








The newsletter of the Public Health Alliance for the island of Ireland

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Welcome to the newsletter of the Public Health Alliance for the island of Ireland. The new Alliance brings together the Northern Ireland Public Health Alliance and the Public Health Alliance Ireland.

The Public Health Alliance for the island of Ireland (PHAI) is an independent, voluntary grouping of individuals and organisations from all sectors across the island of Ireland, who share a commitment to working together for a healthier and more equitable society by improving health and challenging health inequalities.

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Public Health Alliance for the island of Ireland

- **The PHAI is now 'legal'!**

PHAI represents the amalgamation of groups who previously represented Northern Ireland and Ireland separately. PHAI officially registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee in April 2008 and has 16 Council members who represent public health practitioners, statutory, academic and community and voluntary sectors. The new alliance seeks to develop membership of the organisation and deliver a work programme to reflect public health needs across the island.

- **Want to get involved?**

PHAI is a membership organisation that aims to be broad based and reflect the many sectors and disciplines that impact on public health. Building on the strengths of its members, PHAI aims to support people to work more effectively at local and societal levels to be a cohesive alliance with leverage to influence health and health inequalities at all levels of policy making and service provision. Members will be the first to receive news of our events and publications as well as information from other organisations about public health events, policy changes and developments in local government. Feedback from members on current public health issues is always welcome. If you are not already a member, please visit the 'Contact Us' section on our website <http://www.PHAI.org/index.cfm/section/contact/> to download an application form.

- **Annual General Meeting**

The 1st PHAI Annual General Meeting will take place on Friday 12th September. A full programme of events will be on the website closer to the event and we encourage all interested members and organisations to attend.

Food Poverty: Fact or Fiction?

'Food Poverty: Fact or Fiction?', launched in November 2007, reports on research undertaken by the PHAI to collate information on factors which contribute to food poverty in Northern Ireland. The report outlines the societal causes of food poverty, particularly health inequalities as a result of this issue. Recommendations highlight the need to target policies related to food but also social exclusion and seek to compliment and build on existing strategies already in place to ensure an integrated and joined up approach to the issue. The PHAI are currently discussing the implications of this research with key government departments and agencies to develop an action plan to address food poverty in both Northern Ireland and Ireland. Summary and full report available at http://www.PHAI.org/index.cfm/section/events/event_key/15/ or hard copy may be obtained by emailing info@phaii.org

The power of advocacy for public health

Through advocacy we seek to influence political, economic and social systems that directly affect people's lives. Advocacy is a powerful tool for public health. PHAI developed the Public Health Advocacy Toolkit as part of its role to support those working in public health and launched it in 2007. The PHAI developed the Public Health Advocacy Toolkit as part of its role to support those working in public health. The toolkit provides a model for the advocacy process and supports individuals and groups to develop and use their advocacy skills.

Funded by the Health Service Executive, the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety and the Institute of Public Health in Ireland, the toolkit comprises an 'Advocacy for Public Health' manual and website <http://advocacy.PHAI.org/>. The website has an interactive section that allows you to test your advocacy skills and provides resources to further develop specific advocacy competencies. If you have used advocacy in relation to public health we would really like to hear about your experiences to improve the case studies section of the website. Please contact Helen Gilmore h.gilmore@cieh.org

Health inequalities on the island of Ireland: the facts, the causes, the remedies

'Health Inequalities on the Island of Ireland' was published in 2007 and outlines the current status of health inequalities experienced on the island of Ireland. The report has been designed to prompt further discussion, debate and action to equitably address the root causes of ill health and inequality. The short report pulls together a wide range of research and will be of interest to those working to address health inequalities.

Access the full report at

http://www.PHAI.org/index.cfm/section/publications/PublicationCAT_key/1/publication_key/16

Events

- **Social Marketing – One Day Conference**

Social marketing is about using a consumer-centred approach to promoting the adoption and sustainability of behaviours. This one day conference will take place on **Thursday 23 October 2008** in the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick, Co. Antrim. Open to anyone, this will be particularly relevant to all those who work directly or indirectly on health related lifestyle choices such as diet and food, smoking, alcohol and exercise; as well as lifestyle choices concerned with environmental issues, for example, recycling, waste minimisation and travel. For more information contact Helen Gilmore at h.gilmore@cieh.org

If you would like to contribute to the next edition of the newsletter of the Public Health Alliance for the island of Ireland, please email h.gilmore@cieh.org

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