

IPH Newsletter

Vol 5 Issue 1 – March 2011

Welcome to Public Health News in Ireland

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Spotlight on the Health Well – better intelligence, better decisions, better health

The Health Well is an innovative and unique all-island website designed to help you:

- Access the health information you need (including relevant resources and news articles, open access journals and all island data)
- Work collaboratively over the web
- Use information more effectively.

The Health Well aims to help policy-makers, health and social care professionals, managers and agencies. It contains a series of hubs on key public health themes such as Obesity, Fuel Poverty and Health Inequalities. It 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) in Northern Ireland.

[Access the Health Well](#)

[Look at the Health Well Community Profiles to see how your area compares](#)

Better Health Intelligence – Launch of the Obesity Hub

Obesity is a major health challenge across Ireland. The Obesity Hub provides a dedicated online information resource to help health experts, social planners, campaign groups and the media keep up-to-date and use information on obesity more effectively. It marks an important development, across the island in health intelligence.

The Hub includes information on obesity related to:

- Policies and Guidance

- Interventions
- (Numerical) Data
- Research and Evaluation
- Knowledge Translation Tools
- Contacts

And:

- Summaries of research articles drawn from Open Access Journals
- A News Room to help you keep up-to-date with what's happening in your area

With its academic partners, IPH recently launched the Obesity Hub website in Cork on 15 February, Belfast 3 March and Dublin 11 March. These launches created considerable positive interest. Presentations and more information about the Obesity Hub can be found here:

[Access Obesity Hub](#)

[Access further information on the Obesity Hub](#)

Strengthening the all-Island Research Base DEL Funded Diet, Obesity and Diabetes Project, QUB, Belfast

A conference was held in QUB on the 3 March to highlight the findings from a Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) funded research programme on diet, obesity and diabetes. The funding was part of a wider DEL programme to strengthen all-island research infrastructure.

Research partners included IPH, the UKCRC Centre of Excellence for Public Health (NI) and the HRB Centre for Health and Diet Research, UCC, Cork.

[Access IPH presentations on the obesity hub and the prevalence of obesity related conditions and conference presentations here](#)



Researchers and speakers attending Strengthening the all-Island Research Base DEL funded event, Belfast.

Food security on the island of Ireland: are we sleepwalking into a crisis?

In September 2010 IPH produced Climate Change and Health: A platform for action which sets out 10 points covering a number of areas. It draws attention to the need for a more sustainable food production system and argues that food systems need to be reshaped in line with sustainable development and in ways which support health and wellbeing.

IPH has now developed a discussion paper on food security on the island. This makes the case that health is and needs to be central to food and agricultural policy. Population health, food systems and agricultural production are intimately linked. A clear framework on food security is needed in both parts of the island of Ireland and this offers a key opportunity for cooperation.

[Access Food security on the island of Ireland: are we sleepwalking into a crisis?](#)

[Access Climate Change and Health](#)

Greater engagement by medical professionals in tackling health inequalities

A British Medical Association (BMA) conference recently highlighted the need for medical professions to be more involved in tackling health inequalities.

Speaking at “Health Inequalities – the role of the medical profession” BMA President, Sir Michael Marmot stated that health professionals need to be strong advocates and work with other sectors as “every Minister is a Health Minister”.

[Access IPH report: Tackling Health Inequalities – an all island approach to social determinants](#)

Faculty of Public Health updates

UK Faculty of Public Health

The UK Faculty of Public Health (FPH) is the standard setting body for specialists in public health in the United Kingdom. The Board recently met with members in Belfast to discuss changes in public health in England.

[Access further information on the Faculty website](#)

Irish Faculty of Public Health Medicine

The Irish Faculty of Public Health Medicine is an integral part of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. It recently published a manifesto highlighting the need for action across all sectors to improve health and wellbeing, place greater emphasis on prevention and early intervention.

IPH welcomes the manifesto call for a review of health inequalities, including differences in healthcare and health outcome by socio-economic grouping and geography and its recommendations to improve regulation and legislation to prevent the harm done by tobacco and alcohol, and for minimum pricing structures for alcohol and tobacco products, as well as the restriction of advertising of junk food.

[Access IPH statement on the manifesto here](#)

Fuel Poverty news



Fuel Poverty Hub

IPH will launch the all island [Fuel Poverty Hub](#) on the Health Well later in March. The Hub is a one-stop-shop for relevant fuel poverty information resources, news and policy developments. It can support people to work collaboratively through online groups, social media and networking tools. We welcome feedback and suggestions for resources to be added to the Hub.

[Access Fuel Poverty Hub](#)

Warm Homes – Ireland’s Affordable Energy Strategy

IPH is contributing to the final stages in the development of Ireland's first affordable energy strategy. Through our input to the Interdepartmental Group on Affordable Energy, we hope to ensure that the strategy includes meaningful measures to address the health impacts of fuel poverty.

Health benefits of addressing fuel poverty highlighted in recent events

IPH contributed to two recent fuel poverty events. We also contributed to a cross disciplinary NEA Energy Advice Forum convened to discuss lessons learnt from the recent severe cold weather in Northern Ireland.

[Access Energy Action Fuel Poverty Conference 2011 presentations](#)

[Access International Energy Action – Evaluating the co-benefits of low-income weatherisation programmes presentations](#)

Research on keeping warm in cold weather

Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) and the Institute of Public Health in Ireland (IPH) are researching older people's experience of keeping warm in cold weather. The research, funded by the Centre for Ageing Research and Development in Ireland (CARDI), will inform policy on assisting older people to heat and insulate their homes and respond appropriately to cold weather warnings. Other project partners include Queens University Belfast (QUB), Brunel University West London, Dublin City Council, Age Action, Energy Action, Cluid Housing Association, Irish Rural Link and St Vincent De Paul.

[If you would like to contribute to this research, please download the questionnaire](#)

Consultations

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) – Consultation on A Fitter Future for All: An Obesity Prevention Framework for Northern Ireland 2011-2021

DHSSPS has led the development of a cross-Departmental, cross-sectoral obesity prevention framework for Northern Ireland. IPH welcomes the strategy's cross-sectoral approach, stresses the need to incorporate the inequalities dimension of obesity into its aims and principles, and identify programmes of work that could assist in implementation of the strategy. IPH has developed the obesity hub to assist with this framework.

[Access the DHSSPS Consultation](#)

[Access the IPH response](#)

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEH&LG) Climate Change Response Bill 2010

The Climate Change Bill is to provide for the adoption of a national policy in the Republic of Ireland for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2.5% annual reduction in net omissions between 2008 and 2020; to support this by mitigation and adaptation action plans; and to make provision for emission reduction targets to support the objective of transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy. IPH supports the Bill and calls for a clear commitment to international targets and agreements.

[Access the Climate Change Response Bill consultation](#)

[Access the IPH response](#)

Resources

Health Well

Health information resources on the Health Well are grouped into three broad categories:

Catalogues and cache

- A central cache including details of over 22,000 health information resources drawn from websites across Ireland and the UK
- Six structured catalogues containing information resources of different types (research & evaluation reports, policies & guidance, health interventions, numerical data sources, knowledge translation tools and contacts). Currently the catalogues contain nearly 1,4000 resources

Research literature

- Article summaries drawn from around 180 Open Access Journals

News

- News articles drawn from around 170 relevant news sources
- Around 70 health related publications such as newsletters and forums/blogs

A number of leaflets have been produced on this work and can be accessed from www.thehealthwell.info

Making chronic conditions count: Chronic airflow obstruction

The fifth in a series of chronic conditions prevalence forecasting reports which IPH has produced. Previous studies on hypertension, coronary heart disease, stroke and diabetes were launched in 2010.

[Access Making chronic conditions count: Chronic airflow obstruction](#)

Events

Cardiovascular Service Framework (NI) Health Impact Assessment – 1 June 2011

The Public Health Agency (PHA) has completed a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) on the Cardiovascular Service Framework for Northern Ireland (CVSFW). IPH supported this work which was undertaken to determine how implementing the standards in the CVSFW would impact on health inequalities and inequities. The HIA findings and related reports, such as a community profile for Northern Ireland and a literature review of the links between cardiovascular health and inequalities will be launched by PHA in June.

Email Claire Hind at claire.hind@hscni.net to register your interest in attending this event or to request a copy of the report.

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Comprehensive Training – 21-23 March 2011

HIA is a practical, systematic methodology which can be used to assess health impacts and health inequalities of policies, programmes and projects that may not have health as their primary objective. The course is currently fully subscribed.

[Further information and details of the next training may be found here.](#)

International HIA Conference - 14-15 April 2011

The 2011 International HIA conference aims to explore new challenges that HIA faces in the

current global recession and new opportunities for development. The conference will provide an opportunity to discuss how HIA can be used to tackle growing inequalities resulting from this crisis, and advance new strategies for the Health in All Policies approach.

Access further information <http://www.hiainternationalconference.org>

Contact us

Belfast:

The Institute of Public Health in Ireland
Forestview
Purdy's Lane
Belfast
BT8 7ZX
Northern Ireland
Telephone: +44 28 9064 8494
Fax: +44 28 9064 6604
Email: info@publichealth.ie

Dublin:

The Institute of Public Health in Ireland
5th Floor
Bishop's Square
Redmond's Hill
Dublin 2
Ireland
Telephone: +353 1 478 6300
Fax: + 353 1 478 6319
Email: info@publichealth.ie