

BRIEFING



Poll shows full support for the smoking ban from Scotland's voluntary health sector

A survey conducted by Voluntary Health Scotland on the first working day of the smoking ban demonstrated complete support for the legislation.

However, while there was 100 per cent backing for the ban, which is a major step towards improved health in Scotland, over one in ten stated having encountered some problems implementing the regulations.

Just less than a week into the ban and a number of Scotland's voluntary and community organisations were faced with challenges such as "trying to reassure mental health service users that it is not about further discrimination towards them and to create acceptable outside areas for smokers."

One respondent said that a problem encountered implementing the regulations was "balancing the service users' rights to smoke in their own homes and staff's health needs whilst supporting them."

Helen Tyrrell, VHS Director, said "There is clearly overwhelming support for the smoking ban within the voluntary and community sector and in

time it will be a major factor in helping redress Scotland's unacceptable health inequalities. However, extra support will be needed for community-based projects supporting vulnerable service users".

Meanwhile, calls to the national compliance helpline (**0845 130 7250**), show a significant downwards trend which in itself indicates public acceptance of the legislation.

The helpline, which is available to members of the public if a problem involving the new legislation cannot be resolved on the premises at the time, has released figures for the total number of calls received and the number of reported breaches of legislation in the first four weeks of the ban.

The daily average number of calls to the helpline more than halved, from 41 to 20 in the initial four weeks.

The graph shows that the trend of the total number of calls on a daily basis reduced from 30 to 9.

However, the daily average number of alleged breaches passed on to Environmental Health Officers has remained fairly constant.

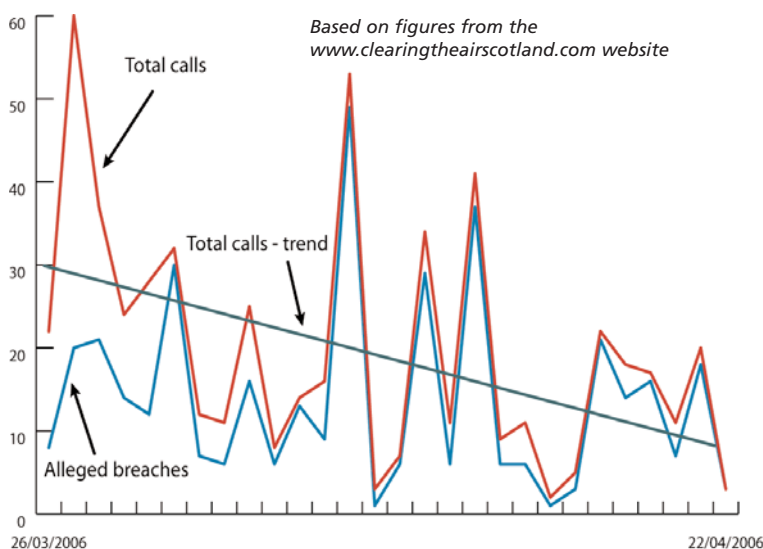
Editorial

Scotland's smoking ban was introduced in March this year. Almost universally backed, many hundreds of thousands are now more able to enjoy a healthier environment. Children and young people will increasingly be protected from the devastating consequences of tobacco exposure, which often only show up much later in life.

Twenty years after the world's worst nuclear incident took place at Chernobyl, its legacy of death and long-term illness and disability affecting hundreds of thousands of people across eastern and north-eastern Europe is still with us and in many areas the environment will never recover.

Major public health disasters and key health interventions have these in common: it is the most vulnerable members of society who experience the worst effects of environmental and behavioural disadvantage and in whose interests the most energetic efforts at recovery must be made; the negative health consequences of disasters last for many years and at the same time the health benefits of interventions often take a generation to bear fruit. And it is only through co-operation by members and sectors of society working together that healthy solutions can be reached.

Helen Tyrrell and the VHS team



NHS Boards may go to the public vote

At the beginning of the month Bill Butler MSP introduced a Member's Bill proposal, *Health Board Elections (Scotland) Bill*, at Holyrood with the aim of introducing an element of direct public elections to NHS Boards.

Currently, lay members of NHS Boards are appointed by Scottish Executive Ministers and are therefore accountable to Ministers and not to the communities they serve.



If passed, the Bill would mean that more than half of each NHS Board in Scotland would be directly

elected by the public.

Any resident eligible to stand in a UK General Election would be eligible to stand as a candidate for their local NHS Board.

The Bill proposes a lower minimum age of 18 years for those who wish to stand as candidates.

Introducing direct elections would:

- ◆ allow greater scrutiny of the decisions made by NHS Boards
- ◆ ensure that the views of NHS service users, their families, staff and affected communities are heard when vital decisions are taken regarding local health services

◆ make NHS Boards democratically accountable for their decisions regarding local health provision

Voluntary Health Scotland believes that local communities should be able to participate in the development and delivery of health services.

If passed, this Bill would significantly advance local democracy in health services.

We will inform you if / when the Bill goes to committee and of the timescales for making representation to the committee.

National Standards for Voluntary and community health sector

It is Scottish Executive policy to promote greater voluntary and community sector (VCS) involvement in the work of statutory agencies and partnerships.

This has led to many more committees, partnership bodies and other statutory bodies seeking representation from the VCS.

However these bodies have little guidance on how to ensure they have achieved fair and accountable representation from voluntary and community groups which will meet their needs effectively.

This has been seen as one reason for the VCS not feeling completely integrated into cross-sectoral partnerships.

Representatives can also have difficulty in their role identifying feedback systems within the sector which adequately support them and allow them to demonstrate their level of representation.

Voluntary Health Scotland has been asked by members of the new voluntary and community sector CHP members' network to work towards standards for VCS representation, drawing on the existing and emerging good practice currently being developed within the VCS.



These standards would take into account local circumstances, such as local *compacts*, as well as national standards such as the *National Standards for Community Engagement* and the *Scottish Compact*.

The material for the standards will be gathered through a series of short workshops, focus groups and interviews and the draft standards will be put out for consultation prior to their final publication near the end of the year.

The workshops will be taking place around the country in May and June and it is intended to integrate these with existing events to allow as many people as possible to attend.

Focus groups will be organised for those areas of the country where no other suitable events are taking place, allowing for greater coverage.

For further information on the events please contact Bill Weir at Voluntary Health Scotland on 0131 652 5993.

Voluntary and community sector take their place in the public health workforce

It has long been recognised that the voluntary and community sector play a key role in health improvement. However, little has been known of the extent of skills and training needs in relation to health improvement within the sector.

VHS and CHEX have been working as members of the national Public Health Workforce Group to find out the main kinds of training accessed by the sector - and the extent to which it equips them for the work they do.

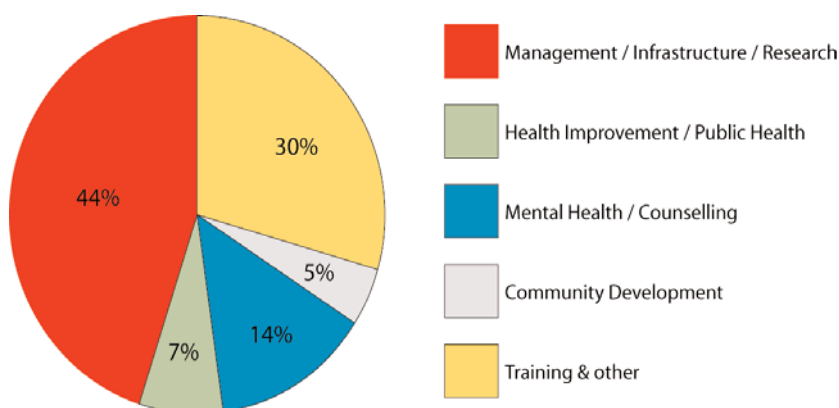
A questionnaire sent to 746 people listed on the CHEX and VHS Databases yielded 212 responses (a 28% response rate).

Findings indicate that:

- ◆ The main training has been in health (promotion) and community education / development
- ◆ However, many (62%) hold a great variety of qualifications from counselling to social work to journalism
- ◆ Most feel that their training has equipped them only partially for their role

- ◆ Up to 90% of workers have access to and support for Continuing Professional Development
- ◆ Unsurprisingly, barriers to further learning are time and money
- ◆ Most people say they wish training in managing projects, staff and budgets; in strategic planning and policy research and ITC. There is also a need for more training in health improvement
- ◆ There is also a need for more training in health improvement
- ◆ The vast majority (92%) are involved in delivering training / learning

Main current learning needs



opportunities to their own teams, partner agencies or externally

- ◆ However, only 31% have trained as trainers

This has told VHS and CHEX that much more work needs to be done to identify more specifically people's

existing training and to map competence frameworks being used in the voluntary and community sector.

At the same time, further opportunities for training in infrastructure issues as well as in health improvement must be identified.

With greater levels of training for trainers the sector should increasingly be able to partner the NHS in delivering training on specific topics - community development, addressing health inequalities, promoting healthy eating, physical activity and healthy parenting.

VHS and CHEX will report further as the enquiry is refined. Meantime, contact Helen Tyrrell at VHS or David Allan at CHEX for more information.

VHS

Email: helen.tyrrell@vhscotland.org.uk
Tel: 0131 652 5992

CHEX

Email: david@scdc.org.uk
Tel: 0141 248 1990

Events

British Heart Foundation Events
(Call 0800 555 5014 for details)

14 May: Hearts First Big Murrayfield Abseil. For ages 16+. 100ft free decent from the roof.

14 May: Hearts First Big Kids Murrayfield Abseil. For ages 8-18. 50ft free descent from the upper tier.

4 June: Perth Lifecycle. A 10, 25 or 50 mile cycle starting from Bell's Sports Centre in North Inch.

25 June: Hearts First White Water Challenge - Grandtully

15 / 16 July: Rat Race Zip Wire - Edinburgh. Fly 180ft through the trees from the top of a crane to the ground.

Anthony Nolan Challenge
(Call 01896 831718 for more info)

Mondays, Fridays and weekends throughout the year. Help take back lives from leukaemia by nominating your boss to be 'thrown to the sharks'!

They will be sent to dive with the sharks at Deep Sea World in Fife.

Community-led health improvement for Scotland - Task Group to report soon

Improving Health in Scotland - the challenge (2003) identified community-led health improvement work as a major component in tackling Scotland's health inequalities.

Since 2004, an Executive-led Task Group has taken this forward. VHS, CHEX and the Scottish Community Diet Project have had a key role to play in this, along with the Executive, NHS Scotland, COSLA and others.



Key pieces of work have been commissioned which highlight the value of community development approaches and voluntary sector engagement in health improvement.

These include a series of community-based case studies of development

approaches, a DVD highlighting good practice and a review of sources of sustainable support, including funding, for voluntary and community sector health work, as well as an analysis of national and local partnership and planning opportunities for local communities and the voluntary sector to contribute to health improvement.

The final strategy will be the subject of a ministerial launch towards the end of June.

This should add significantly to the evidence for the effectiveness of the unique community and voluntary sector approach and open up ways in which we can make an even greater difference to improving Scotland's health.

Please contact Helen Tyrrell - email helen.tyrrell@vhscotland.org.uk, telephone 0131 652 5992 for further information.

Forthcoming Awareness Events

May

2nd: World Asthma Day
8th - 15th: Baby Safety Week
14th - 20th: National Breastfeeding Awareness Week
14th - 20th: National Epilepsy Week
22nd - 28th: Cancer Prevention Week
22nd - 26th: Walk to School Week
31st: World No Tobacco Day

June

1st - 30th: Everyman Male Cancer Awareness Month
1st - 30th: National Osteoporosis Month
3rd - 11th: Heart Week
5th - 11th: Down's Syndrome Awareness Week
11th - 17th: Diabetes Week
12th - 18th: National Men's Health Week
17th - 25th: Motor Neurone Disease Week
18th - 25th: Learning Disability Week
26th - 2nd July: National Deafblind Awareness Week

The launch of the long-term conditions alliance

The Long Term Conditions Alliance Scotland (LTCAS) is a new national umbrella organisation for the voluntary sector, representing the common interests of two million people in Scotland living with long term conditions.

The Alliance will be formalised at a meeting in Edinburgh City Chambers on 16 May and is being addressed by Health Minister Andy Kerr and Professor David Kerr, author of the Kerr Report into rebuilding the NHS in Scotland.

The Alliance subscribes to the central principles of the Kerr Report, recognising the value of partnership with the Executive and the NHS to deliver these in practice.



It aims to influence the direction of health services to ensure that the people living with long term conditions will directly experience improved care.

Objectives of LTCAS include:

- ◆ Raising awareness of the issues for people living with long-term conditions in the general population and NHS Scotland.
- ◆ Developing effective partnerships with the Scottish Executive Health Department, NHS Scotland and others to ensure an authentic patient voice is involved in service improvement.
- ◆ Supporting member organisations and their volunteers in delivering their messages to

promote change that improves health care.

- ◆ Promoting shared learning to improve the lives of people living with long-term conditions.

The Alliance is committed to the interests of people living with long term conditions and will campaign to ensure that a fair deal for all is achieved.

The LTCAS launch takes place at 10 am on Tuesday 16 May, in Edinburgh's City Chambers.

Please contact Christine Williams by 5th May if you wish to attend the launch. Christine's email address is: cwilliams@epilepsyscotland.org.uk

The legacy of Chernobyl

April 26th 2006 was the twentieth anniversary of one of the worst environmental and public health disasters ever, when the nuclear reactor at Chernobyl in the Ukraine exploded, leaving a legacy of death and chronic ill-health as well as massive environmental degradation that is still with us today.

Twenty years after the incident, the number of people who could eventually die as a result of Chernobyl is highly controversial, with the UN-led Chernobyl Forum estimating an extra 9,000 deaths, while campaign group Greenpeace is among those to predict more serious health effects, predicting up to up to 93,000 extra cancer deaths, with other illnesses taking the toll as high as 200,000.

In addition, many hundreds of thousands of people in the Ukraine, neighbouring Belarus and parts of Russia are still suffering from chronic stress caused by bereavement, loss of agricultural livelihood and consequent poverty and the damaged environment.



Up to 25% of agricultural land in Belarus remains unusable.

The International Development Cross-party Group at the Scottish Parliament remembered the event with a day of presentations and

debate: Richard Dixon, Director of WWF Scotland, reminded participants of the ongoing implications of reliance on nuclear power, while Anatoli Artemenko, journalist from the Ukraine, provided a political and economic perspective from the Ukraine, stressing the cooperation required within and between countries if recovery is to take place.

The day finished with a members' debate on the ongoing implications of Chernobyl both for Scotland and in the wider context.

The audience heard from a number of Scottish voluntary organisations working to support children and families in Belarus and the Ukraine, by offering children a rehabilitative break in Scotland, by sharing expertise on issues affecting looked after children and by promoting fostering initiatives.

Review of support services for the voluntary sector

The Scottish Executive, on behalf of the Strategic Funding Review Partners (the Executive, SCVO and CoSLA), has commissioned consultants Rocket Science to carry out a review of support services for the voluntary sector in Scotland.

The review aims to assess the development needs of the voluntary sector in the current climate, around a number of key areas:

- ◆ Organisational development (including capacity building, improvements in quality, governance and best practice)
- ◆ Workforce development (including HR and career development)

◆ Technical support (including finance and ICT)

◆ Income generation

◆ Lobbying and networking support

For those of us working in the voluntary sector, this is our chance to let the Scottish Executive and the Strategic Funding Review partners know about what support we do - or don't - receive, and what services we think are needed in the future.

Rocket Science is looking for voluntary organisation to tell them what support we can access and what gaps exist by:

- ◆ Completing an electronic survey, and / or
- ◆ Attending a focus group -

organised in various venues across Scotland.

The Review website is now live, at www.supportservicesreview.co.uk.



This website also provides updates on developments and outlines ways to get involved in this important review.

For information in hard copy please contact Julia McGhee at Rocket Science -

julia.mcgee@rocketsciencelab.co.uk

For any questions about this review please contact Debbie Adams at debbie.adams@rocketsciencelab.co.uk

By telephone on 0131 226 4949;
By fax on 0131 226 4901; or
By post at the address:
Rocket Science, 2 Melville Street,
Edinburgh, EH3 7NS.

Voluntary and Community sector funding shortfall

Are government efficiency savings being achieved at the expense of the voluntary sector?

In 2004 the Scottish Executive published a major cost saving set of initiatives: '*Building a Better Scotland: Efficient Government - Securing Efficiency, Effectiveness and Productivity*'.



The aim has been to secure £745 million of annual cash savings across all the Executive portfolios, year on year.

Over the 3 years of the Spending Review, a total of £1,732 million will have been released for investment in improvement and creating 5% additional public services.

Through these initiatives the plan is to save £166m a year by 2007-08 in the Health portfolio alone.

One commitment of significance to the voluntary sector is making funding more efficient - improving information for voluntary sector grant applications and simplifying application processes.

However the initiative does not mention anywhere securing or sustaining funding for the voluntary sector.

Some of the VHS members are beginning to experience across-the-board cuts from both Local Authorities and Health Boards and think it is possible that the voluntary

sector may be a soft target for cuts where Local Authorities and Health Boards are finding it difficult to achieve savings in other ways.

This also runs counter to the principles of *The Scottish Compact*.

Voluntary Health Scotland is well placed to make representation to the Executive on issues such as these if sufficient information is available to support the argument.

We are keen to hear any reports of funding cuts and would like to encourage you to make use of the VHS channel of communication with the Scottish Executive.

If you have experienced any recent shortfall in funding please contact Phil McAndrew on 0131 652 5994 or email phil.mcandrew@vhscotland.org.uk

The Scottish Motor Neurone Disease Association celebrates 25th Anniversary

The Scottish Motor Neurone Disease Association (SMNDA) is to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of its founding by John MacLeod, a former policeman from Stornoway, by holding a study day for medical and social care professionals in Inverness.

The conference, which will take place at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, on 22nd June 2006, will consider the progress made over the last 25 years in the care and treatment of people with Motor Neurone Disease (MND) which approximately 120 people develop this condition in Scotland every year.



Key speakers will focus on current best practice in areas such as the management of nutritional, respiratory, psychological and palliative care within the context of multidisciplinary management of MND.

Dr Linda Gerrie, Consultant Neurologist & Lead Clinician for the Managed Clinical Network, who will be chairing the meeting said, "*I think the study day will be of great interest to all health and social care professionals who come into contact with people with motor neurone disease.*"

I'm sure everyone who attends will be inspired by the developments in multidisciplinary care and leave with new information to apply to their own practice."

Places cost £35.00 per delegate and bookings can be made via the Scottish MND Association, tel 0141 945 1077 or e-mail info@scotmnd.co.uk

A draft programme and booking form can be downloaded from www.scotmnd.org.uk

Key points of new Charity Law

The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 legislation outlines the responsibilities and regulation of charities in Scotland. This Act took full effect on 24th April 2006 and some of the key points are listed below:

- ◆ A new Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, **OSCR**, is formally established with powers to monitor and regulate Scottish charities.
- ◆ A comprehensive Scottish Charity Register, kept and maintained by OSCR, lists Scotland's 20,000+ charities including name, principal address, charitable purposes, and annual income. This will also state whether any Notices or Directions have been given to a charity by OSCR.
- ◆ A new legal definition of 'charity' is established – an organisation that is entered in the Scottish Charity Register.
- ◆ It will be an offence for an organisation to 'hold itself out to be a charity' if it is not entered in the Scottish Charity Register.
- ◆ There are 16 charitable purposes defined in the Act, for example, 'the advancement of health'; and 'the advancement of human rights'.
- ◆ To meet the Charity Test, a prospective charity must have only one or more charitable purposes; and must provide public benefit.

Further information can be found on OSCR's new website, www.oscr.org.uk

New independent advice and support services for users of local health and community care services

All NHS Boards have been informed that they should develop a strategic partnership with a consortium of their local Citizen's Advice Bureaux and commission them to provide an independent advice and support service (IASS) for users of their local health and community care services.

The Scottish Health Council has been tasked with the monitoring of local services to ensure that they are delivered in line with a national framework.

There will be two essential components of the Independent Advice and Support Service.

To provide:

- ◆ An advice and support service to patients, carers, service users and members of the public wishing to make a complaint or raise concerns about NHS services and;
- ◆ Information and advice to patients, carers, service users and members of the public on a variety of issues that impact on their health and well-being in order to maintain or improve these.

The IASS will provide information and advice about NHS service provision and procedures and assist people take their complaint through all appropriate procedures, including where required local resolution and consideration by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman or an appropriate professional or

statutory organisation.

It will also advise people on their rights under appropriate legislation to access information and support them to access the information, advise on the procedures and provide support where required on matters relating to continuing care where a person wishes to appeal being discharged from in-patient care and provide general information, advice and support to patients to assist them to cope with the effects of illness or disability, helping to reduce anxiety and stress.

The IASS will provide assistance in a number of ways, including directing patients to specific sources to obtain information they require, exploring the options available to a patient to resolve an issue, including supplying a self-help pack, contacting third parties by telephone when authorised by the patient and assisting patients to compile letters.

The IASS may also accompany a patient to meetings or assist them when reviewing personal files and contacting specialist support or independent advocacy services if the patient requires additional support.

The IASS will not give legal or medical advice on healthcare issues, investigate complaints, assist with complaints about private healthcare services except where these have been purchased by the NHS but are provided by an independent sector organisation or support a patient / carer / relative to attend a Fatal Accident Inquiry.

For further information please contact Jackie Burman at Citizen's Advice Scotland on 0131 550 1046.



Training and development day for voluntary sector members of CHPs

Voluntary Health Scotland joined forces with the Primary Care Division (PCD) of the Scottish Executive Health Department and The Community Health Exchange (CHEX) on 15th February to host the first national training and development day for CHP representatives in Community Health Partnerships.

Held in Glasgow, the event saw representation from every NHS Board bar one and from thirty five of the forty CHPs.

The day was a great success, with considerable debate and extended discussion and networking.

At this point thanks must go to the PCD and also the CHP General Managers who supported the event financially to ensure that each of the representatives attended at no cost to themselves, no matter how far they had travelled.

Speakers on the day included Martin Moffat from the Scottish Executive, who provided an informal and interesting history lesson on the development of CHPs and how they had evolved.

Bill Weir and Phil McAndrew from VHS launched the support network and gave a short presentation on the electronic discussion forum which Phil has developed for CHP representatives to use for exchanging news and good practice.

There were two workshops on the day, the morning one looking at the journey to becoming a representative, the expectations which people had as representatives and what they hoped to achieve.

The afternoon workshop discussed participants' priorities for the new support network and what outcomes representatives could expect from the network.

Among the issues raised on the day were:

- ◆ Representation of the sector
- ◆ The selection process for representatives
- ◆ CHP meetings and the VHS role in these
- ◆ Resourcing of the extended role of the representative and expenses
- ◆ The differing stages of development reached by CHPs
- ◆ The need for a common language in a multi agency partnership

The issues raised will be addressed through the Support and Development Network which VHS has set up for the VCS representatives on Community Health Partnerships and shared with the Primary Care Division of the SEHD.

The electronic discussion forum can be accessed at www.vhscotland.org.uk/blog/vhs_blog.html

Anyone can view the discussion forum but in order to participate in a discussion or post a query individuals require to register.

To do this contact Bill Weir who will arrange an invitation to join and a password to be sent out.

A full report on the day will be available shortly on the VHS website: www.vhscotland.org.uk

For further details of the Support Network, contact Bill Weir at Bill.Weir@VHScotland.org.uk

Current consultations

◆ Delivering a Healthy Future: an Action Framework for Children and Young People's Health In Scotland - draft for consultation.

The Child Health Support Group has developed this Action Framework with the intention of laying out the key actions required to meet the challenges for children and young people's health in 21st century Scotland.

The draft framework can be found at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/04/07102245/0> or can be obtained in hard copy from the Child and Maternal Health Unit at the Scottish Executive - 0131 244 4775

VHS will be consulting with members on the framework during May and June - the closing date is 7 July 2006.

◆ **NHS QIS** is consulting on their new draft **Patient Focus Public Involvement Framework** and VHS is assisting QIS with reaching harder to reach groups, in particular the Equality and Diversity Groups identified in Fair for All.

The link to the consultation document is: <http://www.nhshealthquality.org/nhsqis/files/PFPI%20Framework%2006-09%20Marchweb.pdf>

VHS has already asked its members key questions on this document via the VHS Website. VHS will also work with MAC Consultants to seek further response through focus groups. The consultation period ends on 16th June.