

Hundreds of people pledge the gift of life at the Balmoral Show

The PHA, on behalf of the DHSSPS, hosted the organ donation stand at the Balmoral Show during 12–14 May. Organ Donation Coordinators from all over Northern Ireland, along with staff from the PHA and DHSSPS attended the stand to answer queries or concerns that all too often put people off registering as a donor.

Speaking about the PHA's involvement Dr Eddie Rooney, Chief Executive, said: "I would like to thank all those who were involved in this worthwhile project which provided the opportunity to raise awareness of organ donation.

From a personal perspective I very much enjoyed taking part in the Thursday evening shift and the opportunities presented to encourage people to sign up. It was interesting to meet people whose family

members were either waiting for or had received a transplant. Organ donors came forward and registered individually, while some joined as couples and some as entire families. Over 70,000 people attended the show, offering an excellent platform to provide information on organ donation and help highlight the fact that there is indeed a shortage of donors.

As a result of this effort over 330 people registered at the stand while hundreds more took leaflets away with them to consider at home. Overall this is a great result!"

A number of people also registered using the organ donation website www.organdonation.nhs.uk

If you would like to register as an organ donor, then please do so today at www.organdonation.nhs.uk or telephone 0300 123 23 23.



Pictured at the Balmoral Show supporting organ donation are, from left, Heather Savage, Organ Donation Coordinator, NHS Blood Transfusion; Michael McGimpsey, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety; and Mary McMahan, Chair, Public Health Agency.

Monday morning teleconference – helping to improve internal communication throughout PHA

A teleconference every other Monday morning has been established to improve communication across all PHA locations.

This teleconference will be a 9.00am briefing on key issues and will involve the Agency Management Team, Assistant Directors and representatives from each of the PHA buildings who will act as the communication link for that building. This process will be a two-way exchange of information from which those attending can brief PHA colleagues.

The following members of staff are the communication links for their buildings:

- **West** – Richard Smithson and Brendan Bonner;
- **North** – Gerry Waldron and Madeline Heaney;
- **South** – Brid Farrell;
- **Linenhall Street** – to be nominated;
- **Alexander House** – Gillian Gilmore and Deirdre McNamee;
- **McBrien Building** – Brian Smyth;
- **Kelvin Building** – Ed Smyth;
- **Ormeau Avenue** – Tony Sheridan and Stephen Wilson.

The first teleconference was held on Monday 24 May and included discussion on the Commissioning Plan, PHA budget, developing work with the Participation Network, the development of the PHA website and the PR function.

Further points raised included the development of a global email directory, a list of key contacts, ensuring feedback is disseminated after staff input into processes or papers for AMT/PHA, availability of AMT and Board agendas and minutes, access to external sources of information eg Queens University Belfast resources and the accommodation situation.

Notes will be available with further information on the above points.

It's a man's world – or is it?

Tuesday 15 June, 9.30am–1pm

Oxford Island, Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Craigavon.

Places are still available at a seminar on improving the life expectancy of males



living in the southern area of Northern Ireland. This event will include the launch of the publication, "Men's Health Report – Southern area perspective".

There is no cost for this seminar. Lunch will be provided. To book a place contact Helen or Alice, PHA Southern Office on 028 3741 4640 or email mens.seminars@hscni.net

CEMACH contacts

Updated contact details for the Confidential Enquiry into Maternal and Child Health (Northern Ireland) are listed below:

CEMACH(Northern Ireland) Regional Office

Public Health Agency (PHA)
Eastern Office (Floor 2)
12–22 Linenhall Street
BELFAST BT2 8BS



Direct lines:

CEMACH office	028 9055 3611
Dr Jackie McCall	028 9055 3611
Heather Reid	028 9055 3974
Terri Falconer	028 9055 3619
Fax	028 9053 5500

PHA Eastern Office (and exts):

Switchboard 028 9032 1313

Dr Jackie McCall, Regional Manager,

Ext 2121 or 2405

Heather Reid, Regional Manager, Ext 5500
(Floor 2) or 2352 (Floor 4)

Terri Falconer, Project Manager, Ext 2257

Malcolm Buchanan, Administrator, Ext 2266

Corporate Plan – Draft for 2010/11

The Draft Corporate Plan 2010/11 is well underway. Overall, the budget position for the PHA has not changed significantly for 2010/11; however, there have been a number of changes in how the funding is allocated. As part of the budget settlement, the PHA is required to find savings from across various budget areas. PHA Board members recently reviewed the Draft Corporate Plan 2010/11 and provided their input and direction. More details will be issued in due course.

Accommodation update

The PHA was asked at its inception to develop a business case for a new headquarters. However, given the likely cost of any new accommodation and the current financial climate, the Agency and the DHSSPS have agreed that this should not be taken any further at the moment. As a result we will have to continue with our current arrangements for accommodation. While we recognise that this is not an ideal situation we will continue to look at how we make best use of the space available to us, and endeavour to make our working arrangements across all sites as efficient as possible.

Over the past few months there have been a number of changes within the Belfast offices, including ECCH moving from Arthur House to Linenhall Street and all Belfast based health improvement staff now located together in Alexander House (Mary Black however remains in Linenhall street). A listing of names and contact details will be posted on the intranet site soon.

The HSCB are currently establishing a Premises Committee in each of their facilities (Belfast, South, North and West). The remit of the Premises Committee includes health and safety requirements and the allocation of space across all HSCB, PHA and BSO locations. Initially the PHA will be represented on each of the committees by the Director of Operations and Assistant Director Planning and Corporate Services. We will work closely with local staff to ensure that their needs are represented and that they are aware of what is happening on the committees.

Everyone is also reminded of their responsibility for health and safety, and to give consideration to the general appearance of all premises. A programme of unannounced inspections of all facilities has been agreed (HSCB, PHA and BSO) to ensure that electrical items (including computers and screens) are switched off when not in use, that offices are secure, that confidential and sensitive information is locked away and that every effort is made to keep corridors, exits and walkways clear.

Staff will be kept updated on any new developments regarding accommodation.

PHA Board update

The latest PHA Board meeting took place on 20 May at NICVA, Belfast.

The meeting covered Healthcare Associated Infections, an update on the PHA *Corporate plan*, a finance report, and Performance Management Reports.

Minutes from the meeting on 20 May will be available on the PHA's website at www.publichealth.hscni.net/board/index.html

The next meeting will take place on 17 June 2010, 2:15pm in the Board Room at Craigavon Area Hospital, 68 Lurgan Road, Portadown, BT63 5QQ.

Innovations in bowel cancer screening

Michael McGimpsey, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety recently launched an initiative by the Public Health Agency (PHA) and the Western and Northern Health and Social Care Trusts to encourage men and women aged 60–69 to avail of the new Bowel Cancer Screening programme.

The Bowel Cancer Screening programme is quite different from other screening programmes, as it is carried out by participants themselves, in the comfort and privacy of their own home. Over the next two years all eligible members of the public (between 60–69 years) will be sent a test kit to the address held by their GP.

Dr Tracy Owen, Consultant in Public Health Medicine with the PHA said, “The home test kit can be completed easily in the privacy of a person’s own home and returned by post to the new laboratory for analysis. It is hoped that as the test is carried out at home, more people will respond, particularly men, who often find health issues difficult to talk about.

It is very important that everyone uses this opportunity to take part in the screening, as bowel cancer is the second most common cancer in Northern Ireland, seeing 1,000 new cases diagnosed each year. When detected at a very early stage, treatment for bowel cancer can be 90% successful. The kit is used to detect traces of blood in the bowel motion, which indicates that further tests need to be carried out. People who are tested will have no blood in their bowel motions and will be invited to repeat the screening test again in 2 years time.”

The Bowel Cancer Screening programme offers an opportunity to identify this common cancer at a stage when it can be treated successfully. Over 120 people have already participated in the screening programme since its launch.

For further information on the screening programme and what it involves, visit www.cancerscreening.hscni.net or if you have any questions on completing the test contact the Freephone Helpline: 0800 015 2514.



A new Bowel Cancer Screening programme has been developed. Treatment for bowel cancer can be 90% successful if detected at a very early stage.

EPODE Workshop - preventing childhood obesity

Wednesday 16 June 2010

Lough Neagh Discovery Centre

EPODE (Ensemble Prévenons l'Obésité des enfants or together let's prevent obesity) is a successful approach to the prevention of childhood obesity.

It is a community-based methodology which was developed in France and has recently been adopted in other European countries and beyond. It takes a holistic approach to the prevention of obesity, through the involvement of statutory, commercial, community and voluntary organisations.

The PHA is delighted that Christophe Roy, the Coordinator of the EPODE European Network has agreed to introduce the EPODE intervention at a morning workshop in Lough Neagh Discovery Centre on Wednesday 16 June. He will:

- **illustrate how local towns in France have successfully reduced levels of childhood obesity by adopting healthier eating and activity patterns;**

- **explain how EPODE has been applied across a range of geographies and population sizes;**

- **answer questions and facilitate open discussion.**

This will be an engaging and participative morning workshop aimed at stimulating participants to discuss how the approach could be adopted for use in Northern Ireland.

The PHA is encouraging representatives from government departments, councils, education sector, health and social care, community and voluntary sector and the food industry to avail of this unique opportunity.

If you wish to receive a programme and booking form, please contact Lesley Blackstock, Support Services Administrator, Public Health Agency, 18 Ormeau Avenue, Belfast BT2 8HS
Lesley.Blackstock@hscni.net 028 90 311 611. Please be aware that places are limited and the PHA reserves the right to allocate places to ensure that all sectors are represented.



Short courses available at the Beeches

A range of short training courses available at the Beeches Management Centre are listed below.

- Managing difficult situations
- Administrative development programme
- An overview of continuous improvement
- Appraisal for doctors
- Challenging conversations
- Collaborative working
- Developing management dashboards

- Effective presentation skills
- Engage, empower, enable – the human dimensions of change, motivation and development
- Financial guidance for retirement
- How to get that job
- Performance management in health and social care
- Strengthening Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) in health and social care
- The right to know
- Thinking differently
- Understanding data protection
- Understanding health and social care
- Understanding projects
- Working more effectively

For more information visit www.beeches.hscni.net or call 028 9064 4811 or email enquiries to enquiries@beeches.hscni.net

AMT update

AMT meetings took place on 11 May and 25 May 2010. The agenda and minutes for AMT meetings are available on the PHA intranet at <http://intranet.pha.hscni.net/documents/index.html>

Agenda items for the AMT meeting on 11 May included updates on human resources and finance, Healthcare Associated Infection, PHA, HSCB, BSO Emergency Preparedness, Response Interim Arrangements for the PHA, HSCB and BSO, initiatives for Prison Health and the Patient Client Council Membership Scheme.

The 25 May meeting included updates on human resources and finance, the PHA response to the consultation on the labelling of alcoholic drinks, the Patient Client Council Membership Scheme, the Controls Assurance Standards Report, arrangements for continuing PHA contracts and preparation for the Accountability Review.

The next AMT meetings are scheduled for 8 June and 22 June.

Conquering Mount Kilimanjaro!

Dr Anne Wilson is set to climb Mount Kilimanjaro this autumn. Dr Wilson will undertake this challenge in aid of Marie Curie.

and is the highest 'stand alone' and 'walkable' mountain in the world.

Mount Kilimanjaro is the highest peak in Africa (5,895 metres or 19,341ft)

If you would like to support Dr Wilson's fundraising expedition please visit www.justgiving.com and search for Anne Wilson.

Human Resources Service

Business Services Organisation has now taken full responsibility of the PHA Human Resources (HR) service and previous arrangements which involved local Trust HR departments have now ended.

Staff in the HSCB and PHA should now communicate directly with the HR function in Franklin Street rather than local Trust HR Departments. Paula Smyth, Assistant Director, HR or Norah Emerson, HR Business Partner should be contacted in the first instance regarding general PHA HR issues.

Sickness reports and notification should be sent to Michael Brown in Wages and Salaries Department. Travel claim expenses should be sent to Finance Department, 2nd floor, Business Services Organisation, Franklin Street, Belfast.

AMT meetings schedule update

The schedule of dates for submitting papers to AMT meetings is listed below for reference and can also be viewed here. Please use the approved process and cover sheet when submitting papers through your Director for AMT consideration. You can access the cover sheet on the PHA Intranet at <http://intranet.pha.hscni.net>

Date Paper due to Ruth Parks for AMT Meeting (no later than 12 noon)	Date Agenda & Papers to be Disseminated	Date of AMT Meeting
Thur 20 May 2010	Fri 21 May 2010	Tue 25 May 2010
Thur 3 Jun 2010	Fri 4 Jun 2010	Tue 8 Jun 2010
Thur 17 Jun 2010	Fri 18 Jun 2010	Tue 22 Jun 2010
Thur 1 July 2010	Fri 2 Jul 2010	Tue 6 Jul 2010

Investing in your health and wellbeing

Introduction

As part of the PHA's health and wellbeing plan, AMT recently agreed to adopt an inclusive approach to promoting health and wellbeing within the PHA. Mary Hinds will lead an Investing in your Health and Wellbeing group that will drive action within the PHA workplace together with staff.

The group will establish a systematic approach to promoting health and wellbeing and it is recognised that this will impact on a range of work-related policy and practice issues, as well as looking at innovative ways to support a healthy work life balance.

Developing the health and welfare of staff is essential in the growing organisation, both for its own sake and because of the exemplar role that the Agency will wish to promote with others.

AMT is also aware of the range of challenges that staff have faced over recent months and see the workplace initiative as an important aspect of developing the new organisation and its culture. In the near future requests will be coming out for enthusiastic champions to join the group from all disciplines and across all our facilities – are you interested? If so contact Mary Hinds in the first instance.

You are what you eat

Submitted by Angela McComb, Interim Lead for Obesity

Eating well and moving more are the two most important things we can do to help maintain a healthy weight; yet we are eating more high fat, processed foods, are generally less active and are spending more of our time in sedentary activities.

This makes it very easy to gain weight. Eating only an extra 100 calories each day over one year adds an extra 10lb.

Losing weight has very important health benefits. Even a modest weight loss of 5–10kg (approximately 1–1½ stones) can help reduce many of the health consequences of carrying excess weight, but even stopping further weight gain will be helpful.

Research shows that the best way to lose weight and keep it off is to do it gradually (approximately 0.5–1kg or 1–2lb/week) by making small, long-term changes to what we eat and being more active every day.

Now that the days are longer and warmer, it's an ideal time to give our eating patterns an overhaul and try to move more. In next month's bulletin, Kim Kensett, the PHA's Physical Activity Coordinator, will be looking at how to increase our level of activity.

Meanwhile why not look at what you eat to see what changes you could make to watch your weight – and improve your health and sense of wellbeing.

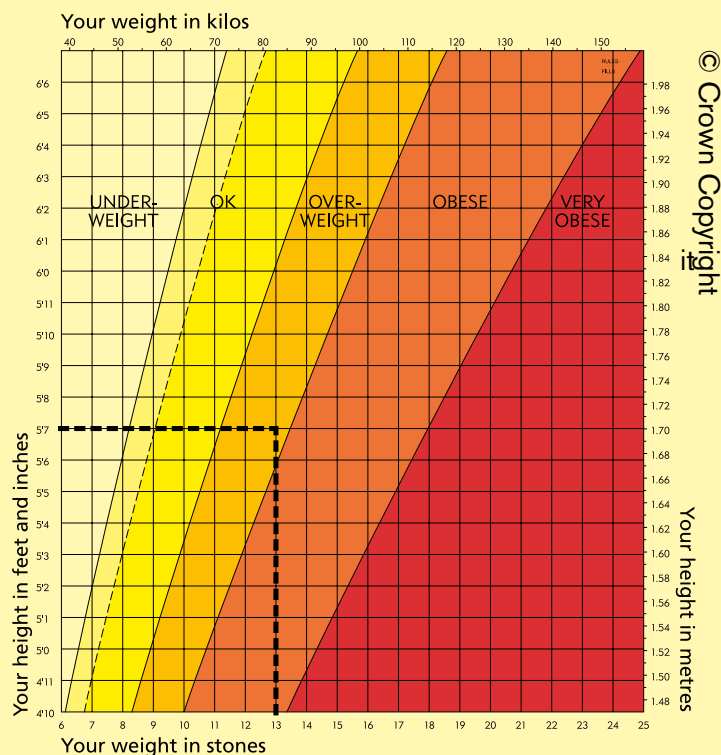


Try some of the suggestions below:

- eat regularly – aim for three meals a day – breakfast, lunch and dinner; research shows that people who eat breakfast are less likely to be overweight than those who don't;
- eat meals slowly and enjoy them;
- Plan your meals in advance and don't shop for food when you are hungry;
- make a list and stick to it – you'll save money and avoid impulse ready-to-eat purchases that are often high in fat and sugar;
- super size your vegetables and fruit; aim to have five or more portions a day of a variety of vegetables, salads and fruits;

- watch out for hidden and unnecessary fats – grill foods instead of frying, and if you do fry, try to use less oil or use spray oil;
- find odd jobs to do between meals to avoid nibbling, or go for a walk;
- alcohol is high in calories, so try to drink less – or opt for water, fruit juice or sugar-free soft drinks;
- downsize high-calorie food and drinks and limit fast food. Go easy on cakes, biscuits and sugary drinks. Just by swapping a can of sweetened fizzy drink for a diet drink or mineral water, we save 138 kcals;
- keep within a range of weights - if you notice you've put on 3 or 4 pounds, try to get off again before it becomes permanent;
- finally, make gradual changes to your diet and lifestyle that you can really stick to and think long term, not quick fix. Remember you probably put the extra weight on over several months, or even years, so don't expect it to come off overnight!

For more information and suggestions for eating well, including an on-line self-assessment quiz and a range of low cost, easily prepared recipes, visit www.enjoyhealthyeating.info



Congratulations!

Congratulations to Gavin Bell, Publications Officer, PHA Ormeau Avenue Unit, and his wife Seorse who are now parents of a “small but very loud and healthy baby boy”. Reuben Xavier was born on Friday 6 May 2010 and weighed in at 4lb 10oz.



Handling responses to Aqs/Pqs etc

If any member of staff receives an Assembly Question (AQ)/ Parliamentary Question (PQ) or any of the additional types of enquiries listed below they should direct these to all four members of the PHA's AQ Response Team immediately.

Type of enquiry

- AQ/PQ
- Ministerial correspondence;
- Ministerial enquiry;
- Departmental enquiry;
- Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) enquiry.

AQ Response Team can be contacted at the Ormeau Avenue Unit on 028 9031 1611 or at:

- Tony Sheridan, Communications Manager, Tony.Sheridan@hscni.net
- Jenny Dougan, (Mon–Wed), Public Relations Officer, Jenny.Dougan@hscni.net
- Nigel Jackson, Business Support Manager, Nigel.Jackson@hscni.net
- Sinead Byrne, (Tue–Thurs), Marketing Officer, Sinead.Byrne@hscni.net

Restructuring process - update for PHA staff

An update was recently issued to staff on the PHA restructuring process. The update included clarification on some issues raised by staff, covering the topics below:

- **current Process 4th level**
- **recruitment below 4th level**
- **displaced staff**
- **vacancies**
- **acting up / secondment**
- **voluntary Redundancy/Retirement – enhanced package**

- **location of posts**
- **relocation**
- **interview Processes**
- **effective date of protection**

The full update on restructuring can be viewed on the PHA intranet site at <http://intranet.pha.hscni.net>

Queries regarding the restructuring process should be addressed to your line manager in the first instance.

Blood donation – date for your diary

A blood donation session will be held in the HSCB Headquarters, 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast in Conference Rooms 2, 3, & 4 on Thursday 9th September 2010 between 9.30am and 4.30pm (last appointment 3.45pm). An appointment system will be used to schedule donations. More information on this system will be issued during August. In the meantime, if you would be interested in donating, please hold this date in your diary.

Currently, 94% of the eligible population do not donate blood and whilst blood can last 35 days, it is usually used within three days of being donated, so the need to raise the profile of blood donation and attract more donors is great.

Due to the exclusion of people who have had a blood transfusion since 1980 the Blood Transfusion

Service has lost the equivalent of 5,500 units of blood.

This particular group of individuals were the most committed donors (probably because their lives have been saved by blood donation) so their loss has had a significant impact on the amount of blood donated.



Blood donation restrictions

- new donors must be between 17 and 60 years of age. However, you can enrol at 16 and we will write to you when you are 17. Regular donors may continue donating until 70;
- donors must weigh at least 50kg (7st 12lbs);
- if you have had ear/body piercing or a tattoo, you must wait 1 year;
- anyone who has received a blood transfusion since January 1980, may no longer donate;
- anyone who is on prescribed medication or has had recent surgery should check with our medical officer on freecall 0500 534 669 before attending a session. (The contraceptive pill does not debar you from donating);
- if you are pregnant you may not donate until the baby is 1 year old.

If you have any other queries you can call the Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service freecall enquiry line on 0500 534 666.