

## IPH Newsletter

**Vol 5 Issue 2 – June 2011**

**Welcome to Public Health News in Ireland**

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### Spotlight on the Health Well – Fuel Poverty Hub



IPH launched the all island Fuel Poverty Hub in March as part of the Health Well. The Hub is a one-stop resource for relevant fuel poverty information, news and policy developments.

The Hub features an extensive collection of reports and resources on fuel poverty which are regularly updated. Other Hub features include

- latest news
- government debates
- policy consultations

The Hub can support people to work collaboratively through online groups, social media and networking tools. We welcome your feedback.

[Access Fuel Poverty Hub](#)

**Your Health is Your Wealth: consulting on a new public health policy for a**

## healthier Ireland

The Department of Health (DoH) in the Republic of Ireland is developing a new public health policy which aims to help people live healthier and more fulfilling lives, and to create social conditions that ensure good health on equal terms for the entire population.

Minister for Health, Dr James Reilly, Minister for Children, Frances Fitzgerald and Ministers of State; Róisín Shortall and Kathleen Lynch took part in a recent consultation day to launch the initiative.

Keynote speakers included Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Director, University College London Institute for Society and Health and Dr Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) Northern Ireland.

IPH is on the working group tasked with developing the policy and is centrally involved in the consultation process.

[A video of the event can be accessed here](#)

[Access the press release and further information from the Department of Health website here](#)

[Access the event programme here](#)

## Tackling health inequalities through the cardiovascular service framework



Pictured at the Public Health Agency Cardiovascular Service Framework Health Impact Assessment Launch, in the Maureen Sheehan Centre, Belfast are (L-R) *Dr Christine McMaster, Public Health Agency (PHA); Dr Eddie Rooney, Chief Executive, PHA; Dr Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety; Mr Sheelin McKeagney, Southern Local Commissioning Group, Health and Social Care Board; Ms Liz McShane, HEART project, Maureen Sheehan Centre and Ms Claire Higgins, Institute of Public Health in Ireland*

The Public Health Agency (PHA) undertook a health impact assessment (HIA) of the Cardiovascular Service Framework for Northern Ireland (CVSFW).

IPH supported the PHA to undertake the HIA and believes it sets a very clear example to other government departments and agencies of the need to assess the health impacts of their work.

Further information on this work and HIA findings may be found at

<http://www.publichealthagency.org/news/pha-%E2%80%93-improving-cardiovascular-services> or access the full reports:

- [Putting a health inequalities focus on Northern Ireland cardiovascular service framework - Summary report](#)

- [Cardiovascular health and wellbeing profile for Northern Ireland](#)
- [Cardiovascular health and wellbeing in Northern Ireland - Literature review](#)
- [HIA focus \(newsletter\)](#)

Available on IPH website at <http://www.publichealth.ie/ireland/completedhias>

## **IPH report links unemployment with rising mental health problems for men**

The economic recession with its accompanying rise in unemployment rates has been linked to extremely adverse effects for men's mental health, according to new IPH research.

The IPH report [Facing the Challenge – The Impact of the Recession and Unemployment on Men's Health in Ireland](#) has identified a strong expectation of increased mental health problems for men given the very strong correlation between unemployment and male mental ill health.

The report is based on research carried out, in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, by Nexus Research Co-operative on behalf of IPH.

[Access the report here](#)

## **Eliminating health inequalities - a matter of life and death**

A new report on health inequalities outlines the interrelationship between economic inequality and inequality of health outcomes. Eliminating Health Inequalities – A Matter of Life and Death was launched by the Think Tank for Action on Social Change (TASC) on 14 June.

The report draws on IPH research and was authored by TASC Head of Policy Sinéad Pentony and Sara Burke, health policy analyst and journalist, with input from the TASC Health Inequalities Advisory Group, chaired by Prof Joe Barry, Chair of Population Health Medicine, Department of Public Health and Primary Care, Trinity College Dublin.

Access a [one page summary of the report here](#)

Access the [TASC press release here](#)

Access the report '[Eliminating Health Inequalities – A Matter of Life and Death](#)' [here](#)

## **Rare diseases**

A European Council Recommendation on action in the field of rare diseases recommends that a specific national approach and European collaboration are the key elements to improve health and wellbeing of people with rare diseases. Health authorities of 27 EU Member States including Ireland have signed up to develop national plans on rare diseases by 2013. IPH is working with DoH to support the development of a National Rare Diseases Strategy for Ireland.

*Did you know? It is estimated that between 5,000 and 8,000 distinct rare diseases exist globally today, affecting between 6 and 8% of the population in the course of their lives.*

## **Obesity Audit**

The All-Island Audit of Obesity-Related Interventions conducted by the PHA and HSE is gathering details of obesity related interventions and evaluations so that they can be shared with policy-makers and practitioners through a specially designed webtool on the Obesity Hub.

The final phase of the audit will go into the field very soon. These details will allow users to conduct more defined search results on the Hub. If you are contacted regarding an intervention you are involved with, please complete this important questionnaire. For further information email [nadine.mcquillan@publichealth.ie](mailto:nadine.mcquillan@publichealth.ie)

## **Fuel Poverty News**

### **Health impacts of cold homes and fuel poverty**

A seminal report on health and fuel poverty written by the Marmot Review Team was published in May 2011. [Health Impacts of Cold Homes and Fuel Poverty](#) presents a comprehensive review of evidence of direct and indirect health impacts associated with fuel poverty and cold housing.

[Access this here](#)

### **Fuel poverty and older people project**

Data analysis is underway on the 'cold weather survey' questionnaires returned by older people as well as secondary analysis of national datasets. This is part of the Fuel Poverty and Older People Project led by Dublin Institute of Technology, Kevin Street, with partners IPH and the Centre of Excellence for Public Health (NI).

We look forward to presenting the findings later in the year. Thank you to all of the respondents for returning the questionnaires!

[Access Fuel Poverty Hub](#)

## **Consultations**

### **Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) - Draft Service Framework for Mental Health and Wellbeing**

DHSSPS has developed a series of Service Frameworks which set out explicit standards for health and wellbeing. IPH responded to the latest Service Framework on mental health and believes the framework presents a good structure to enhance mental health services. However greater attention needs to be given to the validity of the performance measurements to be used for monitoring.

[Access IPH response here](#)

### **Department for Regional Development (DRD) - Regional Development Strategy**

The draft Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland provides an overarching spatial framework to influence the future distribution of activities throughout the Region to 2035.

IPH highlighted the growing recognition that leading causes of illness and death such as heart disease, cancer, respiratory diseases and injuries, may be exacerbated by elements within the built environment which contribute to sedentary lifestyles and harmful environments. IPH called for greater recognition of the links between regional development and health and the need for a health impact assessment (HIA) to be undertaken on the strategy to maximise health outcomes.

[Access IPH response here](#)

### **Department for Social Development (DSD) – Future regulation of gambling in Northern Ireland**

The review of gambling in Northern Ireland presents timely action to up-date legislation to reflect modern gambling practices. IPH supports the approach to strike a balance between developing gambling as a leisure pursuit and minimising its harmful effects. IPH believes a population approach should be adopted rather than an approach which is restricted to a focus on children and vulnerable people.

[View the IPH report 'Developing a population approach to gambling: Health issues'](#)

[Access IPH response here](#)

### **Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) – Phase 2 of the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs 2011-2016**

DHSSPS has led the development of New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs Phase 2 2011-2016 (NSD Phase 2). The consultation provides an opportunity to address a number of issues which have emerged since the original document was published in 2006, including: emerging drugs of concern/'legal highs', and taking a population approach to alcohol.

[Access IPH response](#)

### **Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department for Regional Development - Spatial Strategies on the Island of Ireland: Framework for Collaboration**

This joint consultation document examined the key planning challenges faced by both parts of the Island and discussed potential for collaboration in spatial planning. It set out a framework for collaboration at different levels within the public sector which should result in mutual benefits.

[Access IPH response](#)

### **National Transport Authority on the Greater Dublin Area Draft Transport Strategy 2011-2030**

The Greater Dublin Area Draft Transport Strategy 2011-2030 sets out the National Transport Authority's Strategic Transport Plan for Greater Dublin Area (GDA). IPH welcome the intent to maximise cycling, walking and use of public transport; as well as minimise environmental impacts and reduce car journeys and speeds.

[Access IPH response](#)

## **Resources**

### **IPH web resources on health inequalities**

The [health inequalities](#) section of the IPH website has been updated. Content is now structured

according to our *Corporate Plan 2010-2013* and presented according to IPH 'action areas on health inequalities'

- [giving every child the best start in life](#)
- [healthy and sustainable communities](#)
- [mental health](#)
- [social protection](#)
- [education, lifeskills and employment](#)
- [health intelligence](#).

We welcome your feedback and suggestions on the website.

[Access the health inequalities section of the IPH website here](#)

## Health Well – Health Inequalities Hub

IPH is developing a Health Inequalities Hub as part of the Health Well. This Hub will access information you need on health inequalities, work collaboratively over the web and use information more effectively. We are working with the HSE to explore how the Hub can support students on the forthcoming Specialist Cert in Health Promotion: Health Inequalities being offered by NUIG.

The Hub is managed by IPH in collaboration with the HRB Centre for Health and Diet Research (UCC/UCD) in Ireland and the UKCRC Centre of Excellence for Public Health (NI) (QUB).

[Access the draft Health Inequalities Hub](#)

## Public Health Information System

This *Public Health Information System (PHIS) 2011 Data Tables* page is part of [Health Well](#) website and is managed by IPH with the [co-operation of key organisations throughout the island](#).

PHIS 2011 is the latest version of a collection of tables of health-related data produced by DoH in the Republic of Ireland. PHIS 2011 is also distributed by CD (available from the DoH).

The 24 data tables in PHIS 2011 have been grouped into six themes: Cancer, Demography, Fertility, Hospital Admissions, Mortality, Psychiatric In-patients.

[Access PHIS 2011 here](#)

## Contact us

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