planning and remained a valuable resource for parents.

A new dimension to this resource was added by the link created between the Millennium Babies site and 'UK Online'. 'UK Online' aims to provide the public with convenient access to government information and services. The site provides information specific to citizens of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and links to [www.bornintheyear2k.com](http://www.bornintheyear2k.com) can be found in the section 'Life Episodes - having a baby'. As the regional provider of health promotion information in Northern Ireland, the Agency was pleased to have had the opportunity to contribute to this project.

The Agency's smoking websites were significantly developed during the year and

proved hugely popular with their respective audiences. The website [www.smokefree.co.uk](http://www.smokefree.co.uk) continued to provide quality information on smoking cessation for teachers and health professionals while [www.up-2-you.net](http://www.up-2-you.net) was designed to offer young people aged 12-14 years information on smoking and other lifestyle issues such as self-esteem, healthy eating, drugs and physical activity. Both of these sites were created by the Agency to support the public information element of the Tobacco White Paper, *Smoking Kills*.<sup>4</sup> The Up-2-You site received on average more than 3,500 'hits' per day with many repeat visitors, suggesting that the site is viewed as a useful resource.



"The up-2-you website is an excellent tool, technically it responds very well (fast loading and intuitive interface), secondly the content is also very interesting, notably the health facts and links pages. The tone and language used is accessible without patronising its target audience...

Anecdotally, this has coincided with my own decision to reduce and stop smoking"  
Teacher, Regent House Grammar School

### Corporate communications

Three issues of the Agency's journal *Promoting Health* were published. This journal aims to share easy to read, relevant information about good practice in health promotion, here and further afield. Topics examined included politics and ethics, sexual health and smoking. The sexual health issue explored some of the challenges in promoting sexual health, such as teenage pregnancy and safer sex. It also highlighted examples of innovative sexual health projects working with parents, young people, people with a disability and Northern Ireland's gay community. The smoking issue was launched at the Agency's smoking seminar in March 2001 and contained several of the excellent seminar presentations. A number of additional copies were printed to form part of the seminar delegate pack.

The Agency kept colleagues in health promotion up-to-date with its work and the many collaborative projects that it is involved in, through the six issues of *Inform* published this year. This bi-monthly information bulletin reports on current regional health promotion initiatives as well as providing prior notice of forthcoming projects to facilitate joint working and collaboration.

### Resource development

The HPA produced a range of resources for the public and professionals during the year. A number of these resources were produced in a variety of formats to meet specific needs and to increase access to them. Materials supporting the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) public information campaign were produced in a number of languages and were recorded on audiotape for use by people who are blind or

visually impaired and the Travelling community. A member of the Travelling community worked with the Agency to record the tape which will be used to support parents with literacy difficulties in that community.

The Agency worked with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) and Health Promotion England to produce updated editions of the publications *The Pregnancy Book* and *Birth to Five*. Health and Social Services Trusts throughout Northern Ireland purchase and distribute these publications to all first time mothers in their area.

### Campaigns

The Agency worked to develop and maintain its expertise in producing high quality public information campaigns on health issues. It aims to be a trusted source of information on health and combines careful research and analysis in developing the campaigns. Evaluation has shown this approach to be a powerful and generally cost effective way of getting specific messages to particular target groups within the community or large population groups as a whole.

This year the Agency fulfilled a number of commitments to additional DHSSPS priorities. This involved designing and delivering information for the public and professionals on several important regional health campaigns. It made significant contributions to programmes of work to increase the number of people being immunised against meningitis C, MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) and flu.



A member of the Travelling community recording information about MMR on to audiotape.

The Agency was commissioned by the DHSSPS to revise its information for parents and health professionals in light of publicity surrounding the MMR vaccine. Materials were prepared for a launch in April 2001.

Updated information for parents was produced which will be mailed to them by the Child Health System as their child's vaccination date approaches or slipped into the child's personal health record or 'red book' to provide information at the time they need it most.

The packs for health professionals include:

- an A4 booklet that combines information from factsheets produced in 1998 with findings from up-to-date research supporting the use of MMR.

- *The MMR vaccine. Detailed answers to parents' questions.* This is a shortened version of the information provided by the A4 Booklet. It can be photocopied and given to parents who require more detailed information.

- *The MMR story - Mythbuster* (produced by North Wales Health Authority). This is a booklet designed for use across the table during a consultation with a parent asking questions about MMR.

- a supporting statement endorsed by a number of local professional bodies.

From the beginning of April 2001, the packs will be mailed to all GPs and distributed to other

health professionals such as health visitors and consultant paediatricians.

In keeping with the Agency's commitment to equality of access to information where possible, audiotapes of this information were produced for parents who are blind or visually impaired and for members of the Travelling community and written translations produced for parents from minority ethnic communities.

### **Meningitis C campaign**

The leaflet giving information about the meningitis C vaccine, produced to support the special immunisation programme for children under 18 years, was translated into five minority ethnic languages. GPs, health visitors and school nurses can now give translations of *Meningitis: Reduce the Risk for Children and Young People* to children's parents whose first language is Chinese, Urdu, Hindi, Arabic or Bengali. The translations are also being distributed by a number of minority ethnic community groups, including the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre and the Chinese Welfare Association.

The meningitis C campaign resulted in more than a million vaccines being given to children and young people under the age of 18 years, to protect them against meningococcal C. Encouragingly, the number of recorded cases of meningococcal C has decreased since the campaign began in autumn 1999.

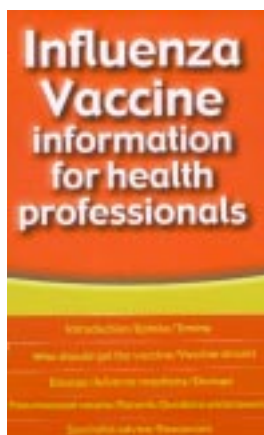
### **Flu immunisation campaign**

October 2000 saw the launch of the flu vaccination programme and the public information campaign *Catch the Vaccine not the Flu*, developed by the Agency. The vaccine is

available free to those aged 65 years and above and to people with a higher risk of serious illness from flu. A target of 65% uptake of the flu vaccine among those aged 65 years and over had been set for the programme.

The Agency developed and produced the public information campaign to raise awareness about the vaccine and encourage those eligible to get vaccinated. The campaign included television and radio advertising, a newspaper insert, information notes for health professionals, and an information leaflet and poster for the public.

In developing the campaign, the Agency used focus groups to assess older people's knowledge of and attitudes to the flu vaccine. They also gathered feedback on materials produced by commercial companies to promote the flu vaccine. Three television advertisements



were also pre-tested with older people. This background information was vital in making sure the campaign appealed to those who needed the vaccine.

The campaign successfully contributed to increasing the number of people who took up the invitation to be vaccinated to 68% (which exceeded the campaign target of 65%). The overall success of these campaigns was due in no small part to the collaboration between a number of organisations and professional groups such as consultants in communicable disease control, GPs, practice nurses, health visitors, schools and parents.

### **Media relations**

The Agency's press office fielded almost 400 calls about health promotion issues during 2000-2001. It continued to respond in a timely and effective manner to a variety of needs to support those working in the press and broadcast media.

The press office also proactively obtained coverage for a number of priority regional health promotion issues, such as physical activity, nutrition and sexual health. This both underpinned the public information element of campaign work and raised the Agency's profile as a reliable source of information on health.

Encouragingly, the number of recorded cases of meningococcal C has decreased since the campaign began in autumn 1999.

# Developing the business

The HPA is committed to developing effective and efficient operational systems and a strong infrastructure.

Work to meet its objectives relating to developing its internal capacity entailed staff development and training initiatives, investment in its information technology network and the ongoing review of internal policies and structures in order to make the best use of resources.

## Equality of Opportunity

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions, powers and duties, to promote equality of opportunity and good relations among a range of groups. The Agency, as specified by the legislation, prepared its draft equality scheme showing how it intends to meet this requirement. Following widespread consultation, the draft scheme was submitted to the Equality Commission in June 2000.<sup>31</sup>

The HPA worked with other HPSS organisations to screen its policies for equality implications. A two-stage consultation process began when it circulated a document listing its range of policies and functions for comment between November 2000 and March 2001.

Work was also initiated to review access to information and services in conjunction with other HPSS organisations. The results of this review will inform the development of an equality impact assessment on the information that the Agency provides.

The Agency also carried out briefings for Board members and senior managers on the statutory equality duties and has planned equality awareness training for all staff members for the forthcoming year.

## Investing in people

Agency staff participated in a two-day team building course at the Derrynoid Conference Centre, Draperstown in November. The course was designed to develop practical and interpersonal skills such as communication, trust, problem solving and team-building between members of staff which could be transferred to the work environment.

Taking 'time out' to develop these skills and invest in its staff underlined the Agency's commitment to honouring the principles of the Investor in People Award received in 1999. While no-one could deny the fun element, staff judged the activities important in building professional relationships and fulfilling personal goals.

## Comments

The Agency is committed to openness and continual improvement and welcomes comments on any aspect of its work. Complaints are investigated promptly and in accordance with the Agency's published guide. The Agency received nine formal comments and no formal complaints during 2000-2001. If you wish to make a comment or complaint, or receive a copy of the Agency's business plan, please contact: Kevin Doherty, Corporate Services Manager, The Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland, 18 Ormeau Avenue, Belfast BT2 8HS.

# Accounts

| Year Ended<br>31 March 2000  |  | Year Ended<br>31 March 2001  |
|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| £                            |  | £                            |
| 1,345,000                    | Cash advances made available by  | 1,379,000                    |
| 48,000                       | - DHSSPS   | 24,200                       |
| 1,086,639                    | - Research and Development Office  | 783,821                      |
| <b>2,479,639</b>             | <b>Total Income</b>  | <b>2,187,021</b>             |
|                              | <b>EXPENDITURE</b>   |                              |
|                              | <b>Programme Expenditure</b>   |                              |
| 176,018                      | Policy Development and Advice  | 157,402                      |
| 362,775                      | Research, Analysis and Evaluation  | 297,815                      |
| 105,894                      | Training and Professional Development  | 83,521                       |
| 1,305,938                    | Public and Professional Information  | 1,113,050                    |
| 551,256                      | Operational Costs  | 565,323                      |
| <b>2,501,881</b>             | <b>Total Expenditure</b>   | <b>2,217,111</b>             |
| <b>(22,242)</b>              | <b>Deficit of income over expenditure before notional capital charges</b>      | <b>(30,090)</b>              |
| 48,383                       | Adjustment to offset notional capital charges                                  | 48,605                       |
| <b>26,141</b>                | <b>(Deficit)/Excess of Income over Expenditure</b>                             | <b>18,515</b>                |
|                              | <b>Capital Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31 March 2001</b> |                              |
| Year Ended<br>31 March 2000  | <b>INCOME</b>  | Year Ended<br>31 March 2001  |
| 0                            | Capital advances made available by DHSSPS                                      | 0                            |
| 0                            | Total Income   | 0                            |
|                              | <b>EXPENDITURE</b>   |                              |
| 26,029                       | Capital Expenditure  | 17,841                       |
| 26,029                       | Total Expenditure  | 17,841                       |
| <b>(26,029)</b>              | <b>Excess/(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure</b>                             | <b>(17,841)</b>              |
|                              | <b>Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2001</b>                                       |                              |
| Balances at<br>31 March 2000 | <b>FIXED ASSETS</b>  | Balances at<br>31 March 2001 |
| 106,069                      | Tangible Assets  | 80,536                       |
|                              | <b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>  |                              |
| 3,022                        | Stock  | 3,344                        |
| 147,405                      | Debtors  | 134,771                      |
| 3,190                        | Cash and Bank Balances   | 3,697                        |
| <b>153,617</b>               | <b>Total - Current Assets</b>  | <b>141,812</b>               |
|                              | <b>LIABILITIES</b>   |                              |
| 149,179                      | Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year                                 | 136,700                      |
| <b>4,438</b>                 | <b>Net Current Assets</b>  | <b>5,112</b>                 |
| <b>110,507</b>               | <b>Total Assets less Current Liabilities</b>                                   |                              |
| 4,023                        | Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year                        | 4,023                        |
| <b>106,484</b>               | <b>Net Assets</b>  | <b>81,625</b>                |
|                              | <b>FINANCED BY:</b>  |                              |
| 106,069                      | Capital Account  | 80,536                       |
|                              | Net Income and Expenditure Reserve   |                              |
| 80,559                       | - Revenue  | 99,074                       |
| (80,144)                     | - Capital  | (97,985)                     |
| <b>106,484</b>               |  | <b>81,625</b>                |

# Accounts

## Cash Flow Statement for the Year Ended 31 March 2001

|  | Year ended<br>31 March 2001 | Year ended<br>31 March 2000 |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|  | £                           | £                           |
| <b>Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Operating Activities</b>           | <b>18,348</b>               | <b>23,277</b>               |
| <b>Capital Expenditure</b>   |                             |                             |
| Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets                            | (17,841)                    | (26,029)                    |
| Proceeds from sales of tangible fixed assets                         | 0                           | 0                           |
| <b>Net Cash Outflow from Investing Activities</b>                    | <b>(17,841)</b>             | <b>(26,029)</b>             |
| <b>Management of Liquid Resources</b>                                |                             |                             |
| Purchase of current asset investments                                | 0                           | 0                           |
| Sale of current asset investments                                    | 0                           | 0                           |
| <b>Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Management of Liquid Resources</b> | <b>0</b>                    | <b>0</b>                    |
| <b>Net Cash Outflow before financing</b>                             | <b>(507)</b>                | <b>(2,752)</b>              |
| <b>Financing</b>   |                             |                             |
| Capital Funding  | 0                           | 0                           |
| Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Financing                             | 0                           | 0                           |
| <b>Decrease in Cash and Bank Balances</b>                            | <b>(507)</b>                | <b>(2,752)</b>              |

## Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses for the year ended 31 March 2001

|  | 2001     | 2000     |
|--|----------|----------|
| Surplus/(deficit) for the financial year                             | 2001     | 2000     |
| - Revenue  | 18,515   | 26,141   |
| - Capital  | (17,841) | (26,029) |
| Unrealised surplus on the revaluation and indexation of fixed assets | 1,866    | 2,619    |
| Total gains/(losses) recognised                                      | 2,540    | 2,731    |

This Annual Report, including the summary financial statements, was approved by the Agency Board at its meeting on 7 August 2001.



Alice Quinn  
Chair



Dr Brian P Gaffney  
Chief Executive

Copies of the Agency's full annual accounts for 2000-2001 can be obtained from Marie McCloskey, Business Manager (Finance), The Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland, 18 Ormeau Avenue, Belfast, BT2 8HS. E-mail: m.mccloskey@hpani.org.uk

# Accounts

## Board Members' Remuneration

|                                    | 2001          | 2000          |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
|                                    | £             | £             |
| Chairman's honorarium and expenses | 6,893         | 9,179         |
| Chief Executive's emoluments       | 80,836        | 77,967        |
| Other members' expenses            | 590           | 1,061         |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>88,319</b> | <b>88,207</b> |

No pension contributions are paid by the Agency in respect of non-executive Agency Board members.

## Emoluments of Chief Executive/Senior Full Time Official

The emoluments of the Chief Executive who is an ordinary member of the Agency's pension scheme are:

|  | 2001          | 2000          |
|--|---------------|---------------|
|  | £             | £             |
| Salary including employer's National Insurance contributions | 75,581        | 73,356        |
| Employer's Superannuation contributions                      | 2,740         | 2,658         |
| Expenses Allowances (taxable)                                | 2,515         | 1,953         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>80,836</b> | <b>77,967</b> |

## Public Sector Payment Policy - Measure of Compliance

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety requires that the Agency pays its non HPSS trade creditors in accordance with the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) Prompt Payment Code and Government Accounting rules. The Government Accounting rules require that "the timing of payment should normally be stated in the contract ... where there is no contractual provision departments should pay within 30 days of receipt of goods and services or on the presentation of a valid invoice, whichever is the later".

The Agency's compliance for 2000-2001, based on a sample of 5% of non HPSS trade creditors, was:

|   | Number | Value   |
|---|--------|---------|
|   |        | £       |
| Total bills sampled 2000-2001           | 105    | 184,030 |
| Total sampled bills paid within 30 days | 102    | 183,711 |
| % of sampled bills paid within 30 days  | 97%    | 99%     |

None of the Agency Board members, members of key management staff or other related parties has undertaken any material transactions with the Agency during the year.

## Auditor's Report on the summary financial statements of the Northern Ireland Health Promotion Agency.

I have examined the summary financial statements set out on pages 43 to 45.

### Respective responsibilities of the directors and auditors

The directors are responsible for preparing the annual report. My responsibility is to report to you my opinion on the consistency of the summary financial statements within the annual report with the full financial statements and with compliance within the Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 and directions made thereafter by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. I also read the other information contained in the annual report and consider the implications for my report if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summary financial statements.

### Basis of opinion

I conducted my work in accordance with the Bulletin "The Auditor's Statement on the Summary Financial Statement" issued by the Auditing Practices Board.

### Opinion

In my opinion the summary financial statements are consistent with the full financial statements of the Northern Ireland Health Promotion Agency for the year ended 31 March 2001 and complies with the requirements of the Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 and directions made thereafter by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

### Henry Saville

Appointed Auditor



# The Agency Board

**Board members  
1 April 2000 to  
31 March 2001**

The work of the Health Promotion Agency is managed by a Board of ten members who are appointed by the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, through the DHSSPS.

The Board meets four times a year to discuss strategy, monitor the performance of the Agency and

assist in the development of priorities and policies. Each Board member acts in a personal rather than a representative capacity and non-executive members, apart from the Chairman, give their services without remuneration.



**Ms Alice Quinn**

was appointed Chair of the Health Promotion Agency on 1 March 2001. She comes to the Agency after a high profile career in retailing with Marks and Spencer spanning almost 30 years. She is also Chair of Proteus (an intermediary funding body for peace and reconciliation) and is a member of the Belfast Partnership Board. Ms Quinn has also been a member of Business in the Community, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), the Institute of Directors, the Fair Play for Women Initiative and the Board of the BBC.



**Mrs Fiona Bagnall**

enrolled as a solicitor with the Law Society of Northern Ireland in 1986. She is currently in Brangam, Bagnall and Co (Solicitors). She regularly lectures within the Health and Personal Social Services to nurses and medical and administrative professionals.



**Mr Paul Burns**

is Training Solutions Manager with Service and Systems Solutions Ltd (SX3), part of the Viridian Group. He was previously a member of the Northern Ireland Chief Executives' Forum and has wide experience in training, management and organisational development issues in the private, public and voluntary sectors.



**Dr Margaret Cupples**

is a GP and Senior Lecturer in General Practice at The Queen's University of Belfast. She is actively involved in primary care and is interested in highlighting the value of health promotion in the undergraduate medical curriculum as well as in the community.



**Ms Liz Fiddis**

is a Lecturer in Health Studies at the Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education (BIFHE) and has a particular interest in student health issues. As Equality Officer of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education she is active on both the Women's and Disability Committees of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.



**Dr Brian Gaffney,**

Chief Executive of the Health Promotion Agency, worked as a GP and then as a consultant in Public Health Medicine. He has a broad experience of the health service from primary care to strategic management.



**Ms Evelyn Gilroy**

has a degree in psychology and a wide range of experience in strategic planning. Previous work has included coordinating a comprehensive redevelopment strategy for the Beechmount Community Project, and working as a Director of the Belfast European Partnership Board, compiling a strategy by which the peace and reconciliation funds from Europe are distributed.



**Mr Anthony Harbinson**

is Director of Finance with the Mater Health and Social Services Trust. He was previously Director of Finance for the Eastern Multifund and the Eastern Ambulance Service Trust. Since 1995 he has been a member of Threshold (NI), a charitable organisation specialising in working with young people who suffer from mental illness. Mr Harbinson was acting Chairman of the HPA from July 2000 to the end of February 2001.



**Dr David Higginson**

has been a consultant cardiologist at the Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust since 1983 having previously trained in the Royal Victoria Hospital, and the Royal Postgraduate Medical School, London. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London and a Fellow of the European Society of Cardiology. He has served on the Council of the Irish Cardiac Society and is interested in primary and secondary prevention of heart disease.



**Mrs Una O'Kane**

has been principal of St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt since 1995. Through her work in the education field she has been involved in health education in primary and post-primary schools in Northern Ireland for more than 15 years.

A full list of members' interests is available on request.

# Agency staff and directors

## Senior Management Team

### Dr Brian Gaffney

Chief Executive

### Linda Barclay

Director of Programme Development

### Maureen Gardner

Director of Communications

### Kevin Doherty

Corporate Services Manager

## Chief Executive's Office

### Janet Stange

Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive  
(until February 2001)

### Heather McDermott

Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive  
(from February 2001)

### Dr John Yarnell

Senior Lecturer in Cardiovascular Epidemiology  
Joint appointment with The Queen's University of Belfast



## Programme Development

### Lynn Bruce

Regional Health Promotion Manager  
(Children and Young People) from  
February 2001

### Máire Campbell

Regional Health Promotion Manager  
(Training and Professional Development)  
from July 2000

### Deborah Hunter

Drugs Project Officer (from February 2001)

### Máire Gallagher

Regional Health Promotion Manager  
(Alliances for Health)

### Frank Kelly

Regional Health Promotion Manager  
(Physical Activity) until August 2000

### Naomi McCay

Research and Information Officer

### Angela McComb

Regional Health Promotion Manager  
(Nutrition)

### Patricia McCune

Health Promotion Officer (until April 2000)

### Rob Phipps

Regional Health Promotion Manager  
(Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs)

### Jorun Rugkasa

Research and Information Officer (from  
July 2000)

### Siobhan Weir

Regional Health Promotion Manager  
(Physical Activity) from December 2000

## Communications

### Sean Arbuckle

Graphic Artist

### Catherine Brown

Publications Officer

### Nina Campbell

Publications Assistant (Electronic Media)

### Jenny Dougan

Public Relations Officer

### Rachel Kelly

Corporate Communications Manager

### Ruth Knowles

Publications Development Manager  
(from February 2001)

### Alan Martin

Design, Production and Electronic  
Communications Manager  
(from February 2001)

### Margaret Slane

Marketing Manager

## Corporate Services

### Carrie Crossan

Receptionist

### Claire Hind

Support Services Administrator

### Patricia Lavery

Clerical Officer (from March 2001)

### Sam Lawther

Porter

### Barbara Ann Lively

Clerical Officer (until August 2000)

### Ann Marie McCann

Administrative Assistant

### Marie McCloskey

Business Manager (Finance)

### Mary Patterson

Audio Typist

### Noreen Savage

Business Services Coordinator

### Janet Stange

Support Services Administrator (from  
February 2001)

### Jonathan Telford

Finance Assistant

### Lesley Whan

Support Services Administrator  
(until October 2000)

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**Health  
Promotion  
Agency**



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