

Showcasing the wealth of public health intelligence and data tools available to regional partners

On July 30th, NWPHO hosted its first roadshow of the year. Attended by a variety of health professionals, the Greater Manchester event included presentations from NWPHO staff about their recent work programme. A series of interactive workshops to

showcase the intelligence and data tools available on NWPHO's website to profile the region's health were also run.

One workshop discussed the new *North West Healthy Weight Indicators* online tool. This tool presents data for adults and

children in every regional local authority compared with the regional average, across 29 different measures. For further details see:

www.nwph.net/healthyweight

Feedback from the roadshow was positive. One attendee noted that:

"The presentations were very useful indeed, especially the one on *Being Well and Becoming Ill*."

Another said:

"The roadshow was a really good opportunity for networking and provided a good overview of NWPHO."

NWPHO also sought wider input on future work and communication processes and are carefully considering the feedback received.

Three further roadshows are planned for later in the year. The first will take place in Lancashire on Tuesday October 20th. A second roadshow will be held in Cumbria, and a final event will take place in the Greater Merseyside and Cheshire area.

Please look out for further details of dates and times on the NWPHO website.



Website and Information Portal redevelopment



The NWPHO website and North West Information Portal are currently under redevelopment through consultation, with a new Information Portal Steering Group to be formed soon.

As well as an enhanced look and feel, the NWPHO website will have a greatly improved user experience and suite of features.

The associated redesign of the Information Portal will make it much more customisable and will be focussed on greater user personalisation.

Partners involved in the portal initiative through their respective sites will benefit from improved features such as 'on demand' hits analysis and a greatly

improved administration interface for management of site content and resources.

Development work is ongoing through the last quarter of 2009 and first quarter of 2010. NWPHO will keep you updated on the availability of these enhanced services via our future bulletins.

Regional incapacity benefit claimant rates some of the highest in England

The launch of the Government's *Improving Health and Work Changing Lives* strategy in 2008 confirms that being in meaningful, paid work can help to reduce health inequalities and to tackle social exclusion. Work can improve people's physical and mental health or wellbeing. Long-term unemployment, however, is estimated to have the same negative impact upon health as smoking as many as ten packets of cigarettes a day.

The scale of ill health among the North West's *out of work* working age population is explored in detail in NWPHO's

forthcoming synthesis report due to be published in November. The synthesis series of reports combine relevant policy, evidence and intelligence across key public health themes. The report will also include details of best practice from across the NHS in terms of back to work interventions and related support.

A total of 367,420 people of working age in the North West are currently out of work and claiming Incapacity Benefit (IB) due to ill health. This is almost 40% higher than the national average and equates to the second highest concentration of

claimants nationally after the North East. The local authorities of Knowsley and Liverpool have the highest concentrations of IB claimants in our region, while South Lakeland and the Ribble Valley have the lowest. At smaller levels of geography, some North West LSOAs - which have populations of around 1,500 people - have as many as six times more claimants than the national average.

A second report concentrating on the health of the *in work* population will be released early in 2010. This report will consider

sickness absence levels and best practice in promoting wellness and preventing ill health at work.



Biggest survey of its kind to measure mental wellbeing across the North West



A total of 18,500 adults were interviewed during 2009 as part of the North West's *Mental Wellbeing Survey*.

As the biggest ever regional survey of its kind, this research fills a gap in the

existing indicators available to measure population mental health and wellbeing. Current measurement tends to focus upon an extreme and negative assessment of population mental wellbeing, in the form of

suicide rates across an area. The findings from this survey will instead provide a more positive measure. The aim is to help inform future planning of preventative health services in the region.

NWPHO worked in partnership with a commercial agency to complete the fieldwork using a computer aided face-to-face interview technique. The survey measured wellbeing using the Warwick-Edinburgh

Mental Wellbeing scale, a validated tool to assess positive mental health.

Initial analysis of the survey data is underway and Regional Director of Public Health for the North West, Dr Ruth Hussey, is scheduled to present preliminary findings from the survey at the North West's Wellbeing Conference on November 9th.

More detailed analyses will follow in 2010.



Survey of Isle of Man health and lifestyles now complete

The Isle of Man have now carried out their largest ever survey of adult health and lifestyles.

Around two thousand people were interviewed on

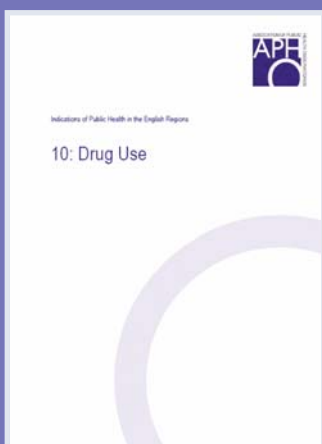
behalf of the Public Health Directorate at the Department of Health and Social Security on the island.

Analysis of the findings across key lifestyle factors

- including diet, smoking, exercise and drinking levels - will begin over the next few weeks and a report of findings will be available later in the year.



Drug use in the nine English regions



As part of the series of *Indications of Public Health in the English Regions* commissioned by the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for England from the Association of Public Health Observatories (APHO), NWPHO have published the recent *Drug Use* Indications report.

The report shows marked variation by region across 46 separate indicators of drug use, at the individual, community and population level. For example, in

2006/07, the North West had the second highest level of problematic drug users in the country and the largest rate of opiate users in the same year. Our region also had the highest rate of *last month* cannabis use among males nationally in 2007/08, but the lowest rate of *last month* amphetamine use among 16-59 year olds during the same period.

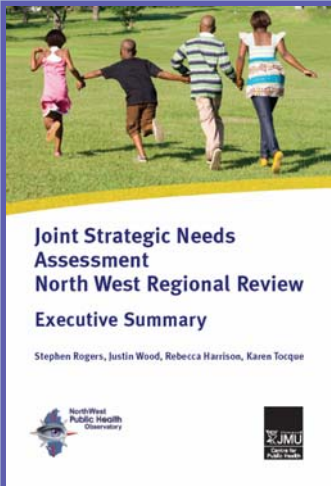
Where datasets allow, the indicators are presented as correlations to the Index of

Multiple Deprivation 2007 at local authority level.

The report has been produced in the context of the development and production of the new national strategy *Drugs: protecting families and communities 2008-2018*. Copies of the full report and executive summary are available to download or order from the NWPHO website.

**Based upon illicit drug use, as defined by the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971.*

NWPHO launches regional JSNA review



NWPHO, in partnership with NHS North West, recently launched its regional review of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) process across the North West.

Public sector partners use the JSNA process to determine how best to spend their resources in line with local people's

views and expectations.

The data collected as part of the JSNA will also help to inform the commissioning and delivering of health and social care services.

The review considers the region's first programme of work on JSNA. It highlights how the North West can further ensure

that resources are better focussed upon meeting the health and wellbeing needs of local populations.

A copy of the executive summary of the report can be downloaded or ordered from the NWPHO website.

Recently published...

Contributions of Alcohol Use to Teenage Pregnancy: An initial examination of geographical and evidence based associations. [Please ring to request a copy.](#)

HIV & AIDS in the North West of England 2008:
www.nwph.net/nwpho/Publications/Forms/DispForm.aspx?ID=203

Suicide in the North West - A review of non-residential and outdoor locations:
www.nwph.net/nwpho/Publications/Forms/DispForm.aspx?ID=204

Intelligent Commissioning. The Association of Public Health Observatories (APHO) annual report:
www.apho.org.uk/resource/item.aspx?RID=72783

North West Children and Young People's Health Indicators 2009. Summary report:
www.nwph.net/nwpho/publications/CAYPHI%20Summary%202009.pdf

Coming soon...

Alcohol Bulletin Series

There will be three separate reports in this bulletin series. These will examine the patterns of alcohol consumption, rates of alcohol-related hospitalisation and characteristics of drinkers across the North West. More details and release dates will be published in the near future.

Cancer Inequalities Report

Further details on this report will be made available later in the year.

Data updates...

Local Alcohol Profiles for England (LAPE)

From October 2009, updates will be added to the LAPE online tool, including data about alcohol-attributable mortality (for males and females) and hospital admissions for alcohol-related harm (National Indicator [NI] 39).

About the North West Public Health Observatory (NWPHO)

NWPHO fulfils a regional public health information and intelligence function supporting the work of public health professionals, local authorities and providers of healthcare and further services relevant to the health of the North West population.

The Observatory is also a member of the Association of Public Health Observatories (APHO). NWPHO's lead areas for APHO are alcohol, substance use, violence, dental health and working with the Health Protection Agency.