

Overview for CIEH Northern Ireland

Meeting of Council

26 April 2007

Report from Graham Jukes, Chief Executive

1.0 Summary and recommendations

- 1.1 This report summarises the activities and progress in ongoing projects in N. Ireland being led by Gary McFarlane since the last meeting of Council.
- 1.2 This report should be read in conjunction with the 2007 business plan for NI which was tabled at the last Council meeting. An updated document is provided with this report (appendix 1) which gives an overview of progress.
- 1.3 Council is recommended to note the report.

2.0 Detail

- 2.1 In late 2006 the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety appointed CIEH NI to design and deliver two specific training events for both local authority strategic service planners and enforcement staff in preparation for the introduction of the smokefree workplace legislation on 30 April 2007. This training was rolled out across NI at various venues over the first two months of 2007. The feedback from both events has been extremely positive and has made a significant contribution to preparations for the successful implementation of this intervention.
- 2.2 In February 2007 the Public Health Alliance for the island of Ireland (PHA) held a two day conference – “Creating Connections 2” – which was a follow-on from the first event in 2005. The CIEH is a founding member of this alliance and is therefore positioned right at the heart of a wide and diverse public health network which now encompasses the whole island. Ministers and officials from both government jurisdictions attended the event and there was good press coverage both north and south.
- 2.3 The two year food poverty project, which the CIEH is one of the three core collaborating organisations in, continues to progress. This work and indeed the topic area is generating considerable and increasing interest across the island with EHPs

already making significant contributions through a variety of innovative local partnerships and projects. The final report will be launched at a high profile event in September 2007 and given the CIEH's positioning within the work (the Director in NI currently chairs the Research Advisory Group and manages the project work and staff), this will be an opportunity to raise our profile further as well as being linked to a credible, topical and robust piece of research which is intended, ultimately, to influence the policy agenda in this area.

- 2.4 A research study has commenced to evaluate the effectiveness of the smokefree legislation in NI. The study will look specifically at indoor air quality and related health effects within licensed premises both before and after the introduction of the legislation. The methodology has been developed in conjunction with the Director in Wales so to allow a further piece of comparative work to be done. Within NI the Director has recruited an EH student to lead on the project which in itself provides very relevant and topical ELP opportunities. It is hoped to extend this concept to involve other EH students in other specific CIEH work streams which builds capacity; provides ELP opportunities; and means that the CIEH can actively support our future EHPs.
- 2.5 The low cost training programme in NI for 2007 is underway and continues to be well subscribed. In addition to EHPs the programme has, this year, begun to attract increasing numbers of other professionals which further enhances our reputation and credibility in this field.
- 2.6 In addition to the specific projects and initiatives within the business plan, the Director has also been involved in ongoing representation and advocacy work. This has included presentations at an international conference on Environmental Risks and Health in Galway; participation in the all island public health leadership network; submission of a position paper on the future proposals for petroleum licensing in NI and input into the public health workforce development work.
- 2.7 With the significant political developments in NI over recent weeks there will be a priority over the next few months in establishing visibility and a presence with newly appointed ministers.

3.0 Implications

Environmental	None
Equal opportunities	None
Financial	Within existing or anticipated/planned budgets
Legal	None
Personnel	None
Public health	None
Public relations	None

Background papers Available from G. McFarlane, Director NI
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