



Regional Strategy Team  
C.4  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont  
Belfast BT2 3SQ

24<sup>th</sup> March 2004

Dear Colleague

**Re: Community Development and Health Network's response to 'A Healthier Future'**

CDHN is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to this consultation document on a twenty year vision for Health and Wellbeing in Northern Ireland. The fact that this is a comparatively brief response is an indication of the extent to which CDHN regards the overall vision as one which it can wholeheartedly support.

CDHN believes that the five themes chosen are appropriate as a framework for a service that will meet the needs of the people of Northern Ireland for the future. As an organisation with a mission to promote community development as a method of addressing the issue of inequalities in health we are encouraged by the inclusion of 'Involving People' as one of the five major themes. CDHN believes that the existing policy *Mainstreaming Community Development* provides a sound basis for moving forward in engaging with the general public and with people who use HPSS services. Preliminary findings from a review of the *Mainstreaming* policy in which CDHN has played a part suggest that the policy has had an impact on the practice of health and social care professionals and managers but that stronger leadership at a regional level towards its implementation is indicated if the full potential of this policy is to be realised.

CDHN welcomes the proposal to establish a Public Involvement Steering Groups and supports the role suggested for that body. The formation of a partnership with the four health and Social Services Councils, or with any successor organisation arising from the Review of Public Administration, will in our view represent a welcome move towards an integration of the various mechanisms within the HPSS for promoting public engagement. As a regional network organisation of groups with an agenda for community development in health we would welcome the opportunity to play an active part in furthering the agenda suggested by the theme of *Involving People*.

Finally on the issue of smoking in public places CDHN fully supports Option C which proposes that smoking should be banned in all enclosed public places and workplaces.

Yours sincerely

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