

# THE NET

Welcome to the North East Teaching Public Health Network's (NETPHN's) fifth newsletter  
News, views & updates for those in public health education, learning & capacity building

## Skilled for Health pilots

Three pilot sites in the North East are taking part in the second phase of the Skilled for Health initiative with support from Public Health North East. The national programme aims to address the low skills and health inequalities prevalent within traditionally disadvantaged communities. It is a partnership between the Department of Health, the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills and the charity ContinYou.

Individuals and communities with low skills are often those who suffer the most social inequalities. They often have the greatest difficulties in managing their own health as well as accessing health services for themselves and their families. This is in addition to the major challenges they face in accessing employment opportunities and being able to manage many aspects of daily life.

Sites in Northumberland, County Durham and Gateshead are testing the learning materials developed in Phase 1 of the programme over a two year period. The Northumberland project, led by Northumberland Care Trust, is focussing on parents with limited literacy, language and numeracy skills. In County Durham primary care trusts and partners are working in a range of settings, which includes working with prisoners and their families and adults in rural areas with restricted access to services. Staff at Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust are working in partnership with the local PCT, council and education providers.

The Trust's national site role means that it will also act as a point of contact for others interested in introducing a Skilled for Health intervention with their workforce. For more information please contact Denise Orange at [denise.orange@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:denise.orange@dh.gsi.gov.uk)

The NETPHN key objectives are to:

- increase the profile of public health across the region
- embed public health in curricula
- develop and enhance public health teaching capacity and capability
- co-ordinate the sharing of existing good practice with regard to public health teaching and learning.

## NETPHN News

### NETPHN's 2<sup>nd</sup> annual conference

We're really pleased to inform you that our 2nd annual conference will be held Thursday 15 January 2009 at the Royal Station Hotel, Newcastle upon Tyne. The main themes of the conference are:

- Developing public health educator capability and capacity.
- Facilitating the embodiment of public health throughout higher and further education curricula.
- Promoting healthy universities and colleges.

The key note speaker will be Professor Stephen Singleton, Regional Director of Public Health.

Conference updates will be available at the NETPHN website [www.tphn.org.uk](http://www.tphn.org.uk) from October 2008.

### Values Exchange update

Due to the articles popularity, we have included a more detailed article on the Values Exchange here in this month's newsletter.

The Values Exchange (VX), created by Professor David Seedhouse is a flexible and interactive web-based system that provides a dynamic teaching tool to explore ethical and moral issues. To make the delivery of training flexible, the VX system is available online and can be delivered either within the university or at an outside location. **continued >>>**



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[www.TPHN.org.uk](http://www.TPHN.org.uk)

## Health Promoting Universities

The Teaching Public Health Networks all have Health Promoting Universities as one of their main focus. A national survey took place earlier this year to establish Health Promoting University leads and activity across the universities in the nine TPHN regions. Nationally the response to the survey was approximately 55% return rate. Within our region all five universities replied and were able to identify a Health Promoting University lead. The next phase of the research will focus on university specific initiatives from across the region.

### Background to health promoting universities

The Health Promoting Universities initiative is based on an ecological model of health where health is influenced by a range of factors including social, environmental and economic. It is embodied within the principles outlined in the Ottawa Charter (1986) Health for all by the year 2000.

***Health is created and lived by people in the settings of their everyday life where they learn, work, play and love.***  
***Ottawa Charter (1986)***

The settings based approach to health is already used to raise the profile of health within a number of settings for example, school, workplace and further education.

Regionally the concept of the healthy setting is key within our public health strategy **Better Health, Fairer Health**. The links between the strategy and the Health Promoting Universities initiative are:

- To develop a coherent approach to the promotion and support of health in the workplace.
- To become the region with the greatest educational attainment and the fewest possible left behind.

### Benefits of the Health Promoting University approach

The benefits can be described at a number of levels:

- Benefits to the individual in terms of health gains and quality of life measures.
- Benefits to the organisation in terms of organisational development, productivity, performance and staff and student retention.
- Benefits to the community as higher education institutions develop their role and responsibility around developing social and economic capital.

### Watch this space....

NETPHN can provide support to the five universities in taking forward the health promoting university, over the next few months:

- The five university leads for health promoting universities together with colleagues from primary care will be invited to meet, share good practice and identify support needs.
- The second annual conference will provide a forum for developing the initiative.
- An area of the NETPHN website will be developed for those involved in the initiative to support and share good practice within a virtual environment.

### >>>Values Exchange update continued

VX can support individuals to make complex decisions in health, education and social care. Case studies are easily created to give individuals a platform to build opinions on the issues being explored. The VX system uses help prompts, grids and free writing spaces to allow the user to work through case studies. The information contributed by each individual goes on to form a report that is collated and fed into larger, detailed group reports. The reports can then be analysed and discussed. The discussion process and the reading of other peoples views in the group reports gives people using VX the opportunity to review their thinking. Individuals can then revisit case studies and adjust their written opinions to reflect their changing views.

The University of Sunderland is one of a growing number of organisations who perceive the benefits of using VX. Organisations currently using VX include universities in the UK, Australia and New Zealand, NHS Trusts and professional bodies. The VX at the University of Sunderland is being funded by HEIF for the next three years and is currently being embedded into degree programmes across the university. The aim in the first year is to establish VX in at least three programmes and three community venues. VX has the capacity to actively engage employers and policy makers in increasing their potential for training staff within their organisations. For example, organisations can participate in tailor made scenarios that bring everyday issues to the fore. Staff at the University of Sunderland are committed to the development of a reach-out culture and are currently looking to organise VX training events to explore its potential from different perspectives. It is intended that practitioners will be invited to attend training events to use this online software.

For more information about VX training events please contact [Barbara.griffin@sunderland.ac.uk](mailto:Barbara.griffin@sunderland.ac.uk)

To become a NETPHN member go to [www.tphn.org.uk](http://www.tphn.org.uk) and fill in the registration form.

### Meet the NETPHN team

Prof. Ann Crosland – University of Sunderland

Annie Wallace – Project Director for Curriculum Development

April Dickens – Project Officer

Jean Craister – Administrator

To contact a member of the team:

- phone Jean Craister on **0191 5153066** or
- email [jean.craister@sunderland.ac.uk](mailto:jean.craister@sunderland.ac.uk)



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