

# Cross Border Health Inequalities Newsletter

Issue 1 - August 2007

## Welcome from Peter Wright, Chair of the Project Board



**Dr Peter Wright**

In 2004 a one-day cross border conference funded by the European Union INTERREG IIIA programme considered health inequalities in the CAWT border region which includes the HSE West and Dublin North East areas along with the Western and Southern Health and Social Service Board regions.

The causes of health inequalities are many but include social and economic factors as well as access to health care. The people living in the border region have historically suffered from all of these. In addition, some people are vulnerable to health disadvantage because of other factors. Their vulnerability can vary through their lifespan. The conference confirmed what we already knew that a lot of excellent work has been done on both sides of the border to address health inequalities.

Those who attended the conference were keen to 'join up' the work they were doing as well as work towards more people and organisations 'joining up' to play their part in tackling health inequalities. With the support of INTERREG IIIA funding the cross border Health Inequalities project that I am leading aims to do just that.

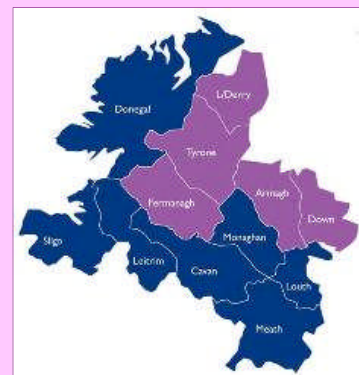
This project is under the guidance of the four Directors of Public Health in the CAWT region. It aims to build on the good work that is already going on and to bring people together to improve the health experience of people who have a health disadvantage. The aim is to work with existing bodies and support them in

tackling health inequalities strategically in the border region. The main strands of the project to support this work are: (1) the updated CAWT Health Profile, with a focus on health inequalities to be launched in the Autumn of this year; (2) the health inequalities database as a local resource for projects and (3) development of a communications group infrastructure with stakeholder partners from across the voluntary, community and statutory sector within the CAWT region.

We're currently identifying people and organisations that are interested in taking part in workshops later in Autumn 2007. If you are interested in being included please Email: [cawtinfo@westhealth.n-i.nhs.uk](mailto:cawtinfo@westhealth.n-i.nhs.uk)

We are also planning a short telephone survey in the next few months and I hope that if you get a call, that you would take a few minutes to share your views to help us in planning the workshops.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and look forward to working with you all on this project.



**The CAWT Region**

# Project Objectives

- Liaise with relevant organisations at local, national and European level in the sharing of information and expertise in relation to health inequalities.
- Engage with key stakeholders within the CAWT border region that have the potential to influence health inequalities and support them with this agenda.
- Develop an infrastructure to enable a sustained strategic, multi-sectoral approach to reducing inequalities over time in the CAWT border region.
- Produce a second health profile of the CAWT border region with a particular emphasis on health inequalities.
- Establish and make arrangements for the continued running of an electronic database of projects and initiatives in the CAWT region that address health inequalities.

## Health Inequalities Database

The Health Inequalities database on the CAWT website is aimed at those working in the area of health inequalities or for those who can see how it is relevant to their work.

The database collates information on a wide variety of projects within the CAWT area and is important for a number of reasons:

- It focuses attention and raises awareness of the groups most affected by health inequalities.
- It shares good practice examples and promotes the work being carried out in these areas.
- It shows the need for more work to be done and for more joined up approaches to be taken by a wide range of statutory, voluntary, community and private sector organisations.

The database has a search facility where key words can be added and project details viewed. Users can add details about their project directly onto the database by completing a short proforma with contact details and a summary. When information is submitted it is verified by the project manager before going "online" to be viewed via the internet.

It is anticipated that in the near future the database will become part of the Institute of Public Health Observatory, All-Ireland electronic Health library (AleHL), a network of websites across the island of Ireland. This will make it possible to search the library's 4,000 knowledge resources from any or all of its member websites. The inequalities database can be accessed at: [www.cawt.com/site/projects.asp](http://www.cawt.com/site/projects.asp)

### **The database members are:**

Dr Caroline Mason, HSE West, (Chair)

Mr Christy O'Kane, CAWT ICT Officer

Mr Diarmuid O'Donnell, CAWT Executive Officer (Member until May 2007)

Dr Mary McClean, Project Manager (Member until July 2007)

# Health Profile

The profile will update the information from the last CAWT profile that was published in 2002. It will also take a closer look at the health inequalities that exist both within the CAWT region and when the CAWT region is compared to the rest of Ireland.

There have been major demographic changes throughout the whole of Ireland in the past few years due to immigration and internal migration. There is also a greater ethnic diversity than was seen in the past.

This profile will describe the recent demographic changes, the current health status of the population, the provision of health and social services, various subgroups of the population who are more likely to have poorer health, socio-economic inequalities and other determinants of health. The preparation of this profile has been taken as an opportunity to consider the information deficits that exist and the problems with comparing data from two different jurisdictions.

## Membership:

Dr Caroline Mason, Chair, Senior Medical Officer, HSE West

Dr Kevin Balanda, Advisor, Institute of Public Health

Dr Helen McEvoy, Senior Policy Officer, Institute of Public Health

Ms Louise Cullen, Research Scientist, Public Health, HSE West

Ms Anne Marie Crosse, Health Promotion Officer, HSE West

Dr Denise O'Hagan, SpRPHM, WHSSB

Dr Christine McMaster, SpRPHM, WHSSB

Ms Linda Cassidy, Information Department, Public Health, WHSSB

Dr Louise Heron, SpRPHM, SHSSB

Dr Joanne McClean, SpRPHM, SHSSB

Ms Joanne Murphy, Information Officer, SHSSB

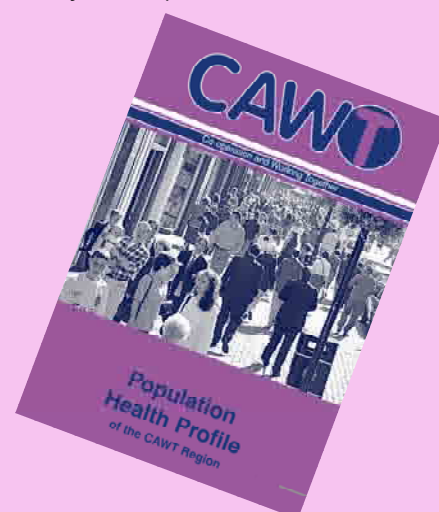
Mr Michael McMonagle, Community Support Donegal, HSE West

Dr Marie O'Neill, SpR Public Health, HSE West

Dr Mary McClean, CAWT Health Inequalities Project Manager (member until July 2007)

Dr Aidan Ryan, Chair, SpRPHM, HSE West (member until June 2007)

Dr Eleanor McArdle, SpRPHM, HSE North East (member until July 2007)



# Communications Task Group

It is widely acknowledged that no one group or individual can successfully tackle health inequalities. We, as a project group, recognise the need to form partnerships with all the groups, organisations and individuals across the regions that have a direct role to play in alleviating health inequalities. We acknowledge that many people are already doing excellent work in this area and have significant experience in tackling health inequalities. Our aim is to work together with all these people to develop a long term strategic plan for the border area.



**Communications Task Group**

The communications subgroup has been set up to engage with stakeholders and to provide a meaningful dialogue with those who can influence policy and make changes. A major challenge in this area is making sure that people are informed and enabled to make a real contribution to a project like this. So, we will be contacting many of you over the next few months and inviting you to attend workshops so we can map the future together.

## Membership:

Dr Louise Doherty, Chair, Specialist in Public Health, HSE  
Dr Peter Wright, Director of Public Health Medicine, HSE  
Dr Caroline Mason, Senior Medical Officer, HSE West  
Ms Anne Sheridan, Mental Health Promotion/Suicide Resource Officer, HSE West  
Mrs Paula McKeown, Public Relations Officer, SHSSB  
Mr Brendan Bonner, Investing for Health Manager, WHSSB  
Ms Maire O'Leary, Social Inclusion Manager, HSE West  
Mrs Lyn Donnelly, Investing for Health Manager, SHSSB  
Ms Siobhan Sweeney, Western Health Action Zone Manager  
Ms Sadie Bergin, Communications Manager, CAWT  
Mr Eamon O'Kane, Director, Derry Healthy Cities  
Mr Tony Doherty, Health Forum Manager, WHSSB  
Dr Aidan Ryan, Specialist Registrar in Public Health Medicine (member until June 2007)  
Mr Diarmuid O'Donnell, Executive Officer CAWT (member until May 2007)  
Ms Jonnie Miller, Investing for Health Co-ordinator, WHSSB (member until May 2007)  
Mrs Paula Tally, Armagh and Dungannon Health Action Zone Manager  
Dr Mary McClean, CAWT Health Inequalities Project Manager, (member until July 2007)

**For further information contact:**

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