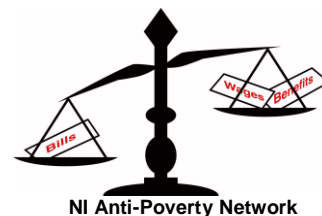
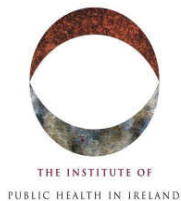


Conference report

‘Developing the Anti-Poverty Agenda: A shared Focus’

April 2007



Background and context of 'Developing the Anti-Poverty agenda: a shared focus' April 2007 Poverty Conference

Addressing poverty and the detrimental effect it has on the health and wellbeing of the 300,000 people it affects in Northern Ireland has been one of the 7 Key Objectives of the Regional Public Health Strategy 'Investing for Health'. The April 2007 Conference was sponsored and initiated by the Eastern Investing for Health Partnership Team in order to identify priorities and potential actions on the anti-poverty agenda.

In order to maximise the expertise and experience available on the poverty theme two other key stakeholder organisations, the Institute of Public Health in Ireland and the Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network agreed to co-organise the Conference. Both Organisations have significant expertise and knowledge of both the statistical/research dimensions of poverty and have informed perspectives of what in policy and practical terms can be done to address poverty and the negative impacts it has on the lives of the people it affects. The attendance and active participation of over 120 people representing 90 organisations from across all sectors at the conference reflects the level of priority and willingness of communities and stakeholders to come together to debate anti-poverty approaches.

The objectives of the conference were to;

- Provide information on the 'Investing for Health' and 'Lifetime Opportunities Anti-Poverty' Strategies and maximise the potential for practical action on health inequalities
- Facilitate expert input and discussion with key stakeholders to progress the Anti-Poverty agenda at local, policy and strategic levels
- Influence the focus and content of the OFMDFM led Anti-Poverty Strategy Action Plans.

The first two of these objectives were addressed by expert inputs from Dr Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer, DHSSPS; Dr Helen McAvoy, Institute of Public Health in Ireland; Helen Johnston from Combat Poverty Agency; Frances Dowds from the NI Anti-Poverty Network and Goretti Hogan, University of Ulster. In

addition background data was prepared by staff from the NI Anti-Poverty Network, Save the Children, Lifestart Foundation and Age Concern on poverty statistics/issues affecting the 4 Age Groups identified as a focus for the Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Strategy i.e. early years, children and young people, working age adults and older people. The 120 participants at the conference were facilitated in workshop discussions to identify a set of specified recommendations that are contained in the conference report.

The Eastern Investing for Health Partnership Team, the Institute of Public Health in Ireland and the NI Anti-Poverty Network will disseminate this conference report widely. In addition the conference report and recommendations for action will be discussed and shared with the Anti-Poverty Team at OFMDFM, the Ministerial led Forum on Poverty and Social Exclusion and the Northern Ireland Assembly. It is hoped that the priorities and recommendations for action can be included within the Regional Action Plan due to be produced as part of the implementation of the OFMDFM Lifetime Opportunities Anti-Poverty Strategy. Where specific anti-poverty actions can be undertaken, particularly at the locality level, the four Eastern Area Investing for Health Managers will explore options for implementation. Organisations who are interested in working with the Eastern Investing for Health Team to take forward actions on the anti-poverty agenda are invited to make contact and/or list their interest/current work through the www.wellnet-ni.com website.

Anne Lynch
Director (Designate) of Strategic Planning and Regional
Commissioning
Health and Social Care Authority

Recommendation: Early Years

Recommended action	Who	Success measures
To prioritise child poverty within the Comprehensive Spending Review	OFMDFM Political parties DFP NI Assembla	1.5% allocation of GDP to Early Years Guaranteed family income
To expand and develop universal home based parenting support programmes to improve school readiness	DHSSPS DE Community and Voluntary Sector	Improved children's health Improved school readiness and accreditation
To promote parenting skills in secondary school curriculum	DE	Reduction in teenage pregnancy
To infant/toddler proof the lived environment		
To hold Government to account for the degree of joined up policy implementation		Poverty a key theme across all government departments Poverty actions costed in the Comprehensive Spending review bids from all government departments
To enact legislation to allow parents to stay at home		

Additional issues listed in Early Years workshop

- Need for pro-active leadership from Government and state employers to implement flexible and innovative working arrangements for parents
- Need for longer term funding for early years community and voluntary sector to prevent 'short-termism'.
- Promotion of accountability for progress/lack of progress on targets by all sectors

Recommendation: Children and Young People

Recommended action	Who	Success measures
Build capacity within government departments to facilitate participation of children and young people	Government Departments OFMDFM Local Government	Criteria for meaningful involvement of children and young people built into Government led funding schemes
Free universal child care to parents on benefits	DEL, DFP DHSSPS DE NI Assembly	Reduction in long term unemployed Increased access to employment
Increased development of schools as a key resource in developing life skills, improving sexual health, safe play and support for parents	DE	Reduction in teenage pregnancy. Development and further roll out of Extended Schools initiative
Investment schemes targeting children and young people in poverty are long term, flexible, strategic and involve the participation of children and young people	Funders DFP NI Assembly	

Additional issues listed in Children and Young Peoples workshop

- Need for all to recognise the impact of the Northern Ireland Conflict on mental health and well-being on young people
- Costs associated with third level education on families experiencing poverty can be a disincentive for young people considering University.

Recommendation: Working Age Adults

Recommended action	Who	Success measures
Fast track service provision focused for major areas of illness in Northern Ireland for people from disadvantaged areas and those groups identified as being at greatest risk of poverty. (women, carers, people with a disability and long term limiting illness)	DHSSPS OFMDFM	Reduction in health inequalities between the highest and lowest socioeconomic groups leading to reduction of poverty and social exclusion
Address impact of conflict on mental and physical health of working age adults	DHSSPS OFMDFM	Reduction in numbers presenting as physically or mentally unwell
Take account of the mental health needs of working age economically inactive people who want to work flexibly	DHSSPS OFMDFM DEL	Increase in flexible employment for people with mental health needs
Resource the implementation of the Bamford	DHSSPS NI Assembly	Increased service provision for people with learning disabilities and mental health needs Increased social inclusion of such groups. Reduction in stigma associated with mental health problems & learning difficulties
Ensure the provision of free/affordable and accessible public transport to the economically inactive and to people seeking employment	DRD	Greater mobility for people experiencing disadvantage and increased numbers entering employment Reduction in social exclusion among PEP*

Increase investment in affordable social housing	DSD OFMDFM	Affordable housing is a key determinant of health. Increased provision of affordable social housing Improved health and well being of individuals and families.
Caring services: Increase support and relief services for carers working in or out of the home. Increase provision of affordable and accessible local childcare.	DHSSPS OFMDFM	Greater mental and physical well-being among caring population of NI. Increase in numbers returning to work, part time & full time Increase in family well being

* PEP People Experiencing Poverty

Additional Issues listed in Working Age workshop

- There should be continued investment in community based preventative health care
- The Welfare State (health service benefit provision) must be adequately resourced to protect the vulnerable and unwell at times of need
- Health and safety at work should be prioritised
- Accessible information on benefit and entitlements for working age adults should be a government priority
- There needs to be a joined up approach to skills and education with greater access for young and older working adults to be trained in trades where there are skills shortages
- Government departments should work more closely together on shared poverty and health targets.

Recommendation: Older People

Recommended action	Who	Success measures
Free personal care for older people	NI Assembly	
Appoint a Commissioner for older people	OFMDFM NI Assembly	Commissioner appointed and in post Development of strategic planning on range of strategies which should bring benefits for older people
Increased investment for preventative health programmes for older people	DHSSPS	Increase in numbers of older people accessing preventative health programmes
Improvement of access to services-transport/cultural/social/information	All Government Departments	Increased uptake of services Increase level of information about existing services
Increase income for older people	NI Assembly	Increased pensions Increased fuel allowance Increases benefits uptake

Additional issues listed in Older People's workshop

- Need to benchmark/map what is happening in relation to poverty and older people
- Increase social prescribing e.g. to access leisure centres/alterative therapies etc

- Maximise the level of support for independent living e.g. domiciliary care, carers support, housing and home safety
- Development of social enterprise opportunities for and by young people
- Ensure that resources are skewed to focus on those most in need.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Delegate list
- Appendix 2 Powerpoint presentations:
Dr Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer, DHSSPS,
Tackling health inequalities and poverty:
- Helen Johnston, Director Combat Poverty Agency,
What can we learn from Anti-Poverty Strategies in
Europe/mainstreaming poverty:
- Dr Helen McAvoy, Senior Policy Officer Institute of
Public Health in Ireland, Inequality and Equality, finding
meaningful measures of progress:
- Goretti Horgan, Research Fellow, University of Ulster,
Tackling health inequalities in North & West Belfast.
- Appendix 3 Expert papers:
Early Years (Lifestart Foundation):
Children and Young People (Save the Children):
Working Age Adults (NI Anti-Poverty Network):
Older People (Age Concern)
- Appendix 4 Institute for Public Health Ireland
Analysis OFMDFM Anti-Poverty Draft Strategy –
Lifetime Opportunities
- Appendix 5 NI Anti-Poverty Network
Analysis OFMDFM Anti-Poverty Draft Strategy –
Life Time Opportunities

All the above documents are available for download from:

www.wellnet-ni.com

www.niapn.org

www.publichealth.ie

Appendix 1

Delegate Registration

Aiden McCullough – Community Development Officer, Craigavon & Banbridge Community HSS Trust
Alan Watts – Development Manager, Belfast Health & Social Care Community
Alanagh Rea – Whiterock Community Centre Manager, Belfast City Council
Anne Lynch - Director (designate) of Strategic Planning & Regional Commissioning, Health & Social Care Authority
Alex Tennant – Head of Policy & Research, Save the Children
Anne Moore – Policy Co-ordinator, Save the Children
Annette McCann – Colin Neighbourhood Partnership
Arfawn Yasin - Advice NI
Barry Rooney – Development Worker, Cook It Project
Bernadette Duffy – Public Relations Manager, EAGA Plc
Bill Stewart – Deputy, Department of Health & Social Services & Public Safety
Breda Connolly – NI Information Adviser, Mencap
Caroline Bloomfield – Community Development Worker. Health Action Zone
Carey Ann Clarke, Training & Development Officer, NI Anti-Poverty Network
Carrie Montgomery – Project Leader, Youth Suicide Prevention, Contact Youth Counselling Services
Chris Totten – Investing for Health Manager, Eastern Health & Social Services Board
Damian Brady – Equality Officer, Dept Culture, Arts & Leisure
Damian O’Loan – Policy Officer, Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP)
Darren Gowdy – Project Co-ordinator Young Peoples’ Fund, Ardoyne & Shankill Partnership
David Patterson – Manager, Down District Strategy Manager
Dawn Thompson – Senior Manager Family Services, Bryson Charitable Group
Dee Fennell – Project Co-ordinator, Young Peoples’ Fund, Ardoyne & Shankill Partnership
Delia Skan – Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment
Dianne Keys – Green Gym Project Manager, Conservation Volunteers
Donna Heaney – Equality Officer, Equality Commission
Dorothy Beattie – Manager, North Down & Ards Age Concern
Dr Barbara McCabe – Queens University Belfast
Dr Christiana Meier – Eastern Health & Social Services Board
Dr Gerry Mulligan – Head of Equality & Social Need Division, Office of the First & Deputy First Minister
Dr Helen McAvoy, Senior Policy Officer Institute of Public Health in Ireland
Dr Janet Little – Eastern Health & Social Services Board
Dr Katrina Collins – Research Consultant, Community Development & Health Network
Dr Michael McBride - Chief Medical Officer, Dept Health Social Services & Public Safety
Duane Farrell - Head of Policy, Research & Communications, Help the Aged
Eamon McAteer – Development Worker Young Peoples’ Fund, Ardoyne & Shankill Partnership
Eamon Oakes – City Bridges
Eileen Sweeney – Area Manager, Action Mental Health
Elaine Campbell - Head of Policy, Age Concern NI
Elaine McCarthy – Programme Co-ordinator, North & West Health Action Zone
Elaine O’Doherty – Advocate for Health & Well-being, Northern Health & Social Services Board
Ellen McNally – Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre
Emma Walker – PA to Investing for Health Manager, Eastern Health & Social Services Board
Frances Dowds – Director, Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network
Gabi Mornhinweg – Community Development Worker, South & East Belfast Trust
Gail Levingston – Area Co-ordinator, North Down & Ards Cruse Bereavement

Glenda Davies – Sandy Row Community Forum Area Development
Goretti Horgan – Researcher Fellow, University of Ulster
Gordon Hewitt, Development Officer, NI Anti-Poverty Network
Greg Martin – Community Development & Health Worker, North Down Community Network
Helen Johnston, Director Combat Poverty Agency
Hilary Forrester – Management Co-ordinator, North Down & Ards Womens Aid
Ivor Mitchell – North Down YMCA
Jane Wilde – Director, Institute of Public Health in Ireland
Jennifer Parkinson – Senior Environmental Health Officer, Eastern Group Environmental Health Committee
Jenny Laverty – Community Health Worker, Flying Horse Ward Community Forum
Jim Marlowe – Transport Union Retired Members
Joan Devlin – Director, Belfast Healthy Cities
Joanna Monaghan – Information Officer, Belfast Healthy Cities
Joe Torney – Deputy Director, Belfast Regeneration Office
John J Quinn – Head of External Relations, UBIFHE
John Wright – Green Action
Julie Cullen – Coordinator, NI Anti-Poverty Network
Julia Harkness – Development Officer, North Down Borough Council
Kim Leebody – Community Development Co-ordinator, Ulster Community & Hospitals Trust
Laura Niwa – Policy Officer, Law Centre NI
Laurence Wright – Development Officer, Engage with Age
Lesley Boydell – Associate Director, Institute for Public Health in Ireland
Lesley Wilson – Family Visitor & OCN Trainer, Lifestart Mid Ards
Liam Quinn – Deputy Director, Regional Development Office, Department for Social Development
Linda Kelly – Team Leader, South Eastern Trust
Lisa McIlherron – NICVA
Lorraine Lindsay – Investing for Health Manager, Eastern Health & Social Services Board
Lynne Mulligan – Community Liaison Officer, NI Housing Executive
Margaret Kelly – Assistant Director, Barnardo's Policy & Research Unit
Margaret Ritchie (MLA) – Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP)
Marie McCann – Care Manager, South Eastern Trust
Mary Black – Health Action Zone Leader, North & West Belfast Health Action Zone
Mary McClean – Project Manager for Health Inequalities CAWT
Mervyn Langtry – Head of Strategy & Equality, Department of Employment & Learning
Maurice Meehan – Investing for Health Manager, Eastern Health & Social Services Board
Michael Goodman – Manager, South Belfast Highway to Health
Mimi McAlinden – Investing for Health Manager, Eastern Health & Social Services Board
Pat Austin – Director, National Energy Action
Pat Duncan – Chairperson, Redburn Loughview Community Forum
Pat Wilson – Co-ordinator, Upper Andersonstown Community Forum
Patricia Mulvenna – Office Manager, NI Anti-Poverty Network
Paul McGill – NICVA
Paula Kilbane – Chief Executive, Eastern Health & Social Services Board
Pauline McClenaghan – Executive Director, Lifestart Foundation Ltd
Richard Lappin – Rethink Service User & Carer Facilitator
Ruth Fleming – Development Manager, Belfast Health Cities
Sandra McCarry – Health Promotion Co-ordinator, South East Belfast Trust
Sarah Morris – Member of Management Committee, Womens' Information Group
Seamus Camplisson – Department of Health & Social Services & Public Safety
Seamus Mullan – Investing for Health Western Health & Social Services Board
Sean Morrissey – National Pensioners Convention, Antrim
Sharon McNicholl – Corporate Policy Officer, Belfast City Council
Sharon Morgan – Administrator, NI Anti-Poverty Network

Shirley Warkin – Development Co-ordinator, Action Mental Health
Stephen Murray – Investing for Health Manager, Northern Health & Social Services Board
Stiofan Long – Development Officer, Health & Well-being, West Belfast Partnership
Tish Holland – Director, Upper Andersonstown Community Forum
Tony Freedman – Disability Matters, North Down Forum for the over 50s'
Trish Boyd – Health Awareness Co-ordinator, Shankill Women's Centre
Una Gilmore – Manager, Lifestart Mid Ards
Una McRoberts – Co-ordinator, Shankill Health Partnership
Virginia McVea – Commission Solicitor, NI Human Rights Commission
Wendy Nesbitt – Community Dietician, Community Nutrition & Dietetic Service Belfast Trust
Wilma Alexander – Investing for Health
Yvonne Cowan – South & East Belfast Trust