



Not Just Health

A strategy for the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
to address inequalities in health

2010/2011 ACTION PLAN



Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust

Executive summary

This action plan should be read in conjunction with Not Just Health: a strategy for Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to address inequalities in health, which provides a framework for action that will support the Trust in addressing its overarching purpose to reduce inequalities in health.

Belfast Trust aims to make a real and measurable difference to the impact of health inequalities on the lives of people living in Belfast and to the demand on our resources and the way in which we deploy them. We are committed to the following strategic objectives:

1. Make it a priority to give every child the best start in life and support young people to fulfil their potential
2. Demonstrate leadership through interagency partnerships and advocacy to address the social determinants of health
3. Encourage all health and social care professionals to use available opportunities to promote health and wellbeing
4. Provide a healthy work environment and maximise the health and wellbeing of our staff and their families; support routes to employment within health and social services for the long-term unemployed; and enable staff to engage in learning and support career progression

5. Work with service users, carers and community groups, building on Involving You, the Trust's framework for user involvement and community development, in a way that leads to shared decision-making
6. Measure inequalities in access to our services, understand the inequalities in morbidity in the population we serve and participate in high quality evaluations of interventions introduced to tackle inequalities in health
7. Reduce our carbon footprint and prepare to deal with the effects of climate change on health.

The Trust recognises the importance of an integrated approach between agencies and the community and voluntary sectors to address inequalities in health. A further action plan will be developed for 2011/2012.

1. Children and young people

Following emergence of new evidence on the importance of early bonding for the development of children's brains, there is renewed interest in early development. Research shows that the architecture of the developing brain is shaped by early experience, particularly the nature of children's relationships with their parents and other care-givers in their family or community¹. The current wisdom is that initiatives that promote supportive relationships and rich learning opportunities for young children create a strong foundation for school achievement, future employment and citizenship. These can be fostered through parent education, family support, early care and education, and preschool services. The evidence indicates that later remediation for vulnerable children will produce less favourable outcomes and cost more than appropriate interventions at a younger age. Evidence also points to the fundamental importance of the expertise and skills of the staff working in this field to the quality of early childhood services.

In Northern Ireland, there is growing interest in promoting infant mental health, that is, programmes which foster early attunement between mother and baby, leading to the development of empathy, which is seen as crucial to the prevention of future propensity to violence². The Public Health Agency is developing a regional programme on early childhood and the Trust will seek to make progress on the areas identified. The Trust recognises the importance of mainstream programmes that address the needs of all children and not only the poorest. Therefore we will seek to develop a mixed approach and will align our actions to the priorities identified by the Childcare Partnership and the Health and Social Care Board's Children's Outcomes Board.

Proposed action in 2010/11:

- Pilot the Roots of Empathy programme to develop empathy in primary school children. This programme has been developed in Canada and rigorous evaluation has demonstrated a dramatic reduction in levels of aggression among school children and increased educational attainment. The proposed pilot would be for a programme in 10 schools in the Belfast Trust area. The Trust will work with the Belfast Health Development Unit, Belfast Education and Library Board, Queen's University, Barnardos and Surestart in taking this forward.
- Develop further services through HYPE. HYPE is a Belfast Trust service which provides health education, information and access to health services to support young people to make informed and responsible choices regarding their sexual health and wellbeing. It works with some of the most marginalised young people in deprived communities. The HYPE team employs, trains and develops young people as peer educators to support the development of other young people. During 2010/11, HYPE will
 - o Build on its training and education programmes already being delivered in Belfast Boys and Girls Model Schools by providing nurse-led, drop-in, youth health advice sessions in both schools
 - o Establish a confidential, health drop-in service in the Trust's Residential Units, working in partnership with the Looked After Children's nurse
 - o Develop resources to deliver relationship and sexual health education programmes for young people with learning disabilities, and their parents

¹ Centre for the Developing Child, Harvard University (2007) The science of early childhood development. www.developingchild.net

² Hosking, G., Walsh, I (2005) Violence and what we do about it. Wave Trust www.wavetrust.org.

- Support work experience and employment opportunities with the Trust for young people leaving care, working in partnership with the voluntary sector; careers services, training organisations and employability services to develop an employability programme for young people. The Trust has responsibility for Looked After Children as part of its remit of caring for children who require protection. It currently provides a Looked After Children's Support Service, a multidisciplinary service that is child-centred and focused on meeting their needs holistically, including emotional, physical, educational and psychological aspects of care. Historically, children leaving care experience worse outcomes across a range of the determinants of health. The programme is designed to combat this.



2. Implementation of Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing Service Framework

Service frameworks, published by DHSSPSNI, set out standards for health and social care. The Cardiovascular Health and Wellbeing Service Framework was launched in June 2009. We propose to target the implementation of this Framework to introduce a stronger focus on health inequalities in our services, engaging clinicians in the process.

The rationale for focusing on cardiovascular disease is strong. It is the biggest cause of death and disability in Northern Ireland:

- 504 people died of Coronary Heart Disease in Belfast and Castlereagh in 2008
- The death rate from cardiovascular diseases fell in Northern Ireland by 36% between 1997 and 2008. For the same period, the death rate fell by 31% in the most deprived areas. This led to an increase in the inequality gap.
- People living in the most deprived 20% of wards in Northern Ireland are at least twice as likely to die from Coronary Heart Disease as those in the most affluent wards
- Coronary Heart Disease accounted for 13,400 admissions to hospitals in Northern Ireland in 2008/09 with an average inpatient stay of 5 days
- Cardiovascular diseases account for substantial time off work, unemployment, disability and number of working years lost to the economy
- Many studies have found that people in lower socio-economic groups use services less on average relative to need than those from higher group.

The service frameworks include standards for smoking cessation, physical activity, diet, and alcohol consumption, all of which impact on the risk of developing cardiovascular disease and demonstrate disparities by socio-economic group. For example, smoking is a major risk factor and is more prevalent amongst lower socio-economic groups. In both north and west Belfast, around 38% of people smoke compared to around 26% in south Belfast. NICE guidance for smoking cessation and physical activity recommends brief opportunistic health promotion advice by GPs and other health professionals, followed by referral to services such as smoking cessation and exercise programmes. There are multiple opportunities for health and social care professionals across the service to offer this advice, particularly medical staff. There is evidence that illness and admission to hospital sensitises people and makes them more receptive to health promotion messages.

Proposed action in 2010/11:

- Encourage all health and social care professionals to use available opportunities to promote health and wellbeing, focusing on smoking cessation
- Audit recording of smoking status of inpatients and referral to smoking cessation services with a view to increasing referrals from clinical staff
- Establish a Belfast Cardiac Service Users' Forum and create stronger links with the Eastern Area Stroke Service Users' group.
- Measure inequalities in access to our cardiovascular services, focusing on access to lipid clinics and cardiac surgery, and investigate if present.

3. Travellers Health Strategy

There are approximately 950 Travellers living in Belfast. Travellers are amongst the most disadvantaged groups in Northern Ireland and experience much worse health than the settled community. At a recent workshop with Travellers, hosted by Belfast Trust, Travellers described their experiences of discrimination in accessing Trust services. To address these issues, the Trust is developing a Travellers Health Strategy, central to which is the proposal to employ Traveller health advocacy workers. Their role will be to help raise awareness with Trust staff of issues that Travellers have in accessing services and to provide liaison and advocacy support to Travellers using services. The Trust will work closely with the Public Health Agency, An Múinte Tober and other relevant agencies in taking this forward.

Proposed action in 2010/11:

- Seek to employ two part-time Traveller Health Advocacy workers to promote and support increased access to health and social care services for Travellers, working with front line staff.

4. Health and wellbeing at work

This strategy recommends providing a healthy work environment and maximising the health and wellbeing of all our staff and their families, including supporting routes to employment within the Trust for long-term unemployed and disadvantaged groups. The Trust has developed a strategy to improve workforce health, which proposes health improvement programmes for staff; interventions to support staff to cope with stress and to find ways of reducing work-related stress; and implementation of work-life balance and workplace strategies which contribute to health and wellbeing.

Proposed action in 2010/11:

- Develop a pilot healthy weight programme for staff, focusing initially on staff who are obese
- Develop a pilot peer health programme for front-line staff in Patient and Client Support Services. This will involve training peer health workers to be able to promote health within their peer group and signpost them to health improvement programmes and preventative services
- Implement a Lifelong Learning Strategy. Building on the success of the employability programme, this strategy will promote pre-employment initiatives and outreach, engage support staff in learning and promote the skills escalator, and enable development and progression for Trust staff.

6. Promoting equality of opportunity

The Trust is committed to both the spirit and the legislation set out in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This includes diversity training for front-line staff.

Proposed action in 2010/11:

- Produce a new Equality Scheme outlining the Trust's commitment, plans and actions to address inequalities related to Section 75 groups
- Conduct an audit of inequalities to identify the recurring and prominent areas of inequality at both local and regional level and develop an action plan in response to findings
- Take forward a Disability Action Plan to address barriers in service provision and employment
- Develop a good relations strategy in partnership with the community to address inequalities and barriers to good relations
- Enhance and formalise a human rights-based approach to decision making in the Trust. The Trust wishes to ensure that along with equality and disability considerations, human rights assessment is core to our decision making, resource allocation and policy formulation. The Trust will support this with appropriate training for staff
- Map health and wellbeing needs for the migrant population living in Belfast, with a view to addressing the priorities identified, working in partnership with other agencies and migrant associations.

7. Reducing our carbon footprint

The Trust has developed an Environmental and Sustainability Policy which aims to introduce sustainable development principles into Trust business, to ensure that it minimises any negative impacts of its activities on the environment.

Proposed action in 2010/11:

- During 2010/11 the Trust will implement its Environmental and Sustainability Policy, building on existing work to increase energy efficiency, increase sustainable transport and procurement, minimise waste and increase recycling.



Action plan 2010 to 2011

Topic	Action during 2010/11	By when	Indicator	Who responsible
1. Children and Young People	Develop proposals for a programme which would identify vulnerable mothers attending for antenatal care and provide them with dedicated support	June 2010	Proposal submitted to PHA for funding	Child Health
	Pilot the Roots of Empathy programme	Sept 2010	Programme launched in primary schools Sept 2010	Public Health
	Develop further services through HYPE – - Drop-in clinics in BBMS and BGMS - Service for LAC - Resources for children with learning disability	Sept 2010	Services up and running and resources available	Child Health
	Develop an employability programme for young people leaving care	March 2011	Young people involved in programme	Family and Childcare
2. Cardiovascular Services Framework	Audit recording of smoking status of inpatients and referral to smoking cessation services and develop improvement plan	December 2010	Audit published and improvement plan developed	Health Improvement
	Establish a Belfast Cardiac Service Users' Forum	March 2011	Meeting convened,	Public Health/ Cardiac
	Measure inequalities in access to our cardiovascular services	September 2010	Report available on cardiac surgery and lipid clinics	Planning and Redevelopment/Public Health

3.Travellers Health	Employ two part-time Traveller Health Advocacy workers	December 2010	Workers in post and implementing Travellers action plan	Primary and Community Care
4. Health and wellbeing at work	Develop a pilot healthy weight programme for staff	December 2010	Pilot programme in place	Health Improvement/ Occupational Health/ Nutrition and Dietetics
	Develop a pilot peer health programme within PCSS	March 2011	Pilot programme in place	Learning & Development/Health Improvement/PCSS
	Implement a Lifelong Learning Strategy	March 2011	Pilot programme in place	Learning & Development/Health Improvement/PCSS
5. Interagency partnerships	Work with the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership to deliver an integrated healthy ageing plan for Belfast and a model for a sustainable age sector in Belfast	March 2011	Plan and model published	Older People's Services
	Work with the Public Health Agency and Belfast City Council to establish the Belfast Health Development Unit, a city-wide partnership for health and a city plan for health inequalities.	March 2011	Partnership convened, remit agreed, workplan of Unit finalised	Public Health

6. Promoting equality of opportunity	Produce a new Equality Scheme	March 2011	Scheme published	Health and Social Inequalities Team
	Conduct an audit of inequalities and develop an action plan	December 2011	Audit completed and action plan published	Health and Social Inequalities Team/Public Health
	Progress a Disability Action Plan	March 2011	Progress report	Health and Social Inequalities Team/Physical and Sensory Disability Team
	Develop a good relations strategy	March 2011	Strategy published	Health and Social Inequalities Team
	Formalise a human rights based approach to decision making in the Trust	March 2011	Strategy published	Health and Social Inequalities Team
	Map health and wellbeing needs for the migrant population living in Belfast	October 2010	Report published	Public Health
7. Our Carbon Footprint	Implement the Trust's Environmental and Sustainability Policy	March 2011	Policy agreed and progress report for 10/11	Estate Services/PCSS

This action plan and the strategy are available on
www.belfasttrust.hscni.net

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